

# Measuring Gen-Y Customer Experience in the Banking Sector

The article analyses customer experience as the subject of marketing research and presents methods for assessing customer experience. The results of empirical research revealing the Gen-Y customer experience in using the Lithuanian commercial banks' services are presented.

**Keywords:** experience marketing, customer experience, touch points, banks.

Straipsnyje nagrinėjama vartotojo patirtis, kaip marketingo tyrimų objektas, pristatomi vartotojų patirties vertinimo metodai. Pateikiami empirinio tyrimo rezultatai, atskleidžiantys Y kartos vartotojų patirtį naudojantis Lietuvos komercinių bankų paslaugomis.

**Raktiniai žodžiai:** patirties marketingas, vartotojų patirtis, sąlyčio taškai, bankai.

## Introduction

In today's marketplace, for consumers is no longer enough a good product, its delivery and consumption, they desire more. One of the ways of giving customers more is creating positive customer experience. Therefore, most organisations agree that creating positive experience for customers is an important tool for sustaining a competitive advantage in many industries. In order to become more competitive, organisations are choosing to create positive experiences for their customers (Pralhad, Ramaswamy, 2004). Experience marketing is becoming the cornerstone of the organi-

sation's strategic orientation. According to C. Hu, L. Huang and X. Zhang (2013), in the future, experience marketing is expected to be applied more and more widely. Companies will refuse traditional marketing and will start creating experiences for their customers. According to S. Kim et al. (2011), in the twenty-first century, organizations will focus not on a service-based but on an experience-based economy.

Customer experience has not been particularly widely under consideration in scientific literature, though researchers started to analyse it already 30 years ago. Authors, such as B. Pine and J. Gilmore (1999), C. Tynan and S. McKechnie (2009),

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Asta KYGUOLIENĖ – doctor of social sciences, associate professor at Marketing Department, the Faculty of Economics and Management, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania. Address: K. Donelaičio str. 58, LT-44248, Kaunas, Lithuania. Phone: +37037327856. E-mail: [asta.kyguoliene@vdu.lt](mailto:asta.kyguoliene@vdu.lt).

Nerijus MAKUTĖNAS – Bachelor student of Marketing Management at the Faculty of Economics and Management, Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania. Address: K. Donelaičio str. 58, LT-44248, Kaunas, Lithuania. Phone: +37037327856. E-mail: [nerijusmak@gmail.com](mailto:nerijusmak@gmail.com).

L. Carbone and S. Haeckel (1994), C. Gentile, N. Spiller and G. Noci (2007), studied experience marketing on a theoretical level. These authors analysed the concept of experience marketing, and how to create perfect customer experience as well as how to sustain it.

In practice, increasing competitive advantage is relevant to any organisation. In the banking sector, it gets special importance because of its high impact on the country's economy and also on the welfare of society. S. Kropas et al. (2013) argue that banks have a major impact on the European economy, as they provide important financial services to households and businesses: they carry out day-to-day operations, provide financing, investing and personal finance management services. These functions are essential for a modern market economy. Authors also emphasize that good long-term customer relationships and customer support are the key issues to successful banking. Banks are trying to attract new customers and keep the existing ones, therefore, experience marketing becomes one of the tools to boost competitiveness.

Gen-Y is significant for banks. This generation nowadays constitutes the majority of "wealth accumulators" in developed economies and is looking for financial products to maximize their wealth (European Financial Marketing Association and Oracle Financial Services, 2010). Y generation is expected to be one of the largest customer segments within a few years. Generation Y is significantly different from the previous generations. This is the first generation to grow up with constant supply of new technologies, and they are therefore willing to try and use

new technologies to a larger extent than previous generations (Glass, 2007). Therefore, banks were at the front of adapting the concept and offered customers digitalized services such as Internet banking. It is also not uncommon that a customer uses more than one provider of financial services. Given the broad range of options for the customer, it is more difficult for traditional banks to stand out. Gen-Y is more interested in the basic banking rather than in investment plans, their most popular banking products are debit cards, loans, credits, mobile banking is also important for them, they are looking for financial assistance to manage their money (Farah, Macaulay and Ericsson, 2010). According to European Financial Marketing Association and Oracle Financial Services Report (2010), great banking experience is one of the cornerstones of the Gen-Y engagement, thus engaging with Gen-Y needs a dedicated strategy.

Thus, the article focuses on analysing customer experience in the banking sector among the Gen-Y customers. **The research problem** is formulated as a question: What is the Gen-Y customers' experience using the Lithuanian commercial banks?

**The object of research** is the Gen-Y customer experience using the services of Lithuanian commercial banks.

**The aim of research** is to measure the Gen-Y customer experience using the services of Lithuanian commercial banks.

**Research methods.** A comparative analysis of scientific literature was used to achieve the purpose. A questionnaire survey as the quantitative method was chosen for empirical research.

## Experience marketing as the subject of marketing research

Already in the middle of 1980, issues on creating customer experience were discussed. In 1982, M. Holbrook and E. Hirschman (1982) highlighted the importance of the experience aspects of consumer behaviour. In the time span of the last 30 years, several researchers and scholars have defined the term “customer experience”, which have provided a better understanding of what customer experience is all about. Almost all authors interpret this term differently; according to C. Tynan and S. McKechnie (2009), the word “experience” can be understood in different ways.

The experience is a “take-away impression form by people’s encounters with products, services, and businesses – a perception produced when humans consolidate sensory information” (Carbone, Haeckel, 1994). Furthermore, B. Schmitt (1999) states that experiences are the “result of encountering, undergoing, or living through situations. They are triggered stimulations to the senses, the heart, and the mind. Experiences also connect the company and the brand to the customer’s lifestyle and place individual customer actions and the purchase occasion in a broader social context. In sum, experiences provide sensory, emotional, cogni-

tive, behavioural, and relational values that replace functional values”. U. Walter, B. Edvardsson and A. Ostrom (2010) adds that customer experience is defined by the customer’s direct and indirect experience with service processes, the organisation itself, the facilities and the way the customer interacts with the organisation’s employees and other customers. All this create the customer’s reactions that turn into experience.

Changing consumer expectations have changed traditional marketing, and experience marketing has emerged. Customer behaviour has changed especially on the satisfaction and behavioural levels (Mittal, Kumar, Tsiros, 1999). Consumers give more importance to affective purchase and want to have multisensory experience, receive stimulations and feel emotions during the purchase. These changes induce a change of marketing. Whereas traditional marketing focuses on the product, experience marketing focuses on the customers’ expectations (Noren, 2012). A. Noren also emphasizes that customers are attracted by sensational and emotional aspects: they want to have something unexpected. People are not only buyers, they feel and think too, and the mass customization no longer meet the customer’s expectations. The comparison of traditional and experience marketing is given in Table 1.

Table 1

Traditional marketing vs. experience marketing

Traditional marketing	Experience marketing
Focuses on features and benefits	Focuses on customer experience
Narrow definition of product category and competition	Consumption is holistic experience
Customers are rational decision-makers	Customers are rational and emotional human beings
Methods are analytical, quantitative and verbal	Methods are eclectic

Traditional marketing specialists assume that consumers (business customers or end-users) in different markets (industrial, technology, service sector) weigh functional features according to their importance, compare them between different products and choose the one with the highest overall utility (compare the good and bad qualities). In contrast to the limited approach to functional features and benefits, experience marketing focuses on customer experiences. Experiences occur as a result of encountering, undergoing or living through things.

Traditional marketing has a narrow view of competitors and products as well. Competition is first and foremost in narrowly defined product categories – competition between brands (Schmitt, 1999). Whereas experience marketing does not have personal categories, for example categories as car loan, housing repair loan. Instead of it, it states “new car at your new shed” (Schmitt, 1999).

In traditional marketing, the customer manages the situation and makes the purchase rationally. Customer does this action in sequence to solve a problem. As J. Engel, R. D. Blackwell and P. W. Miniard (1994) explain, solving a problem refers to a deliberate, reasonable action taken to needs’ satisfaction. In experience marketing, consumer behaviour is determined not only by rational factors, but also by emotional aspects. The consumer chooses to buy a product for rational reasons, dreams, and feelings.

In traditional marketing, the entire marketing mix is targeted towards the customer in order to achieve the result of principle: “Stimulus-Reaction” (van Vatterschoot, 2002). This approach is very narrow and limited, while experience marketing has the potential to use diffe-

rent methods. There are no methodological restrictions or models, thus experience marketing is eclectic.

## Customer experience measurement

In the growing academic literature, researchers have developed various specific and generalised scales for the customer experience measurement in different sectors. The analysis of the measurement methods of customer experience in specific sectors confirms that customer experience measurement is a relevant topic – there are many customer experience measurement tools suitable for different areas.

J. Otto and J. Ritchie (1996) developed a six-dimensions scale (hedonism, interactivity, innovation, comfort, safety and stimulation) to measure the experience of tourism customers. T. Novak, D. Hoffman and Y. Yung (2000) proposed a way to measure customer experience in the online environment with constructs as web usage, challenge, control, exploratory behaviour, flow, focused attention, interactivity, involvement, playfulness, positive effect, skill and time distortion.

S. Kim et al. (2011) constructed and validated a generalised measurement scale on the same factors and developed the Customer Experience Index (CEI). H. Oh, A. Fiore and M. Jeoung (2007) generated a scale which was based on the four levels of experience by B. Pine and J. Gilmore (1998). Very similarly, S. Hasonry and D. Gilbert (2009) have developed a measuring instrument for the sake of measuring the cruise experiences of the customers. In addition, they examined the constructs of tourist’s emotional experience in relation to hedonic holiday destinations and developed a destination

emotion scale (DES) with three significant dimensions as joy, love and positive surprise. Moreover, T. Slatten et al. (2009) created measurement scale which was used to assess atmospheric experiences that emotionally touch visitors at a winter park.

J. Brakus, B. Schmitt, and L. Zarantonello (2009) distinguished many experience dimensions and constructed a four-dimensional brand experience scale with dimensions as sensory, affective, intellectual and behavioural. They also emphasized the relationship between the brand experience, brand personality, satisfaction and loyalty. In the meanwhile, the Hospitality Experience Index (HEI), was developed by B. Knutson et al. (2009) who proposed a four-factor, 18-item measuring instrument for the assessment of hotel industry's customer experience. C. Wu and R. Liang (2011) developed a scale to measure past experience and identify its importance for customers' satisfaction and loyalty.

While analysing methods for measuring customer experience, customer experience is most often associated with the service quality that a customer experiences during the service delivery. The SERVQUAL model proposed by A. Parasuraman, V. A. Zeithaml and L. L. Berry (1988) is very widely used to measure the quality of service. However, this measurement model is not suitable for measuring customer experience at every touch point with the organization. Its main reason is that, according to the service quality studies, customers are treated as passive observers, who just process the information and later assess the service interactions as a resultant outcome. But their interactions with the organization (in the social context) and the entire customer

process has not been explicitly considered and empirically investigated (Walter et al., 2010).

Most of the above mentioned customer experience measurement techniques were industry specific which were designed while concentrating on the sector-specific requirements of the customers. Therefore, these existing measurements cannot be used to measure the experience of the banking sector. In addition, according to existing studies, scholars have developed scales either in online settings or in offline settings. None of the existing scales have considered both of these elements in a combined way. The appropriate evaluation of customer experience in the banking sector can only be done when these elements are considered in the collective manner.

To measure customer experience independently of a specific sector it is necessary to identify, categorise and define different elements that occur during customer experience at different touch points. The formed customer experience depends not only on the factors that organization can control, but also on those that are outside of organization's control (Meyer, Schwager, 2007). This is because the experience comes from service encounter and can be interpreted differently. This means that customer experience cannot be fully controlled by the organization. The importance of various interactions, such as between customers and employees, customers among themselves etc., and how these affect the experience have been the focus of several studies (Grove, Fisk, 1997). Each time, by touching any part of the product, service, brand or the organization, customers are getting another experience. Such moments of truth between the customer and any part of the

organization are known as 'touch points'. All consumer purchase steps that the customer passes through are made up of numerous touch points. Customer experience is considered as a single, overarching experience (Rose et al., 2012). Therefore, extensive perception of customer experience touch points makes it possible to take a closer look at the discrete elements that constitute customer experience.

Customer experience develops throughout all touch points and episodes encountered during the service delivery process (Juttner et al., 2013). These touch points may exist before and after purchase and occur on different channels. C. Meyer and A. Schwager (2007) emphasize that touch points may not be necessarily directly related to the organization, but may also interact with unplanned situations. While the signs, stimuli and service encounters reflect something that the company provides to the customer, touch points show what is really going on from the consumer's perspective. Therefore, comprehension of customer experience touch points can only be understood from

a subjective customer experience (Lemke, Clark and Wilson, 2011).

Stein and B. Ramaseshan (2016) proposed research and determined seven specific sections of the customer experience touch points, which are as follows: atmosphere, technology, communication, process, employee-customer interaction, customer-customer interaction and product interaction elements. The distinct elements are shown in Table 2.

The importance of these touch points for customer experience is also highlighted by other authors. K. Hoffman and L. Turley (2002) conducted a study to find out the impact of atmospheric elements on customer experience in the service sector. They indicate that the physical environment determines the customer's judgment and opinion about the service delivery. Playing music in the bank can affect the consumer's willingness to use this bank service, communicate and maintain long-term relationships (Dube, Chebat and Morin, 1995). According to K. Hoffman and L. Turley (2002), the atmosphere is made up of tangible (furniture,

Table 2

### Elements of touch points

Touch points	Elements
Atmosphere	Amenities; ambience; image.
Technologies	Technology-ease of use; wide technological possibilities; self-service technology.
Communication	Promotional message; informative message; advertising visibility.
Process	Waiting time; website speed; website convenience; service process.
Employee-customer interaction	Helpful employee; personalized service; argumentative employee.
Customer-customer interaction	Customer reviews; direct customer interactions; indirect customer interactions.
Product interaction	Product quality; product assortment; product attractiveness.

Source: A. Stein, B. Ramaseshan (2016).

carpets, equipment), and intangible (colours, music, smell) elements. Both components are important in creating customer experience. Also, K. Wakefield and J. Blodgett (1999) notice that environmental design, comfort and ambience affect consumer perceptions and feelings.

J. Seeley (2011) argues that to create a better customer experience, technology opportunities should be available at every step of the service provision. Easy-to-use technology facilitates the customer's purchase and consumption process and thus creates a positive user experience.

According to A. Stein and B. Ramaseshan (2016), customer experience is driven one-way connection from the service provider to the consumer, including both promotional and informative reports. These communication elements are important for customer experience in all product or service search, evaluation and post-purchase phases.

Also, the processes that have a significant impact on user experience in online and offline settings are important. The authors distinguish the following elements of the process: waiting time, website speed, website convenience, service process. Mostly, service process is more important than the outcome.

T. Slatten et al. (2009) emphasize the importance of customer-employee interaction, arguing that the organization's employees must engage with their clients in order to create a pleasant experience with positive emotions and satisfaction. The authors also note that employees who are helpful, caring and friendly create better experience for their customers. Research done by M. Soderlund and S. Rosengren (2008) shows that a simple smile from employee can lead to customer satisfaction.

The importance of customer-customer interaction is defined by S. Grove and R. Fisk (1997), who state that customer satisfaction and experience may be affected by other customers during the service delivery process. Interactions with other customers also determine service evaluation, recommendations and feedback to other people, depending on the positive or negative experience (Martin, 1996).

S. J. Hoch (2002) highlights product interaction elements and claims that customers gain experience in searching, viewing, using and evaluating a product or service. This includes direct or indirect customer contact with the palpable or impalpable service or product.

In light of this, the defined touch points exist throughout the customer's journey containing the search, evaluation, purchase and after-purchase phases. In addition, these elements are general, identified by the evaluation of several different sectors. Therefore, this work is based on the research carried out by A. Stein and B. Ramaseshan (2016) and their identified touch points.

## Research methodology

The research was intended to measure the Gen-Y customers' experience using the services of Lithuanian commercial banks. Therefore, a questionnaire survey as the quantitative method was chosen for empirical research. The questionnaire was constructed of general questions related to the usage of commercial banks' services. The instrument proposed by A. Stein and B. Ramaseshan (2016) was applied to evaluate customer experience at different touch points. For each touch point (atmosphere, technology, communication, process, customer-employee interaction,

customer-customer interaction and product interaction) there were formulated statements. Respondents were asked to evaluate the statements according to the bank, which a respondent uses most. The Likert scale was applied to evaluate statements ranging from 5 ('fully agree') to 1 ('completely disagree').

In scientific literature, there is no consensus regarding the period when the Gen-Y people were born. According to W. Strauss and N. Howe (1991), people born between 1982 and 2004 belong to Gen-Y (Millennials), R. K. Miller (2011) states this period being 1980-2000, S. Littman (2008) identifies the period of 1982-2002, however, Y. Kavounis (2008) argues that people born between 1982-1994 are Millennials. In this study, W. Strauss and N. Howe's Generational Theory was taken into account, and it follows that people aged 13-35 were regarded as Gen-Y. Persons under 18 years of age are referable to this generation, but they were not involved in the research as only adult people can make full use of banking services.

Quantitative research was carried out in Lithuania in April 2017. The questionnaire was published in the online survey webpage. The estimated convenience sample size was 272 respondents, reliability level – 95%, data error rate equalled to 5%.

## Research results

Respondents were asked to indicate all the banks the services of which they are using and to mark the one most often used bank. Most of the respondents in Lithuania use "Swedbank" (59%), SEB bank (24.4%), and DNB bank services (15.5%). Further results reflect the respondents' customer experience in most commonly used banks.

Therefore, the following results of the survey discover the three largest banks in Lithuania. According to the banks' annual reports (2016), by the size of loan and deposit portfolios, SEB bank has the largest market share, with the net value of loans and leasing portfolio in 2016 December 31 being 5.3 billion Euro, while the deposit portfolio being 5.2 billion Euro. The second place takes "Swedbank", which loan portfolio at the end of the 2016 fourth quarter reached 4.6 billion Euro, while the deposit portfolio amounted to 6.2 billion. In the third place is DNB bank with a loan portfolio of 2.75 billion Euro, and deposit – 2.48 billion.

Before moving to customer experience results, there are some generalizations: the largest part of the survey participants, even 83.8%, visit the bank branch less than once a month; 10.7% of respondents visit it several times a month; 5.1% – several times a week. Meanwhile, 42.8% of respondents use e-banking services several times a week, 38.4% – on a monthly basis, 10.7% on a daily basis, and 8.1% – less than once in a month. The results allow to assume that electronic banking is very important, especially having in mind that Gen-Y is the first generation in which internet consumption is widely spread. Therefore, measurement of experience is necessary both in real and in online environment.

Measuring customer experience, respondents evaluated 22 statements, each of them described the elements of all seven touch points.

*Atmosphere elements.* Respondents had to evaluate how they feel about the bank atmosphere. The average value concerning the statement that the whole bank atmosphere creates positive image is 4.19. This is the highest evaluated statement among the atmosphere statements. The results reveal that the environment of

bank branches is organized good enough: the average meaning indicating that the environment is cosy reaches the average of 3.95, the convenience of bank branches is evaluated by the average of 3.90.

*Technology elements.* The bank's technological capabilities are widely used, the average value of this statement is 4.04. The second statement defining the easy usage of bank technology was estimated at 4.13 out of 5. Such assessment shows that the vast majority of respondents do not find it difficult to use banking technology and their experience is positive. The third statement indicating banks' comfortable self-service capabilities is evaluated by the average of 4.49. It is evident that technology elements have beneficial impact on customer experience.

*Communication elements.* Respondents had to assess the bank's communication. The statement saying that the bank's advertisements are useful reaches the average of 3.24. The highest rating of communication elements statement is evaluated by the average of 3.70 which defines the bank's clear information about the provided services. The average score for the statement which declares that bank advertising is always noticeable is 3.20. Most respondents found it difficult to agree or disagree with statements, which means that banking communication is not effective, despite the fact that the averages are slightly higher than the average response rate.

*Process elements.* The first statement describing the customer waiting time at the bank branch is estimated only by 2.39 out of 5. Low average value indicates that the experience of waiting in branch of the bank is not good for most respondents. Another statement describes the waiting time in online environment. The purpose of this statement was to find out whether

the website of the bank operates rapidly. Average value of this statement reaches 4.25. Statement defining the website convenience is evaluated by the average of 4.03. The average meaning indicating that the bank is able to provide all necessary services during one visit is estimated at 3.79 out of 5.

*Customer-employee interaction elements.* The following statements sought to measure employee-customer interaction. The average value concerning the statement about customer experience whether bank branch employees are helpful is 4.09. Such an assessment shows that respondents are satisfied of the banks' employees helpfulness. The second statement describes the supply of personalized services to the consumer, this statement evaluation is 3.86 out of 5. Competence of bank employees is rated 4.01 out of 5. These interactions play a significant role in customer purchase.

*Customer-customer interaction elements.* Other customers' review about the bank is good enough, the average value reaches 3.75 out of 5. Further, respondents had to indicate whether a direct interaction with other customers, such as other users' rush to perform operations faster or unwanted contact, often causes negative emotions. The score for the statement estimates 2.84 out of 5. As this statement was formulated from a negative perspective, the low evaluation in this case indicates that their experience is more positive than negative. When evaluating the results from the positive side, the average score is 3.16. This means that direct interaction with other users is still causing positive emotions, but only for a very small part of respondents. Another statement was also formed from a negative perspective. The score of the statement defining the indirect customer-customer

interactions (such as running and noisy children; scent of unpleasant odour) is 2.82 out of 5. Evaluating all respondents' answers from the positive side, the average response rate is 3.18. This means that indirect interaction with other customers also has more positive emotions.

*Product interaction elements.* The statement about the banks' service quality is evaluated by the average of 4.16. Another statement declaring that the assortment of services offered by the bank is extensive, it reaches the average of 4.04. The lowest evaluated statement among all product interaction statements says that the services offered by the bank are attractive. The average value is 3.52 out of 5. Evaluations of these elements are very important, interactions with products show how experience can influence future purchases.

All 22 statements describing seven touch points are evaluated differently. Almost all statements are evaluated higher than the average, there is only one statement that has a lower rating. All results are shown in the Figure 1.

Summing up the results, customers have the best experience of technological elements. The overall average is 4.23. Most respondents agreed that the technological capabilities of banks are widely developed, it is easy to use them, and banks offer good self-service opportunities. It can be noted that banks are actually expanding the 24-hour self-service area network and consumers are eager to use it.

Consumers are also satisfied with atmospheric elements in banks. The average reaches 4.01. Regardless of the bank which services the respondents use, their experience of the atmosphere in banks is positive. To sum up, banks are using a relatively easy way to make the customer experience at least a bit better. To achieve

this, they only need to have a pleasing design and interior.

The average of employee-customer interaction elements reaches 3.99. The majority of respondents agreed that bank employees are helpful and qualified; banks offer services according to the customer personal needs. Knowing that more and more companies are investing in human resources and trying to raise the staff qualifications, respondents' answers only confirm this.

The total average of the product interaction elements is 3.91. This suggests that customer experience of the quality of banking services, its' wide choice and its' attractiveness is positive. These elements are perhaps the most important, because if the customer experience in dealing with them is negative, banks would likely meet less and less new customers.

Respondents' estimate for the process elements is 3.62. This average is strongly affected by the rating of statement saying that customers does not have to wait for a long time in the bank branch (2.39), with which the majority of respondents did not agree. At this point, customer experience negative emotions.

The worst customer experience is emerging when interacting with other customers (3.36) and with bank communication (3.38). Although, the respondents rated these touch points as the lowest, their experience is still more positive, because the rating is higher than the average value.

The overall average of all touch points, which represents the overall customer experience using banking services, is 3.78. More than half of people tend to agree with statements, so it can be concluded that the overall customer experience is positive.

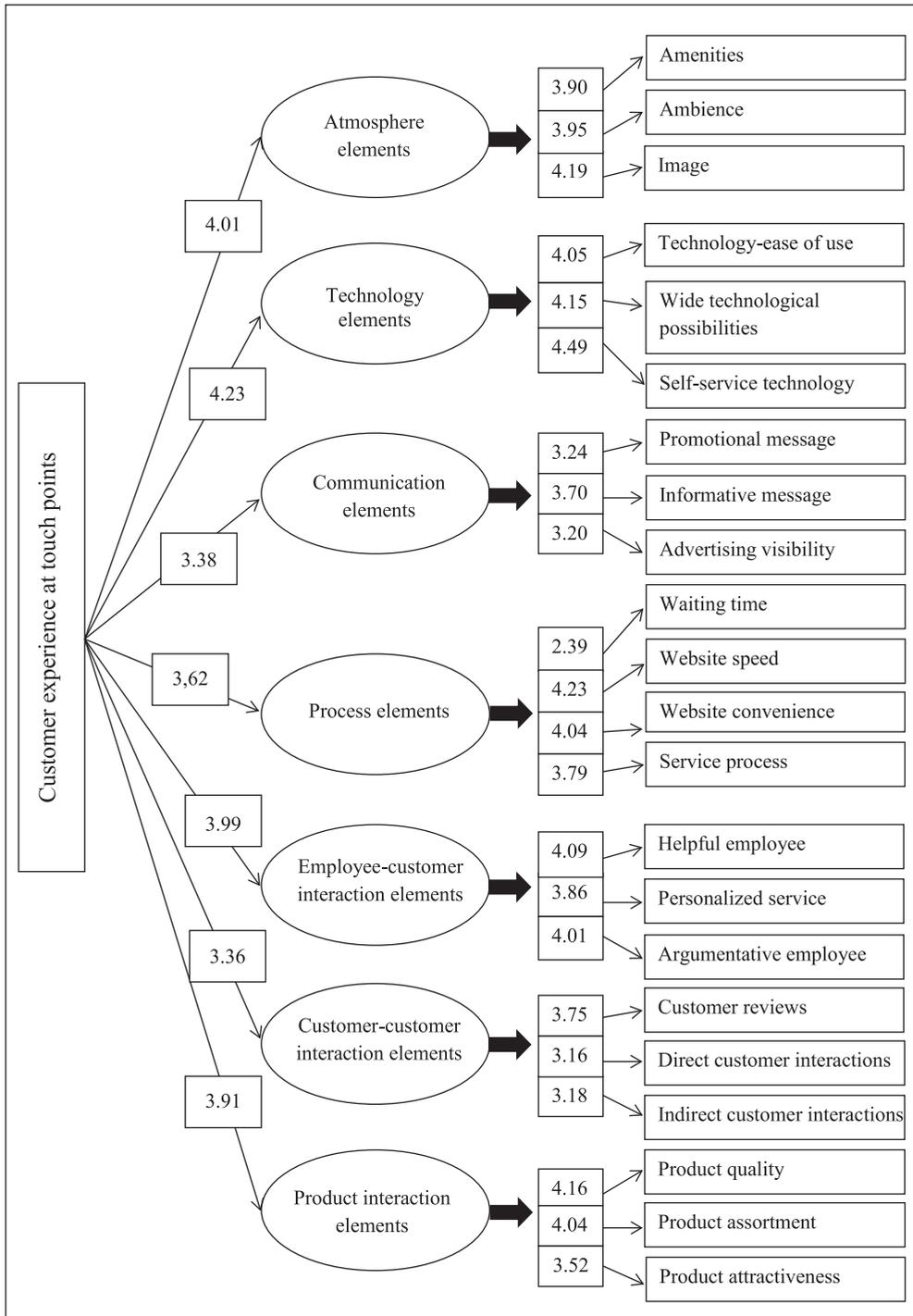


Fig. 1. Gen-Y customer experience at touch points using the services of Lithuanian commercial banks

As a research result, customer experience in different banks was also compared dividing the respondents' answers according to their most commonly used bank.

SEB bank clients most rarely visit bank branches (89%, less than once a month), whereas DNB Bank customers visit bank branches most often (7,1%, several times a week). Daily electronic banking is mainly used by DNB Bank customers (16,7%).

The results of the evaluated statements by banks are shown in Table 3.

All the elements of the atmosphere touch point were best evaluated by SEB Bank customers, with the average of 4.13. Whereas, the worst atmosphere was evaluated in DNB Bank. All technological elements were best rated by Swedbank users, the average being 4.32 out of 5. Also, Swedbank has the best ratings in all communication elements, the average value is 3.45, while the worst communication has SEB Bank. The longest waiting queue was indicated at Swedbank branches, the shortest – at DNB Bank. However, the overall experience of waiting in the queue is still negative. The highest average evaluation of all process elements is rated by SEB Bank's customers, average reaches 3.66.

The averages of the employee-customer and customer-customer interactions were the highest at DNB Bank, accordingly, they were 4.04 and 3.47. All product interaction elements appeared the best in Swedbank, with an average rate of 3.97.

The overall customer experience at all touch points was the highest at Swedbank, the average of 3.80, whereas in the other two banks customer experience was only slightly lower, the average values were the same – 3.76.

## Discussion and implications

According to the results, the Gen-Y customer experience using banking services is positive, there are no big differences in customer experience comparing different banks. Such results show that banks understand the importance of customer experience and invest to it. But there is still space for improvements. So that to create better customer experience, it is suggested for the banks not to consider customer experience as a total sum of experiences, but rather to assess customer experience in each step of the customer

**Average values of Gen-Y customer experience by banks**

*Table 3*

Touch points	SEB Bank	Swedbank	DNB Bank
Atmosphere	4.13	4.00	3.90
Technologies	4.12	4.32	4.11
Communication	3.23	3.45	3.37
Process	3.66	3.60	3.56
Employee-customer interaction	3.95	3.99	4.04
Customer-employee interaction	3.45	3.29	3.47
Product interaction	3.80	3.97	3.85
<b>Overall evaluation</b>	3.76	3.80	3.76

journey, starting with search for information about a product and ending with the post-purchase stage.

Based on these findings, it is suggested to develop better experience for consumers, especially when they encounter with banking communication. The bank's advertised services, new offers or product discounts are not always noticeable to consumers, and incoming promotional messages are not always useful. To avoid this, banks could create different message contents for different consumer segments according to their needs, having in mind what was mentioned above, that engaging with Gen-Y needs dedicated strategy. In order to improve customer experience in communication, banks can create exclusive promotional campaigns that give the user unforgettable emotions and leave a positive impression. In this way, customers may not only notice bank's advertisements better, but also it would be easier for them to memorize it.

According to the results, interaction with other customers can be improved. It is not possible to control all contacts, i.e., to tell customers how they should behave at the bank branch or even manage their actions, nevertheless, banks can try to minimize the number of these interactions. For example, banks might try to avoid noisy children by creating separate, reception cells for customers who come with children.

In addition, the results of the survey show that customers have the worst experience at the bank branch because of a long waiting time in the queue. Although banks try to create the possibility to perform the necessary operations and procedures using online banking, it is not possible to transact certain banking operations, such as cash deposit, on the internet. The problem of queues at the banks

could be solved by creating staff working schedules and distributing working hours based on customers' rush hours. In this way, for example, during the tax period, the bank would have more sections dedicated to paying taxes, while at other times, more departments would perform other required tasks. In addition, this problem can be solved by creating a pre-registration. One of the customer reception cells could accept customers who signed up to arrive at a certain time. That way, customers should not stand in the queue and wait for the service. Another way to make customer experience better in waiting, is to involve the client in some kind of activity so that the waiting time would not be so long, having in mind that it might fit the Gen-Y customers' nature.

## Conclusions

- Gen-Y is very important for banks because it is one of the largest customer segments. So, it is of utmost importance to be sure that the customer experience design is ready to serve these young customers the way they want to be served.
- Customer experience might be assessed by measuring customer experience at different touch points. Touch points such as atmosphere, technologies, communication, processes, employee-customer interactions, customer-customer interactions, product interactions are proposed for customer experience measurement in the banking sector.
- Gen-Y customers value the atmosphere in Lithuanian banks positively. They do not experience negative reactions or emotions due to the

surrounding environment and its features. The best experience of banking the customers receive using technologies. This can be explained by new technological innovations that have been adapted to banking. The experience of bank communication is good enough. However, waiting time in the queue creates the worst experience for customers. Yet the experience in dealing with bank employees is positive. Customers do not feel unimportant when communicating with the bank's staff and their needs are satisfied. According to the evaluation of all touch points, the experience of the bank's customers' interactions with other customers is not good enough. Bank clients do not always experience good emotions due to other customers. Moreover, banks offer their customers a wide range of high-quality service choices, which make their clients happy and have positive experience.

- The results of this research are important from a strategic point of view. The assessment of customer experience on every touch-point identified improvement gaps. This can help banks to have deeper understanding about the entire customer journey. Bank managers can pay attention to the important factors having impact on customer experience, and thus can satisfy their customers even with the limited resources, by reviewing the processes.
- Further research directions include measuring customer experience not only for Gen-Y, but also for other generations. Seeking to find out what kind of experience banks create, it is suggested to investigate not only private customers, but also experience of business customers or bank partners. Also, to assess customer experience in terms of individual services such as services for borrowers, depositors, etc.

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Asta KYGUOLIENĖ, Nerijus MAKUTĖNAS

## BANKŲ SEKTORIAUS Y KARTOS VARTOTOJŲ PATIRTIES VERTINIMAS

S a n t r a u k a

Šiandienos rinkoje verslas pripažįsta, kad teigiamos vartotojų patirties kūrimas yra svarbus išlaikant konkurencinį pranašumą. Esant didelei prekių ir paslaugų pasiūlai, vartotojai turi galimybę rinktis. Nebeužtenka gero produkto, jo pristatymo, gero aptarnavimo, vartotojai trokšta daugiau, siekia, kad, įsigyjant produktą arba teikiant paslaugą, jų patirtis būtų teigiama. Todėl, besikeičiant vartotojų lūkesčiams, tradicinį marketingą keičia patirties marketingas. Patirtimi pagrįstas marketingas pabrėžia vartotojo patirtį, o ne produkto savybes, vartotojo patirtis vertinama kaip vientisa, akcentuojama, kad vartotojai priima ne tik racionalius, bet ir emocionalių sprendimus, taikomi metodai yra eklektiški, nenuoseklūs.

Mokslinėje literatūroje gausu įvairių vartotojo patirties matavimo būdų, tinkamų naudoti tiek specifiniuose, tiek bendruosiuose sektoriuose. A. Stein ir B. Ramaseshan (2016) įvardija septynias sąlyčio taškų kategorijas – atmosferos, technologijų, komunikacijos, procesų, darbuotojo-vartotojo sąveikos, vartotojo-vartotojo sąveikos, paslaugos sąveikos, pagal kurias, matuojant vartotojų patirtį, galima vertinti vartotojų patirtį naudojantis bankų paslaugomis tiek virtualioje, tiek realioje aplinkoje.

Tyrimo tikslas – ištirti Y kartos vartotojų patirtį naudojantis Lietuvos komercinių bankų paslaugomis. Y karta po kelerių metų bus vienas didžiausių vartotojų segmentų, jų charakteristika skiriasi nuo ankstesnių kartų. Teigiama patirtis naudojantis bankų paslauga – viena iš esminių sąlygų Y kartos įsitraukimui, todėl Y kartai pritraukti bei išlaikyti

organizacijos turi numatyti būtent šiai kartai skirtas strategijas (European Financial Marketing Association ir Oracle Financial Services Report, 2010).

Tyrimui pasirinktas kiekybinis tyrimas. Siekiant sužinoti vartotojų patirtį, pasirinktas apklausos metodas, o apklausai atlikti parengta anketa. Vartotojų patirčiai išsiaiškinti buvo naudojama Likerto skalė ir respondentų prašoma įvertinti suformuluotus teiginius. Duomenų apdorojimui buvo atlikti skaičiavimai. Apklausti 272 respondentai.

Tyrimo rezultatai atskleidžia, kad Y kartos vartotojų patirtis kiekviename sąlyčio taške yra skirtinga, ji kintama, nėra tolygiai teigiama ar neigiama. Beveik visi teiginiai įvertinti aukščiau nei vidurkis, tik vieno teiginio įvertinimas buvo mažesnis. Geriausia vartotojų patirtis susidūrus su technologijomis. Vartotojai taip pat patenkinti atmosfera, darbuotojų-vartotojų, produkto sąveika bankuose. Atliktas tyrimas atskleidžia, jog bankai turėtų kurti geresnę komunikaciją. Taip pat vartotojų patirtis nėra pati geriausia susidūrus su kitais vartotojais. Be to, iš atlikto tyrimo rezultatų matyti, kad blogiausia vartotojų patirtis – ilgai laukti eilėje banko filiale. Bendras visų sąlyčio taškų vidurkis, rodantis bendrą Y kartos vartotojo patirtį naudojantis bankų paslaugomis, lygus 3,77.

Atliktas tyrimas padeda geriau suprasti vartotojo patirties kūrimo bei jos matavimo aktualijas teoriniame bei praktiniame lygmenyse. Rezultatai, atskleidžiantys Y kartos vartotojų patirtį, leidžia bankams matyti, kuriuose vartotojo sąlyčio taškuose patirtį reikia kurti geresnę.