



How St. John Health Grows its Customer Base by Leveraging its Website

The Challenge: Quantifying the Web's Contribution

St. John Health provides quality medical care to millions of patients across the Detroit area. The health system has grown into the area's largest, with nine hospitals, 125 medical locations and more than 3,000 physicians. St. John's website, www.stjohn.org, is a critical business tool and connection with the community, patients, healthcare providers and others.

Pam Hedman, Web Center Director at St. John, realized that the health system relied on gut instinct and anecdotal feedback to determine how well its website met site visitors' needs. She could count the volume of visits, but she didn't have a scientific way to gauge who was coming to the website and why, let alone measure the web's effectiveness in supporting customer acquisition initiatives. Pam turned to ForeSee Results in 2003 to apply the proven and scientific methodology of the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) to measure online customer satisfaction.

SATISFACTION INSIGHT #1: SITE VISITOR COMPOSITION IS DIFFERENT THAN EXPECTED

When St. John started measuring the website with ForeSee Results, it found that job-seekers, not part of its primary target audience, comprised 56% of actual site visitors...a number far higher than expected. Interestingly, these job-seekers also browsed other areas of the site looking for healthcare and physician information.

Based on these findings, St. John separated out the job opening information so that people looking for positions could go immediately to the information they needed. In addition, St. John emphasized the health information content so job-seekers could also use the site as a health resource.

SATISFACTION INSIGHT #2: SEARCH IS A TOP PRIORITY

St. John's website faced the common challenge of making it easy for visitors to find specific information. "Voice of customer" data analyzed using the ACSI methodology showed that improvements to search would have a significant impact on increasing satisfaction and loyalty. St. John made a series of small, incremental improvements to its search experience, including eliminating confusing search results, enhancing the meta tags and enabling people to search by both medical and lay terms (e.g. hypertension and high blood pressure). The percentage of site visitors who found the search descriptions helpful increased 13% based on these changes.

Besides search, St. John enhanced the content of its website so that it was more focused on specific disease information and other topics of interest to the community, while also enhancing the site's navigation and look and feel.

SATISFACTION INSIGHT #3: ONLINE TRANSACTIONS DRIVE ROI

Like many businesses, St. John Health is increasingly using its website for transactions that were previously conducted in person or on the phone. One important online transactional tool is the "find a physician" tool. Based on data collected on its website, St. John enhanced the tool to make it more user-friendly for both patients looking for doctors and for doctors looking for other physicians for referrals—key to business growth.

The physician directory functionality had a huge impact on increasing site traffic and introducing new customers to St. John. The percentage of people coming to the site to find a physician rose 125% from August 2003 to August 2006. During the same time period, the number of site visitors with a St. John doctor grew 37.5%.



Case Study

In addition, St. John added a very popular interactive cancer risk assessment tool and functionality for pre-registration and appointment scheduling to its website. Besides making these services more convenient for patients, putting them online makes it easy for the health system to track ROI—and quantify the contribution of the website to the bottom line.

“Our website has really become an essential device to achieve St. John’s business strategy. Many departments rely on the voice of customer data we receive from ForeSee Results to plan initiatives that make the website—and the entire health system—better able to serve the community.”

—Pam Hedman, Web Center Director,
St. John Health.

Results:

ForeSee Results’ customer satisfaction analysis helps St. John look at its website from the customers’ perspective. The customer data informs budget decisions to help Pam and her team secure the funding they need for website initiatives. Specific results include:

- *Increased Site Traffic:* St. John’s website traffic grew 138% from June 2003 through June 2006, supported by site improvements and added functionality that attracted many new and returning site visitors.

- *Customer Acquisition:* By integrating web data with its CRM database, St. John has found that 15% of people conducting transactions online become new patients, an impressive statistic. St. John tracks annual revenue for new patients using the website and has exceeded its new patient goals for the past two years.
- *High Physician Satisfaction:* Physician satisfaction is high and one in five physicians who visit the site are coming to research a referral in the St. John network. Also, of the physicians who used the search function on the site, 83% found what they were looking for.
- *Feedback from Web Used throughout Organization:* Many departments have come to rely on feedback coming through the satisfaction analysis and open-ended questions, especially the HR department, which faces enormous recruiting challenges for nurses and other personnel.



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