

AeroScout is a global leader in RFID-based visibility solutions serving many industries including healthcare, manufacturing and mining. We recently sat down with Amit Larom, Vice President of Worldwide Services, and Josh Plantz, Director of Customer Satisfaction, to discuss AeroScout's customer feedback program and how it was a benefit to them.

Q: What prompted you to start a customer feedback program?

AeroScout had been conducting customer surveys for years so surveys were not a new concept for us. However, the customer feedback received, as informational and important as it was, was not collected in a fashion that we could use well to drive improvements. At the same time, a third-party research firm was interviewing customers of both AeroScout and our competitors and publishing their results, which actually left us with more unanswered questions. And without having conducted those surveys ourselves, we did not have the ability to change the questions to meet our objectives or follow up with individual accounts. We therefore determined we needed to run and manage our own program with our own specific goals. We needed dialogs with the right customers to gain the right insights, and take specific actions that would drive our desired improvements.

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Q: How did you go about implementing this program?

While the executive team initially bought into the idea of managing and running our own customer feedback program, they underestimated the overall effort involved in doing this optimally. More specifically, it immediately became clear that resources to follow up on the results was a challenge. This fact outlined the need for a different approach.

Therefore, we made two specific improvements to our plan:

1. We established a clear *program owner* with Josh, Director of Customer Satisfaction and a member of the Professional Services Team. We announced his company-wide responsibilities of collecting and disseminating data, helping teams to understand results received, suggesting follow-up items, and monitoring internal progress. With this change, Josh has dedicated time to manage the overall program and he is accountable for the results.
2. We also brought in Waypoint Group, as we quickly determined we did not possess the in-house expertise to initially set up a program like this. We didn't have the same level of experience as they, and AeroScout employees were already engaged elsewhere working long hours.

Q: What did you learn along the way, and how did Waypoint Group help?

Waypoint Group immediately assisted AeroScout in establishing a common nomenclature for the internal communications and follow up process. At AeroScout we do much more than track the Net Promoter Score, and we found Net Promoter to be an effective method for segmenting customers and driving the right follow-up approach, which we continue to leverage today.

We already knew we needed improvement in the area of customer survey follow up, and Waypoint Group assisted us in establishing and implementing processes to assign, track, and establish internal visibility. Additionally, we learned how important it was for other employees to understand the importance of this program. We started reporting the internal *follow-up rate* widely around the company. With this, and the support of the executive team, other departments became even more focused on our overall company-wide objective.

We also learned how important it was for everyone in the organization to understand the impact of Promoters and Detractors – how Promoters assist us in driving growth and how Detractors damage our business. In a structured and organized fashion, we presented our survey findings to our internal teams and educated them on how to create their own action plans based upon these important gained insights.

Additionally, since of course time is a precious resource, we wanted to quickly impact the overall business. Waypoint Group had experience in this realm, and we did not want to waste time reinventing the wheel. Waypoint Group was key to accelerating the process into the first phase of a stable program, outlining components of the program that were not obvious to us and providing the framework to make the program scalable, easier to manage, and faster to achieve results.

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Q: What would you say are the key outcomes so far?

Very soon after putting the new processes in place, we have seen improvement in our scores. We attribute our success to the new internal visibility of the program, having much more customer satisfaction information to act upon and our new standards with follow-up processes in place across all departments. Currently, we proactively manage our customer relationships as a concerted company effort and the results are proven.

Before implementing this new program, we relied on a weekly “Hot Accounts” meeting, in which we discussed various customer issues. However, the customers were not always prioritized correctly. Now, through our feedback process, we truly know which accounts to focus on, what their issues truly are, and how to address any issues before they escalate. This creates a sense of urgency that is externally validated. In other words, we prioritize correctly from our customer feedback and we focus on the right things within the right time-frames.

Additionally, the survey software we implemented is easy to use, powerful for the price, and integrates with our CRM system. We have a systematic way for internal departments to receive customer feedback history, and no customer communication is lost. We know our customer survey program is working because:

1. Our scores are improving, helping to drive faster growth.
2. Our “Hot Accounts” process requires less of our time and starts with a much shorter list of customers. Our internal processes and communications flow much more easily.

Q: What are 1 or 2 things you would tell someone just starting this effort?

Our customer feedback program works! Our customer satisfaction review process is a crucial link to success. We can't do everything from a single centralized team to improve – we need cross-functional team work for that – but we manage the “to do” list and maintain visibility across the organization. Additionally, this process is about managing customers in a uniform way. It's critical to get information out across the organization so that people can act upon it.

2010 was a very successful year for us, and we thank Waypoint Group for the help! This is an ever-evolving process, and we are grateful Waypoint Group was able to assist us in accelerating successes and pointing us in the right direction quickly and easily. We achieved a great deal over the last 9-12 months, and we have a clear path forward.

About AeroScout:

AeroScout is the market leader in Unified Asset Visibility solutions. Customers improve operational efficiency using AeroScout products that leverage standard Wi-Fi networks to track and manage the location, condition and status of mobile assets and people. AeroScout's global customer base consists of leading hospital, manufacturing, mining, and logistics organizations, including many of the Fortune 500. The company invented the first Wi-Fi-based Active RFID tag, and today is widely recognized as leading the market in number of deployments and tags shipped. Headquartered in Redwood City, California, AeroScout has offices in Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Australia and Latin America. For more information, please visit www.aeroscout.com.

About Waypoint Group:

Waypoint Group provides strategic analysis and advisory services to companies that want to improve their rate of profitable growth. Our clients achieve increases in customer lifetime value by increasing the percentage of loyal customers in their business. We help companies amplify and act on customer insights to accelerate profitable growth by

- Increasing the rate of referrals and references
- Inexpensively generating more leads
- Creating new up-sell and cross-sell opportunities
- Delivering competitive insights