

Step 4d—Service Encounter Design

Each job at LensCrafters—sales associate, lab technician, and doctor of optometry—requires both technical skills and service management skills. Associates are well trained, friendly, and knowledgeable about their jobs. The lab technicians are certified in all work tasks and processes. Many associates are cross-trained.

At the service-encounter level, key issues that managers need to consider include the following:

- What human resource management processes and systems will ensure hiring the right people, training them properly, and motivating them to provide excellent service? What recognitions and rewards should be provided?
- How are associates trained to handle service upsets and service recovery?
- What standards should be set for grooming and appearance?
- What behavioral standards, such as tone of voice, physical mannerisms, and the words that associates use in customer interactions, should be set?
- How should employee performance be measured and evaluated?
- What can be done to make the one-hour wait a positive experience for customers?

LensCrafters reinforces its customer benefit package with a comprehensive 30-day unconditional service guarantee design defined as follows:

You buy a pair of glasses at LensCrafters and then you think, “Maybe red’s not my color.” Or, you question, “Wow, should I have gotten the anti-reflective coating?” Or after wearing them for a while you realize, “These really aren’t going to be comfortable enough to wear every day.”

Whatever your reason, if you don’t completely love your eyeglasses or prescription sunglasses, you can exchange or return them for a full refund at

LensCrafters—no excuses, no explanations. That’s what our 30-Day Unconditional Guarantee is all about—giving you peace of mind with every pair.

So how does it work? Simple. Just return your eyeglasses—in their original condition—to LensCrafters within 30 days. We’ll exchange them for a new pair or refund your money. Why do we do it? Because LensCrafters stands behind each and every pair of our glasses. And we want to make sure you simply love them.

What does “Unconditional” really mean? The 30 days begins on the date you actually receive your eyeglasses.

You can return or exchange your new eyewear as many times as needed within the 30-day time period. However, the 30 days does not start over with each return or exchange.

If you exchange your purchase for a pair at a lower price, we’ll refund the price difference.

If you exchange your purchase for a pair at a higher price, you’ll only pay the price difference.

If your eyeglasses get broken, you can use our 1-Year Replacement Discount.²²

Steps 5 and 6—Market Introduction/Deployment and Evaluation

Although the company has been around for some time, it undoubtedly faces challenges in replicating its design concept in new locations. On a continuing basis, as technology and procedures change, LensCrafters will have to develop processes to introduce changes into all existing locations to maintain operational consistency and achieve its strategic objectives. For example, how might it react as competitors such as Walmart enter the optical industry?

As you see, LensCrafters, manufacturing and service design depends on a variety of operations management concepts, all of which are integrated and support a rather complex customer benefit package.

Discussion Questions

1. How might today’s technology, such as the Internet, be used to understand the voice of the customer?
2. What lessons can be learned from the LaRosa’s Pizzeria boxed example?
3. In building a House of Quality, what departments or functions should be involved in each step of the process?
4. Explain how the goal-post view of conforming to specifications differs from Taguchi’s loss function.

5. Would you rather buy an automobile where suppliers used the goal-post or Taguchi models? Why?
5. Propose an explicit service guarantee for an airline. Clearly explain why you included the features of your service guarantee (maximum of one page). Do you think that an airline would adopt it? Why or why not?