

Animation 2.2

Consider quality as an order qualifier or order winner. Within the category of quality we have identified nine main factors:

Performance: How well the product or service meets its product or service specification. So a vacuum cleaner is measured primarily on how well it cleans rather than any other feature.

Features: Added product or service refinements which support the primary requirement. How easily a vacuum cleaner stores away after use may be a useful feature.

Consistency: The ability of the product or service to consistently perform to its specification over time. A good quality watch is required to keep time accurately over several years.

Conformance: The ability of a product or service to perform according to its specification. Electrical goods have a safety mark to show that they conform to a standard which gives confidence to the purchaser that they are fit for use.

Technical durability: How a product or service performs to its specification despite variations in conditions. Children's toys for example need to be durable.

Serviceability: The ability of a product to be maintained and continue to work acceptably over an extended time period. Improvements in motor car design have enabled some companies to offer a 7 year extended warranty.

Aesthetics: The look, feel, sound or smell of a product or service. Vacuum cleaners made by Dyson for example have a specific style and are made in bright colours to appeal to purchasers. Service companies such as fast food restaurants have identical décor across many different locations to create a consistent brand image.

Perceived quality: This is the notion of customer satisfaction and whether there is a gap between customers' expectations and their experience. Many hotel companies use questionnaires or comment cards to collect this information.

Value for money: Customers may be willing to accept a lower specification for a product or service offered at a lower price. A good example of this is in the low cost airline business.