



South Africa needs to put the care back into healthcare – Ask Afrika Orange Index[®] service benchmark

There are times when excellent service is more than an important element in the success of a business, in the healthcare sector, it can sometimes be a matter of life and death. The 13th annual Ask Afrika Orange Index[®] service benchmark found that the healthcare sector did not perform badly, but perhaps not as well in the service dimension as one may hope. Current trends show that consumers are looking for more than transactional efficiency, which is a hygiene factor, they want human engagement, empathy, and emotional connection. This year the Ask Afrika Orange Index[®] included new industries including Private Hospitals, Gyms and Healthclubs, and Funeral /Burial Services, bringing the number of industries measured up to 32.

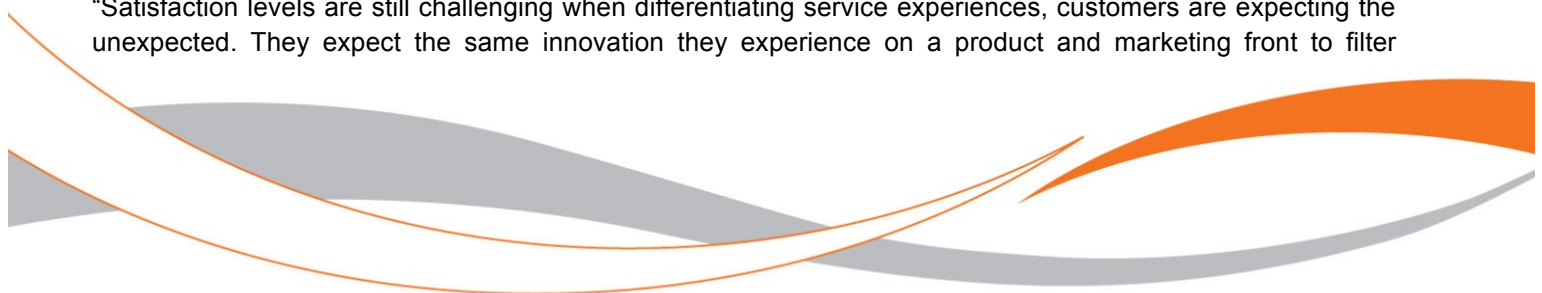
Netcare did the best in the healthcare sector coming 28th overall out of the 155 companies ranked and won the Private Hospital industry award. The next company in the sector was Mediclinic, 37th overall and second in the Private Hospital industry category. The Medical Aid industry then made a showing, not far behind with Discovery Health 40th overall and first in the Medical Aid Companies industry (industry winner in 2010), Bonitas was 44th overall and second in the industry (industry winner in 2009). Gems, last year's winner and having won in 2011, was in third place in the industry and 59th overall.

“The top performing companies performed significantly better on effort, reputation, and fairness. The biggest challenge and the poorest performing areas for companies were empathy, product benefits, value for money, first call resolution (FCR), and effort,” says Sarina de Beer MD of Ask Afrika.

As much as empathy and compassion is needed in the healthcare industries it is also vital in the Funeral/Burial Services industry Martin's Funerals won the industry award and came 62nd overall. Gym's and Health Clubs then made it into the rankings with industry winner Virgin Active coming 97th overall. The Doves Group was placed 100th overall and second in the Funeral/Burial Services industry, followed closely by Avbob third in the industry and 102nd overall.

Consumers are becoming more demanding about the level of service they expect and companies would be well advised to look into service strategies that would up their game. Life Hospitals came third in the Private Hospital industry and 120th overall, Medihelp (industry winners in 2006,2007, 2008 and 2012) came fifth in the industry and 134th overall. Planet Fitness was huffing and puffing a bit at the finish lines, second in the industry category and 148th overall. Bestmed still just made it into the rankings 154th overall and sixth place in the industry.

“Satisfaction levels are still challenging when differentiating service experiences, customers are expecting the unexpected. They expect the same innovation they experience on a product and marketing front to filter



through to the service environment. Great service is not sufficient for loyalty and commitment. Strong emotional satisfaction is imperative. Poor performing companies are still missing the basics,” says de Beer.

The Ask Afrika Orange Index® is a unique South African customer satisfaction benchmark, established in 2001 and now measuring 32 industries and 155 companies. The Ask Afrika Orange Index® is the broadest and most widely-referenced service excellence benchmark in South Africa, and not only measures service within industries, but across industries.

It includes ten of the most relevant service benchmarks and enables a 360 degree view of the company. This helps companies identify landscape changes, and it provides insights into the mass consumer trends informing service improvement strategies. The results of the Ask Afrika Orange Index® survey are audited by BDO and sampling expert Dr Neethling.

The Ask Afrika Orange Index® has a nationally representative sample of about 15, 000 respondents and measures transactional performance, overall service, effort, treat customers fairly (TCF), first call resolution (FCR), emotional satisfaction, reputation dimension, trust, and corporate social responsibility (CSR). It also measures emotional responses and not only rational experience, as emotions are typically more accurate and less ‘packaged’, and these responses correlate better with word-of-mouth, or a typical call to action. Loyalty is measured through the Net Promoter Score (NPS).

Full research reports can be purchased from Ask Afrika, providing specific insights into a company’s performance, contextualising this into the industry context, and into the general service delivery landscape, both locally and globally.

To order a full Ask Afrika Orange Index® research report call: 012 428 7400, www.askafrika.co.za

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About the Ask Afrika Group:

Over a period of almost two decades, Ask Afrika Group has grown to be the largest independent South African market research company. The company focuses on local relevance, benchmarked against the global context. Ask Afrika is a member of WIN/Gallup International and ESOMAR. Apart from its large South African footprint, Ask Afrika Group also operates in a dozen African continental territories.

Ask Afrika Group is well known for delivering strategic and large scale field projects and for creating benchmarks for industry. With regards to service excellence Ask Afrika Group is the preferred research partner across industries to co-craft customer service strategies through meaningful research methodologies across the value chain and customer service touch points.

TGI research, for which Ask Afrika Group owns the South African copyright, has an annual single source sample of 15 000 locally and 800 000 globally. It has a global geographic coverage of 70 markets, and measures services, products, media, and brands. Ask Afrika’s knowledge of brands is extensive and as owner of the local TGI license, it is the leader in brand expertise in South Africa. TGI can provide a commercial alternative to industry media measurements. It is the perfect vehicle for brand positioning.

The Ask Afrika Groups’ exclusive product suite includes the Ask Afrika Orange Index®, the Trust Barometer™, Radio Moods™, TGI (Target Group Index), Ask Afrika ICON Brands™ and TGI Township, the Digital Barometer, the Lite Data Collection, the Behavioural Sciences Package and Gateway. Ask Afrika is proud of its exceptional service delivery, with offices based in Pretoria and Stellenbosch. For more information please visit the website: www.askafrika.co.za

Issued on behalf of Ask Afrika by Stone Soup Public Relations

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