



Customer
Thermometer

NPS Playbook - **10 Strategies** for dealing with NPS responses



How to respond to NPS detractors

NPS detractors are a threat to your organization. Even the **best-performing companies** will have some customers who not only won't recommend them, but will actively recommend others to go elsewhere.



1. Be realistic

The ultimate goal with NPS detractors is to convert them into NPS promoters. That's quite an ask, however. Is it reasonable to expect you have the power to 'convert' a customer who actively dislikes you into an advocate? It seems unlikely, at least within a short timescale. Converting NPS detractors into NPS advocates is a laudable, and achievable, long-term goal. However, a more realistic short to medium-term goal is to turn NPS detractors into NPS passives.

2. Accept the 'zone of tolerance'

The 'zone of tolerance' concept is a useful way of thinking about the dynamics at play here. The author Leonard Berry came up with it. His idea is that the extremes of negative and positive customer experience can be defined like that because they are memorable. So, when customers score high or low on NPS, it's because their memory is triggering something positive or negative that they can easily recall. This applies here because the gap between these two extremes (the zone of tolerance) is where customers are ambivalent because they can't remember anything consequential about their experience. Customers within the zone of tolerance aren't necessarily happy, or unhappy. In this way they are classic NPS passives – people who score 7 or 8 on the NPS scale. Some will be happy, just not quite happy enough for things to be memorable. Likewise, others will be unhappy with their experience being somewhat underwhelming or barely adequate – but still tolerating it.



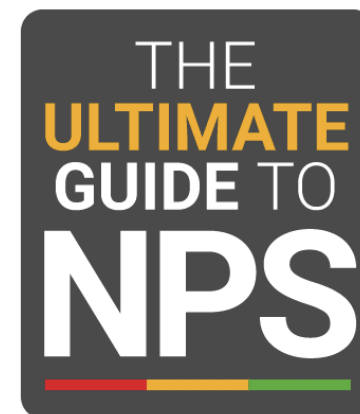
3. Aim for passives from detractors

Getting NPS detractors to become NPS promoters means taking them from memorably bad experiences to memorably good ones. That's a big jump. Because NPS detractors are so damaging, your best bet is to neutralize them – at least in the first instance. In other words, you want to consciously try and nudge NPS detractors into the zone of tolerance by making their negativity forgettable. You can do this by:



4. Find common ground

Finding what NPS detractors have in common in terms of their reasons for giving low NPS scores. These reasons should lead you to relatively minor changes in process and engagement that remove friction and irritation. It won't make them wonder at how great your company is, but it might alleviate their issues enough to turn them 'passive' the next time you invite them to score you.

 CustomerThermometer

5. Close the loop

Closing the loop on individual NPS detractors. This has the effect of making a difference at an individual level. The bonus is that, doing this regularly, you get through a lot of detractors and the changes you implement benefit others and avoid problems that trigger low NPS scores.



How to respond to NPS Passives

This is actually a less common target for NPS strategy. Most organizations focus on firefighting the urgent issue of NPS detractors. There's a lot to be said for spending at least some of your time and resources on NPS passives. The primary reason for this is because NPS passives are perilously close to being NPS promoters. It's the difference between an 8 and a 9! **Flipping NPS passives** into becoming NPS promoters is a great way to make your NPS metrics look better. And in the real world, it should be having a meaningful effect on loyalty, retention and proactive word of mouth too.

6. Fine is Ok... Sometimes

If you could sum up NPS passives in one word it would be "fine". They are just fine; OK; alright. They aren't fired up about your business, and that's the gap you need to close. Returning to the zone of tolerance concept, this is where NPS passives live. To pull them out of it, you need to elevate the forgetability of their experience into something genuinely memorable.

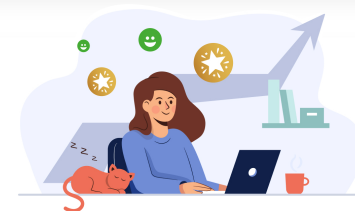




7. Be memorable

You can do that by: Asking NPS passives what it would take to increase their NPS scores to a 9 or a 10 – and implementing some changes along these lines. Exploring why NPS promoters are so positive about you and see how to grow these experiences to all customers. Injecting some magic touches into the customer experience. Examine the customer journey in detail and see what opportunities there are to adding extra value, thoughtful gestures and empathy. These ‘moments’ are genuinely memorable so try to create more of them.

8. Some passives will always be passives



Another important reason to focus a strategy around NPS passives is to mitigate risk. Passives are constantly in danger of sliding down into ‘detractor’ territory if their expectations dip. This is especially the case if you are operating a parallel strategy for NPS detractors that dominates the majority of your attention. If you’re not careful, you spend all your time trying to push the same detractors into the passive category only to have them fall back down again. Sooner or later they will churn. Forrester did some research into the tendency of most companies to prioritize elevating negative customers (detractors) versus ‘middling’ customers (passives). The results are extremely enlightening. Companies who spend more effort on passives make significantly larger revenue gains compared to those preoccupying themselves with detractors only. It is worthwhile to examine exactly how many detractors and passives you have in your customer base, and their relative lifetime value (LTV), in order to guide your prioritization.

How to deal with NPS promoters

The optimum plan for NPS promoters is to keep them as NPS promoters. This will require you to continue to deliver value. As well as the retained revenue from their ongoing custom, you get **additional value** by benefiting from their recommendations.

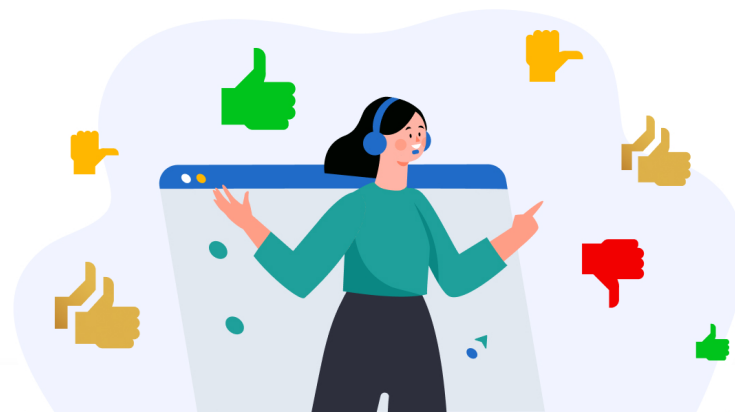
9. Follow up

Where possible, you should track these recommendations through a referral program. This will enable you to determine the relationships between customers saying they recommend you and actually recommending you. You can also attach incentives or rewards to such programs.



THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO NPS

 CustomerThermometer



10. Maximise value

Keeping NPS promoters on side also enables you to extract maximum value from their insights and experiences. All 'extreme' feedback is highly valuable. Just as "a complaint is a gift" (in that it gives you valuable intelligence) so does a very happy customer. You can learn a lot, and have this inform decision making, and continue to do so over time. Beyond this, you can potentially elicit testimonials, marketing case studies, independent reviews, participation in product testing, and more.



Customer
Thermometer

Create Your Free NPS Account

