



Cornell University
The Cornell Store

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Survey Provides Guidance for The Cornell Store:

Over 3,100 Customers Participated; Reported Increased Satisfaction

Ithaca, NY – The aspects of The Cornell Store which customers say they most value are its knowledgeable staff and the reliability of having textbooks available before classes start. Other attributes which were rated very highly include: problem solving, speed of service during the first week of classes, and the store's refund and exchange policies.

Those are the findings of a comprehensive survey of Cornell students and staff conducted by the store. From March 2 through March 6 of this year customers completed the survey, which was conducted entirely online. The survey format was designed by the National Association of College Stores for The Cornell Store. This enables The Cornell Store to compare its results to those of other college stores which have utilized the same survey instrument, and also to previous implementations of this survey at Cornell in April 2002, April 2005, and April 2007.

There were 3194 responses total: 62% from students; 30% from Cornell University staff; and the remainder from alumni or visitors. The overall satisfaction rating increased from 3.72 in 2007, to 3.88 this year (on a scale of 1-Low to 5-High).

The aspects customers indicate as important and needing improvement all relate to textbook pricing, both at beginning of the semester, and the value books have at buyback. This distribution of ratings exactly matches the pattern in previous years, and for other

college stores. Cornell scores slightly lower than the industry average for “competitively priced textbooks,” at 2.72 compared to 2.96, but scores higher than the average for “fair prices when selling back your textbooks,” 2.78 compared to 2.55.

On several factors connected to the textbook cost issue the store continued a trend of improvement first reflected in the 2005 survey: “Availability of used textbooks” increased from 3.16 in 2005 to 3.19 in 2007, and 3.32 this year. “Fair prices when selling back your textbooks” increased from 2.28 (2005) to 2.44 (2007) to 2.78 this year.

“We are very pleased that the results reflect the focus we’ve placed on used books,” said Gary Swisher, deputy director of The Cornell Store. “Textbooks are expensive so we’ve been steadily increasing our used book supply. This has involved making buyback more convenient and paying more for more titles, so students benefit both when buying and when selling.”

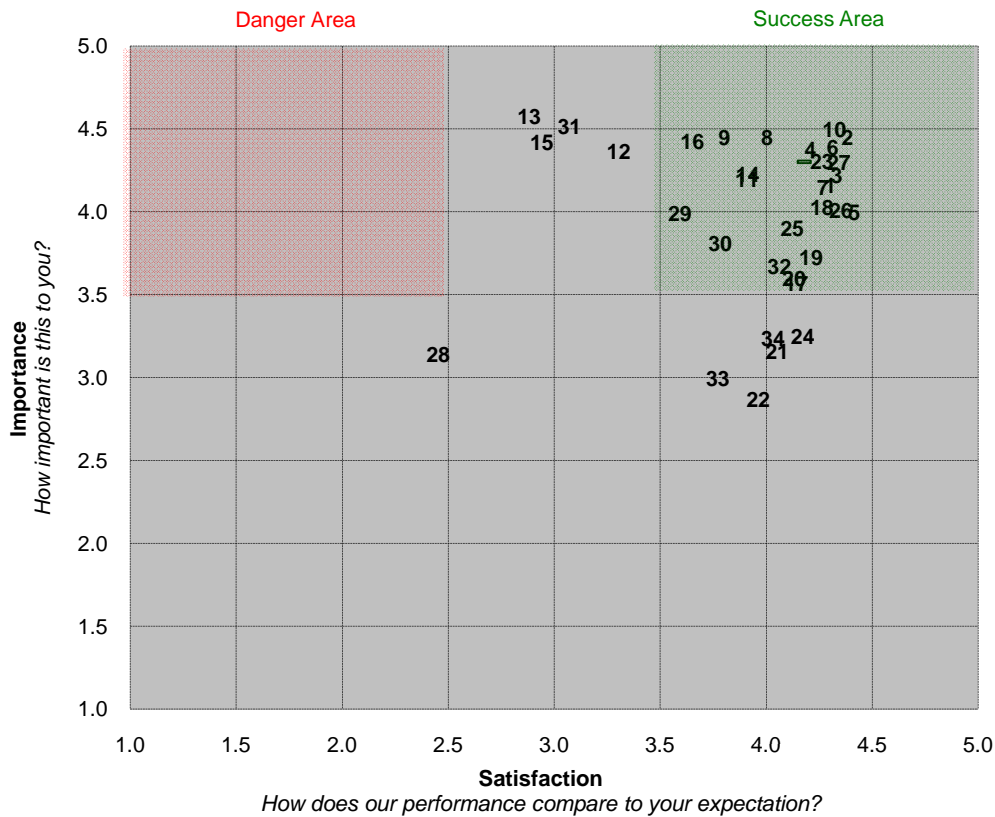
The survey consisted of thirty-four factors on which customers were asked to rank the importance of the factor to them, and their satisfaction with the store’s performance on that factor. The results are displayed visually on the enclosed “scattergram.” The upper right section, which includes items that received high rankings for both importance and satisfaction, can be considered the “success area.” The upper left section, where customers identified items that are very important to them but where their satisfaction is lower, can be considered the “danger area,” that is, the items most needing attention.

“We will continue to study the survey data and the thousands of written-in responses from customers in order to identify improvements we can make,” said Margie Whiteleather, strategic projects manager for The Cornell Store. “It’s enormously helpful that so many members of the Cornell community took time to give us their feedback.”

To ensure objectivity with the results, all survey results were compiled and analyzed by the research staff of the National Association of College Stores. Headquartered in Oberlin, Ohio, NACS is the non-profit trade association for college and university bookstores across the country, of which The Cornell Store is a member. NACS offers this survey service to member stores as part of a benchmarking and best practices initiative for the college store industry.

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Cornell Store Customer Survey -- March 2009



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| 1 Warm & friendly staff | 18 Selection of school supplies |
| 2 Knowledgeable staff | 19 Selection of apparel/insignia items |
| 3 Adequate number of staff | 20 Selection of computers/software |
| 4 Speed of service 1st week of classes | 21 Selection of electronics products |
| 5 Speed of service other times | 22 Selection of food and beverage items |
| 6 Resolution of problems | 23 Ease of locating items |
| 7 Responsiveness to special orders | 24 Attractive displays |
| 8 Refund/exchange policies | 25 Helpful in-store signs |
| 9 Convenient store hours | 26 Pleasant shopping atmosphere |
| 10 Textbooks available when classes start | 27 Convenient location |
| 11 Comm. re: expected arrival of late/OOS texts | 28 Convenient parking |
| 12 Availability of used textbooks | 29 Useful web site |
| 13 Competitively priced textbooks | 30 Good source for one stop shopping |
| 14 Convenience of selling back textbooks | 31 Competitive prices overall |
| 15 Fair prices when selling back textbooks | 32 Communication about store events |
| 16 Overall (text selection, price, returns, etc.) | 33 Store involvement in campus activities |
| 17 Selection of general and reference books | 34 Email from the store (pers. Buyback info, newsletter, sales, etc.) |