

Kirova A.
H. V. Ohinko, research supervisor
Alfred Nobel University Dnepropetrovsk

MYSTERY SHOPPING

Do you love to shop? If so, you may be tempted by unsolicited emails or newspaper ads that claim you can earn a living as a secret or mystery shopper by dining at elegant restaurants, shopping at pricey stores, or checking into luxurious hotels. But, according to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the nation's consumer protection agency, marketers who promise lucrative jobs as mystery shoppers often do not deliver bona fide opportunities.

If you want to know how well a business is running, considering their customer service, honesty at business etc, then you are at the right place. May it be your own business or others business, by availing mystery shopper investigation service; you can have a check on the working of the business.

In this case a secret shopper poses as a customer or client, and tries to find out whether employees at a specific business are honest and helpful. If you own or manage a business, a mystery shopper can save your profits and your business by giving you a realistic view from a customer's perspective. This will help you get to know the positive and negative points of your business. You can later work on the negative points and improve on your services. This will also give you an idea about how each and every person you employ is working in your absence.

Mystery shopping programmes are unique and utilise the following suite of mystery shopping research tools:

- Brand Audits (bespoke operational evaluations)
- Customer & Staff Satisfaction Surveys (independent online surveys)
- Mystery Shopping (customer experience evaluations)
- Benchmarking (regular competitor progress tracking)
- Best Practice Management (tools and processes to achieve flawless execution)

Mystery shopping programmes are dedicated to help increase customer satisfaction, boost sales performance and build staff competence, resulting in increased profitability.

Retail Active mystery shopping services identify and guide you through the critical business issues that affect customer loyalty, satisfaction and sales. We help you to engage the issues to positively affect performance improvement.

Mystery shopping or a mystery consumer is a tool used externally by market research companies or watchdog organizations or internally by companies themselves to measure quality of service or compliance to regulation, or to gather specific information about products and services. The mystery consumer's specific identity is generally not known by the establishment being evaluated. Mystery shoppers perform specific tasks such as purchasing a product, asking questions, registering complaints or behaving in a certain way, and then provide detailed reports or feedback about their experiences.

Shoppers are often given instructions or procedures to make the transaction atypical to make the test of the knowledge and service skills of the employees more stringent or specific to a particular service issue (known as scenarios). For instance, mystery shoppers at a restaurant may pretend they are lactose-intolerant, or a clothing store mystery shopper could inquire about gift-wrapping services. Not all mystery shopping scenarios include a purchase.

After the visit the shopper submits the data collected to the mystery shopping company, which reviews and analyzes the information, completing quantitative or qualitative statistical analysis reports on the data for the client company. This allows for a comparison on how the stores or restaurants are doing against previously defined criteria.