

CASE STUDY

## ALSTOM Power Service benchmarks performance to boost customer satisfaction

A leading Australian utility finds that a survey is enough to kick start achievement of customer loyalty goals

### About ALSTOM Power Service

ALSTOM Power Service is the largest after-market service provider to the power industry in Australia and New Zealand. It has approximately 500 full time employees but this can increase to over 1000 people during a major power outage.

The company does power plant field work, process engineering and project management. It also offers workshop facilities, technical support and provides spare parts to power plant operators.

### The drive for improvement

Based on the Kaplan and Norton model, ALSTOM Power Service has implemented a strategy map and balanced scorecard. This approach is based on understanding key strategic themes which are grouped into four general perspectives: learning and growth, business processes, customer and financial.

Within the customer perspective, one of ALSTOM Power Service's strategic initiatives is focused on creating a loyal customer base.

Peter Bounsall, ALSTOM Power Service's Executive General Manager Business Systems and Processes, says: "As part of achieving our loyalty goals, we set out to measure customer satisfaction so we could develop a path forward to improve our client service delivery capabilities.

"Within the organisation we felt a professional survey would be the best way to find out what our clients really think.

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## Methodology and roll out

Customers confidentially completed online surveys. This facilitated constructive and honest feedback. The project took roughly two months with some follow-up work after the survey closed.

Mr Bounsall says: “Survey writing is an area of considerable expertise; it’s a matter of working out the right questions so the information collected is of real value. The Insync Surveys team helped us understand what works and what doesn’t.

“Insync Surveys contacted clients who didn’t complete the survey to find out why. This was useful because it highlighted some issues. For example, one client said they didn’t participate because they weren’t satisfied with their contract situation. This important feedback was acted on immediately.”

## The results

The ALSTOM Power Service Customer Satisfaction Survey looked at ten areas so they could identify some specific areas for improvement, including: safety, knowledge of staff, product quality, value and professionalism.

“A gap analysis measured importance of the survey statements to our customers and then asked about their perception of our performance. This allowed us to pinpoint key issues rather than looking at results across all areas,” says Mr Bounsall.

“Our results were benchmarked against similar organisations that have undertaken customer research with Insync Surveys. Our survey also had some general questions about our competition. Both these elements meant we could see how we’re performing against the rest of the market,” he says.

## Continuous improvement

ALSTOM Power Service has now undertaken another, more targeted survey with Insync Surveys. It is called a Pulse Customer Satisfaction Survey. A smaller group of customers were interviewed over the phone by a team of Insync Surveys researchers. This has allowed ALSTOM Power Service to gain in-depth feedback on issues discovered in their first survey. It also highlighted progress on improvement initiatives that were implemented after the first survey results were analysed.

## The benefits

“Our Pulse Customer Satisfaction survey showed that the customer satisfaction initiatives we’ve used since our first survey have definitely helped us enhance customer loyalty. The flow on effect is new and repeat orders,” says Mr Bounsall.

Customer satisfaction surveys send a strong message that you value customers and care about what they think. ALSTOM Power Service has used the results as a communications tool to facilitate face-to-face meetings. It also sent letters of thanks to survey participants which reinforced its commitment to high satisfaction levels.

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“For the sales team, the survey has been incredibly useful for relationship building. It’s allowed them to make appointments with clients and openly share our findings. The sales managers then lead the discussion by using the actual survey questions to gather client specific feedback and act on it to build loyalty,” says Mr Bounsall.

The results are also being used for their annual strategic planning and quarterly sale conferences.

“The survey showed that certain states have strong customer loyalty. For example, in Tasmania we have a strong physical presence and can maintain very close customer relationships. We now know we can boost our physical presence in other states to move forward.

“Internally, a couple of areas have been looked at and we’ve made improvements. For example, access to corporate business systems is important when ALSTOM Power Service employees are on project sites. We’re now working out how we can provide information to clients faster.

“Insync Surveys’ service has been excellent. From day one they’ve understood what we were trying to get out of our survey. There were no delays in conducting the surveys or providing results. Their project managers are also great.

“We’d contacted several research companies but after talking to Insync Surveys, it was very clear they are survey experts and are willing to work closely with organisations to ensure the objectives are met.”

## About Insync Surveys

Insync Surveys is a 2009 *BRW* Fast 100 company. With offices in Melbourne, Sydney and Perth, we deliver customer, employee, board and other stakeholder surveys for some of the largest organisations in Asia Pacific, including: Cathay Pacific, Foster’s, Toll, AXA, Medibank Private, WorleyParsons, the New South Wales Department of Community Services, the Victorian Department of Primary Industries, Tourism Western Australia, iiNet, Fairfax Digital, QLD Department of Emergency Services, TT-Line (Spirit of Tasmania), Melbourne Cricket Club, many local councils, most university libraries and Mission Australia. This experience allows us to benchmark your results. Insync Surveys’ organisational psychologists help your organisation to improve performance and the working lives of your people.

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