



Up close and really personal

How getting a better understanding of product quality can drive improved customer experience

Product quality is a key focus for all automakers. Nothing will cause brand affinity to be challenged more than a bad experience with a product.

So much more than just TGW (things gone wrong), product quality is the impression gained from a mix of all the senses and the holistic way they are delivered. The noise of a door shutting can drive perceptions of quality; odour impacts interior ratings; colour matching influences fit and finish ratings.

Product quality surveys are a key part of the researcher's toolkit in understanding this key area and MaritzCX can help with the design, reporting and interpretation of these surveys. At times however it is necessary to go deeper; to really dig deep into how the car is perceived by owners.

Inspection Clinics

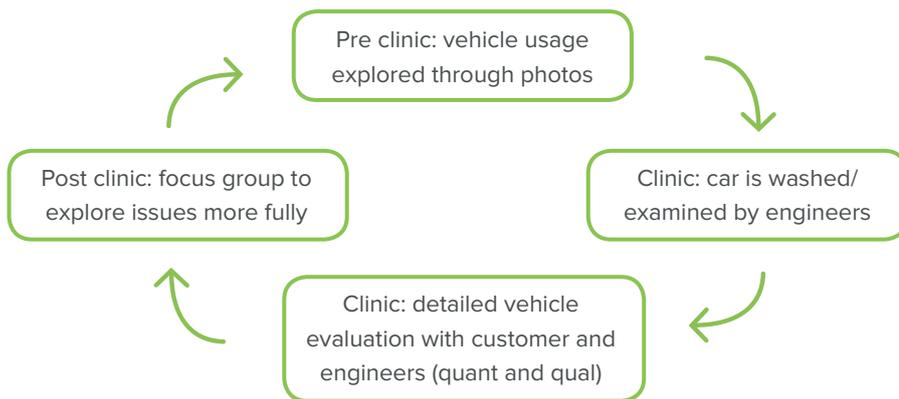
Sometimes, product satisfaction and reported TGW do not seem to stack up; for example when satisfaction levels are below expectations but quantitative TGW are not especially high. Or, TGW can be higher than previous internal benchmarking indicates, or a vehicle is failing to sell as well as expected. Finally there's often a need to benchmark against key competition in order to feed next generation product development. At times like these, Inspection Clinics let engineers get up close and really personal with customers and their cars.



Customers can demonstrate issues they encounter and engineers can understand these in full detail



Manufacturer and competitor cars are evaluated in real world settings to bring strengths and weaknesses to life



How it works

The process works on a cycle to gather a rich seam of data. Before the clinic, customers provide photos and images to show how they use their vehicles and their interactions with them. Then during the clinic the car is examined by engineers and then a detailed qual/quant evaluation is carried out with both the customers and the engineers. Following on from the clinic we can run focus groups if the engineers wish to explore the issues that came out of the clinic more fully.

A suite of innovative text analysis tools

Because the approach is semi-structured and includes interactions with the MaritzCX moderator and engineers, we collect a great deal of rich verbatim data which needs to be analysed. MaritzCX has addressed this challenge with a suite of innovative text analysis tools.

For example, the output for each selection filter takes the form of a clearly arranged, printable report, giving a direct indication of the respective tenor of opinion (slight, strong approval/slight, strong rejection, controversial tenor...). It is simple to export these to either MS Word® and Excel®.

Context is vital in text analysis so we ensure that we apply context-sensitive search, enabling clients to browse all statements for certain key words and get the system to show all opinions connected to them. We can also provide a QuickView overview of opinion: showing the trend of opinion for all topics in the interview/discussion guide at a glance and delivering an excellent initial feel for the overall mix of opinion. We assign type characteristics to the participants before going on to do a differentiated analysis of the various typologies. We create rankings, such as scores on a scale of 1 to 10 and enable clients to follow the course of discussion for an individual respondent by simply retrieving the entire interview in question.

Early Wear & Tear

- Leather seats quickly wear
- Plastic panels easily scratch
- Locks show traits of misfit.



Poor Material Quality

- Vast amount of (obvious) plastic parts
- Suboptimum plastic quality (hard, less structured)



A range of visualisation tools also support analysis: Cloud of Significance filters results in the style of a tag cloud and Tenor of all Targets visualises the contradictory acceptance or rejection of questions for all target groups at a glance. Reporting is also highly visual, using photos of the respondents' cars to support the findings and the quantitative analyses are supported and brought to life by video which is cut into a highlights video with professional voiceover.

Putting theory into practice

MaritzCX clients use Inspection Clinics to nail the minutiae of what makes the experience of their car better than the competition - and hence build on that with new developments. By seeing how the cars are used, viewing their typical condition, and getting direct contact with customers, engineers and technicians get a powerful understanding which they apply in their day to day work. The interactions highlight that customers often do not see defects, but during the clinics engineers come to spot them. Customers sometimes do not describe TGW in the correct way – for example squeaks are related to a specific, incorrect source, but engineers are able to identify the right origin. They also reveal that sometimes complaints are based on a customer's lack of knowledge (particularly relating to technical functions).

Inspection Clinics are also a big hit with customers as they get into direct contact with the manufacturer and really understand how their feedback is used and appreciated. And it's not only the small stuff that is important – we help clients understand the holistic, big picture view to re-evaluate what makes the experience of their vehicle different and hence build their brands for the future.