



CUSTOMER SERVICE BENCHMARK REPORT



E-Commerce

NOVEMBER 2020

*A pulse of how 2,000 of the world's top eCommerce companies deliver
support on customers' digital channel of choice for support: email.*



[^]netomi

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Executive Summary

The Customer Service Benchmark Report uncovers how 2,000 of the world's largest eCommerce companies provide customer support on the leading support channel: email.

As barriers to entry shrink in the increasingly competitive eCommerce industry, customers are becoming less loyal. Putting a priority on customer experience is now required to build and grow a business. Support is now as critical as providing a high quality or unique product, or fiercely competing on price. The idea that customer service is no longer a nice-to-have, but essential to attract and retain customers, is proven by the fact that 95% of customers say good customer service is important for brand loyalty¹. What's more: 60% of customers have scrapped a planned purchase based on poor customer service¹.

So what are the pillars of good customer service? Customers crave convenient, effortless resolutions on their channel of choice. Today, email remains the preferred digital channel for support. According to Forrester Research, "54% of customers used email for customer service last year, making it the most used digital channel for customer service."² Providing a good customer experience on email, though, is hard and expensive to do. This is evident in how global eCommerce companies today are delivering support on email.

Our study revealed that eCommerce companies need to greatly improve their email support experience, providing quicker responses with higher-quality answers and empowering their human agents to be empathic.

We found that only **59% of eCommerce companies offer support on email**, and of those, **30% ignore customer emails** altogether. The companies that do respond, are not providing full resolutions. The average score on the **Answer Quality Index (AQI)** is **44.2 / 100**.

The companies that prioritize email support and answer both a straightforward query and a special request respond quickly: **1 in 2** respond within the first 6 hours. While the average response time is **17.3 hours**, eCommerce companies were almost **2X** as likely to respond to an everyday, simple query within the first hour.

To measure the overall performance and effectiveness of a company's email support, we created the **Support Performance Index (SPI)** which provides a 360-degree analysis of a response measuring personalization, answer quality, empathy and responsiveness. On a scale of 1-100, **41%** of companies who responded to an email scored below 50 points. This signals that eCommerce companies, on average, need to refocus resources on email support as customer expectations are not being met.

Key Findings

- 1 **Email is not universal:** Only **59%** of eCommerce companies have an easily accessible email address.
- 2 **The inbox is more like a black hole:** Of the eCommerce brands that have an email address, a staggering **30%** ignore emails.
- 3 **Performance against support key performance indicators (KPIs) is all over the map:** The average score for the **Support Performance Index (SPI)**, which measures personalization, empathy, answer quality and responsiveness, is **56.2**, with 23% scoring within the **70-85** point range out of 100 total points.
- 4 **On average, eCommerce companies are not providing full resolutions:** The average score on the **Answer Quality Index (AQI)**, which measures the usefulness and meaningfulness of a response, is only **44.2 / 100**.
- 5 **The eCommerce companies that prioritize email are responding quickly: 1 in 2** companies respond to customer inquiries in the first 6 hours and **75%** respond within 24 hours.
- 6 **Personalization is a bright spot: 88%** of eCommerce companies personalize responses.
- 7 **Empathy is rare: 3 in 4** companies do not show any compassion to a customer in need.
- 8 **APAC prioritizes speed:** eCommerce companies in APAC provide the best customer service, resolving tickets almost **1.5X** as compared to eCommerce companies in EMEA.
- 9 **Zendesk users provide higher quality answers:** When it comes to the quality and thoroughness of an answer, Zendesk users scored **53.3** on the **AQI**, almost **30%** higher than other users of other agent desk platforms.
- 10 **Luxury Goods outperform other industries:** In SPI and AQI, eCommerce companies in the Luxury Goods industry outperformed companies while Consumer Electronics companies trail the rest.

Methodology

Our study includes over 2,000 eCommerce companies from 63 countries with 30 native languages.

We used apollo.io to find the largest 2,000 eCommerce companies globally.

We manually checked the social media accounts and corporate websites to find support-related or corporate email addresses. Of the 2,000 companies, we were able to find 1,190 email addresses.

We sent an email to each company—translated to the native language of their home country—as a customer trying to decide whether to complete a purchase based on the company’s refund policy. We adjusted to send an email within regular business hours for each country. We sent the following email at 8 AM on a Thursday:

Quick question about returns & refunds



[REDACTED] <[REDACTED]@gmail.com>

to Customerservice ▾

Hi,

I would like to learn more about returns. I'm not sure whether I should buy depending on the policy. How long does it take to get a refund after I make a return?

Thanks.

Besides our generic question, we also wanted to observe how eCommerce companies react when a customer poses a unique and personal request. To understand this, we sent the following email at 8 AM on a Monday:

Help needed for a special birthday gift



[REDACTED]

to Customerservice ▾

Hi,

The coronavirus has affected me in unexpected ways. I want to buy something special for my best friend's birthday, but I have been struggling financially. Do you give coupon codes by any chance? Is it also possible to waive the shipping fee? Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Thanks.

Netomi’s research team created two proprietary indexes to measure the quality of customer support: the Support Performance Index (SPI) and Answer Quality Index (AQI). SPI is a 100 point scale measured by personalization (10 points), empathy (20 points), relevance (20 points) and resolution time (50 points). Companies can earn up to 10 bonus points if a company sends a CSAT survey, or waives the shipping fee for the customer struggling financially. AQI measures the usefulness of the response. In this use case, we have omitted the resolution and analyzed personalization (20 points), empathy (40 points), and relevance (40 points).

For the 1,190 emails sent in two batches, we received 751 replies for our question on refund policy and 621 replies for our request for coupon codes. We analyzed email replies for many dimensions that define a good customer service experience, including personalization, empathy, relevance and response time.

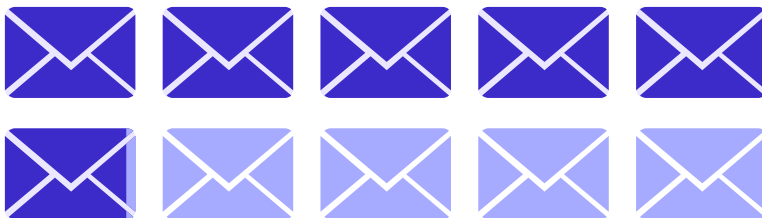
1

Only 3 in 5 eCommerce companies provide easily accessible email addresses

While email remains a preferred channel for customer support to ask for a return, to update a delivery address or ask a question about a product, a whopping **41%** of global eCommerce companies do not offer email support.

According to a Netomi consumer survey, **47%** of people prefer to contact a company for customer service over email, more than any other channel. While other support channels have emerged in recent years, email remains the most convenient as it's asynchronous: a person can send an email to a company and walk away, checking for a response when it's convenient for them. This shows that the 59% of eCommerce companies that have an email address are turning support into a differentiator by meeting customer expectations for convenient and effortless experiences.

59.3%



Do eCommerce companies provide email addresses?

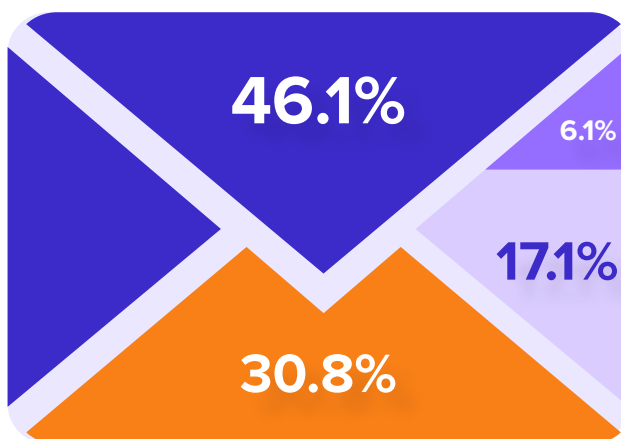
- Yes
- No

2

Nearly 1/3 of emails are ignored and response rates are inconsistent based on the customers' ask

Of the 1,190 eCommerce companies that had an email address, only **69%** responded to a generic question about a return policy. While a customer could likely find the answer to a common FAQ like this within an online knowledge base, the fact that **31%** of companies did not respond to a simple question is alarming, especially as the email stated that a sale was dependent on better understanding the return policy. This is because even one instance of poor customer service could discourage customers from ever doing business with a company again.... or at all.

Our research also exposed inconsistencies with response rate depending on whether a question was straightforward or contained a special request. We discovered that emails might be arbitrarily getting lost in a companies' inbox, or ignored simply because agents are not trained to properly respond to unique scenarios or empowered to go above and beyond. While **46%** of companies responded to both straightforward questions and special requests, nearly **1 in 5 (17%)** only respond to standard questions. Interestingly, **6%** of eCommerce companies only responded to special requests. This could signal that agents at these companies focus their time on complex and unique scenarios in a hope that customers will seek out self-serve support for simple, everyday requests.



Do eCommerce companies respond to customer inquiries?

- Special Requests
- Straightforward Requests
- Neither
- Both

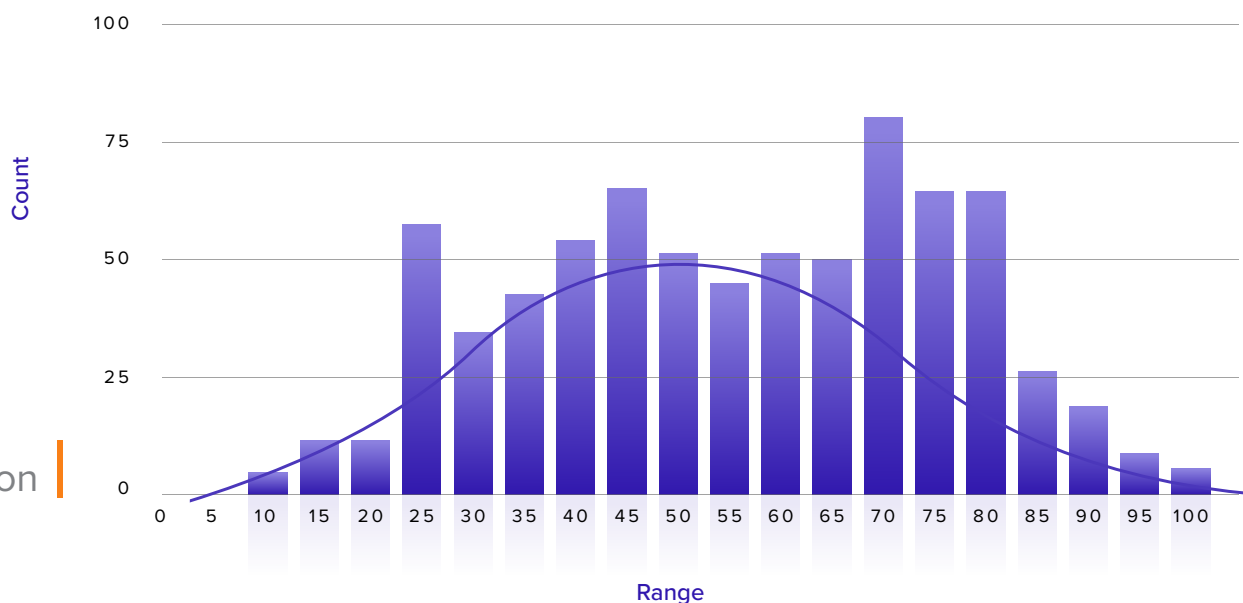
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eCommerce Companies Performed Well on the Support Performance Index (SPI)

Responding to an email is not enough, customer satisfaction (CSAT) is also driven from how quickly a company responds, how complete and meaningful a response is, and whether a company personalizes the interaction. We looked holistically at every response, analyzing these things that matter most to customers.

Our **Support Performance Index (SPI)**, as described in detail in methodology, holistically compares a response against many key metrics. Overall, the **SPI** is **56.2** with a 23% scoring in the 70-85 range. Global action sports brand DC Shoes scored at the top of the chart, with an impressive SPI of 104.9, almost 5 points above the 100-point benchmark. The company excelled at all of the key factors, including an average response time of 20 minutes and a remarkable 50% discount rate.

Other top performing eCommerce companies that exceeded 100 on the SPI include: **Princess Polly** (Australia, 103.44); **Payless ShoeSource** (US, 103.34); **COS** (UK, 101.45); and **Universal Store** (Australia, 100.73). These companies provided high quality, personalized and relevant responses and have empowered their agents to be empathetic.



Hi [REDACTED]

Thanks for reaching out to us! I'll gladly provide you with the links and information regarding returns.

For all Boardriders Club Members, return shipping labels are FREE if returned within 45 days.

For all other guests, return shipping labels are \$5.95. This amount will be deducted from your refund.

If you're not yet a Boardriders Club Member, you can go ahead and sign up through the following link:

<https://www.dcsheoes.com/account/>

You can find all the information regarding returns in the following link:

<https://www.dcsheoes.com/customer-service-returns-and-exchanges-online-and-phone-purchases-return-policy.html>

And you can select the items to be returned and print your return label in the following link:

<https://www.dcsheoes.com/order-status/>

Please keep in mind that at this moment, given the challenges we're facing due to the situation with the current pandemic, returns are being processed within **3-4 weeks from the moment USPS is in possession of the package.**

A refund will be issued back into your original form of payment. You will receive an email confirmation once your refund has been processed.

Lastly, depending on your financial institution, refunds should be reflected on your statements within 2-4 business days after you receive that email.

Please do not hesitate to contact me again if you have any other questions, I'd be happy to help!

Thank you for choosing DC Shoes USA! Have a great day!

[REDACTED] Customer Service

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



[REDACTED] (DC Shoes)

[REDACTED]

Hello [REDACTED]

We appreciate your concerns for others.

DC Shoes recognize the many struggles in many different communities around the world.

As a onetime exception we are granting you a 50% off discount for 1 item only. Code: [REDACTED]

We wish you well!

















Thank you for choosing DC Shoes USA! Have a great day!


[REDACTED]: Customer Service

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Support Performance Index Leaderboard



Company	Country	↓ SPI
	 United States	104.90
	 Australia	103.44
	 United States	103.34
	 United Kingdom	101.45
Universal Store	 Australia	100.73
	 United States	99.78
COTTON:ON	 Australia	99.03
AÉROPOSTALE	 United States	97.28
	 Australia	97.19
ZILINGO	 Singapore	97.03

Company	Country	↓ SPI
	 Netherlands	97.03
	 Canada	96.31
	 United States	95.82
	 United Kingdom	95.44
	 United States	94.92
	 United Kingdom	94.91
	 United States	94.73
maplin	 United Kingdom	94.35
TILLYS	 United States	93.49
	 Australia	93.04



Best Enterprise Companies



Company	↓ SPI
	87.8
NORDSTROM	82.7
	78.6

Companies with more than \$10B Revenue

Worst Enterprise Companies

Company	↓ SPI
	24.7
Lenovo	23.0
	15.5

Companies with more than \$10B Revenue

AÉROPOSTALE

Dear [REDACTED]

We understand your concern and your condition which was caused by this Horrible Pandemic. We do appreciate that you had brought this to our attention. We are happy to help!

At this time, We do not provide any shipping code or discount code but as a 1-time courtesy, you can go ahead and place the order, and then we will just waive the shipping for you.

We wish to hear from you soon!

Have more questions? We're standing by. Simply reply to this message or contact our customer service team at 1-877-289-2376 (option 1). We're available 9 am - 11 pm, EST to help you out.

Sincerely,
[REDACTED]

Customer Service at www.aeropostale.com

Hi [REDACTED]

Good day! We hope you're having a great day. Thank you for reaching out to us regarding with the return information and we understand that you wanted to learn more about our return.

We are here to assist and guide you regarding with the return information.

You can return **Payless** product for any reason within 30 days of the original purchase date and receive a full refund for the purchase price, plus applicable sales tax.

You can return **Payless** product for any reason within 30 days of the original purchase date and receive a full refund for the purchase price, plus applicable sales tax.

Please return your item(s) in the original packaging.

- Simply print and complete the Return form [here](#) and include it with your return
- Please allow 7 to 10 business days for us to process your return and credit your original form of payment
- You can ship your return to **Payless.com** using any U.S. carrier of your choice. USPS, FedEx, or UPS for example. Please follow the instructions [here](#) to send your return and visit your choice of carrier's website for information on shipping and drop off locations near you.
- You will need to **pay** for the shipping of your return item(s) back to **Payless.com**
- If your return is a gift the refund will be credited to the card that was used to make the purchase and must also include the completed Return form [here](#).

Send your return to:

Payless.com Returns Processing
40 Logistics Blvd
Walton, KY 41094

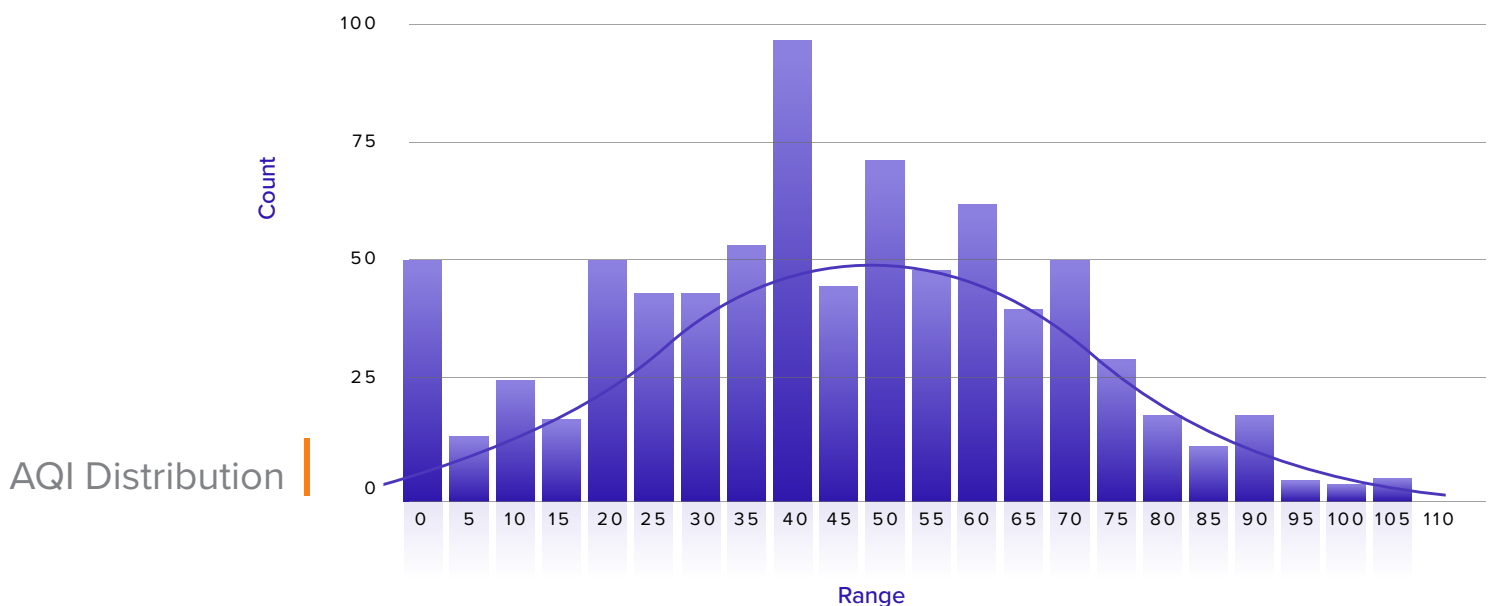
4

41% of responses were not complete, meaningful or satisfying

If a customer's question is not answered or does not provide the information that the customer is looking for, the response is essentially useless. After all, an irrelevant response would potentially lead to more customer frustration than being ignored in the first place.

The Answer Quality Index (AQI) measures the usefulness and meaningfulness of a response. In our study, we looked to see if the response to the return policy question included details on the eligibility of returns, timeline and process. For the special request email, we looked for a response to include empathy, willingness to help and personalization. For global eCommerce companies, the average **AQI** is **44.2**, with 25% of companies scored in the 50-70 range. Out of eCommerce companies that responded, 6% did not meet our baseline standard for answer quality and provided an answer with no substance.

Once again, **DC Shoes** was a bright light scoring the highest on the AQI with an impressive score of 105/100.





Eddie Bauer Customer Support <customercare@csc.eddiebauer.com>

to me ▾

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for contacting Eddie Bauer, I'm sorry to hear that you need to return an item, I'd be glad to give you information about our return process.

You may print your return label for your order online. Please click the link https://eddiebauer.letsinc.com/order_locator?shop_id=5c2b55e7-5187-11e9-ae84-0641277919e8&iframe=0&instructions=1&v=returns. Please also include a piece of paper with your contact information and how you would like for us to process the return(exchange or refund).

The label will be emailed to your email address from FedEx within 24 hours. We encourage you to check both your spam and junk folders in case it didn't go straight to your inbox.

Once you have the label, print it and attach it outside the package. You may drop it off to the nearest post office or FedEx ground shipping drop off location in your area and they will take it from there.

Please allow 14 business days for us to receive and take record of your return. You will be notified via email once we receive it. Allow an additional 7 business days thereafter for us to process your refund. Thank you for your patience in this matter.

We hope this information has been useful. If we may be of further assistance, please reply to this email or reach out to us via live chat online at eddiebauer.com.

Thank you for continued loyalty to Eddie Bauer and have a wonderful day!

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Eddie Bauer Customer Service



to me ▾

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for contacting Crocs.

We don't usually give coupon codes on request, but we understand the situation many people face due to the current times, and since it is for a special occasion such as a birthday, we would like to give you this 30% off + free shipping coupon:

Make sure to wish your friend a happy birthday from Crocs!

If you need any further assistance please do not hesitate to reply to my email.

Best regards,

[REDACTED]
Call Center Specialist

www.crocs.com

crocs

#comeasyouare



CR Customer Services

to me ▾

Good Morning

All of our policy information can be located on our website and this should help you understand our refund policy. I cannot provide you with exact timescales as depending on the method of initial payment and goods you are returning it can vary

Kind Regards

CR Customer Services

customer.services@carpetright.co.uk

D:

...

T: 01708 802000 www.carpetright.co.uk

carpetright.

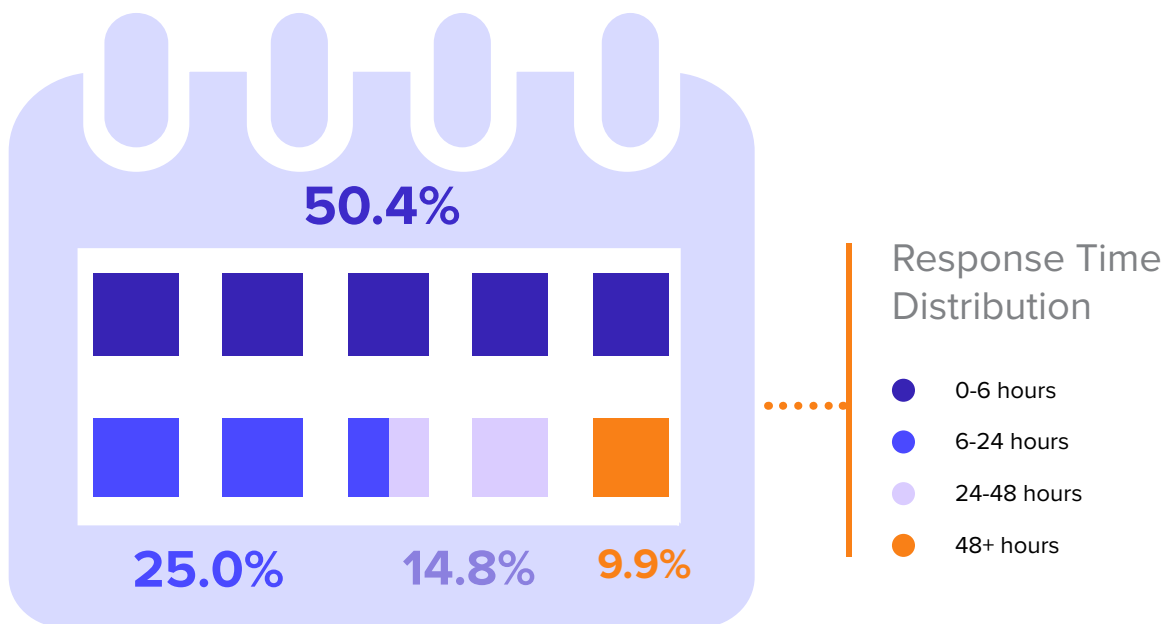


5

All in all, eCommerce companies are quick to respond, with 1 in 2 companies responding within 6 hours

Global eCommerce companies appreciate the need for speed: more than half of companies respond within 6 hours and **75%** of companies respond within 24 hours. On the other hand, nearly **10%** of companies responded after 48 hours. The average response time for global eCommerce companies is **17.3** hours.

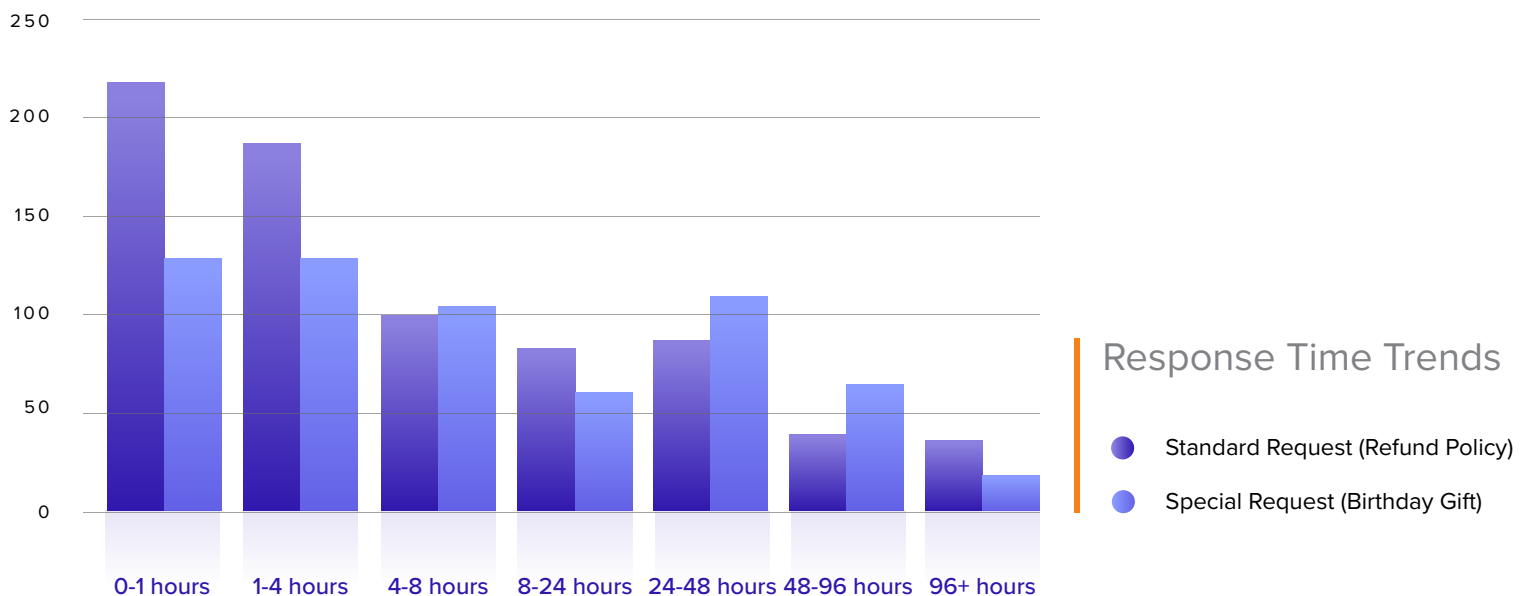
When we examine the 46% eCommerce companies that responded to both emails, **1 in 2 respond within six hours**. This emphasizes that these companies prioritize email support, responding to a range of requests quickly.



Not surprisingly, though, there was a disparity in response time based on the type of question. eCommerce companies were almost **2X** as likely to respond to the straightforward return policy query within the first hour, with an average response time of **15.82 hours**. The fastest responders to these emails are **Blacks Outdoor Retail Limited** (UK, 1 mins); **Stockx** (US, 1 mins); **Lyst** (UK, 2 mins); **PC Richard and Sons** (US, 2 mins); and **Engelhorn** (Germany, 2 mins).

Customers with special requests are kept waiting longer. The average response time for unique scenarios is **19.16 hours**. There are many reasons we can assume that special requests would have a longer response time - agents seeking peer advice, manager approval or checking company policies for responding to unique requests.

Dollar Shave Club, **Sun Dance Holdings**, **Natural Life** and **The Webster** were the quickest responders to special requests, getting back to a hopeful customer in just two minutes with a satisfactory response.



Fastest Responders - Standard Request



Company	Country	Response Time (in mins)
Blacks	United Kingdom	1
stockX	United States	1
lyst	United Kingdom	2
PC RICHARD & SON	United States	2
engelhorn	Germany	2
PLATO'S CLOSET	United States	2
udaan	India	2
SPANX BY SARA BLAKELY	United States	3
Stussy	United States	3
abc carpet & home	United States	3

Company	Country	Response Time (in mins)
SCANDINAVIAN DESIGNS	United States	3
NORDSTROM	United States	3
south moon under	United States	3
PEARL LUMI	United States	3
DC	United States	4
ST. JOHN	United States	4
la Vie en Rose	United States	4
Max	New Zealand	4
ROGAN'S SHOES	United States	4
Robert Dyas	United Kingdom	4



Fastest Responders - Special Request



Company	Country	Response Time (in mins)
 DOLLAR SHAVE CLUB	 United States	2
 sundance	 United States	2
 natural life <i>give love laugh</i>	 United States	2
 THE WEBSTER	 United States	2
 scrubs & beyond	 United States	3
 lucy	 United States	3
 mm meu móvel de madeira	 Brazil	3
 lyst	 United Kingdom	3
 dakota watch company	 United States	3
 TEPPERMAN'S <small>AT HOME SINCE 1925</small>	 Canada	3

Company	Country	Response Time (in mins)
 MODO <small>NEW YORK MILANO STOCKHOLM</small>	 United States	3
 SHOES FOR CREWS	 United States	4
 SPANX® <small>BY SARA BLAKELY®</small>	 United States	4
 GOLF TOWN	 Canada	4
 KELLY-MOORE® PAINTS	 United States	5
 Hammacher Schlemmer	 United States	5
 Fink's JEWELERS	 United States	5
 GLIK'S	 United States	6
 SUZY SUZY SHIER	 Canada	6
 ÇiçekSepeti	 Turkey	6



6

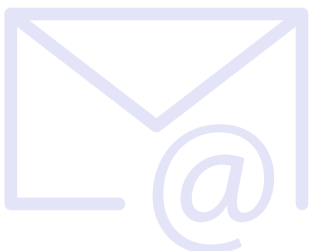
3 in 5 eCommerce companies personalize responses

Personalization is becoming a differentiator in the overall customer experience, particularly within customer support. In this study, we looked at the bare minimum of personalization: whether an agent addresses the customer by their first name and if the agent signed off using their name. These small gestures can go a long way with a customer's overall feelings about an interaction with a company's support organization.

While **58%** of eCommerce companies fully personalized their response to customer emails with both the personal greeting and agent sign-off, **10%** of companies addressed the customer by their first name only and nearly **20%** used the agent name only.



eCommerce companies use of personalization in customer support email responses



7

eCommerce Companies are not using CSAT Surveys to understand their performance

CSAT surveys are a great tool that can help companies understand how well their agents perform against expectations, if customer service interactions represent a threat to the relationship or if support is a loyalty-driver. Because of the value it can bring support teams, we were surprised that **80%** of companies do not send out a quick survey to gauge whether customer expectations are met.

20.8%

Do eCommerce Companies
Send CSAT Surveys?

Yes ●
No ●



SPANX®

Hi [REDACTED]

Thank you for reaching out to our customer service team.

We all know communication is key to any relationship...including the one between you and us! We're committed to making this relationship last, so please take a minute to let us know how we're doing.

How likely are you to recommend Spanx.com to family and friends?

Not At All Likely

Extremely Likely

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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8

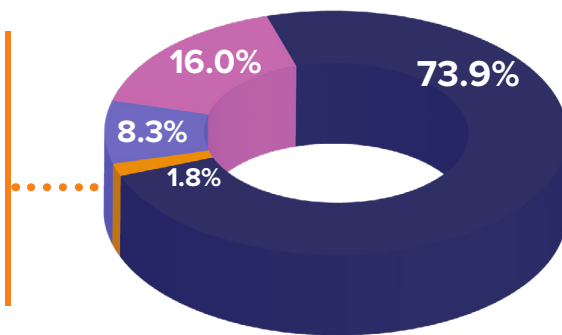
eCommerce companies are largely unempathetic

While conversational AI platforms, like Netomi, now work on email, the channel is largely managed exclusively by human-agent teams. Unlike automated AI agents, humans can show empathy and have discretion in unique or complex scenarios.

We wanted to see which companies empowered agents to go above and beyond to help a customer struggling financially in the wake of Covid-19. The customer, wanting to purchase a gift, asked about promotion codes or free shipping. Sadly, we found that only **8%** of eCommerce companies would waive a shipping fee, only **16%** provided a discount code and only **2%** of the eCommerce companies did both to go above and beyond to satisfy a struggling customer.

Do eCommerce companies accommodate a struggling customer?

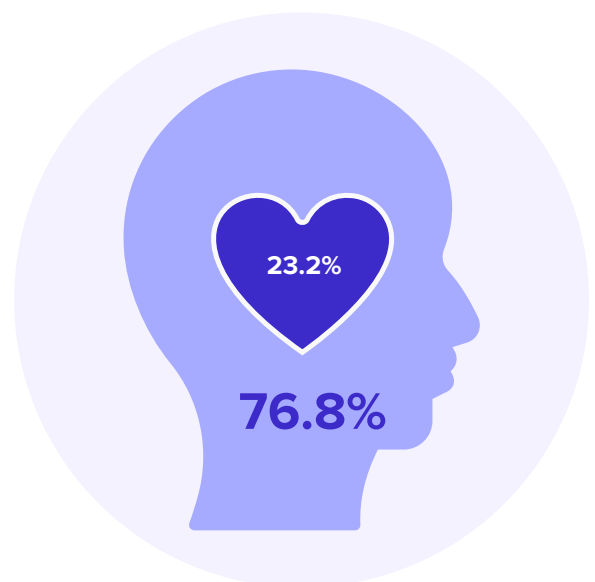
- Provided Discount
- Waived Shipping
- Both
- Neither



We also analyzed responses by looking at whether agents, at the very least, acknowledged a person's plight by saying sorry or otherwise communicating deep sympathy for what the customer is going through. We were again disappointed to see that nearly **3 in 4** eCommerce companies remained indifferent or did not acknowledge a person's struggle, even if they couldn't offer a discount code.

What is the agent's reaction to the person's personal difficulty with COVID-19?

- Sympathetic
- Indifference



Companies that Provided the Highest Discount

Part of our ask to companies was whether a discount code was available and the 16% of companies that stepped up were very generous. The average discount was **18.7%**, but five companies including Dress Barn, Eddie Bauer and DC Shoes provided an incredible **50%** off.



A'GACI

DC

dressbarn

Eddie Bauer

Moore's
CLOTHING FOR MEN



EYEMART EXPRESS

SPY+



 crocs

JOHNSON
OUTDOORS

Moosejaw

PAUL & JOE

Discount Breakdown



50%	Maximum	18.7%	Average
9%	Minimum	15.0%	Median

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Hi [REDACTED]

Thank you for getting in touch with us.

We are so sorry to hear that, this is a hard time for everyone and we understand completely. We can offer you a code for free standard delivery and we hope to see you shopping with us soon.

Code for you [REDACTED]

If you have any other questions please do not hesitate to ask.

Best wishes form New Era Cap Team.

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

New Era Cap Customer Care Team



Service Clients JCE

to me ▼

[REDACTED]



Dear Client)

There is currently no free charge transaction.

Thank you for your understanding.

Regards,

See you soon,

The [joueclub.fr](https://www.joueclub.fr) team

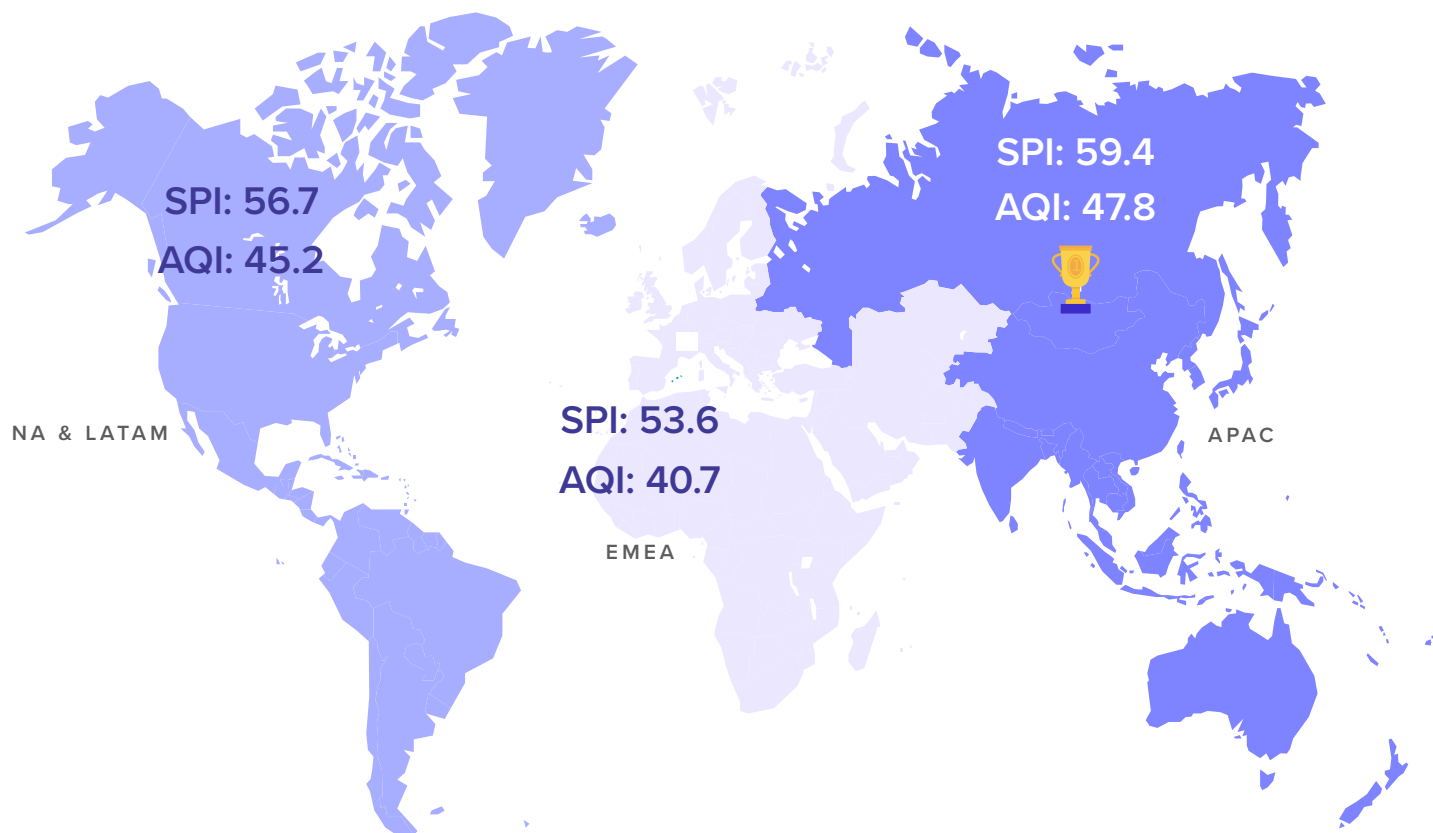


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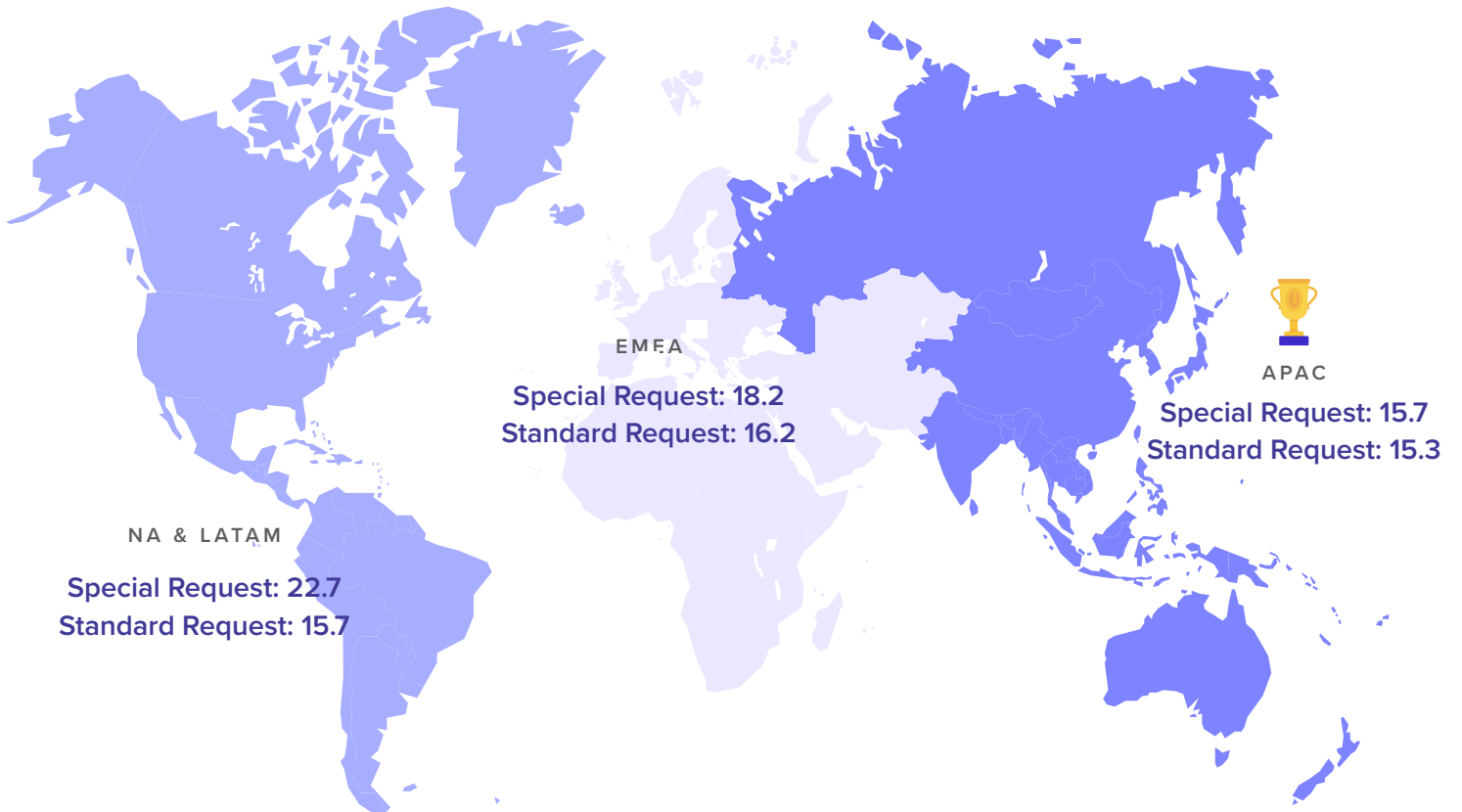
Where in the world do customers get the best support? APAC.

Compared to other regions, eCommerce companies in the Asia Pacific (APAC) region excelled in customer service. These companies resolved tickets faster—almost **1.5X faster** than Europe and the Middle East (EMEA)—and outperformed other regions in both the **Answer Quality Index (AQI)** and **Support Performance Index (SPI)**. APAC was propelled to the top region with eCommerce companies in Australia, Singapore and India, overarchingly, providing excellent support compared to other countries. North American and Latin American companies closely followed APAC in the AQI and SPI, while companies based in EMEA underperformed other regions for AQI and SPI.

On average, Australian companies scored **65.2** in SPI, well above the average of **56.2**. While companies Down Under were not the fastest responders, they did outperform all other countries in terms of the quality of their answers. Companies based in India, on the other hand, were the fastest.



Performance by Region



Response Times by Region

*Response Times are in Hours



eCommerce companies that have headquarters in English-speaking countries achieved the highest SPI score. However, it is important to note that American companies did not perform as well as those based in Australia, the Netherlands and Singapore.

Hello!



ENGLISH

Average SPI: **57.1**
Average AQI: **46.2**

Standard Request Response Time: **17.0**
Special Request Response Time: **20.0**

नमस्कार!



HINDI

Average SPI: **54.0**
Average AQI: **38.6**

Standard Request Response Time: **7.1**
Special Request Response Time: **12.1**

Ciao!



ITALIAN

Average SPI: **53.0**
Average AQI: **36.3**

Standard Request Response Time: **13.4**
Special Request Response Time: **20.3**

Bonjour!

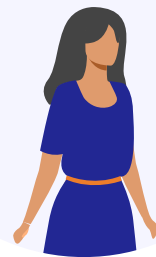


FRENCH

Average SPI: **48.0**
Average AQI: **34.4**

Standard Request Response Time: **20.1**
Special Request Response Time: **29.8**

Hallo!




GERMAN

Average SPI: **47.7**
Average AQI: **29.4**

Standard Request Response Time: **15.0**
Special Request Response Time: **12.8**

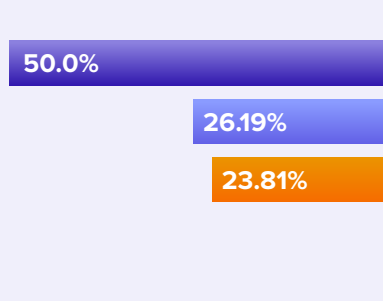
*Response Times are in Hours

Country	↑ Average SPI	Average AQI	Special Request Response Time	Standard Request Response Time
	65.2	57.3	19.8	19.8
	64.4	56.4	18.7	18.7
	60.7	47.1	7.5	7.5
	57.7	45.8	17.7	17.7
	55.6	44.5	26.4	26.4
	54.0	38.6	12.1	12.1
	53.9	38.3	21.7	21.7
	52.0	33.5	15.0	15.0
	50.2	44.6	25.5	25.5
	48.5	36.5	28.1	28.1

10

Company response time is trending faster

There was overlap with companies included in this report and our July edition. We analyzed the change in response time and were impressed that **50%** of these companies provided faster resolutions. Nearly **1 in 4** companies that responded in July ignored emails in November, a shocking result but could be due to increased volume due to holiday shopping.



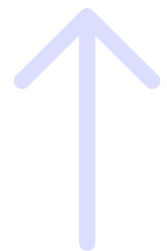
How have response times changed over time?

- Faster Resolution
- Slower Resolution
- No Resolution






Biggest Increase in Response Time (in hrs)

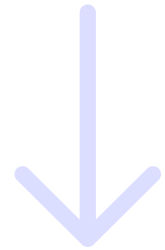


Company	Response Time in July (in hrs)	Response Time in November (in hrs)	Difference (in hrs)
Office DEPOT	188.0	1.15	186.9
NORDSTROM	143.7	0.05	143.7
JOHNSON OUTDOORS	140.78	3.88	136.9
SHISEIDO	142.78	25.3	117.5
chico's	114.7	3.5	111.2



Biggest Decrease in Response Time (in hrs)

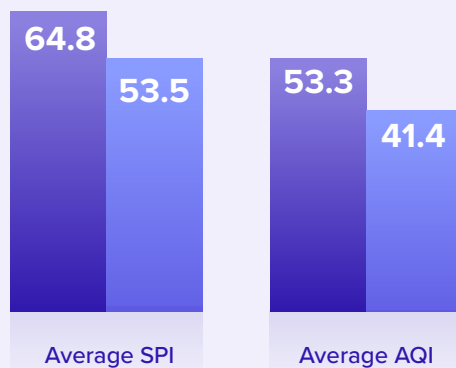
Company	Response Time in July (in hrs)	Response Time in November (in hrs)	Difference (in hrs)
	6.5	96.07	-89.92
	13.95	85.2	-71.25
	0.30	23.78	-23.48
	11.31	29.93	-18.62
	2.33	17.73	-15.40



11

Zendesk users provide better email support

More than all of the other agent desk platforms combined, eCommerce companies that use Zendesk perform higher on the SPI and AQI. Zendesk users scored **64.8** points on the SPI, compared to **53.5** for users of other agent desk platforms. When it comes to the quality and thoroughness of an answer, Zendesk users scored **53.3**, almost **30%** higher than other users of other agent desk platforms.

How does Zendesk users perform compared to others?

- Zendesk
- Others

12

Consumer Electronics companies are the worst

There was a discrepancy in the quality of support based on the specific industry. Perhaps unsurprisingly, we found that luxury goods and jewelry companies scored highest on SPI (**62.3**) and AQI (**48.0**). Due to their high-priced items, the cost of losing one sale or a customer is significant. These companies have always prioritized in-store and online experience, and agents pay more personalized attention to every customer. Following luxury goods and jewelry on the SPI were: apparel and fashion (**58.8**); sporting goods (**58.7**); Health, beauty & wellness (**53.7**); books and stationery (**51.5**); home furnishings (**51.2**); and consumer electronics (**50.1**).



LUXURY GOODS

Average SPI: **62.3**
Average AQI: **48.0**



APPAREL & FASHION

Average SPI: **58.8**
Average AQI: **47.9**



SPORTING GOODS

Average SPI: **58.7**
Average AQI: **44.4**



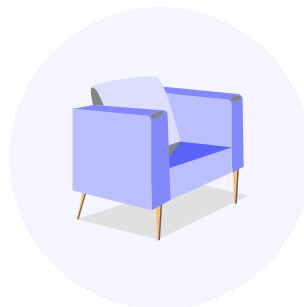
HEALTH, WELLNESS & BEAUTY

Average SPI: **53.7**
Average AQI: **43.3**



BOOKS & STATIONERY

Average SPI: **51.5**
Average AQI: **40.5**



HOME, FURNISHINGS & ACCESSORIES

Average SPI: **51.2**
Average AQI: **40.8**



CONSUMER ELECTRONICS

Average SPI: **50.1**
Average AQI: **38.3**



Apparel & Fashion Leaderboard



Company	↓ SPI
 DC	104.9
 PRINCESS POLLY	103.4
 Payless <small>SHOESOURCE</small>	103.3
 COS	101.5
Universal Store	100.7



Luxury Goods Leaderboard



Company	↓ SPI
MONICA VINADER 	87.7
Little Switzerland	87.3
colette:	87.1
claire's	84.0
Ben Bridge	83.8



Sporting Goods Leaderboard



Company	↓ SPI
PURE  HOCKEY	92.3
 JOHNSON OUTDOORS	86.1
 Kathmandu	84.1
 macpac	84.1
 NORTH40 <small>OUTFITTERS</small>	82.3



Consumer Electronics Leaderboard



Company	↓ SPI
 cool blue	97.0
maplin	94.3
SimpliSafe	76.4
Harvey Norman	74.5
UBREAKIFIX.	69.4



Books & Stationery Leaderboard



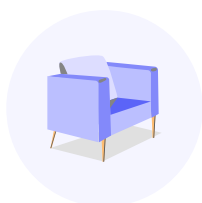
Company	↓ SPI
Lakeshore®	92.9
kikki.K	73.8
HALF PRICE BOOKS	71.1
eason	68.1
PAPER*SOURCE	66.7



Health, Wellness & Beauty Leaderboard



Company	↓ SPI
scrubs & beyond	94.9
Glossier.	92.1
THE VITAMIN SHOPPE	83.8
HARRY'S	83.1
purple .com	80.4



Home Furnishings & Accessories Leaderboard



Company	↓ SPI
KOALA CLOTHING AUSTRALIA	93.04
WILLIAMS SONOMA	87.97
Casper	87.00
KELLY-MOORE PAINTS	84.70
Dekoruma	83.61

Conclusion

Over one billion people shop online today, or roughly 40% of the global population³. As the customer base grows, so too does competition. The barriers for entry are lower than ever, and new companies are launching daily as platforms like Shopify make it incredibly easy to launch a very functional and visually-appealing online storefront. Coupled with the ease of finding international suppliers and manufacturers, it's easy to understand how there are an estimated 12 million – 24 million global eCommerce sites⁴.

The dominance of eCommerce on shopping behavior is only on the rise: by the year 2040, 95% of all purchases will be through eCommerce⁵. To effectively compete and create a loyal customer base, eCommerce companies need to prioritize customer support. Increasingly, customers demand effortless, convenient experiences on their channels of choice. Today, email remains the most preferred digital support channel.

Our **State of Customer Service - eCommerce** report revealed that while 30% of eCommerce companies provide good to excellent support according to the **SPI Index** (scoring above 70), there are still many opportunities to improve. Email needs to be offered as a choice - and companies should never ignore an email under any circumstances. Today, AI platforms like Netomi have advanced Natural Language Understanding (NLU) engines that can accurately understand multiple intents within an email and automatically resolve simple queries. In this study, an AI agent could have quickly resolved the standard return policy query within seconds of being received, allowing human agents to focus on more unique and complex questions like the special request.



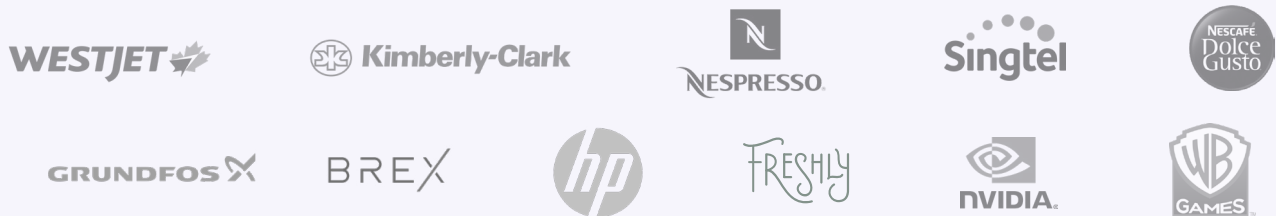
About Netomi

Netomi is an AI platform for customer service that allows businesses to activate, manage, and train AI to automatically resolve tickets, enhance agent productivity and provide a world-class customer experience. It's a channel-agnostic platform that multiplies a company's workforce by giving valuable time back to support agents, and delights their customers with faster resolutions. Backed by Index Ventures and Y Combinator, Netomi has offices in Silicon Valley, New York and India.

Let's improve your email customer experience and delight your customers.

Get in touch at info@netomi.com

You're in good company...



References:

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2. Forrester: <https://lmsstatic.blob.core.windows.net/document-library/boldchat/pdf/en/forrester-2018-customer-service-trends.pdf>
3. Statista: <https://www.statista.com/markets/413/e-commerce/>
4. WP Forms: <https://wpforms.com/e-commerce-statistics/>