

Guest Satisfaction

Golden Triangle:

Delivery...Attitude...Product



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The UniFocus DAP (delivery, attitude, product) model provides a valuable extension to existing service models. In response to critiques of the Conceptual Model of Service Quality, Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry proposed the Transaction Specific Model.¹ The DAP model extends that framework by separating the service construct into two new constructs, **delivery of service** and **attitude of the service providers**. The relationship between the DAP constructs to each other and to overall guest satisfaction suggests the product quality is a hurdle, and delivery and attitude play nearly equal roles in achieving high guest satisfaction.

Transaction-Specific Conceptual Model

The transaction-specific conceptual model indicates that the evaluation of three key elements are the basis of guest satisfaction. The factors are:

- Service quality
- Product quality
- Price (value)

Continuing research on this model has identified two advantages in using transaction-specific satisfaction rather than overall satisfaction.

1. One advantage is that the complex psychological reactions that consumers have will have been taken into consideration.
2. The second advantage is that changes in performance can be better identified in transaction-specific measures.

The role of value in the evaluative process is continually debated in the research. Many argue that it is a moderating factor when considering service and product quality before coming to an evaluation of overall satisfaction. As such, many research efforts have focused solely on the service quality and product quality measures.

The issue with this classification is that the overly broad construct of service quality combines concepts that have very different characteristics. A simple example is to consider the aspect of front desk friendliness and front desk efficiency (and far too many surveys combine these two into one question!). These two items address very different evaluations; a front desk associate may be very friendly but inefficient, and vice versa. The corrective actions to be taken from these two measures are very different.

DAP Model

What the DAP model (Delivery-Attitude-Product) accomplishes is to transform the traditional construct of service quality into two distinct constructs:

- One measures delivery (efficiency) and
- One measures attitude (friendliness).

While the two constructs, as expected, are highly correlated, they allow for different corrective responses to address issues.



I have worked extensively with both the transaction-specific model and the DAP model. The construct of product quality incorporates measures that address tangible items to the hotel guest. Questions that I have seen included in the product construct are clean rooms, comfortable beds, up-to-date hotel design, secure environments, relaxing public areas and similar measures. Product quality seems to be a “hurdle” measure in aspiring to high overall satisfaction measures. It is the first step, and further progress can not be made if there is a failure in product quality.

DAP Research

In one study of 200 full-service upscale hotels, the hotels were divided into three categories based on the product quality measure:

- 1st: An upper quartile (50 hotels)
- 2nd: a mid-range (100 hotels)
- 3rd: and a lower quartile. (50 hotels)

All of the measures were on a ten-point scale.

- Only one hotel in the lower quartile on product quality (8.22) was able to achieve an overall satisfaction score that was above the median for the entire sample of 200 hotels (8.73 delivery medium).
- And that one hotel had some outstanding service scores (I would love to find that GM and do a case study on how to achieve such high attitude and delivery scores in what was considered an inferior product!).
- There was not one hotel with a product quality score in the upper quartile that had an overall satisfaction score that fell below the median for the entire sample.

The correlation of product quality to overall satisfaction, when compared to the correlations of attitude and delivery, decreased as the product quality score increased.



This indicates that once the hurdle is cleared, the service aspects of the stay become more important to the guest.

- There were 11 hotels that had attitude and delivery scores greater than 9.0.
- Eight of those hotels were the top eight hotels in overall satisfaction.
- The remaining three had product quality scores less than 9.0 and were unable to compensate for that, even with outstanding service scores.

I previously referred to product quality as a "hurdle." Considering the relationship between attitude and delivery, I do not feel that either of them could be considered a second hurdle. I prefer to visualize the three constructs as a triangle with product quality as the base of the triangle. Attitude and delivery make up the two equally important sides of the triangle. To reach the pinnacle of overall satisfaction, you need a base (product quality) and the two sides (attitude and delivery) in equal measure. 🏹

	OVERALL SATISFACTION	DELIVERY	ATTITUDE	PRODUCT
Upper Quartile	8.76	8.98	8.88	8.88
Median	8.46	8.73	8.59	8.55
Bottom Quartile	8.13	8.49	8.33	8.18

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