



Case Study

Telecommunications Company Uses Multivariable Testing (MVT®) Methods and Survey Techniques To Increase Customer Satisfaction

The Opportunity

Due to a large and increasing number of customer complaints, a large telecommunications company undertook a project to redesign its telephone bill. Each year the company processes well over 100 million bills. Postage alone amounts to \$38 million annually. Although the primary goal of the project was to increase customer satisfaction with the bill, other important considerations were to reduce customer clarification calls to the business offices and to implement only those ideas that did not adversely impact costs associated with postage or billing operations.

The Approach

With these goals in mind, the project participants developed a survey with the aid of QualPro consultants. The survey was designed to identify how easy the bill was to interpret as well as customer satisfaction. Only 60% of the customers surveyed were satisfied with the existing bill.

The project participants also brainstormed and initially identified 90 ideas. However, after discussions with co-workers, they reduced the list to 19 ideas that would be tested.

The Test

40 prototype bills were designed for the MVT® process. Packets, including the new bills, were sent to 4,000 participants randomly selected from 10,000 customers who had consented to take part in the experiment. Telephone surveys were conducted several weeks after the participants had received the packets. Data was then compiled, organized, and analyzed with surprising results.

<i>Idea</i>	<i>Old</i>	<i>New</i>
Company Logo Size	Small	Large
Logos	Stand Alone	Company+ others
White Space Amount	Current	Smaller
Return Page Boxes	No	Yes
Corners of Boxes	90°	Curved
Return Page Different Color	No	Yes
Colored Footer	No	Yes
Index Acct. Page Summary	No	Yes
Page Numbering Scheme	Simple	Complex
Return Page Display Info.	Simple	Complex
Table of Contents	No	Yes
Type Case for Main Bill	All upper	Mixed
Print Format	Fixed	Proportional
Proportional Type	Walbaum	Helvetica
Payment Info. Display	Lump sum and no date	Payments and dates
Recycled Paper	Current stock	Recycled w/logo
Print for Itemized Calls	Upper Case	Mixed case
Bill Size	Current	Larger
Align Items on Left	No	Yes

The Results

A simple page numbering scheme was preferred, but only when the footer was colored. Return page color did not increase customer satisfaction but did improve the customer's ease in interpreting the bill. Curved corners on the return boxes, an idea felt by many to increase aesthetic appeal, was not important. Having a large company logo was the idea that most influenced customer satisfaction. Although customer service had strongly supported the use of a table of contents, the experiment clearly showed that adding additional information simply confused customers. The smaller white space amount was preferred by customers and would result in reducing the space requirements by 30%. Using a larger bill size was not significant; this would have cost the company 10% more for the paper.

The MVT® process resulted in the design of a more appealing bill that was easier to understand and did not cost any more to produce. The new bill increased the satisfaction rating by over 25 percentage points.