New consumer research explores the complexity of modern consumer expectations around the world in 2021.

Low customer expectations for delight underscore a business opportunity.

Consumers have complicated needs, and are quick to cancel.

The research was conducted by Opinium, on behalf of Freshworks.

Freshworks makes it fast and easy for businesses to delight their customers and employees.
New consumer research explores the complexity of modern consumer expectations around the world in 2021. Companies now have a unique opportunity to delight their customers through thoughtful, speedy and personalized communications that reflect customer values and offer the human touch.

Our research found that:

- Consumers have low expectations to be wowed – marking a major opportunity for companies to delight
- They expect companies to share their values and will exchange a range of data for a better company experience
- Consumers are complicated and even contradictory at times, but still lean toward the human touch
Low customer expectations for delight underscore a business opportunity

Consumers around the world revealed they have low expectations when it comes to the experience interacting with brands — confirming that the market is ripe for a fresh approach.

Consumers expect their service experience to align to the brand's promise — a big opportunity for improvement.

Just 14% of consumers expect to be wowed by a company

Only 14% expect personalization

56% said a brand's customer service often doesn't match the image they portray

80% want brands to be more honest
Consumers expect brands to understand their personal values, and not waste their time.

Value alignment and responsiveness reign supreme. To help achieve a closer tie between the two, customers are willing to be open about themselves and their lives.
52% expect a quick resolution

80% said they want quicker responses from companies
Values matter more

55% want companies they care about to know more about them

63% now expect brands to consider their personal values when communicating
The great exchange

77% are willing to exchange personal data for a superior experience.

- Contact details: 37%
- Relationship history: 25%
- Previous browsing/purchasing behaviors: 24%
- Address: 22%
- Values (i.e. the causes I care about): 21%
- Clothes size: 18%
- Salary: 10%
Consumers have complicated needs, and are quick to cancel

52% of customers stopped buying from a company during the pandemic as a result of their communications. Why?
Hate the wait or tone deaf

- Call center wait times were too long: 22%
- Couldn’t get a response to their query: 21%
- Insensitive communications: 17%
- A competitor responded to the pandemic more effectively: 15%
Multiple channels to delight

About half of consumers (49%) want to hear more from the brands they buy from, and delightful service experiences can be created through human interactions or technology-first responses.
Section 3

Human-first

- 61% of consumers said they admire companies that use a smart mix of self-service and humans.
- 61% miss being able to speak to companies when using self-service options.
- 71% would much rather speak to a person than use self-service options.
Technology-first

39% would rather use self-service options than have to speak to a company using any other channel.

39% say they can resolve issues much quicker using self-service options than other customer service channels.

36% would be happy if they never had to speak to a company in person again.
The demise of email has been greatly exaggerated

When asked how their use of communication channels has changed this year, the use of email among consumers has increased more than any other channel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication Channel</th>
<th>Increased</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone call</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WhatsApp / Private</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Via their App</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chatbot / self-service</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automated web form</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Customers selected email as their preferred tool for:

- Making a complaint: 31%
- Tracking an order: 28%
- Providing feedback: 24%
- Sourcing product information/support: 22%

Email checked in as second for:

- Refunds/exchanges: 25%
- Making/rescheduling appointments: 20%
“Customers rule the world, and many of them have shown empathy by adjusting expectations for companies over the trials and tribulations of the last year. We are seeing now that many will exchange information about everything from personal values to salary information for personalized service that improves their experience. The takeaway for companies is that they can no longer separate their product from the customer experience; instead, it is a business imperative for companies to make it easy to delight their customers through thoughtful, easy and speedy interactions that reflect customer values.”

Stacey Epstein
Chief Marketing Officer, Freshworks
The research was conducted by Opinium, on behalf of Freshworks, who surveyed 11,502 global adults aged 18+, from Australia, Brazil, France, Germany, India, the Netherlands, Singapore, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Data was collected from 1st – 7th June 2021.
Freshworks makes it fast and easy for businesses to delight their customers and employees. We do this by taking a fresh approach to building and delivering software that is affordable, quick to implement, and designed for the end user. Headquartered in San Mateo, California, Freshworks has a dedicated team operating from 13 global locations to serve 50,000+ customers including Bridgestone, Chargebee, DeliveryHero, ITV, Klarna, Multichoice, OfficeMax, TaylorMade and Vice Media. For more information visit [freshworks.com](http://freshworks.com)