

# How can *Voice of the Customer* research help you?

Hello, I'm Ann Amati, Principal, Deliberate Strategies Consulting. For the past 20+ years I've worked with owners who value individual B2B customer relationships. I know "getting inside your customers' heads" helps you make faster, more confident decisions. This is true whether you're tackling a priority issue or refreshing your strategic plan.

Here are situations some of my past clients were in when they called me, along with excerpts from a case study, a "sound bite" heard during a feedback interview, or a testimonial from a client.

What's your situation, and how may I help? (My contact information is at the bottom of the page.)



*"How can we strengthen revenue, competitiveness and company value?"*

## Strengthen strategic plan

Strategic plans are often developed without the input of customers. Each time you overlook important customer issues or make assumptions that you don't verify, you miss the chance to break through a growth barrier.

A "Voice of the Customer" research project will highlight hidden gaps and help your company move closer to *the full revenue potential* of your current assets, staff and business model.

*"Ann researched what made loyal customers loyal, how we could grow relationships with customers who bought from both us and from our competitors, and how we could start relationships with buyers who were familiar with us but weren't yet buying. . . Ann's research also uncovered a change affecting our competitiveness in that particular [geographic] market that had not yet come to my attention."* *[see Testimonials]*



*"What customer issues did I just inherit?"*

## Uncover hidden issues

This opportunity is particularly relevant to new leaders. Whether you bought, were promoted, or were hired to run the company, the more you know about the customer issues you inherited, the bigger and faster the impact you can make.

If company-initiated customer feedback wasn't part of the old culture, don't take silence to mean customers are completely satisfied or loyal.

Instead, let me listen to your customers. I'll give them a chance to state their expectations and praise what's so great about this company.

*"I had been in my position less than 90 days when I first engaged Ann Amati. Her findings gave us enough clarity into where we stand with our customers to know where to push and where to back off. . . Having an expert interviewer research our value proposition as experienced by our customers gave political capital to initiatives that needed to happen."* *[see Testimonials]*



*“How can we win back defectors?”*

## Reverse account turnover

Some customer leave for reasons beyond your control. Others make logical-sounding excuses on their way out.

After all, it can be difficult for one adult to say to another, “This is where you’ve been disappointing us.”

I will investigate

- *the story behind the story* of what happened,
- how you can win back defectors, and
- how pervasive the problem is before others experiencing the same disappointments make excuses and leave.

*“In terms of ROI, one measurable piece is having a chance to work with prior clients who had stopped considering us before you interviewed them. We’ve already re-engaged with two I know we wouldn’t have without your involvement.”*  
*[see Testimonials]*



*“How do we grow account size and add ‘new logos’?”*

## Restart stalled growth

Could the problem be messaging?

I’ll talk with your customers, then write a customer-to-customer description about your relevance to issues that matter to your target audiences.

Or are you “leaving money on the table?”

I’ll find up-sell/cross-sell opportunities, and develop your internal staff into true account managers.

I’ll find out what’s holding back the growth you deserve and provide you with actionable advice from experts: your customers.

*“The results of your work told us we were headed down the wrong path. While it was a message our company was reluctant to hear, recognizing the needs of our customers and uncovering market opportunities was critical for future success. I was amazed at your ability to extract such detailed data from our customers: they opened up to you in a way they never will with their sales rep or Management.”*  
*[see Testimonials]*



*“How do we win back customer trust and confidence?”*

## Repair problem accounts (at-risk, dormant, dissatisfied)

A “rescue mission” is where a big-dollar customer is vocal about their dissatisfaction or has quietly started withholding RFQs.

I will dig in, listen to both sides of the story from multiple sources on each side, and develop a plan that starts a new chapter in each problem account.

*“As soon as I can find an alternative, I’m going to fire them,” said an SVP during his feedback interview. He was my client’s third largest customer, so I immediately called in to summarize what this customer expected but wasn’t experiencing. The company snapped into action, solved the problems, and saved this important account. I interviewed SVP again in a follow-up interview. His feedback? “They went from being a nightmare of a vendor to my best over night. They’re perfect now.”*  
*[see Sound Bites]*



*“Why did we win this sale yet lose that one?”*

## Improve inconsistent sales

Why do you win when you win and lose when you lose? If you don’t know, then you don’t know how to adjust your sales process to win more consistently.

It’s not that problems are hard to *fix*; they’re hard to *find* when you’re looking from the inside the company.

At the end of a “Win-Loss” project, you’ll have clear—and probably easy—steps that will improve your win rate.

*“One customer spelled out very clearly why a competitor is awarded more of his business than we are. He was specific about what we could do to be considered more often. We’ve already begun following his recommendations, and we look forward to the enhanced relationship leading to a greater number of projects with his firm.”* *[see Testimonials]*



*“How can we secure contract renewal?”*

## Secure contract renewal

The rules of the game are changing. Boomers and Gen X-ers don’t make decisions the way Millennials do. The wave of Boomer retirements means your customers—and competitors—might soon be led by strangers.

“The best defense is a good offense.” Find out *now* where all internal influencers see *room for improvement* and protect your existing accounts.

*A service firm had been working on-site with a new customer in an unfamiliar industry for three rocky years. The firm’s leadership wanted to both earn a renewal and be perceived as ready to approach other prospects in their customer’s industry. Interviews with multiple key contacts revealed the team’s performance was fine, and progress up the learning curve was applauded as swift. However, there was a laundry list of issues that put renewal at risk. The firm took their customer’s feedback to heart. The contract extension was signed, and the customer offered hearty praise during reference checks. *[see Case Studies]**