



## [ CASE STUDY ]

ViewsCast real-time automated survey system captures the voice of the customer and gives Applebee's the dish on customer feedback.

### The Challenge

**Does your opinion count?** Applebee's Neighborhood Grill & Bar® says "Absolutely"! Applebee's® places a high degree of importance upon the opinions of their guests. Finding out this valuable information directly from their customers is key - without this information it would be difficult to run a successful operation. After all, if customers aren't happy with their experiences they won't return - and likely neither will their friends and family. Applebee's understands the importance of this information - the challenge is in capturing this customer feedback in a timely manner, having it be representative of their guests across the entire chain, and having it be actionable so that the information uncovered can give them insight and direction into what is working and what isn't in each of their restaurants so that these findings can be addressed appropriately.



**Darren Epperson,**  
Associate Director  
of Customer Feedback for  
Applebee's International, Inc. states,

“*Three things impressed us about Synovate as we interviewed companies to help us with our test of the voice of the customer: their research capabilities, their experience and success with the project we had in mind, and the resources they were willing to dedicate to the project.*”

### The Solution

In an effort to meet this challenge head on, Applebee's turned to Synovate, one of the world's top research firms with a solid history of conducting customer surveys like these for clients. Synovate offers clients the highest level of service, expertise, and state-of-the-art data collection methodologies needed to successfully run a program of this magnitude. The solution for Applebee's involves inviting their guests to participate in an automated IVR-based telephone survey which utilizes the Synovate ViewsCast™ system. The survey asks questions about their visit to the restaurant where they received the invitation. Information regarding their visit is captured to help Applebee's understand how their guests evaluated their entire visit from the time they entered the parking lot to the time they left the restaurant.

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>> Through the use of the ViewsCast system and their custom reporting website, Applebee's is able to receive real time survey results providing the knowledge needed to run their business effectively and to keep their guests satisfied.

### The Project

Synovate worked closely with Applebee's International, Inc. to design the guest satisfaction program that would best serve their goals and objectives. Key areas of measurement were determined that served as the basis for the survey to ensure that Applebee's collected information about the guest visit that would be actionable so that any out-of-line situations could be rectified.



Every nth customer who visits Applebee's is invited to call ViewsCast via an invitation printed on their cash register (POS) receipt. Upon calling, guests enter a unique ID code (found on their receipt) to access the survey. They then answer automated questions by pressing the

buttons on their phones that corresponded to their answers. They also have the opportunity to leave a spoken verbatim comment at the end of the survey. As incentive for participating in the survey, guests receive a discount off their next meal purchase. To ensure ViewsCast is collecting the most accurate feedback possible, guests are asked to call within three days of their restaurant visit.

Applebee's management from all levels are provided access to various reports (based on level within the organization), as well as their customer comments, directly from their secure, real time Synovate reporting website. This real time reporting gives Applebee's the power to tap into their customers experiences 24/7/365.

### The Result

Applebee's has received invaluable information from their guest satisfaction program. Through the implementation of their customer feedback program; Applebee's has become closer to their customers and has insight into directions for improvement. This program has also highlighted best practices that occur within the chain so that those can be driven throughout the organization for maximum impact. Customers know that Applebee's cares about their business by the very fact they are asking for their opinions and are making improvements as a result of that feedback. Customer opinion does indeed matter to Applebee's!

### About Applebee's International, Inc.

Applebee's Neighborhood Grill & Bar, owned by Applebee's International, Inc. is the world's largest casual dining concept. Headquartered in Overland Park, Kansas, Applebee's franchises and operates over 1,700 casual dining restaurants in 49 states and 12 international countries. For more information please visit <http://www.applebees.com>.

## From a company driven by curiosity

 Synovate is a global market intelligence and research company full of curious people who continuously stretch the definitions of conventional research. The company operates in 46 countries across the world.

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