
**Quality management — Customer
satisfaction — Guidelines for monitoring
and measuring**

*Management de la qualité — Satisfaction du client — Lignes directrices
relatives à la surveillance et au mesurage*

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Contents

Page

Foreword	iv
Introduction.....	v
1 Scope	1
2 Normative references	1
3 Terms and definitions	1
4 Concept of customer satisfaction	2
5 Framework for monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction.....	2
6 Planning for monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction.....	3
6.1 Defining the purpose and objectives	3
6.2 Determining the scope and frequency	3
6.3 Determining implementation methods and responsibilities.....	3
6.4 Allocating resources	3
7 Monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction activities	4
7.1 General	4
7.2 Identifying customer expectations	4
7.3 Gathering customer satisfaction data.....	5
7.4 Analysing customer satisfaction data.....	8
7.5 Providing feedback for improvement.....	9
7.6 Monitoring customer satisfaction.....	9
8 Maintenance and improvement of monitoring and measurement processes	10
Annex A (normative) Conceptual model of customer satisfaction.....	12
Annex B (normative) Identification of customer expectations	14
Annex C (normative) Direct measurement of customer satisfaction	17
Annex D (normative) Analysis of customer satisfaction data.....	22
Annex E (normative) Using customer satisfaction.....	27
Bibliography.....	29

Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

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The main task of technical committees is to prepare International Standards. Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the member bodies casting a vote.

In other circumstances, particularly when there is an urgent market requirement for such documents, a technical committee may decide to publish other types of document:

- an ISO Publicly Available Specification (ISO/PAS) represents an agreement between technical experts in an ISO working group and is accepted for publication if it is approved by more than 50 % of the members of the parent committee casting a vote;
- an ISO Technical Specification (ISO/TS) represents an agreement between the members of a technical committee and is accepted for publication if it is approved by 2/3 of the members of the committee casting a vote.

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An ISO/PAS or ISO/TS is reviewed after three years in order to decide whether it will be confirmed for a further three years, revised to become an International Standard, or withdrawn. If the ISO/PAS or ISO/TS is confirmed, it is reviewed again after a further three years, at which time it must either be transformed into an International Standard or be withdrawn.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

ISO/TS 10004 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 176, *Quality management and quality assurance*, Subcommittee SC 3, *Supporting technologies*.

Introduction

0.1 General

One of the key elements of organizational success is the customer's satisfaction with the organization and its products. Therefore, it is necessary to monitor and measure customer satisfaction.

The information obtained from monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction can help identify opportunities for improvement of the organization's strategies, products, processes and characteristics that are valued by customers, and serve the organization's objectives. Such improvements can strengthen customer confidence and result in commercial and other benefits.

This Technical Specification provides guidance to the organization on establishing effective processes for monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction.

0.2 Relationship with ISO 9001:2008

This Technical Specification is compatible with ISO 9001:2008, whose objectives it supports by providing guidance on monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction. This Technical Specification can help address specific clauses in ISO 9001:2008 related to customer satisfaction, namely those listed below.

- a) ISO 9001:2008, 5.2, on customer focus: "Top management shall ensure that customer requirements are determined and are met with the aim of enhancing customer satisfaction."
- b) ISO 9001:2008, 6.1, b), on resource management: "The organization shall determine and provide the resources needed (...) to enhance customer satisfaction by meeting customer requirements."
- c) ISO 9001:2008, 8.2.1, on customer satisfaction: "As one of the measurements of the performance of the quality management system, the organization shall monitor information relating to customer perception as to whether the organization has met customer requirements. The methods for obtaining and using this information shall be determined."
- d) ISO 9001:2008, 8.4, on analysis of data: "The organization shall determine, collect and analyse appropriate data to demonstrate the suitability and effectiveness of the quality management system and to evaluate where continual improvement of the effectiveness of the quality management system can be made. This shall include data generated as a result of monitoring and measurement and from other relevant sources. The analysis of data shall provide information relating to (...) customer satisfaction (...)."

This Technical Specification can also be used independently of ISO 9001.

0.3 Relationship with ISO 9004:2009

This Technical Specification is also compatible with ISO 9004:2009, which provides guidance on managing for the sustained success of an organization. This Technical Specification supplements the following guidance given in:

- ISO 9004:2009, Clause B.2, on customer focus, and
- ISO 9004:2009, 8.3.1 and 8.3.2, on determining needs, expectations and satisfaction of customers.

0.4 Relationship with ISO 10001, ISO 10002, ISO 10003

ISO 10001 contains guidance on codes of conduct for organizations related to customer satisfaction. Such codes can decrease the likelihood of problems arising and can eliminate causes of complaints and disputes which can decrease customer satisfaction.

ISO 10002 contains guidance on the internal handling of product-related complaints. This guidance can help to preserve customer satisfaction and loyalty by resolving complaints effectively and efficiently.

ISO 10003 contains guidance on the resolution of disputes regarding product-related complaints that could not be satisfactorily resolved internally. ISO 10003 can help to minimize customer dissatisfaction stemming from unresolved complaints.

Collectively, ISO 10001, ISO 10002 and ISO 10003 provide guidance which can help to minimize customer dissatisfaction and enhance customer satisfaction.

This Technical Specification complements ISO 10001, ISO 10002 and ISO 10003 by providing guidance on the monitoring and measuring of customer satisfaction. The information gained can guide the organization to take actions which can help to sustain or enhance customer satisfaction.

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Quality management — Customer satisfaction — Guidelines for monitoring and measuring

1 Scope

This Technical Specification provides guidance in defining and implementing processes to monitor and measure customer satisfaction.

This Technical Specification is intended for use by organizations regardless of type, size or product provided. The focus of this Technical Specification is on customers external to the organization.

This Technical Specification is not intended for certification or contractual purposes, nor is it intended to change any rights or obligations under applicable statutory or regulatory requirements.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document: For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 9000:2005, *Quality management systems — Fundamentals and vocabulary*,
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3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 9000:2005 and the following apply.

3.1

product

result of a process

NOTE 1 Product can be a service, software, hardware or processed material.

NOTE 2 Adapted from ISO 9000:2005, definition 3.4.2, whose original three notes have been condensed into Note 1.

3.2

customer

organization or person that receives a product

EXAMPLE Consumer, client, end-user, retailer, beneficiary, purchaser.

NOTE 1 Customers might include other interested parties who might be affected by the products provided by the organization and who might influence the success of the organization.

NOTE 2 While a customer can be internal or external to the organization, the focus of this Technical Specification is on the external customer.

NOTE 3 Adapted from ISO 9000:2005, definition 3.3.5, whose original note has been expanded into Notes 1 and 2.

**3.3
customer satisfaction**

customer's perception of the degree to which the customer's requirements have been fulfilled

NOTE 1 Customer complaints are a common indicator of low customer satisfaction but their absence does not necessarily imply high customer satisfaction.

NOTE 2 Even when customer requirements have been agreed with the customer and fulfilled, this does not necessarily ensure high customer satisfaction.

[ISO 9000:2005, definition 3.1.4]

**3.4
requirement**

need or expectation that is stated, generally implied or obligatory

NOTE Adapted from ISO 9000:2005, definition 3.1.2, whose original five notes have been removed.

4 Concept of customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is determined by the gap between the customer's expectations and the customer's perception of the product as delivered by the organization.

To achieve customer satisfaction, the organization should first understand the customer's expectations. These expectations might be explicit or implicit, or not fully articulated.

Customer expectations, as understood by the organization, form the primary basis of the product that is subsequently planned and delivered.

The extent to which the delivered product is perceived by the customer to meet or exceed expectations determines the degree of customer satisfaction.

It is important to make a distinction between the organization's view of the quality of the delivered product and the customer's perception of the delivered product, because it is the latter that governs the customer's satisfaction. The relationship between the organization's and the customer's views on quality is further described by the conceptual model of customer satisfaction, as presented in Annex A.

Since customer satisfaction is subject to change, organizations should establish processes to monitor and measure customer satisfaction on a regular basis.

5 Framework for monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction

The organization should establish a systematic approach to monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction. This approach should be supported by an organizational framework to enable the planning, operation, maintenance and improvement of processes for monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction.

Planning includes determination of the methods of implementation, and the allocation of necessary resources (see Clause 6).

Operation includes identifying customer expectations, gathering and analysing customer satisfaction data, providing feedback for improvement and monitoring of customer satisfaction (see Clause 7).

Maintenance and improvement includes the review, evaluation and continual improvement of processes for monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction (see Clause 8).

6 Planning for monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction

6.1 Defining the purpose and objectives

As a first step, the organization should clearly define the purpose and objectives of monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction, which might, for example, include the following:

- to evaluate customer response to existing, new or re-designed products;
- to obtain information on specific aspects, such as supporting processes, personnel or organization behaviour;
- to investigate reasons for customer complaints;
- to investigate reasons for loss of market share;
- to monitor trends in customer satisfaction;
- to compare customer satisfaction in relation to other organisations.

The purpose and objectives influence what, when, how and from whom the data is gathered. They also influence how the data is analysed and how the information is ultimately to be used.

6.2 Determining the scope and frequency

Based on the purpose and objectives, the organization should determine the scope of the planned measurement, in terms of both the type of data that is sought, and from where it is to be obtained.

The type of information gathered can range from data regarding a specific characteristic, to assessment of overall satisfaction. Likewise the scope of assessment depends on the type of segmentation:

- by customer,
- by market, or
- by product.

The organization should also determine the frequency of data gathering, which can be on a regular basis, on an occasional basis, or both, as dictated by business needs or specific events (see 7.3).

6.3 Determining implementation methods and responsibilities

Some information regarding customer satisfaction might be obtained indirectly from the organization's internal processes (e.g. customer complaints handling) or from external sources (e.g. reports in the media). Usually, the organization needs to supplement such information with data obtained directly from customers.

The organization should determine how customer satisfaction information is to be obtained, and who is responsible for that activity. The organization should also determine to whom the information is to be directed for appropriate action.

The organization should plan to monitor the processes for obtaining and using customer satisfaction information, as well as the results and effectiveness of these processes.

6.4 Allocating resources

The organization should determine and provide the necessary competent human and other resources for planning, monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction.

7 Monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction activities

7.1 General

To monitor and measure customer satisfaction, the organization should:

- identify customer expectations;
- gather customer satisfaction data;
- analyse customer satisfaction data;
- provide feedback for improvement of customer satisfaction;
- monitor customer satisfaction on-going.

These activities and their relationship are depicted in Figure 1, and described in the clauses that follow.

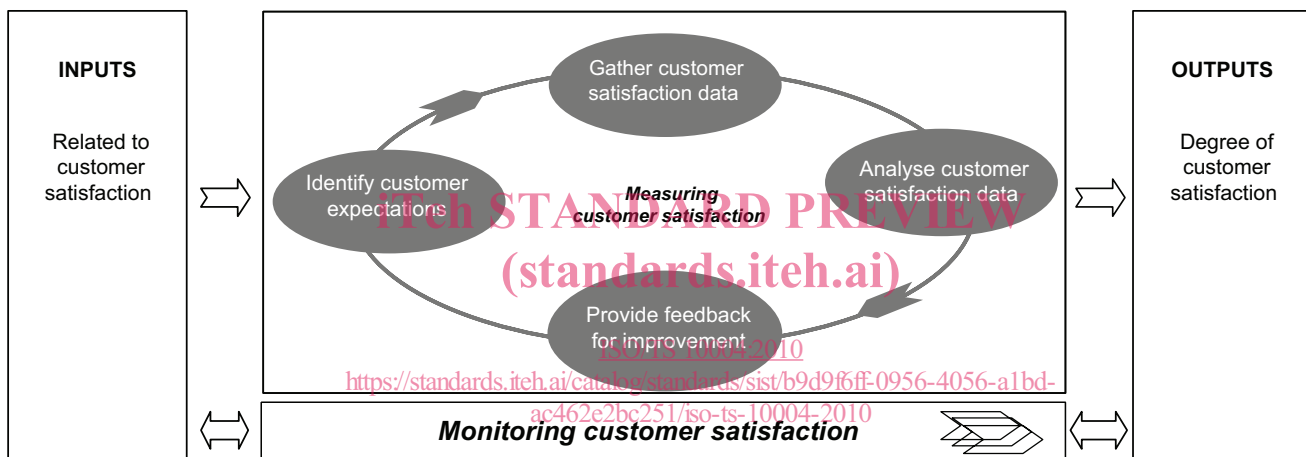


Figure 1 — Monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction

7.2 Identifying customer expectations

7.2.1 Identifying the customers

The organization should identify the customers, both current and potential, whose expectations it intends to determine.

Once the “customer” group is defined, the organization should identify the individual customers whose expectations are to be determined. For example, in the consumer goods sector, such individuals might be regular customers, or they might be occasional customers. When the customer is an enterprise, one or more persons in that enterprise (e.g. from purchasing, project management or production) should be selected.

Further examples of various types of customers and considerations are provided in Clause B.2.

7.2.2 Determining customer expectations

When determining customer expectations (see Figure A.1), the organization should consider the following:

- stated customer requirements;
- implied customer requirements;

- statutory and regulatory requirements;
- other customer desires (“wish list”).

It is important to recognize that a customer might not always explicitly specify all aspects of the product. Items that are presupposed might not be specified. Some aspects might be overlooked, or may not be known to the customer.

As outlined in the conceptual model (see Annex A), it is crucial that the customer's expectations are clearly and completely understood. How well these expectations are met will influence the customer's satisfaction. Examples of various aspects to consider in order to better understand customer expectations are provided in Clause B.3.

The relationship between customer expectations and customer satisfaction is further discussed in Clause B.4.

7.3 Gathering customer satisfaction data

7.3.1 Identifying and selecting characteristics related to customer satisfaction

The organization should identify the characteristics of the product, of its delivery and of the organization, which have a significant effect on customer satisfaction. For convenience, the characteristics can be grouped into categories such as:

- a) product characteristics;

EXAMPLE Performance (quality, dependability), features, aesthetics, safety, support (maintenance, disposal, training), price, perceived value, warranty.

- b) delivery characteristics;

EXAMPLE On-time delivery, completeness of order, response time, operating information, quality of delivery service.

- c) organizational characteristics.

EXAMPLE Personnel characteristics (courtesy, competence, communication), billing process, complaints handling, security, organizational behaviour (business ethics, social responsibility), image in society, transparency.

The organization should rank the selected characteristics to reflect their relative importance, as perceived by the customer. If necessary, a survey should be carried out with a sub-set of customers to determine or verify their perception of relative importance of characteristics.

7.3.2 Indirect indicators of customer satisfaction

The organization should examine existing sources of information for data that reflect characteristics related to customer satisfaction, e.g.

- frequency or trend in customer complaints, calls for assistance, or customer compliments;
- frequency or trend in product returns, product repair or other indicators of product performance or customer acceptance, e.g. installation or field inspection reports;
- data obtained through communication with customers, e.g. by marketing, sales or support personnel;
- reports from supplier surveys conducted by customer organizations, which can reveal how the organization is perceived in relation to other organizations;

- reports from consumer groups that might reveal how the organization and its products are perceived by customers or users;
- media reports which might reveal how the organization or its products are perceived, and which might themselves also influence customer perceptions;
- sector/industry studies, e.g. involving a comparative assessment of characteristics of the organization's product;
- regulatory agency reports or publications.

Such data can provide insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the product and related organization processes (e.g. product support, complaints handling and customer communication). The analysis of such data can help to shape indicators of customer satisfaction. It can also help to confirm or supplement customer satisfaction data gained directly from the customer.

7.3.3 Direct measures of customer satisfaction

7.3.3.1 General

While there might be indirect indicators of satisfaction (see 7.3.2), it is usually necessary to gather customer satisfaction data directly from customers. The method(s) used to gather customer satisfaction data depend on various factors, e.g.

- the type, number and geographical or cultural distribution of customers,
- the length and frequency of customer interaction,
- the nature of the product provided by the organization, and
- the purpose and cost of the assessment method.

The organization should consider the practical aspects described in 7.3.3.2 to 7.3.3.4 when planning the approach and methods to use for gathering customer satisfaction data.

7.3.3.2 Selecting the method for gathering customer satisfaction data

The organization should select a method for gathering data that is appropriate to the need and the type of data that is to be collected.

The method most commonly used for gathering such data is a survey, which can be either qualitative, or quantitative, or both.

Qualitative surveys are those that are typically designed to reveal characteristics of the product, delivery or the organization that are relevant to customer satisfaction. They are typically undertaken to understand or explore individual perceptions and reactions, and to uncover ideas and issues. They are relatively flexible in application, but can be subjective.

Quantitative surveys are those that are designed to measure the degree of customer satisfaction. They are typically conducted to collect aggregate data, using fixed questions or criteria. They are used for determining status, benchmarking, or tracking changes over time.

Brief descriptions of these types of survey methods and a comparison of their relative advantages and limitations are provided in C.2.4.