Net Promoter Score Explained

The Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a metric built on how likely a customer is to recommend a product or service. In the simplest terms, customers are asked how likely they are to recommend the product or service, on a scale of 1–10, but there's more to this metric than meets the eye.

How is the net promoter score calculated?

The net promoter score is calculated by subtracting the percentage of respondents who gave a negative response from the percentage of respondents who gave a positive response.

So if we surveyed 10 people, got three negative responses, five positive responses, and two neutral responses, that gives us a calculation of 50%-30%, and a net promoter score of 20. A net promoter score can be any number between -100 and 100.

Positive, negative, and neutral responses

To have a universal metric, the NPS needs to have consistent categorisation of positive, negative, and neutral responses. If some cases classified a response of 8/10 as positive and others classified it as neutral, then the results from the calculations are not comparable.

When asked "how likely are you to recommend this product/service", a response of 0–6 is considered negative for the NPS. Responses of 7–8 are neutral, and responses of 9–10 are positive.

Interpreting the net promoter score—what is a good NPS?

Due to the nature of the NPS calculation, any score above zero is considered good. This may be surprising at first, as most of the time a score of zero doesn't feel positive, but a positive number means that there are more positive responses than negative responses.

A response of 30+ is great news, 80+ is amazing, and 100 is a perfect score that means there were zero negative responses. Any score under zero (a negative number) indicates more negative than positive responses, and should be taken as a sign to review and adjust.

Different industries have different average NPSs, so you should always take that context into account when reviewing your NPS. Consumers are more likely to offer favourable reviews to certain industries, so always benchmark yourself against relevant competitors.