

South west train – customer satisfaction

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



This report is commissioned to identify the changes in customers' satisfaction with the facilities provided by South West Trains, to find out areas to be developed and ways to improve the areas. The survey draws attention to the fact that more than 50% of the passengers felt happy with the station atmosphere. Besides, except for the staff availability, the overall staff performance could satisfy many customers; however, customers on peak time journeys showed less satisfaction than those on off-peak journeys.

The report then evaluates these facts and concludes that the company could enhance the level of passengers' satisfaction with facilities/services, car-parking facilities and staff availability by considering these following suggestions: 1. Upgrading unqualified facilities/services 2. Rationalising car-parking facilities 3. Improving staff quality and quantity

INTRODUCTION This report is based on the National Passenger Survey which is conducted by Passenger Focus. 2, 334 customers were polled between 28th January and 30th March 2012 on a 100-station scale.

By examining 35% of the returned questionnaires on the topic of customers' satisfaction with South West Trains facilities, this report analyses the feedback of passengers in Spring 2012 and then compares with that in Spring 2011. It describes the passengers' opinions and highlights how they have changed through the year. Customers' satisfaction is ranked as: 1. satisfied or good 2. neither/nor 3. dissatisfied or poor The satisfaction of customers is considered on the basis of the percentage of people who felt satisfied or good with station facilities during peak and off-peak hours.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The findings from passengers' satisfaction with South West Trains facilities are categorised into three main sectors which are station atmosphere, staff performance and physical facilities. 3. 1. Satisfaction with station atmosphere Source: National Passenger Survey conducted by Passenger Focus, Spring 2012 Overall, more than a half of the passengers found the station atmosphere satisfactory. However, the fulfilment of passengers' demands sharply decreased compared to Spring 2011. Satisfaction with overall environment at peak hours suffered a downturn change through a year, decreasing remarkably from 64% to 54%.

At the same time, the numbers of customers satisfied with cleanliness and personal security considerably fell by 3%. On the other hand, the passengers' satisfaction in off-peak times was rather stable, since it either stayed the same or slightly increased by 1%. 3. 2. Satisfaction with staff performance Source: National Passenger Survey conducted by Passenger Focus, Spring 2012 When it comes to staff performance, not many customers expressed satisfaction with staff availability, especially in peak times with 46% satisfied.

Nevertheless, chart 3. 2 indicates positive feedback from passengers in terms of the attitudes and helpfulness of the staff and the way requests to staff were handled. Although the number of customers pleased with the attitudes and helpfulness of staff at peak hours noticeably dropped, the overall satisfaction of passengers did grow. Specifically, the average percentage of satisfied people was about 65% in 2011 and 68% in 2012. Another striking point is that how station staff handling passengers' requests

during peak hours significantly improved with 91% satisfied (75% in Spring 2011).

As regards the station physical facilities, while the change in customers' feedback in off-peak times after a year seemed to be positive, it is quite obvious that the percentage of satisfied customers in peak times considerably declined. In detail, table 3. 3 below shows that apart from a marginal improvement in provision of information about train times and platforms, the other sectors suffered a sharp reduction in the proportion of people feeling satisfied. The facilities/services and facilities for car parking proved to be least fulfilled since the numbers of satisfied passengers dramatically diminished by 13% and 12% respectively.

CONCLUSIONS

The above analysis indicates that South West Trains got positive feedback from customers as most of the listed aspects were assessed to be good by more than half of the passengers. Nevertheless, passengers seemed to feel more pleased while travelling in off-peak times than in peak times. Hence, it can be concluded that the facilities and services that the stations provided could not satisfy a large number of customers simultaneously. Furthermore, it should be noted that there were several sectors that witnessed the lack of customers' satisfaction such as: 1. Facilities and services.

Availability of staff Consequently, in order to fulfill the increasing demands of customers, South West Trains should take proper actions to upgrade the

quality of such sectors in particular and the station facilities and services in general.

RECOMMENDATIONS

South West Trains could enhance the level of customers' satisfaction by applying the three following measures: 1. Upgrading unqualified facilities and services by carrying out specific surveys to find out the demands and expectations of customers towards stations' facilities and services so as to recognise issues, solve problems and increase the level of satisfaction.

Rationalising car-parking facilities by applying new fee charging policy (e. g. offering discount during off-peak times). In addition, South West Trains could increase parking capacity for customers by working with local authorities to expand parking zone, encouraging employees to use alternative transportation or to park in peripheral lots. 3. Improving staff quality and quantity by offering staff a range of essential training programmes and recruiting more employees. Besides, basing on performance observations, the company should retrain staff whose performances were below certain standards.