

BEYOND PRICE AND SPEED:
Creating Customer Loyalty Through Exceptional Broadband Experiences

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When fiber leads, the future follows.

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INTRODUCTION

Brand sits above everything else. It is the reputation you carry with customers, built through consistent delivery over time. It guides your marketing and operations, and it lives in the customer's mind.

Customer experience is day-to-day proof of the promise your brand makes in every interaction. It is a journey with many touchpoints that begins well before a fiber network is built. It runs through planning and permitting, through construction on the street, through marketing and customer acquisition, through installation and activation, and into an enduring relationship that should keep improving over time.

Trust and loyalty are not built overnight. They take time, intention, and often less money than you might expect. The work begins by creating thoughtful interactions and a feedback loop with your customers. You have to be unafraid to listen, even when it feels uncomfortable. One unhappy customer can have an outsized impact. They will tell everyone they know, and social platforms give them endless ways to amplify their grievances.

So, what is the secret sauce? There is no one-size-fits-all formula. The focus must be on who your customers are, what they care about, and where their pain points lie—both at the beginning of the contract and years into the relationship.

The broadband sector has long leaned on Net Promoter Scores (NPS) as the main measure of satisfaction. NPS is a number, and numbers can help, but what matters most is why you received that score. What is the story behind it?

Consumers hold fiber providers to a higher standard than their favorite coffee shop, retailer, or accommodations provider. Today's consumers expect communications providers to provide a better level of service than they receive from other brands: consistent, reliable, steady service, and the ability to communicate on their terms – after all, fiber is the Gold Standard when it comes to broadband service and customer service should be no different.

This paper will first explore methods for creating thoughtful moments that proactively improve customer experience and build trust and loyalty in your brand. It also presents best practices to conduct customer experience surveys, secure responses, and communicate results and progress.

DESIGNING THOUGHTFUL MOMENTS THAT BUILD LOYALTY

Every provider has its own recurring emotional moments, especially around hardship, service challenges, or life events. Treat these as opportunities to build trust, not transactions.

Once you identify thoughtful moments that resonate with your customers, create a repeatable response protocol system. Consistency can turn routine moments into memorable ones and build a reputation that keeps customers loyal long after the installation is done.

Fiber is Already Winning

The fiber broadband industry already has a leg up on the non-fiber competition. Fiber is reliable. Fewer outages. Lower latency. Fewer truck rolls. This creates space to take care of people. Use the time you win back with fiber's reliability to invest in human moments that build trust. This is how small teams outplay bigger brands.

Up until recently, the fiber broadband industry placed a great deal of emphasis on acquiring broadband customers. This is largely because broadband networks were in planning and early deployment stages. Now, the fiber networks are built, and many subscribers will have access to multiple fiber broadband providers. Competitiveness no longer lies with the provider that is first with fiber; the winning differentiator is customer experience and the ability to keep subscribers long-term. Not only do long-term customers create reliable, recurring revenue, but those customers have the power to refer you to friends and neighbors who can become new customers.

Examples of Thoughtful Brands

Pet supply brand Chewy regularly demonstrates how powerful it is to anticipate a customer's emotional needs and respond with small, human gestures. When a pet passes away, Chewy refunds the order, asks customers to donate the food, and often sends flowers with a handwritten note. The cost is low; the impact is lasting. These moments create loyalty that no discount can match.

It works because the company identified a recurring moment that matters to customers, and the gesture is simple, personal, and memorable. Chewy's response is scripted, pre-approved, and easy for frontline teams to execute. As an added bonus, customers share these stories, organically amplifying the brand's reputation.

These types of interactions are prevalent in the hospitality industry, too. The Marriott Vacation Club shares stories often about how a small, personal gesture can transform a stressful moment into a memorable one. When a guest lost her childhood stuffed animal, the resort didn't just return it. They created a playful "[VIP day](#)," documented it with photos, and followed up with a care package. The experience spread widely on social media because it felt human, thoughtful, and unexpected.

Hospitality brands excel at this because they understand who their customers are and empower employees to act. Ritz-Carlton's Gold Standard is the clearest example: every frontline employee is trained in a simple service philosophy and given authority (within guidelines) to fix problems on the spot. Most fixes cost little, yet they create disproportionate goodwill.

The simple, underlying principle of these examples is that a relational approach beats a transactional one. These stories work because they give customers something they want to share. When people feel understood and cared for, they become the most credible messengers a brand can have.

Broadband Moments that Matter

In broadband, find the small but meaningful moments in the customer journey where a thoughtful gesture can make a big difference. This could be installation day, service outage recovery, or a home tech upgrade.

We've outlined a list of potential thoughtful moments below. Define a few of these “moments that matter” and script a caring, brand-aligned response for each.

1. Pre-Construction Phase

- Opportunity: First interaction with the brand.
- Enhancements:
 - Door hanger or driveway bomb providing future subscribers information on what to expect and when.
 - Provide contact information for any questions or concerns during this phase.
 - Be responsive.
 - Offer for service and promotions.

2. Service Installation & Activation

- Opportunity: This is the next physical interaction with the brand.
- Enhancements:
 - Provide clear scheduling and real-time technician tracking.
 - Offer proactive communication (SMS/email updates).
 - Give a “Welcome Kit” offering tips for optimizing fiber speed and smart home connectivity.

3. Billing Cycle

- Opportunity: Monthly bills are a recurring touchpoint.
- Enhancements:
 - Simplify bills with clear breakdowns and usage insights.
 - Offer personalized recommendations (e.g., upgrade for streaming households).
 - Include loyalty perks or educational content about maximizing fiber benefits.

4. Speed & Performance Checks

- Opportunity: Customers often run speed tests or check performance.
- Enhancements:
 - Integrate easy-to-use speed test tools in the app – if you don't have one, consider creating one.
 - Provide proactive alerts if performance dips and offer instant troubleshooting.
 - Gamify performance (e.g., “Your fiber speed is 10x faster than the national average!”).

5. Seasonal Events & Peak Usage Times

- Opportunity: Holidays, major sports events, or streaming premieres.
- Enhancements:
 - Send tips for optimizing Wi-Fi during family gatherings.
 - Offer temporary bandwidth boosts or premium streaming bundles.
 - Create themed campaigns (e.g., “Fiber for the Big Game”).

6. Contract Renewal or Upgrade

- Opportunity: When customers approach renewal or consider upgrades.
- Enhancements:
 - Use data-driven personalization (e.g., “You've added three new devices, consider our Gig plan”).
 - Offer loyalty discounts or exclusive perks for long-term customers.

7. Outage or Maintenance Notifications

- Opportunity: These moments can make or break trust.
- Enhancements:
 - Communicate early and transparently.
 - Provide estimated restoration times and compensation options.
 - Offer self-help resources and live chat during outages.

8. Customer Support Interactions

- Opportunity: Every support call or chat is a chance to impress.
- Enhancements:
 - Implement AI-driven self-service for quick fixes.
 - Follow up after resolution with satisfaction surveys and helpful tips.
 - Turn negative experiences into positive ones with proactive goodwill gestures.

Proactive follow-ups can also be a tool to build trust, demonstrating that customers are more than a transaction. For new installs, follow up after 30 days with a quick Wi-Fi optimization tip or equipment check. For difficult technical issues, send a follow up text a week later to ensure everything is stable. For hardship or sensitive situations, send a handwritten note or local gift card.

These positive experiences create advocates, but only if you share them. Encourage techs and agents to flag “wow moments.” With customer permission, you can share stories on social media to build local goodwill and even turn those moments into internal celebrations, training examples, or customer testimonials.

Following the Ritz-Carlton example, give agents and technicians the authority to resolve issues quickly. Create a small discretionary budget to waive fees, drop off a replacement router, or send a goodwill gesture. This requires far less money than in hospitality but delivers the same effect: customers feel taken care of.

You don’t need a hotel-level budget to deliver hospitality-level experiences. Small, personal gestures, backed by empowered employees and a simple service philosophy, create stories customers remember and retell. In a category where products feel similar, customer experience becomes the brand.

BETTER CX STARTS WITH BETTER (SURVEY) LISTENING

Too many companies “guess” at what matters instead of asking directly. It is far better to operate from a place of truly knowing what you are doing well and where you can improve, so you can focus resources on the right things at the right time.

A strong survey mixes quantitative and qualitative questions and opens the door to an ongoing dialogue. A consistent feedback loop helps you see whether an issue is an isolated incident or a developing trend. It creates opportunities to strengthen your brand’s reputation by being responsive and showing customers that you genuinely care.

Other methods of customer feedback can be useful, but surveys are incredibly valuable in measuring the customer experience. For example, NPS and other customer satisfaction scores provide quantitative measures, but surveys dig deeper in providing customer insights and give more qualitative measures. Likewise, individual calls into a call center can skew negative and may reflect a single bad experience. A once-a-year relationship survey, with a broad invite and a required “why,” shows where you really stand, what is working, what is not, and where specific pain shows up. If a tricky build had construction issues, that will appear in many comments and in one town’s scores, which is different from one angry call.

Securing Responses

Getting people to take your survey itself is a measure of brand strength and loyalty. A healthy response rate shows customers see you as worth their time. To gain the most responses, it's critical to make the survey compelling to customers.

First, consider the channels used to invite customers to take the survey. Do your email campaigns have high engagement rates? If so, consider an email invite with reminders. If you utilize SMS messaging with customers, send a short link customers can execute on the go. Web banners, social media, or paper-based QR codes can also be used to advertise the survey opportunity.

Access equity is also important. Multiple languages should be considered to mirror diverse customer demographics, and a phone survey should be offered for those that prefer to answer verbally or do not have access to online services.

To instill trust in the survey process, put the time estimate up front, explain how the data will be used, goals of the survey, and assure recipients that their privacy is important and their response data will not be sold or shared.

Additionally, incentives are a great way to attract responses. Offer local gift cards or other prizes through a name drawing of customers that completed the survey.

Frequency

The FBA Marketing Committee recommends one comprehensive relationship survey per year. A broad, once-a-year invite pulls in the quiet middle, not just extremes. Scores that are gathered weekly or after every touch can swing with weather, billing cycles, or a single outage. That creates confusion. One annual benchmark with a required “why” gives leaders a clear signal and a shared story.

If your company feels the need to conduct Pulse Surveys, use them sparingly. These short, frequent surveys should be done no more than once or twice per year, and don't include an NPS question. Use pulses for one topic only. For example, first bill clarity or outage texts, and keep them to five questions or less. Treat pulses as checks on a specific fix, not as your brand barometer.

Response Rate Targets

The Committee also recommends a minimum 10% response rate. This creates a reliable benchmark, reduces noise from short term events, and gives teams a clear year-over-year view of what's working and what's not.

On a base of 5,000 accounts, 10% means 500 completes, which is enough to see clear trends. On a base of 18,000, 10% means 1,800 completes, which is very strong. If your base is small, use a minimum of 400 completes so you can still trust the results and capture enough voices to see real patterns by town, product, or service.

Securing Responses

Survey development can be tricky and needs to be objective, clear, and short. Before writing a single question for your survey, consider the problem you are trying to solve and what decision(s) you need to make to solve that problem.

Over time, the mix of comments matters too. Year over year, track not only how many people respond, but how many leave constructive or positive notes. Long comments are gold. They read like testimonials, they surface what is on customers' minds, and they help separate one-off stories from real patterns.

Sidebar:

Survey Starter Suggestions

1. How likely are you to recommend (your brand) to a friend or neighbor? 0 to 10
2. What is the main reason for your score? (open text)
3. It was easy to choose the right plan. (agree scale)
4. My installation went as expected. (agree scale)
5. My first bill matched what I was told. (agree scale)
6. My service has been reliable in the past 30 days. (agree scale)
7. Wi-Fi works where I need it in my home. (agree scale)
8. It was easy to get help the last time I needed it. (agree scale)
9. During an outage, I receive clear and timely updates. (agree scale)
10. What is one thing we could do to serve you better? (open text)

Explain Impact

Employ a WIIFM (what's in it for me?) strategy. Be proactive in convincing the members of your audience that completing your survey is just as important to them as it is to you. Communicate up front why taking five minutes out of an already busy day to answer your survey questions is worthwhile to them.

Some generic starting points:

- "We'd like to know what you look for in an internet carrier so that we can provide you with the best possible service and value."
- "With your input, we'll be able to offer you more of what you're looking for – in terms of products, service and value."
- "Your opinion is important to us because ..."

Be Direct

Get right into it with an overall satisfaction question. Research has shown that people are more likely to complete a survey and provide honest answers if they can start answering questions related to what the survey is about at the very beginning.

Also, one question = one thought. Ask one thing at a time, avoiding confusion with compound questions that have multiple topics, such as "Did the order and installation of XYZ internet meet your expectations?" Break it into two separate questions instead. A single multi-grid question should be counted for every instance of feedback you are asking for.

Shorter is Better

The shorter your survey is, the more likely it will be completed. Five minutes and 10 questions for a customer satisfaction survey should be sufficient. Mix quick-answer questions with one open text. Let people skip anything except the open text "why" question.

Avoid Bias

It is easier than you may think to telegraph the "right" answers to some questions. For example, if you asked, "Given climate change and the fact that many customers have a desire to be more environmentally friendly, do you agree that XYZ should stop mailing paper bills?" This question would most likely inspire the same answer from everyone as you are guiltily respondents into the answer that you want.

Use plain language, no jargon, and avoid loaded questions. Be careful to present all sides of an issue when you ask for an opinion. "Should XYZ Carrier offer a separate site for corporate account holders or is the current site sufficient?" doesn't give respondents an opportunity to consider other options. A better question would be "Which of the following do you think would help meet the needs of large customers?" and provide a list of several multi-choice options.

Other Tips

- Half of your customers likely have no idea what service they subscribe to, and you may be able to uncover issues specific to service level(s). "Pipe in" those service level options when possible so that you can address issues specific to customers one-on-one and run cross tabs in accordance with the type of service they are subscribed to.
- Demographic questions, if asked, should be at the end of the survey.
- Require one open text "why." You will capture praise as well as problems, often in detail.
- If you think there is a chance you want to use feedback collected in the survey publicly, add a consent checkbox at the end: "You may quote my comment with my first name and town".

SHARE WHAT YOU LEARN

Once the survey is completed, close the loop. Publish what was learned and how it will be addressed (or even celebrated). A one-page “What we learned” document can be built for internal and external audiences. Include three fixes you will launch within the year. Sharing “what we fixed” after last year’s survey encourages happy customers to weigh in next time.

As you collect responses, it’s helpful to tag and flag surveys with valuable data or responses. Tag each comment by theme and by moment in the customer journey and flag strong quotes for marketing and training.

Other outcomes and data that are helpful to track include:

- Positive ratio: Share of comments that are neutral to positive vs negative.
- Theme counts: Top three “why” themes with trend vs last year.
- Segment coverage: Responses by town, plan, and service so no group is under-represented.
- Testimonial yield: Number of comments you can reuse with permission.
- Action follow-through: Number of fixes launched that trace back to survey themes.

It is important to close the loop publicly. Thank respondents, share what changed, and invite participation next year.

CONCLUSION

Beyond price and speed, your brand is earned in everyday moments. Fiber gives you a technical advantage—fewer outages, lower latency, and fewer truck rolls. But those operational wins only matter if customers feel them. Customer experience is where your brand promise becomes proof. Measure what matters. A sequence of small, well-executed moments that together create trust, reduce churn, and turn customers into advocates.

Design repeatable moments that matter. Identify a few “moments that matter” in the customer journey and script simple, scalable responses for each. Automate what makes sense but preserve the human touch where it counts. Small, human gestures cost little and create outsized loyalty.

A well-run annual relationship survey will tell you not just whether customers are satisfied, but why. Use that insight to prioritize three high-impact fixes each year and publish what you learned and what you fixed to demonstrate that you listened. Closing the loop publicly turns feedback into credibility and increases participation next year.

Start small, move deliberately. You don’t need hotel-level budgets to deliver hospitality-level experiences. Choose a handful of experiments—one recurring gesture, one frontline empowerment change, one survey-driven fix—measure the impact and scale what works. Over time, these small investments compound into a reputation that competitors find hard to buy.

In a market where speed and price are table stakes, the companies that win will be the ones that turn everyday interactions into memorable stories. Make customer experience your competitive edge—and let the proof of your brand live in every interaction.