



From Noise to Clarity:

A Customer Insight Team's Guide
to Driving Business Impact from Feedback

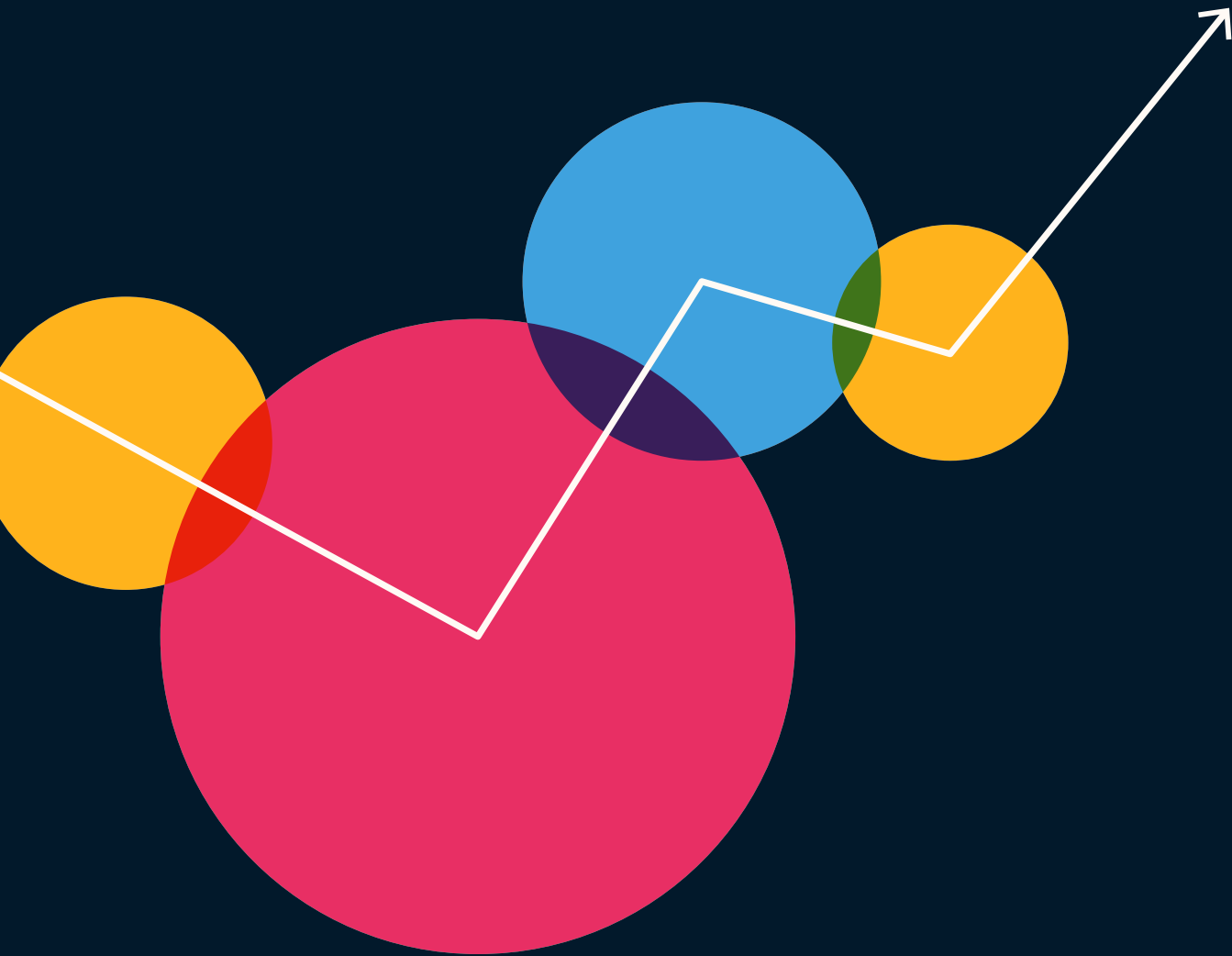
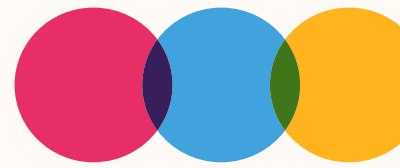


Table of Contents



01

**Your Customers are Talking.
Are You Listening?**

3

02

**Know Them, Win Them:
The Case for Understanding Your Customer**

4

03

**The Barriers Between Insight
Teams and Impact**

6

04

**The COMO
(Cost of Missing Out) Is Real**

8

05

**How to Unlock the Full Power of
Customer Feedback with AI**

9

06

Success Stories

12

07

Key Takeaways

17



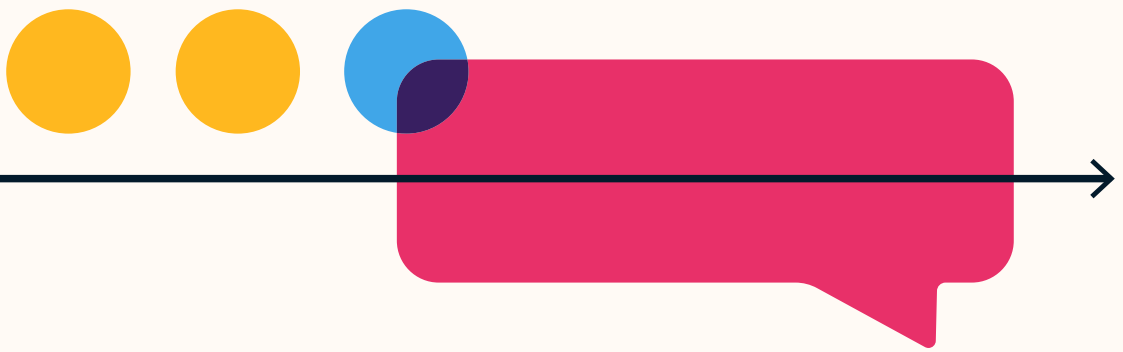
Your Customers are Talking. Are You Listening?

Every month, more than half of all internet users post reviews online, adding to an endless stream of unfiltered customer feedback—everything from survey comments, online reviews, support tickets, to chat transcripts, and social media posts. This flood of unstructured data is your richest source of truth, but also the hardest one to tame.

Unlike structured feedback, which tells you *what* your customers are thinking, unstructured feedback reveals the *why* behind their feelings, thoughts, and decisions in their own words. Within these open responses lie hidden themes, unmet needs, frustrations, wishes, and unexpected opportunities.

With consumers sharing experiences across countless platforms, forums, and websites, unstructured feedback is only growing. The real challenge isn't collecting it. It's making sense of it at scale. For many insights teams, the sheer volume can feel overwhelming.

AI bridges the gap, helping insights teams to cut through data overload, deliver clarity faster, and at a scale beyond traditional methods. In this playbook, we'll explore the opportunities hidden in unstructured customer feedback, the challenges teams face in uncovering business-driving insights, and how AI can transform raw comments into clarity—and clarity into action.



Know Them, Win Them: The Case for Understanding Your Customer


Customer expectations have reached an all-time high and they continue to rise. Shoppers today seek more than just simple transactions; they want meaningful connections with the brands they choose. They expect to see their values reflected, their voices heard, their needs understood, and met.

In today's evolving competitive landscape, understanding your customer isn't just a nice-to-have. It's the foundation for increased customer acquisition, retention, and business growth. According to Forrester, customer-obsessed organizations have seen 49% faster profit growth. However, being customer-obsessed requires a deep understanding of your customers. Research shows that 70% of decisions are based on emotion, including the brands consumers choose and stay loyal to. When customers feel understood and emotionally connected, the impact is measurable: 57% of consumers say they will increase their spending with brands they feel connected to.

The competitive advantage of knowing your customers before your competitors do

Customer insights teams have a highly coveted front-row seat to their customers' needs, wants, feelings, and motivations. By surfacing customer sentiment, preferences, and decision drivers early, insight teams have the power to give their organizations a first-mover edge.

This deep understanding becomes the foundation for smarter strategies, shaping not only how you design products but also how you create experiences that resonate as well as craft communication strategies.



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When you truly know your customers, you move beyond surface-level engagement to:

- **Unlock opportunities to personalize experiences:** By understanding different needs and preferences within your audience, you can tailor interactions, messaging, and support in ways that feel relevant and personalized to different customer segments.
- **Discover new product innovation:** Your customers often reveal unmet needs and frustrations in their own words. When you listen closely, these insights can inspire new ideas, shape product innovation, and keep your brand ahead of the competition. In fact, around 65% of successful product launches credit the integration of customer feedback as a central part of their strategy, proving that customer understanding is essential when introducing new products to your customers.
- **Build connections that strengthen loyalty:** When your customers feel seen and understood, they don't just buy from you once—they have the potential of becoming repeat customers. Studies show increasing customer retention by 5% can lead to profit increases ranging to up to 95%.
- **Turn satisfied customers into loyal advocates:** Beyond repeat purchases, these customers spread the word, recommend your brand to others, and amplify your growth through authentic advocacy. These customers are also the foundation of your community and a driving force behind long-term growth.

The equation is simple: *better understanding leads to better business outcomes.*

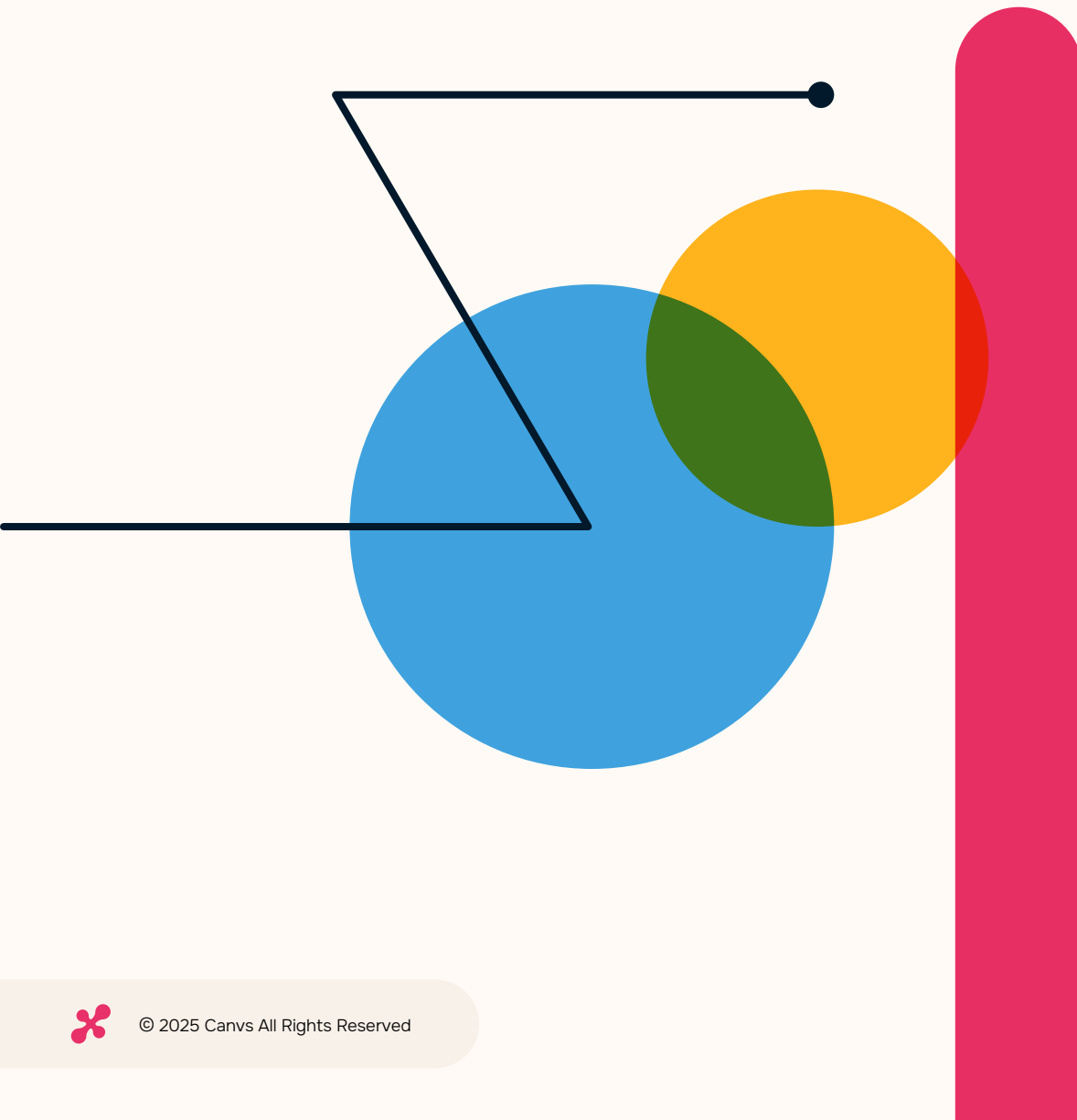
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The Barriers Between Insight Teams and Impact

Research shows that 80–90% of all data is unstructured, yet turning that volume of data into signal remains one of the toughest challenges for insights teams. With pressure to not just report but drive business decisions, the real test is making sense of feedback in a way that is fast, accurate, and actionable.



What's holding insight teams back?

It often comes down to these challenges:

- **Data Overload.** Brands receive thousands of open-ended responses every single day, from surveys, reviews, and support interactions to social media conversations. Traditional methods— manual coding, word clouds, or sampling— quickly collapse under the weight of this volume. Instead of clarity, teams are left with backlogs, incomplete analysis, and missed opportunities.
- **Lost Nuance.** Human expression is not always simple. Consumers communicate in layered, complex ways that are easy to misinterpret when relying on basic tools or manual review. Key signals often go undetected, including:
 - **Tone:** Subtle cues like sarcasm, humor, or frustration can completely change the meaning of a comment.
 - **Context:** Feedback often depends on situational factors (timing, environment, personal circumstances) that can be lost when stripped of detail.
 - **Emotion:** Customers rarely express just one feeling. Frustration and hope, excitement and hesitation often coexist in a single piece of feedback. Decoding these emotional layers is difficult but critical for true understanding.
- **Lack of Clear Objectives.** Many insight teams are caught between conflicting stakeholder requests and shifting priorities. Instead of proactive discovery, they find themselves in reactive cycles of answering ad hoc questions, leaving little room for deeper strategic work.
- **Interpretation Bias.** Even the most experienced analysts can bring unconscious assumptions into their coding and interpretation, which can skew findings. Without standardized, scalable methods, bias seeps into insights.
- **Low Bandwidth and Inadequate Technology.** Small teams often struggle to keep pace with high feedback volumes, especially when working with fragmented or outdated technology stacks.



04

The COMO (Cost of Missing Out) Is Real

When qualitative feedback is under-analyzed, brands lose more than just data points. They lose opportunities to strengthen customer loyalty and grow revenue.

- **Missed Insights at Scale:** Subtle but powerful signals, like emerging customer frustrations, unmet needs, or shifting preferences and trends, remain hidden in the noise. Without surfacing these patterns, brands risk falling behind competitors who act on them first.
- **Weakened Loyalty:** When customer concerns, needs, and desires go unaddressed, satisfaction quickly erodes. Studies say that in today's competitive market, 52% of customers will switch to a competitor after just a single negative impression, underscoring the importance of addressing customer needs.
- **Lost Revenue:** Opportunities to strengthen customer relationships, prevent churn, and create upsell or cross-sell opportunities slip away, turning what could have been growth into avoidable loss.
- **Direction Gap:** Data without interpretation leads to confusion, not clarity. When insights remain fragmented or shallow, teams lack a clear strategic path forward. This not only weakens the impact of research but also limits the influence of insight teams within the organization.

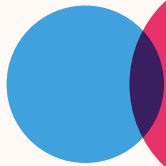
When insight teams can't overcome these barriers, the entire organization suffers. Valuable customer voices go unheard and the team's potential to drive growth and loyalty remains untapped.



How to Unlock the Full Power of Customer Feedback with AI

Qualitative feedback is gold, but mining it has always been slow, manual, and inconsistent—until now. *The emergence of AI has changed the game.* By analyzing qualitative analysis with speed, scalability, accuracy, and consistency, AI empowers insight teams to go from raw feedback to business impact in minutes, not months.

Instead of drowning in data, teams can focus on uncovering patterns, drawing meaning, and delivering insights that move the business forward. The key isn't replacing existing workflows, but enhancing them. *And most importantly, AI doesn't replace the human element. It elevates it.*



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Think of AI as your teammate that quickly processes and organizes unstructured feedback, surfacing the patterns and signals that matter most. From there, your team brings the critical context, storytelling, and strategic framing that give those insights weight inside the organization. The partnership of human expertise with AI's efficiency transforms customer feedback into a true competitive advantage.

An AI teammate, like Asa by Canvs, helps you boost productivity, uncover deeper insights, and deliver revenue-driving strategies.

Asa empowers you to:

- 1. Explore your unstructured feedback with ease:** Gone are the days of manual digging. With Asa, automate uncovering key insights, summarizing results and drafting reports instantly, not in weeks or months.
- 2. Blend your quant and qual data and get the best of both worlds:** Quickly spot trends and shifts in customer sentiment by leveraging Asa to highlight key differences across demographics and overtime at scale.
- 3. Turn data into stories:** With the time saved, you can focus on the strategic view and craft a compelling story around the data. Asa, helps by suggesting, building, and tailoring visualizations that make insights stand out, from charts to graphs.
- 4. Share your key insights in an instant:** Asa can draft your reports, suggest questions or next steps for stakeholders. That frees you to focus on where your expertise matters most: refining, editing, and ensuring the reports align with strategy and expectations.



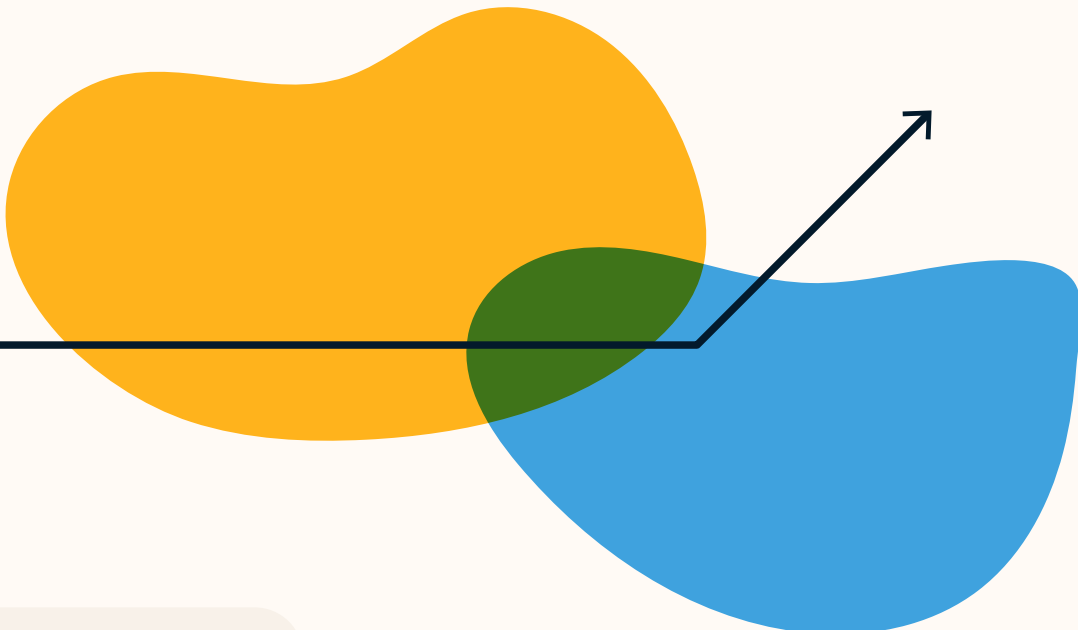
The future of insights isn't human versus AI. *It's human with AI.* Teams that embrace AI aren't just keeping pace with the flood of feedback, they are unlocking its full potential to strengthen the customer journey, drive loyalty, and shape smarter business decisions.

| Category | Before Adopting an AI Teammate | After Adopting Asa (AI Teammate) |
|---------------------|--|--|
| Workload | Teams overwhelmed by repetitive tasks; manual effort required for research, reporting, and coordination. | Asa automates repetitive work, streamlines research, and generates reports instantly, reducing workload significantly. |
| Decision-Making | Decisions delayed due to slow data gathering and fragmented insights. | Asa surfaces real-time insights and patterns, enabling faster, evidence-based decisions. |
| Collaboration | Communication gaps between teams; knowledge often siloed or lost. | Asa centralizes knowledge, ensures context is shared, and acts as a bridge between cross-functional teams. |
| Efficiency | Processes are often slowed by manual analysis and switching between tools. | Asa integrates seamlessly, speeding up workflows and boosting productivity. |
| Customer Insights | Gathering and analyzing customer feedback at scale is time-consuming, errorprone, and often incomplete. | Asa rapidly analyzes customer feedback, highlights themes, and uncovers emotional drivers at scale. |
| Employee Experience | Teams feel overburdened and stretched thin, leading to burnout. | Asa reduces workload stress, allowing employees to focus on strategic, creative, and high-value work. |
| Scalability | Scaling insights and operations requires hiring more people and additional resources. | Asa enables scalable insight generation and support without proportional headcount increases. |
| Innovation | Limited time for brainstorming and innovation due to daily grind. | Asa frees up time, enabling employees to innovate and experiment more often. |

06

Success Stories:

From Feedback to Business Growth



Scaling Customer Understanding to Power Product Innovation and Loyalty

The Challenge:

As a fast-growing brand, Fabletics was overwhelmed with unstructured feedback from brand health surveys to thousands of product reviews. Their consumer insights team was responsible for surfacing decision-ready insights across product, marketing, retail, and CX functions. With limited bandwidth and increasing internal demand, the team struggled to consistently analyze customer feedback, track sentiment over time, and connect insights to business decisions.

The Solution:

To scale their impact and make sense of high volumes of unstructured feedback, Fabletics partnered with Canvs to automate and enhance analyzing qualitative data. With Canvs, the consumer insights team was able to apply consistent code frames to open-ended survey responses, allowing them to monitor shifting sentiment over time and surface emerging themes for the executive team.



The Results:

Using Canvs, Fabletics found that customers were frustrated with the fit of their scrubs, especially curvier women expecting the stretch of activewear. This insight directly led to the development of a new product: the Flex Scrub Top, now one of their top-reviewed items. Additionally, Fabletics began aggregating and analyzing product reviews at the style level, helping merchandising teams make informed updates to sizing, fit, and fabric choices. Key outcomes include:

- **Faster Time to Insight:** Uncovering emotional drivers and product-level pain points to help teams create better, more inclusive designs.
- **Product Innovation:** Identifying fit issues for curvier customers which led directly to the design of the Flex Scrub Top - a best-selling product that not only solved a key customer pain point but also strengthened brand loyalty and opened new growth opportunities within the product line.
- **More Actionable Feedback:** With clear, data-backed insights, the consumer insights team amplified the voice of the customer across the organization, keeping it central to decision-making.



"We really see ourselves as the advocates for the Fabletics customer. So much goes into a business decision, and what can get lost is empathy. We're the ones who sit with the data day in and day out, so we constantly work to bring customer emotion and perspective back into the conversation"

Kyla Balkan, Director of Consumer Insights and Strategy, Fabletics

Reducing Customer Churn by Understanding Audience Sentiment

The Challenge:

The National Geographic Brand Insights team set out to reduce customer churn and boost satisfaction and loyalty. They had a wealth of subscriber comments, reviews, and survey feedback but processing and analyzing thousands of them was a daunting challenge.

The Solution:

Leveraging the Canvs platform, the team uncovered meaningful insights from unstructured feedback to understand how subscribers were engaging with its iconic brand and content, including:

- Nuanced feedback on how aspects of content were driving subscriber satisfaction and loyalty.
- Emotional triggers that foster loyalty, including appreciation for National Geographic's educational and inspiring storytelling.
- Audience feedback on areas for improvement, including clarity in communication about subscription features and promotions.

Canvs empowered the National Geographic team to move beyond surface-level data, unlocking the “why” behind their subscriber satisfaction and loyalty.

The Results:

Armed with these insights, the National Geographic team implemented targeted strategies to improve customer satisfaction and retention. Key outcomes included:

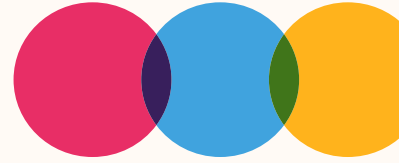
- **Proactive Churn Mitigation:** By identifying dissatisfaction early, the team addressed key pain points such as unclear subscription terms or unmet programming expectations.
- **Enhanced Customer Loyalty:** Highlighting and reinforcing emotional connections, such as the audience's appreciation for authentic storytelling helped increase overall satisfaction.
- **Data-Driven Decision Making:** Faster analysis of unstructured feedback allowed the team to implement changes more quickly, ensuring a better experience for their audience.



"Canvs allows us to go deeper into understanding what truly matters to our audience, giving us the tools to improve satisfaction and retain loyal customers."

National Geographic Brand Insights Team

Key Takeaways



1. **Voice of the Customer is your greatest growth driver.** Every strong business outcome begins with a deep understanding of customer needs, wants, and emotions. When customers feel seen and heard, they reward brands with loyalty, advocacy, and sustained growth.
2. **Unstructured feedback is your richest source of truth.** Open-ended comments, reviews, and social comments reveal the why behind customer decisions and sentiments. But this goldmine only delivers value when teams can analyze it at scale, otherwise insights stay buried and opportunities slip away.
3. **AI turns insight teams into impact engines.** By combining human expertise with AI, insight teams can analyze vast amounts of feedback with speed and accuracy, while keeping the emotional nuance. AI takes care of the heavy lifting, while humans bring context, empathy, and strategy—together turning raw feedback into clarity and action.
4. **The time to act is NOW.** Leading brands are already using AI to transform feedback into competitive advantage, shaping smarter strategies, building stronger loyalty, and influencing the highest levels of decision-making. Insight teams that embrace this shift today will be tomorrow's market leaders.



About Canvs

Canvs is the leading customer feedback platform built to accelerate decision-making and drive measurable business impact. Backed by over a decade of innovation and purpose-built AI that turns unstructured feedback from any source into clear, impactful insights. Trusted by the world's top brands, Canvs empowers teams to decode what customers want, why they stay loyal, and how to keep them engaged—powering better acquisition strategies, stronger retention, and sustained growth.

Book A Meeting

Ready to turn insights into impact?

See how Canvs helps insight teams move beyond surface data to deliver clarity, influence strategic decisions, and drive measurable business results.

BOOK A MEETING