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HEALTHCARE

Insights

OPERATIONS, RELATIONSHIPS AND NET PROMOTER SCORE

The customer experience revolution.



HOMELINK

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OPERATIONS, RELATIONSHIPS AND THE NET PROMOTER SCORE

By Jim Nygren, VP of Business Development and Marketing, HOMELINK

It is by no means a controversial statement to say the world is an increasingly complicated place.

The post-acute health care space alone is full of nuance between the complexity of patient needs and the legislation and regulations that affect how providers can get patients what they need. While it's important to acknowledge that nuance, there are times when it's best to just be direct.

Think back to your elementary school days for moment. When you wanted to know if your crush felt the same way about you, you probably employed a simple approach—you passed over a

note that just said, “Do you like me?” with check boxes for “yes” and “no.”

When it comes to finding out how people feel about your business, service, etc., you can learn a lot from asking a simple, direct question. In this case, it's closer to, “On a scale of 0 to 10, with 10 being the highest, how likely are you to recommend our company, service, etc. to a friend or colleague?” The grown-up version of “Do you like me” is the fundamental building block of your net promoter score (NPS), and if you're not currently measuring it for yourself, you should be.

NPS Question Example

On a scale of 0 to 10, with 10 being the highest, how likely are you to recommend our company or service to a friend or colleague?



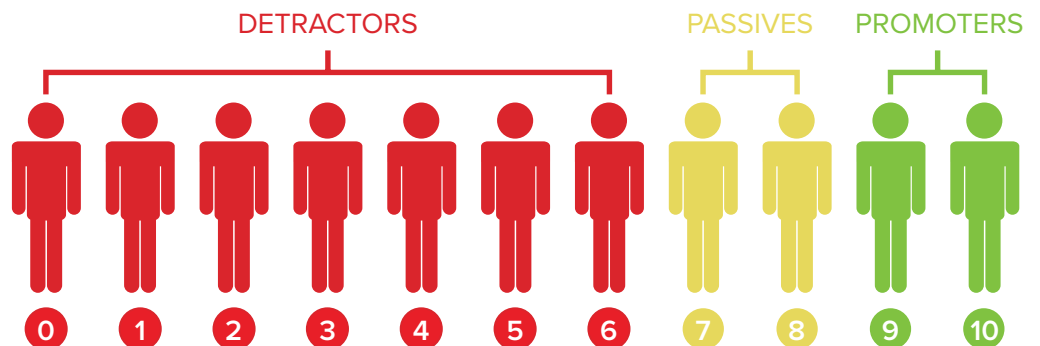
What is NPS?

NPS is more than just another acronym and a bunch of numbers. At its core, NPS is a loyalty metric that helps businesses determine how people feel about them. Traditionally, the NPS has been used to measure customer loyalty specifically, but you can apply it to other groups, such as employees.

The idea is this: instead of asking a series of questions in a long, drawn out survey, you ask one direct question like, “On a scale of 0 to 10, with 10 being the highest, how likely are you to recommend our company, service, etc. to a friend or colleague?” People are far more likely to take 15

seconds to answer one question than they are to spend several minutes filling out a longer survey. When HOMELINK started using an NPS model instead of traditional surveys, our response rate went from 1 percent to 20 percent.

Those who respond are then separated into one of three groups based on the score they give, as demonstrated in the graphic below:



71.4 HOMELINK's NPS
2018 Average



It's Really About Experience

What NPS does is put a number to your reputation. It isn't deep data, but it is incredibly valuable. It tells you how loyal people (e.g., customers, employees, etc.) are to your company. In short, NPS shows you how well you're building and maintaining relationships, and it points where you should focus your attention.

If you asked our company to pick one thing we value above all else, we say experience. At HOMELINK, fostering positive experience is ingrained in our culture. We connect patients, payers, and providers, so those relationships are important to thousands of individuals. The way we're implementing NPS tracking is about so much more than just seeing how people feel about us—it pulls our culture directly into our operations.

It Does More Than You Think

If all NPS did was help us cultivate relationships, that honestly would be enough. But, the effect of having a real-time experience metric is diagnosing a more serious problem long before you'd historically figure it out.

Because our NPS is tracked in real time, we can detect when issues arise more quickly than we would have in the past. For instance, while in the process of upgrading to a VoIP phone system, we noticed a small dip in our NPS. To us, this meant the upgrade had a couple of hiccups, and customers weren't getting the response they were accustomed to. Luckily, we knew something wasn't right, so we could begin troubleshooting before we even knew what the problem was.

What Can You Do Today?

If you're thinking about tracking your NPS (and you should be), the great news is it'll only cost you some time to get started. You don't need to invest in a lot of complicated software in the beginning. You already know the formula, so you can literally do the math.

First, figure out what question(s) you want to ask. If you're just starting out, there's no shame in working with some variation of the question we presented before. From there, determine when you want to contact your customers; probably following an interaction of some sort (e.g., communicating with a staff member, purchasing or receiving a product). Then send them the question. In our experience, you'll get more honest answers from people if you ask them via email, so we'd recommend starting there.

The other thing you can do is commit to the process. For the NPS tool to truly be effective, it has to be a part of your operational process. Immediate feedback is a must, with an urgency to follow up with detractors to get a better understanding of their experience. We find this to be the most valuable part of the tool. Otherwise, there are better things you can do with your time.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

[Jim Nygren](#) is Vice President of Business Development and Marketing for VGM HOMELINK who works with workers' compensation and group health payers across the country to better navigate ancillary networks and care coordination. Jim believes it is a care provider's obligation to provide the highest quality of care and experience for those they serve. Jim holds an MBA emphasizing in Finance and Marketing from Iowa State University.

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