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Excel in Experience

Customer-experience survey reveals who rises to the top, falls to the bottom of quick-service pack.



CHICK-FIL-A

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The quick-service industry is feeding consumers an experience worth an encore—in some cases, at least.

According to a recent study by customer experience firm Temkin Group, the industry ranked second among 19 for highest customer-experience ratings. In addition, the industry's average rating jumped 2 percentage points this year over last to more than 76 percent.

Bruce Temkin, managing partner of Temkin Group, says the high scores are fueled largely by consumers' expectations: quality food with a minimal wait and an accurate order the first time around.

For the second straight year, Chick-fil-A topped the fast-food industry—and came in third among all industries—with a rating of 82 percent, driven by the brand's emotional connection with consumers.

“Customers tell you what they want, and it's our job to create that experience,” says Mark Moraitakis, Chick-fil-A's director of hospitality and service design. “The industry has raised its performance, especially with the addition of [fast] casuals.”

Survey results were less than memorable for other quick-service brands. Starbucks dropped three percentage points from 2012, with competitor Dunkin' Donuts outperforming the brand in every category.

“Consumers have different expectations for companies based on their brand promise,” Temkin says. “Clearly, these two chains make different brand promises, so it's not that Dunkin' Donuts provides a better experience, but it delivers against its brand promise more consistently than Starbucks.”

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