

# > Haworth, Inc.

Office furniture maker improves customer satisfaction through in-depth analysis of customer attitudes and preferences

## Challenge

Customer knowledge is market advantage. To refine its edge and better manage customer relationships, Haworth needed to learn what was important to its customers and deploy that knowledge to key decision makers.

## Solution

Haworth uses PASW Statistics to extract in-depth, strategic information from customer surveys. With fact-based knowledge, managers make decisions to improve business, pinpointing and addressing potential manufacturing and distribution problem spots faster and more accurately than ever before.

## Results

- Decreased field problems by evaluating customer satisfaction in eight new categories
- Increased follow-on sales by analyzing the “how” and “why” of customer preferences
- Reduced vendor fees by enabling Haworth to report and analyze market research data in-house

For more than 50 years, Haworth has made customer service a hallmark. To continually improve the quality and usefulness of the office furniture it makes, Haworth uses customer research data. This enables the company to design products that anticipate how people want to work. Haworth innovations include “floating” paper trays that keep work in progress close at hand, and customizable furniture systems.

To continue attracting new customers and retain existing ones, Haworth began leveraging its business knowledge and analytical software in 1995. That’s when Haworth Process Specialist Sharon James and her department began looking for ways to better understand buyer needs and measure satisfaction.

## At a glance

Country: U.S.  
Industry: Manufacturing  
Date founded: 1948  
Company type: Private  
Revenues: \$2 billion (2000)  
Employees: 9,000

## Application

Market research

## Solutions used

PASW® Statistics\*

\* PASW Statistics, formerly called SPSS Statistics, is part of SPSS Inc.’s Predictive Analytics Software portfolio.

At the time, Haworth mailed customer surveys to buyers and paid a vendor to enter results into electronic files. James reviewed these results in Microsoft® Excel®, but found “it was too limited for the analysis we wanted to do. Excel could tell us how many customers we had or chart monthly results, but we needed much more strategic information. Our mission was not only to discern overall satisfaction levels from our customer surveys but also to dig deeper and answer questions such as: Would a customer be likely to repurchase from Haworth? Would a customer recommend Haworth to other companies? Getting those answers meant getting into the ‘hows’ and ‘whys’ of our customers’ preferences.”

Haworth knew it wanted survey analysis and demographic samples. The team also wanted to identify factors to gauge best-case customer satisfaction scenarios.

“Excel didn’t give us much flexibility; it could only provide a standard report using the data in the mailing,” James says. “We had to hire a market research firm if we wanted a non-standard report.”

James and her team searched for a better solution and quickly narrowed the field. “We talked with end users of both SAS® and PASW Statistics to understand each product’s benefits,” James notes. “We learned PASW Statistics was a stronger choice in our PC environment because it was designed for people accustomed to Windows®.” James also says that many college students use PASW Statistics “so we don’t have to retrain them when they come to work here.”

### Getting better answers to “how” and “why” questions

In mid-1995, Haworth purchased PASW Statistics. “It immediately changed the way I did my job, because it gave me more in-depth results,” she says. “I could analyze survey data I collected and see what they were really telling us. For example, Excel could tell me how many chairs and desks we were shipping, but nothing about customer satisfaction. PASW Statistics changed that by giving me answers to my ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions about customer preferences.”

□ “PASW Statistics helps define what is important to customers and where the company has to deploy more resources such as training and technology”

– Sharon James  
Process specialist  
Haworth Inc.

In 1996, Haworth switched from mailed surveys to a computer-assisted telephone interview system. Interviewers could ask more directed questions from an online script. Answers were captured electronically, and raw data stored in a database. This enabled Haworth to further analyze customer data. “We could tell if customers were satisfied with their lead times, whether the shipment arrived undamaged, whether the customer knew in advance if we changed our delivery times, or what they thought of our product designs and quality.”

Today, James is taking her customer satisfaction surveys to new levels. PASW Statistics helps her define what is important to customers and determine areas where the company should deploy more resources, such as training and technology. “We use the software to combine information from our competitive survey, our customer and dealer surveys, and information from our customer database,” James says. “We learn exactly where customers think we are struggling and can allocate resources to address the problem.

“Overall, we’re doing more with statistical analysis, and that’s improving the way we do business,” says James. “There is no way I could see us doing that without PASW Statistics.”

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