



eXcap



Shimano is going after the cyclist

Page 5

“I think it shows strength
to turn to an expert”



“In those two days, the
entire customer journey
was captured per group”

Everyone is familiar with Shimano as a brand, but who are the consumers who deliberately choose it? Shimano holds a strong position in the cycling world, but is looking for ways...

...to further engage consumers with its brand. The first steps have been taken in that direction, with the support of excap.

Shimano has a rock-solid reputation in the world of cyclists. Bicycle retailers like to recommend a derailleur, chain, gear set or brake set of the brand.

But does the end user really think it is important? And does it matter to him if the bike is equipped with a top-class brake disc or a slightly cheaper version? Shimano was not quite sure. Although the Japanese company has contact with the end user, mainly online, this question has not yet been particularly addressed. After all, the company mainly deals with original equipment manufacturers and dealers.



“We want to tailor our service center to **meet the needs of our end user.**”



“What drives the consumer? That is essentially the most important question we wanted to see answered,” says Erik-Jan Brunninkreef, Retail Service Manager of Shimano Europe. “Shimano is a company that aims to make its products as good as possible. In order to retain our strong position, we also need to look more closely at our target group; we need to know whether we are meeting the consumer needs. We have developed a Shimano Service Center, and we want to tailor it to meet the needs of the end user better. In order to do that, we must gather more insights in our end users.”

These are typical questions that a company like Shimano cannot answer itself.

The answer requires a thorough analysis and a certain degree of detachment from the company itself. This is why Brunninkreef asked excap for help. “We are interested in the entire customer journey. I know that this is a typical case in which excap is specialized.”

“We are interested in the entire customer journey.”

That is true. Shimano wanted to get to know its consumers. This is why Shimano initiated a research within four different countries. Four countries with four languages, four cultures, four customer journeys.

"I think that shows strength, not to summon someone from your own circles, but to turn to an expert."

That is what Mike Hoogveld - the expert himself - says. Hoogveld is specialized in improving sales and service organizations. He has already worked with excap to further improve the customer experience at Hornbach home improvement stores. Excap works together with multiple partners on a regular basis to find the best solution for specific issues.

For Shimano's project, excap and Hoogveld went to Sweden, Germany, France and the Netherlands. During their visits, they met with groups of users of Shimano's products and the retailers who sell Shimano's products. Groups of different sorts, from sporty power users to people who occasionally take a ride in the city. Hoogveld: "These focus group sessions were very fruitful. We presented a number of specific questions to the participants. The result is a series of concrete projects that Shimano is currently working on with excap."

For instance, it turned out that the Shimano Service Center - a shop in bicycle retailers that stands for delivering the best possible service you can get on your Shimano products - could use some more knowledge about the consumer.

Brunninkreef: "That is very important to us. We want to help retailers through these service centres. They also help us to create a positive brand experience among consumers. In the sessions we had with excap we discovered that the concept could be embraced even more than it is now. We can do this by raising awareness. That is an eye-opener. That's something we started working on right away." Mike Hoogveld turned the results of the meetings with cyclists into workshops for Shimano employees. "We just started to think about how satisfied our customers really are and what we can do to improve that.

This two-day workshop, with everyone involved from the four countries, was very fruitful. This resulted in eight projects, which we subsequently described in more detail."

In those two days, the entire customer journey was captured per group.

"I think it shows strength, not to **summon someone from your own circles.**"



“We
reinforce
each other,

it’s that
simple”

Which considerations do these consumers make when buying a bicycle? And what are the prime motivations when they seek service for their two-wheeler? What do they all encounter? What are they looking for? What do they find important? The results formed a great source for a priority list that Shimano started working on. A priority list to connect consumers to the brand.

Research shows that our consumer is looking for information. Why is one chain more expensive than another? What makes Shimano better than other brands? Questions that a retailer can answer with the help of Shimano. But this is something that does not happen enough.

It is a long-term project. The collaboration between Shimano and excap is far from finished.

Brunninkreef: “For me, the challenge is to keep the priorities that we have set as a result of the research. I’ll keep brainstorming with excap and Mike Hoogveld to track our progress and how we need to move forward.” The first step has been taken, by establishing KPI’s for the action points.

Mike Hoogveld can’t wait. “This type of project generally makes me happy. Usually I don’t get involved in consultancy work until another party has already conducted the research. This is not always pleasant, because you don’t know how it was executed or whether the correct questions were asked. This collaboration with excap completes the whole picture for the customer. From research to advice, and monitoring compliance, all in the hands of one party. That is ideal. We reinforce each other. It’s that simple.”



Mike Hoogveld is one of the most requested speakers in the Netherlands on customer-related topics.

The partner of the Holland Consulting Group also carries out scientific research into customer experience and wrote several books on the theme, which became best-sellers. As an advisor, he likes to work with excap. “Because excap focuses on the entire chain, which is important to a company like Shimano. Solely conducting research is not enough. Consultancy and help translating the result into practice to achieve improvement is key. I think that is a sign of strength”.

“Excap focuses on the entire chain, which is important to a company like Shimano.”



Want to learn more?
excapinternational.com

excap

Amsterdam
John M. Keynesplein 19

Antwerp
Ankerrui 9

Groningen
Helperpark 312



+31 20 204 45 08
info@excapinternational.com
excapinternational.com