



The guide to improving your contact centre Net Promoter Score

Introduction

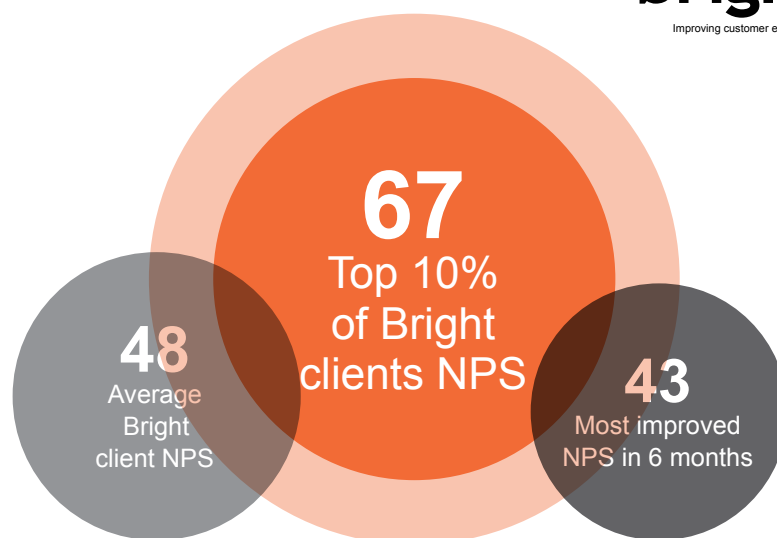
For most UK organisations, the Net Promoter Score (NPS) remains the primary method of measuring customer satisfaction. Share analysts, CEO's and executive teams are all starting to take notice, understanding the clear relationship between a customer's likelihood to recommend a brand and their propensity to remain loyal and increase their spend. So, why do so many companies struggle to increase their NPS score and more importantly quantify its value?

Our research showed us that top performing companies with the highest NPS scores all understand the links between Operational, employee and customer insight and they monitor and manage this data holistically.

Over the past 10 years Bright has worked with numerous organisations helping them improve their customer experience by using a combination of data insight, market leading technology and a hands-on approach to operational management. We think our stats speak for themselves.

Through addressing a combination of issues derived from our voice of customer solution, and correlating it with contact centre employee feedback and performance metrics, in 2017 we have been able to help clients improve NPS by an average of 75% after 9 months. In this paper, we share our top 8 tips on how to achieve this.

The paper is aimed at anyone in customer experience with an interest in customer care, especially those who are looking to drive real operational and financial value from a NPS programme.



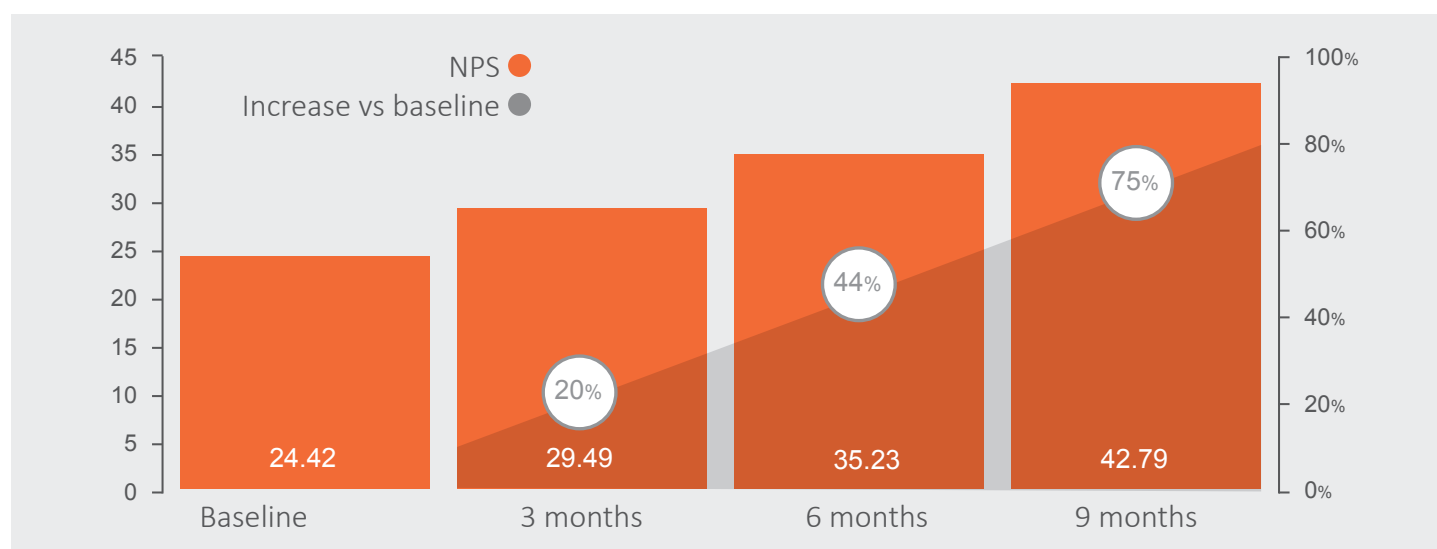
Fg1. Clients working with Bright for more than 6 months show industry beating scores.

The Basics

Before we start sharing our top tips for improving your NPS score let's start with a quick overview how Net Promoter Works, as still to this day many companies get this wrong!

The Net Promoter Score ranges between -100 and +100. To calculate NPS, it is necessary to ask customers to rate the likelihood of them recommending your business to others on a scale of 0 to 10. Those who respond with a score of 9 or 10 are considered to be promoters. People who answer 7 or 8 are passive. Those who answer 0-6 are considered to be detractors. The NPS score is equivalent to the percentage of promoters minus the percentage of detractors. A score that is positive is considered to be good, whereas anything over +50 is considered excellent.

In order to effectively use NPS to improve the customer experience, it is necessary to gather information about what your promoters like about the service and what your detractors dislike. By listening to the voice of the customer you can rapidly get a picture of the aspects of service that are unsatisfactory. You can then quickly respond and address these concerns in order to switch detractors to promoters. Sounds easy but there are several other aspects to consider when trying to improve your Net Promoter Score. Our 8 top tips proven to have a significant impact are:



Step 1: Identifying what actually drives your Net Promoter Score

It is crucial to find out what your customers think before everybody else does. Today's wide range of modern surveying tools are not just "nice to have" anymore, they have become actionable and truly meaningful down to operational level for frontline staff and team managers.

However asking customers to provide an NPS score isn't nearly enough, it is imperative that a company understands what is driving that feedback and what levers to pull to see a rapid improvement. Surveys with a single NPS question will only provide limited data but by using a combination of transactional (moment in time) surveys at different points in the customer journey a business will be able to see where the experience has failed to deliver.

It is also important to use other survey questions to analyse NPS drivers. Bright looked at over 170,000 pieces of (contact centre feedback) data and found that three factors prove equally important to a customer's likelihood to recommend a business:

- Customer Effort,
- Agent Engagement &
- Agent Knowledge



The results showed a clear relationship between NPS and Effort, Engagement and Knowledge. When customers score these metrics high, they go on to score NPS high, and vice versa. A number of metrics did not show any correlation, or much weaker correlation, indicating a causal relation between the previous three. Bright also discovered that when using a five-point scale (1= dissatisfied & 5= very satisfied) for any of the above factors:

- A customer score of 1-2 would result in a detractor NPS score
- A customer score of 3-4 would result in a passive NPS score
- A customer score of 5 would result in a promoter NPS score

The reason for looking into this was due to the difficulty of using a 10 point scale for IVR surveys.

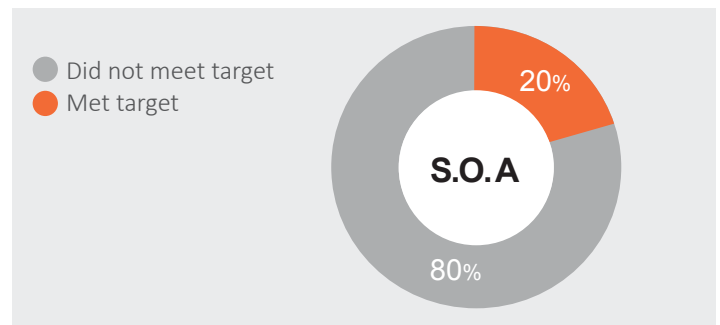
Fg2. Graph shows scores for three metrics and the subsequent score for NPS.



Step 2: Focus where it matters most

Most contact centres still prioritise the wrong measures when defining good customer experience. Speed of Answer (SOA) remains one of the primary SLA's, with many striving to answer 80% of calls within 20 seconds.

This metric often has little consideration for the customers point of view. i.e. do customers really need us to answer so quickly or are there more important factors that need to be addressed. Bright's annual benchmarking report "Bright Index" show that only 20% of UK contact centres achieve this target but even less have worked out what their SOA breaking point is before any subsequent impact on their NPS score.



As a rough guide Bright recommends a 120 second breaking point for speed of answer.

We do see a clear relationship between speed of answer and NPS with customers scoring maximum points when their wait time is short. What's more interesting however is the NPS score customers leave if the speed of answer was rated poorly. Far higher than if the engagement and knowledge of the advisor was weak. Given most UK organisations struggle to achieve their SOA service level surely now is the time for companies to re-allocate their time and resources into the service factors customers value the most. Similarly, doing correlations between NPS and advisor specific measures (as shown in the example below) makes it a lot easier for team leaders to focus on the staff that need the most help (and has the greatest potential to impact NPS positively) and thus accelerate their impact on the overall score.



Step 3: Drive employee engagement to improve your NPS score

Most UK companies run annual employee satisfaction surveys however very few of these programmes focus on the factors that will enable the frontline to deliver superior customer experience.

Bright recommends running a complimentary survey focused on the agent population. By looking at support, processes, motivation and frontline engagement a company can quickly discover those parts of the business that hinders individual performance. What's more, running regular pulse surveys will help managers keep a temperature check of their employee engagement.

New research insight published by Bright in 2017 showed a clear relationship between happy employees and happy customers.

Bright saw a nearly 1:1 ratio meaning that for every 1pt you manage to increase your Employee NPS score, your Customer NPS will also increase by 1pt.



Employee: How likely is it that you would recommend us as a place of work to a friend or family member?

Customer: How likely is it that you would you recommend us to a friend or family member?

Clear relationship between Employee and Customer NPS

Bright sees nearly a 1:1 ratio meaning that for every 1pt you manage to increase your Employee NPS score, your Customer NPS score will also increase by 1pt.



When looking at the dispersion of Promoters, Passives and Detractors, we discovered a huge potential for businesses to increase their Customer NPS by turning "passive" colleagues into promoters.

If just half of their passives were made into promoters, their NPS would move from 7 to 24.5.



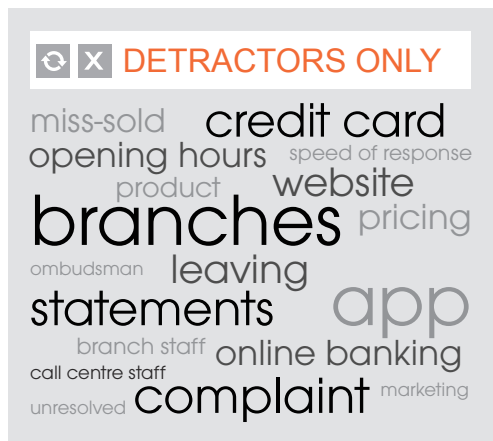
Step 4: Find NPS drivers outside of Customer service

Text analytics tools provide a wealth of opportunity for companies to cut through the vast amounts of unstructured customer feedback. For many this is still a manual and labour intensive process however automated tools are starting to become a cost-efficient mechanism in identifying the root cause of customer dissatisfaction.

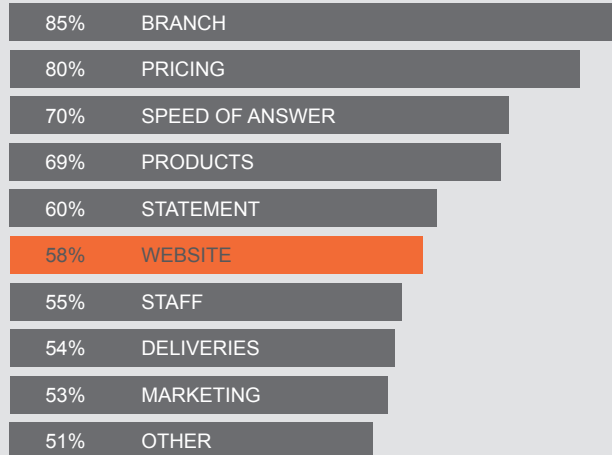
When looking at customers' top gripes using sentiment analysis, we find that only a handful of reasons behind detractor scores lies with customer service operations. The rest needs to be addressed at CEO level and contact centres can be the source for this data on an ongoing basis.

A significant benefit for contact centres is a reduction of failure demand. For example, as much as 20-30% of calls are often generated after customers were not able to find the information they needed online.

Example 1: Use text analytics to identify detractor and promoter words and phrases.



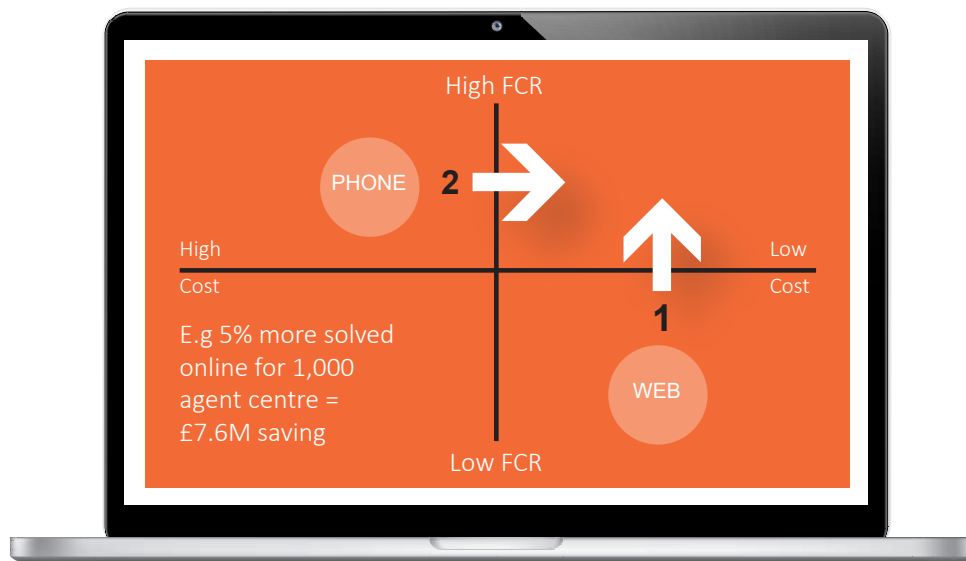
TOP 10 GRIPES



Example 2: Create customer sentiment buckets to identify detractor trends including issues generated outside of Customer Services. Then make sure CEO has visibility in order to drive change in other departments and thus drive down failure demand.

Example 3: Reviewing website content to reduce unwanted calls into the contact centre can have an unprecedented potential to cut costs.

When analysing this for a client we identified £7.6M in savings which they are well on their way to achieve.



Step 5: Avoid survey fatigue!

Customer insight is crucial for us to know where to focus our efforts. However, increasingly customers are reluctant to provide feedback due to over surveying and a lack of faith that the supplier will act on the feedback.

We're all in the same boat here and our top tips to stop survey fatigue happening are as follows:

- Get back to customers with 'you said we did' communications to show that you have listened and are taking action.
- Survey instantly, ideally 10 seconds after interactions, to make it relevant and non-intrusive.
- Get help designing your surveys, the subtle nuance in questionnaire design can have a massive impact on the response rate and clarity of insight.



Step 6: Choosing the best survey type

A range of survey options are available to today's companies but our years of experience tells us that one format stands head and shoulders above the others. Automated transactional telephone surveys have an almost 20% better return than SMS and Email.

If triggered within seconds of an interaction they are the best chance an organisation has to capture moment in time insight. They have also been proven to capture far more verbatim comment which as previously discussed is a key component in any successful NPS programme. Sound files capture customer sentiment (a useful tool when playing back to staff and managers) and when transcribed opens a wealth of opportunity for data mining and analytics. To increase the volume of verbatim feedback comments, use proactive prompts such as 'was there anything you think we could have done better?'.

Step 7: Set advisor targets that will help drive your NPS score

Setting NPS as a frontline target can be challenging as not all factors that influence a customer's likelihood to recommend are in the control of an advisor. This can cause some to become disengaged and demotivated if they feel they can't control the outcome. A far better way is to help managers and agents focus on things they can influence.

Let's face it, when agents are dealing with customers trying to work out what has gone wrong and wrangle seven different systems to get the information they need, the mythical 'recommendation' question is probably going to be the last thing on their mind. So, what should you target your advisors on to try and generate a positive NPS score?

That depends on your sector and the types of issues the customer has.

In insurance and mortgages services for example knowledge is paramount. The more clued up your advisors are, the higher an NPS score your customer is going to give you. But it's not enough for agents to be knowledgeable – they need to demonstrate to the customer that they know what's going on and have the ability to answer complex queries in a confident and eloquent way.

In retail, we see that engagement and empathy are key requirements for the customer. They want to know that you understand their situation and that you value them as a customer. However, if the query is a particularly emotional one – perhaps they're waiting for a Christmas present on Christmas eve, or their new sofa has been lost in transit (no, really, it happens!) – then knowledge trumps empathy every time.

By targeting the frontline on things they can control in parallel with helping analysts find the root cause of process issues companies will see their NPS score start to improve.

Step 8: Quantify the benefits of your NPS improvement

Once the NPS dial starts to turn it is crucial for an organisation to evaluate the business impact the improvement is having on the wider organisation. By linking the increase to revenue, cost and retention data you will quickly build a picture of the value of the programme. One of Bright's telecom clients proved their promoter customers spent an average of 33% more on up and cross sold products which after developing their NPS program yielded an estimated £15m increase in sales revenue per annum.

The following case study illustrates the power of creating a successful NPS improvement program.

TUI

Improving customer experience during a major business transition

TUI Group is a multinational travel and tourism company, encompassing well-known brands such as Thomson and First Choice. The group includes travel agencies, hotels, airlines and cruise liners, with this empire making them the largest leisure, travel and tourism company in the world.



The Challenge

TUI needed to improve its contact centre Net Promoter Score (NPS) and increase customer feedback response rates. The customer feedback process was very labour intensive and a lack of real time data was affecting their ability to resolve customer issues and improve customer satisfaction. There was also confusion over which part of the business the customer's query had come from i.e. travel, weddings, cruises.

The Solution

Bright Navigator fundamentally changed the way they survey customers. Bright's contact centre experts trained the team on how to use the system and how to interpret the results. TUI is now surveying customers every two hours. Agents, team leaders and management all have access to real time information to enable them to take immediate corrective action.

The Results

In just under 12 months, TUI improved contact centre NPS from 3.8 to 41.6. Customer Effort rose from 56% to 76%, General Satisfaction from 64% to 79%, Knowledge from 67% to 82% and Contact Resolution from 67% to 80%. TUI has the data to understand where to improve contact centre performance, and the contact centre is influencing process and policy improvements elsewhere in the business with evidence.

“Having worked with Bright at a previous company, I had confidence in the business and their solution.”

Rachel Gregory, Contact Centre Solutions Manager

Transitional challenges

The business had made the decision to close one of their main contact centres in Coventry, and transition it to Swansea, where they had one small contact centre. The existing centre in Swansea went through rapid changes, including a new building to accommodate the increase from 40 full-time staff to approximately 200 full-time staff.

The operating model in Coventry and Swansea at the time was a siloed approach, with small teams dealing with very specific customer query types. Whilst establishing their new main contact centre, TUI decided to implement a target-operating model, based on best practice. This would completely change how they deal with customers, with tier one being high volume simple queries, and tier two being low volume complex queries.

The team knew that there was a problem with the customer experience, but there was very little evidence to fully understand what the problems were. NPS was just 3.8.

Finding the solution

Customer feedback was, at the time, being fed through their central CRM function and involved a very manual process for the CRM team of extracting and cleansing the data once a month and sending out customer surveys via email for which that had two weeks to respond. At the end of the two weeks, results would go back to the CRM team who would have to manually manipulate and cleanse the data to put it into a useable format to send over to the Contact Centre Solutions team to analyse.

The problems with this process were that if the email hadn't been captured in the call, they weren't able to survey them, and a delay of up to two months getting visibility of any useful data. By the time they had this data, there was confusion over which real time issues were still outstanding or resolved, and survey response rates were just 5%. As a customer, you might have to wait a month until you received any follow up.

For TUI, this wasn't good enough and the Contact Centre Solutions team knew they needed a solution that meant they didn't have to rely on the CRM team for data manipulation.

Rachel Gregory, Contact Centre Solutions Manager, explains their decision process: "Having worked with Bright at a previous company, I had confidence in the business and their solution. One of the big features that set Bright Navigator apart from similar tools on the market, was that our advisors would have their own logins and could see when surveys were coming back and what their individual scores were, meaning they could act on any issues straight away. This is a great form of self-development for them and one of the bonuses of having real-time feedback at our fingertips."

Understanding the problems and knowing what to do about them

"With Bright Navigator, we now survey our clients daily," explains Rachel. "Bright gave us intensive training on how to interpret the comprehensive analysis and reports that the solution provides. And if we have any queries on the results, the contact centre experts at Bright are always there to help us make sense of what we are seeing, and support us in recommending an approach to respond."

"With Bright Navigator, we now survey our clients daily. Bright gave us intensive training on how to interpret the comprehensive analysis and reports that the solution provides. And if we have any queries on the results, the contact centre experts at Bright are always there to help us make sense of what we are seeing, and support us in recommending an approach to respond."

Rachel Gregory, Contact Centre Solutions Manager

"Changing the way we survey has been a game changer for us. It's given us more specific focus areas and we've been able to see issues that we would never have known about before. We are able to use the data to support our agents better. Team Managers now have the ammunition to focus their coaching. And the agents can see how they are performing every day; giving them the insight to improve the experience they deliver."

Lisa Steele, Director of Customer Contact

With a much more solid approach to customer feedback, the business has got much more useful data to analyse, enabling them to see what query type is causing issues and implementing actions to resolve these problems.

"Changing the way we survey has been a game changer for us. It's given us more specific focus areas and we've been able to see issues that we would never have known about before", explains Lisa Steele, Director of Customer Contact.

"We are able to use the data to support our agents better. Team Managers now have the ammunition to focus their coaching. And the agents can see how they are performing every day; giving them the insight to improve the experience they deliver."

As well as their main contact centre in Swansea, TUI also outsourced some of their calls to a partner in India. One of the issues that was highlighted through the verbatim comments left through Bright Navigator was repeated feedback from customers that there was a language barrier. This information supported the business' decision to move their outsourced contact centre from India to South Africa. This move has resulted in comments regarding communication problems significantly reducing now that customer interactions with South Africa are now being surveyed.

Bright future

With Bright Navigator in place, TUI now have surveys being sent out every two hours to customers and they have already seen survey response rates more than double from 5% to 12% in less than 12 months. As well as this impressive result, NPS has jumped from 3.8 to 41.6 with promoters increasing from 44% to 63%, and detractors have decreased from 39% to 21%.

TUI is now able to see the impact transitions and changes made in the contact centre, or in products, processes and policies elsewhere in the business are having on customers. With this information available in real-time, they can resolve any issues, such as knowledge of new advisors quickly. This is something they never would have been able to do as the data would have been 6 weeks out of date by the time it reached them.

"The more we got to know the people at Bright, the more we knew we had made the right choice. There was real collaboration between us, as opposed to just a supplier transactional relationship. We know we can call the team anytime if we have any questions and that they will do anything they can to help. They have so much knowledge to share and time to give, which is something I personally really value."

"I really felt they went above and beyond in the first few months and were really hands on, whether it was helping us interpret the survey data, or walking us through the portal and what everything meant. They created relevant monthly reports for us at the start whilst our team was getting up to speed. We've been given amazing insight into our business which ultimately, has enabled us to improve the customer experience, which is what it's all about for us", said Rachel.

"Looking forward, we are looking at how we can expand our use of Bright solutions to further improve the customer experience. Bright Employee will help us develop our people to continue to improve on the results we are seeing in the customer experience."

tui.co.uk

TUI was awarded the Innovation Award for Transformation & Engagement at the Forum Innovation Awards 2017

"For achieving an extraordinary depth of engagement in Swansea, the hub of a new operating model that has turned around performance in a competitive market, with a 40 point rise in Net Promoter Score and £17m benefits."



Bright Navigator is an automated satisfaction survey tool for companies with a high level of customer contacts. It measures continuously; providing real time insight into what customers think and why. This data is broken down by product, customer type, staff member or channel. To us, that's the basics, read more about the bells and whistles on www.brightindex.co.uk.

Summary

The popularity of Net Promoter Score is showing no signs of fading but for companies to realise the true value of an NPS programme they need to understand how to drive it and quantify its value. Just simply asking the recommend question is no longer enough. Organisations need to use all available resources to holistically measure NPS in relation to operational and employee data to maximise its return on investment.

For more information about how your company could benefit from Bright's unique approach to improving Net Promoter Score please visit www.brightindex.co.uk