# More Than Half of US Shoppers Will Abandon a Brand Following a Bad Experience

**ARTICLE**

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**M**arketers and business leaders often prioritize customer service initiatives that don't always align with the needs of the customer. But to keep consumers coming back, it's more important than ever for marketers to bridge this gap by focusing on what customers really want—a responsive, streamlined shopping experience.

According to April 2019 data from business intelligence company Incite Group, customer service professionals from various industries worldwide said that a seamless omnichannel user experience (34.0%) and the encouragement of self-service tools (29.7%) will be two of the most transformative customer service innovations over the next five to 10 years.

**What Will Be the Most Transformative Application of Innovation for Customer Service for Businesses Worldwide in the Next 5-10 Years?**
*% of respondents, April 2019*

A seamless omnichannel experience for the user
**34.0%**

Empowered customers with the self-service tools to help themselves with ease
**29.7%**

Higher quality automated responses to basic customer issues
**20.1%**

Faster response times to customer queries and complaints
**16.2%**

*Note: includes agencies, B2B companies, B2C companies, NGO, media/press and technology providers*
*Source: Incite Group, "2020 State of Customer Service Report," June 13, 2019*

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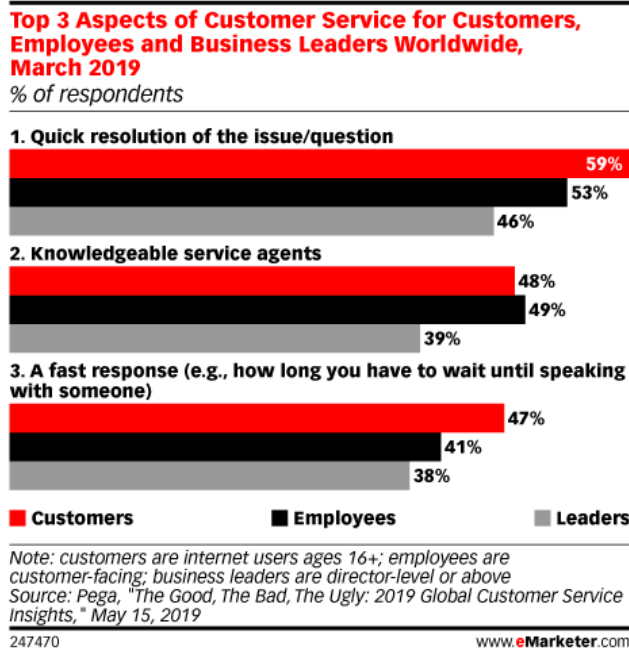
"If you don't have an integrated, seamless omnichannel approach, customers will notice it right away," said Carey Stoker, senior vice president of customer services at omnichannel commerce company Radial. "Think of the customer experience like a Ferris wheel. The customer is in the middle, and everything rotates around them. Each car is a different touchpoint. But when one of those cars is removed, the ride—or the journey—becomes unbalanced. The consumer feels unsettled and questions the brand or retailer's ability to provide a fully integrated experience."

But what are consumers looking for?

According to a January 2019 survey conducted by The Harris Poll, 84% of marketers in North America and the UK said they are satisfied with their company's abilities to leverage technology to deliver on key customer experience measures, but only 68% of consumers felt the same.

A similar disconnect exists between consumers and business leaders worldwide with attitudes toward customer service. According to a March 2019 survey from consumer engagement company Pega, three in five consumers worldwide said a quick resolution to their issues or questions was the most important aspect of a customer service experience, vs. 46% of business leaders who said the same. Sentiments toward the importance of knowledgeable service agents

and fast responses also delineate among customers and business leaders.

**Top 3 Aspects of Customer Service for Customers, Employees and Business Leaders Worldwide, March 2019**
*% of respondents*

**1. Quick resolution of the issue/question**
- Customers: 59%
- Employees: 53%
- Leaders: 46%

**2. Knowledgeable service agents**
- Customers: 48%
- Employees: 49%
- Leaders: 39%

**3. A fast response (e.g., how long you have to wait until speaking with someone)**
- Customers: 47%
- Employees: 41%
- Leaders: 38%

■ Customers   ■ Employees   ■ Leaders

*Note: customers are internet users ages 16+; employees are customer-facing; business leaders are director-level or above*
*Source: Pega, "The Good, The Bad, The Ugly: 2019 Global Customer Service Insights," May 15, 2019*
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These discrepancies are important to note as more than half (55%) of US shoppers said that just one bad experience would stop them from returning to a brand, according to a July 2019 survey from alternative payments provider Klarna. But retailers are having trouble providing this experience that consumers crave—more than one-third (36%) of respondents said they struggle to keep pace with changing consumer expectations, and more than double that figure (69%) said they have to work harder than ever to retain customers.

"Part of what makes a brand unique is the brand and the experience that is generated," Stoker said. "To drive that, a frictionless ease of service and low consumer effort are going to be important in an ongoing way. That is really where differentiation will occur, and businesses need to make sure that they're building their brand footprint around that."