

For Customers Delivering Peace of Mind and Satisfaction to Every Customer

In order to create user-friendly products, Sharp is applying customer feedback from the Customer Assistance Center toward product improvements. Sharp pursues customer satisfaction by supplying products and services that customers can always rely on.

Actions in Fiscal 2007		Objectives for Fiscal 2008
Objectives	Achievements	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further improve quality in the early stages of product making (planning and design) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieved better product quality and reliability and a shorter evaluation cycle by expanding application of design parameters for the development and design process Strengthened the analysis system by assigning more failure analysis technicians (currently 53 more than the previous year) Issued a revised version of Company-Wide Technical Safety Standards (14th edition) and promoted product making in line with the strengthened standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinforce design quality and product safety through the use of statistical methods and tools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the number of design parameter applications for the development and planning process Update and strengthen Company-Wide Technical Safety Standards Promote inter-company sharing of technical analysis capabilities Improve products by taking on the customer's point of view and introduce more universal design products <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activate the Voice of the Customer (VOC) program to incorporate customer feedback into product making Pursue "no customer waiting" responsiveness and faster, more reliable service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reorganize the reception system during peak times to improve the consistency of the phone call reception rate Implement ongoing training in response techniques for customer assistance agents Strengthen efforts to improve the percentage of repairs that can be completed in one visit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce more universal design products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 109 models of 19 products recognized as universal design home appliances by the Association for Electric Home Appliances in Japan Implemented product improvements based on usability test results and analysis of customer feedback 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the phone call reception rate to achieve a higher ranking in customer satisfaction surveys of inquiry response skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The phone call reception rate increased by 10.7 points over the previous year as a result of improvement efforts, including predicting the number of inquiries and raising the level of customer assistance agents' response skills 	


Basic Stance and Vision on Customer Satisfaction and Quality

Quality Philosophy

To respond to society's needs and make products that satisfy our customers, we keep the slogan "Quality First" in mind at all times.

品質第一 私たちの心です
Quality First in Heart and Mind

Displayed at every Sharp site as a company-wide slogan for quality

 Quality guarantee system
ISO 9001-certified sites (companies)

Efforts to Ensure Product Safety

At Sharp, product safety is based on adherence to the safety standards, laws, and regulations of every country. Sharp's own uniquely strict Company-Wide Technical Safety Standards are revised annually, especially concerning issues such as incombustible material usage and abnormal motion detection.

Moreover, the Sharp Group has established a voluntary action plan on product safety. It specifies: 1) the Sharp Voluntary Product Safety Action Policy, 2) the product safety promotion system, 3) efforts for ensuring the safety of products, and 4) response to accidents with products. In addition, in fiscal 2007 the Product Safety Promotion Center was established to further improve safety efforts.

Along with responding in a timely manner to changes in the social situation and revisions to laws pertaining to product safety, Sharp will continue to increase its efforts at offering products that customers can use with peace of mind.

Creating Products That Are Easier to Use

In order to develop products that customers can feel comfortable using, Sharp conducts monitor and usability tests and actively reflects customers' voices in its product planning.

In fiscal 2007, Sharp ran these tests for LCD TVs and DVD/Blu-ray Disc recorders. For products that are currently on the market, the rate of customer calls to the Customer Assistance Center was quantified (by calculating the cumulative number of calls per cumulative unit sales). By comparing the rate of calls with that of previous models, Sharp can pinpoint which models require improvement and can conduct more precise analysis.

Through such ongoing efforts, Sharp has created products following universal design standards, and as of June 2008, 109 models of 19 products have been recognized as universal design home appliances by the Association for Electric Home Appliances in Japan.

To continue this trend in the future, Sharp is incorporating the customer's point of view as it looks ahead to creating products that are better than ever.

Improved product from fiscal 2007

As simple as a VCR, but even easier to use
Easy recording and playback of HD programs

The easy-to-use, simple remote control

LC-42DS3-W

BD-AV10-W

Automatically ends recording when the program is over

One-touch recording

One-touch timer recording

Select a program from the EPG and press one button to timer-record that program

Starts playback from where it ended last time


One-touch playback



Universal design product from fiscal 2007

Look, touch, and understand Digital MFP MX-7001N

The MX-7001N itself (the control panel, internal parts, etc.) and its instruction manual are designed so they can be recognized by people with varying kinds of color vision. The MX-7001N has been certified for Color Universal Design (CUD) from the Color Universal Design Organization (CUDO), a nonprofit organization in Japan.




MX-7001N

Instruction manual

Large, easy-to-see, touch-screen LCD control panel

Easy-to-push operating buttons



No. 1 in Customer Satisfaction; After-Sales Service Activities

Guided by the goal of becoming No. 1 in customer satisfaction, Sharp is advancing customer service innovation activities in an effort to provide faster, more effective after-sales service that customers can always rely on.

In fiscal 2007, Sharp established a service parts pre-order system. When a request for repairs is received by 6:00 p.m., the necessary parts are shipped immediately and will arrive at the appropriate service center anywhere in Japan the next morning before 9:00 a.m. Later that day, the parts are used in repairing products. This system has increased the number of repairs that can be completed in only one visit and is making customers happier. Using the know-how that is being accumulated through this system, Sharp aims to increase the rate of "hits" (instances when exactly the right part is ordered) in the future.

In addition, a full-time system for next-day complete repair service for large AQUOS LCD TVs has been set up at 39 service centers across Japan. After the repairs are completed, Sharp makes follow-up calls to customers that are yielding positive feedback.

Sharp plans to continue raising the standard of customer satisfaction in a variety of ways.

Hospitality Is the Motto of the Customer Assistance Center

From the first consultation with a potential customer to a request for repairs after purchase, Sharp's Customer Assistance Center responds to customer needs with hospitality in mind. While always taking the customer's point of view, Sharp's greatest mission is to provide products customers feel good using.

In order to achieve this goal, Sharp is training the people who have direct contact with customers: the customer assistance agents. Sharp's agents are receiving training in the fundamentals of response skills, as well as technical product knowledge, in order to improve the quality of service they provide. With this training, agents are better able to foster a customer satisfaction-oriented mindset and improve their skills of accurately assessing customer needs and providing the best possible solutions to problems.

Sharp is working to create easy-to-use, high-quality products that reduce the inconvenience of customers having to call the Customer Assistance Center. Feedback from customers is transmitted accurately to those in charge of product development within the appropriate divisions, and regular meetings are held to exchange ideas and opinions with the aim of making product improvements.

Sharp will continue to satisfy customers and fulfill expectations by always keeping the customer's point of view in mind.



Customer Assistance Center

Active Disclosure of Quality Information

In the event that a Sharp product is found to be responsible for injury to customers or for damage to property, Sharp will disclose relevant information immediately in newspapers and via its website. Sharp also has contact points to directly receive inquiries from customers and is striving to keep quality problems to an absolute minimum.

During fiscal 2007, Sharp notified customers as below, providing free-of-charge inspection and repair services. Sharp also continually updates important product safety information on its website.

• LCD TVs for the Oceania market (May 2007)

In response to the risk of electric shock from some 42-inch LCD TVs sold in Australia and New Zealand, Sharp announced free-of-charge inspections and repair service.

• Residential solar power generation system (December 2007)

In response to the risk of color alteration and/or burnout for the connecting section of some indoor power conditioners, Sharp announced free-of-charge inspections and repair service.

TOPICS

Sharp Ranked No. 1 Overall in Quality Management

Sharp took first place in the third Quality Management Ranking Survey (sponsored by the Union of Japanese Scientists and Engineers and cosponsored by Nikkei Inc.). The survey evaluates and quantifies efforts such as putting in place and operating systems to improve quality. Evaluated areas include management conditions of departments responsible for quality, human resource development, and customer inquiry response measures.

Sharp ranked especially high in the proliferation and promotion of quality improvements. The company was highly rated for recognizing quality innovations in its regular awards system and for creating the Quality Engineer System*, an intra-company certification system for quality control ability.

Sharp's activities were introduced at a lecture on the survey at a later date.

* Quality Engineer System: This program was initiated in October 2005 to educate and support quality technicians. At the end of April 2008, 9,426 employees had been certified at the beginner or intermediate level.



Quality Management Ranking Survey lecture

Training Call Center Leaders from Shanghai

Sharp is reinforcing the operation of its call centers in the Americas, Europe, China, and the rest of Asia in response to growing worldwide AQUOS sales.

In fiscal 2007, three call center leaders from Sharp Electronics Sales (China) Co., Ltd. (SESC) came to the Customer Assistance Center in Japan and learned how to improve their responsiveness and apply customer feedback towards product making. On the final day, the trainees said the training had changed their outlook and they confidently proclaimed that they would return home and improve the Shanghai call center.



(From left) SESC call center leaders Mr. Ding, Ms. Hu, and Ms. Wei