



**THE EMIRCOM<sup>®</sup> BUYER'S GUIDE  
FOR EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE**



# THE IMPORTANCE OF CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

**A CUSTOMER MAY NOT  
REMEMBER WHAT HE WAS TOLD,  
BUT WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER  
HOW YOU MADE HIM FEEL.**

The Global Leaders of Customer Experience Management Survey reported that 85% of senior business leaders agreed that “price, delivery, and lead times are no longer effective marketing business strategies”.

When access to competitive product or service information such as availability, options, and pricing is accessible at the touch of the consumer’s finger – what really constitutes a competitive advantage? Customer Experience is the only competitive advantage left.

Creating and delivering an exceptional customer experience, one that is unmatched by the competition, is the key to gaining a competitive edge and the continued satisfaction and loyalty of the consumer.

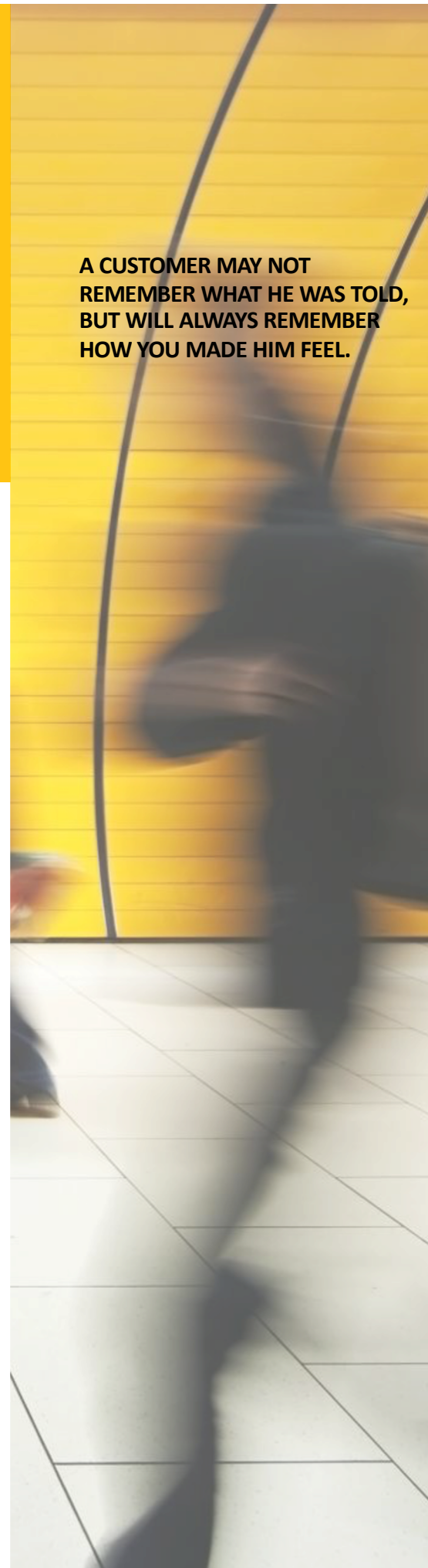
Many service providers and vendors claim to be customer experience players nowadays. But what does this really mean?

We believe that customer experience has to be much more than an elusive buzzword. We propose taking a measured and disciplined approach to what can sometimes seem like an art form or an immeasurable practice.

Let’s start by sharing the definition of Customer Experience (CX) as we see it.

We define CX as the feelings, thoughts and emotions that occur throughout a customer’s journey with a brand. This journey includes using the company’s products and engaging with its various touchpoints.

Each customer experiences this journey differently. One size does not fit all. To some, getting up and running efficiently with a new product or service is most important. To others, receiving fast resolution when facing a problem is key. Each customer has unique moments that shape their experience.



To succeed, organizations need to repeatedly offer an unmatched customer experience for every customer, throughout their journey. This means providers can no longer offer blanket solutions for all service, sales or marketing interactions.

How can organizations identify the moments where experience is critical to each individual? How can they stage an engagement with a customer to be a memorable event every time, even when it is initiated by the provider itself? And finally, how do providers ensure that the action taken by frontline staff is performed in the most effective manner?

This explains why when we give someone a “vanilla customer experience”, coupled with all the right facts and figures, they often respond: “I know what you are saying, it just doesn’t feel right”.

This is also why people often don’t remember what you told them, they remember how you made them feel.

When customers are asked what turns them into advocates of a brand, they often point to feeling acknowledged and appreciated. Product features and cost fail to motivate advocacy; yet, they do generate detraction when outperformed by competition.






We believe that the future of Customer Experience management is in identifying what customers seek, and using intelligent technology to execute the right actions to drive a scalable customer experience that is unmatched by the competition.

Customers appreciate a personalized relationship with a provider or product, one that is focused on their specific needs and context, one that saves them time by keeping one step ahead of fulfilling their needs.

Author Simon Sinek mentions in his Golden Circle work (2012), that customer experience is grounded in the tenants of biology. Not psychology; biology. The part of the brain that controls decision-making and behavior is the same part that controls feelings and emotions. The part of the brain that controls rational thought does not, in fact, control behavior. A person’s decision to remain loyal to one company in the face of overwhelming rational proof of a better offer has more to do with the buyer than the seller. Loyalty is, in fact, not rational at all but a highly emotional state.

Therefore, when we conduct a generic conversation with a customer, based on facts, figures, features and benefits, people can understand it, but it does not drive behavior. When we communicate in a human and personal way – one which incites emotion – we are communicating with the part of the brain that controls behavior.

**YOUR CUSTOMER'S EXPERIENCE**

-  Customer experience is the combination of feelings, thoughts and emotions across the customer journey
-  Each customer journey is unique, affected by the perceptions, emotions, events and moments that shape the experience
-  A customer journey is your opportunity to impact customers' choices; this is when they will become your ambassadors or detractors
-  The part of the brain that controls decision making also controls feeling; loyalty does not come from logic, but from emotion.
-  Get closer to your customers throughout their journey, to improve their customer experience.

**A CUSTOMER MAY NOT REMEMBER WHAT HE WAS TOLD, BUT WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER HOW YOU MADE HIM FEEL.**

# OUR 6 STEP METHODOLOGY

Leading organizations today realize that delivering a great customer experience has a direct and substantial impact on the bottom line. But only few know how to manage the complexities involved in the execution and optimization of an integrated multi-channel customer experience that maximizes the business results.

Emircom has the proven competency in developing mature customer experience capabilities. It provides a detailed CX roadmap that establishes direction and gives clarity to organizations in their journey from where they are to where they need to be for delivering exceptional customer experience.

Herein, we describe our 6-step methodology for successfully implementing a sustainable, scalable, exceptional customer experience.

**OBJECTIVES  
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**LEAD,  
THE VOC  
WAY!**

6



# SETTING

## STEP 1

THE OBJECTIVES AND ISSUES  
NEED TO BE CLEARLY DEFINED  
AND BACKED BY RELEVANT AND  
RELIABLE DATA.



Indeed, the objective is to establish an organizational capability to deliver exceptional customer experience! This is the time to crystallize and articulate what the business is trying to achieve, who the key stakeholders are, and what the implications are for the affected audiences in the specific target customer segments.

Consider your organization's vision, what you stand for; this will set the tone for the type of customer experience you will choose to deliver. Next, define the touch-points affected and the key stakeholders who will assist you in making it all happen.

Choosing corroborated data to make realistic assumptions about the customer sentiment or market segmentation paves the way to success in accomplishing the desired customer experience.

# GAP ANALYSIS

## STEP 2

### LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF THE CUSTOMER AND VOICE OF THE BUSINESS:

TECHNIQUES INCLUDE IN-DEPTH CUSTOMER INTERVIEWS, MYSTERY SHOPPING, COMPETITIVE INTELLIGENCE, EMPLOYEE INTERVIEWS, STRATEGIC PRIORITIZATION, SYSTEMS AND CAPABILITY ANALYSIS, AND SO ON.

With growing competition, complexities and increased regulations in every industry, a single common solution will not work for every organization. What is required is an objective analysis of where the organization is at this point in time, and where it aspires to be, as defined by customer needs and organizational vision.

The key element here is to go out and ask customers what they expect of your brand, what they need. Not what they want, what they need. This will crystallize the underlying need your offering aims to meet. Since customer experience is defined by what the customer feels or perceives, it is essential to take an outside-in view of the customer perspective. An unbiased understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the existing customer experience will help identify problem areas and key customer pain points, as well as opportunities for improvement. This will clarify the scope of the short-term and long-term changes that need to be implemented.

The goal of the gap analysis is to identify levers that will improve CX and reinforce the desired brand image.



# STRATEGY DEFINITION

## STEP 3



**BUILD A COMPELLING BUSINESS CASE BY INCORPORATING THE BRAND STRATEGY AND THE BUSINESS GOALS INTO THE SCALABLE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY.**

When the gap between current CX and desired CX is fully visualized, it is time to focus on developing an appropriate customer experience strategy. This strategy must be designed to deliver a scalable, exceptional customer experience. Details need to be developed as to what activities will make the desired experience a reality, how they need to be performed, and what timelines and resources are required.

The success of any CX initiative requires executive buy-in and sponsorship. Presentation of the business case by incorporating the strategic direction of the business, a clear course of action to deliver what is expected, and specific benchmarks for evaluating the progress helps secure executive buy-in.

# CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE DESIGN

## STEP 4

TAKE A MINDFUL  
APPROACH TO DESIGNING  
YOUR SIGNATURE  
EXPERIENCE, ONE THAT  
BEST REPRESENTS YOUR BRAND  
AND IS UNMATCHED.

The design of the customer experience should include a complete plan for creating the desired experience at each one of the critical touch-points, along with a detailed visualization of all the interdependent entities within the business. The objective is to design an implementation roadmap that contributes to the overall business goal of customer-centricity and uses relevant metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs) to evaluate progress and success. Additionally, the plan must include various ways in which the desired customer sentiment is prompted. The groundwork done in developing the systems, technologies, processes, people and data sources helps in delivering the intended multi-channel customer experience in a consistent and sustainable manner.



# SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION

## STEP 5



ACTIVELY DRIVING THE CUSTOMER-CENTRIC INITIATIVES TO ENABLE THE DESIRED CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE EVOLUTION WILL BE POSSIBLE ONLY WHEN IT IS VIEWED AS A NECESSARY OVERALL BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION TO RETAIN COMPETITIVENESS.

Establishing competencies across all the functional units of the business to deliver a consistently improved customer experience requires resources, time and, most of all, a unified commitment at every level of the business, starting with buy-in at the highest executive level. The journey starts with making the desired changes internally – systems redesign, performance metrics, human resource routines, training, employee engagement, appraisal and award mechanisms, etc. Obsolete touch-points must be eliminated, low performance ones need to be improved, and critical touch-points that are missing need to be created. This needs to be accompanied by a culture change program that ensures the connection between employee engagement and CX is established, and the right behaviors are encouraged.

# SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION

## STEP 5

### 5.1

#### CREATE MEMORABLE FIRST IMPRESSIONS

First impression is key. Your customers' experience often starts as soon as you "greet them at the door," at the onset of an interaction. Make customers feel unique and trusted by eliminating the interrogation associated with traditional customer authentication methods. Preventing fraud and gaining customer confidence by incorporating a robust identity verification process through multi-factor authentications is no longer just a business imperative. It is matter of survival. The challenge is to create a hassle-free authentication experience without the need for interrogation, especially during contact center interactions.

With over 60% of customer calls requiring authentication, irrespective of the industry, this issue has become a vitally important customer experience and customer loyalty issue. Collecting necessary details and double-checking them to verify the customer's identity add to the customer's interaction time and can cause the contact center's costs to mount. And to the degree that the customer perceives he or she is being interrogated, sometimes thinking the process is too long, too impersonal and too painful, the customer experience is diminished.

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# SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION

## STEP 5

# 5.2

## KNOW YOUR CUSTOMER, EVEN WHEN THERE ARE MILLIONS.

Organizations struggle to create and then follow an increasingly complex roadmap in the customer journey over multiple channels, while they seek to design an exceptional customer experience. To ensure that you really know your customers, to the degree they feel it, you need to garner the full potential of advanced Big Data analytics technology to map, capture and analyze every minute detail of the customer journey, regardless of the number of channels available for the customer to interact with the business.

Big Data analytics extracts valuable, all-encompassing, customer insights from Big Data that is produced by customer transactions, interactions, feedback, emails, tweets, IVR, web sessions, and other customer support systems. It enables organizations to map their customer journeys across channels and touch points in order to analyze and understand how customers interact with the organization, identify journey bottlenecks and pitfalls, reduce customer effort and optimize the customer experience.

**FOR A THOROUGH UNDERSTANDING OF THE CUSTOMER BEHAVIOR, IT IS NECESSARY TO GET TO THE ESSENCE OF INDIVIDUAL CUSTOMER JOURNEYS, AS WELL AS UNDERSTAND THE OVERALL PICTURE OF HOW TO LEVERAGE TOP-TRENDING BEHAVIORS FOR HIGH QUALITY CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT WITH VISUAL AND DYNAMIC JOURNEY VISUALIZATION.**

# SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION

## STEP 5

### 5.3

#### BE SMART IN THE MOMENT.

Understanding the customer intent is at the core of improving customer experience. Knowing the customer's preferences and taking timely action by identifying cases of dissatisfaction and churn signals will positively influence performance metrics. But getting to the core of the customer intent is a challenge that most organizations have not solved satisfactorily. Interaction analytics solves this challenge.

The main advantage from multi-channel analytics is, it extracts actionable insights from the customer's likes, dislikes, complaints, wants, emotions and, in short, anything that can be captured from various communication channels using speech and text analytics technologies. Based on these insights, organizations can respond to the customer's interactions. These responses are no longer limited just to answering questions or providing information, but now can extend to timely overall customer experience enhancements, with the necessary support and preparation of all the functional departments.

The power of interaction analytics can also be leveraged in real-time to identify hidden opportunities to improve customer experience or the bottom line while the customer is on the line. The aim is to discover the causes for customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and then to both recreate great customer experiences and fix the poor ones. This capability helps organizations discover more than one way to make a value-driven impact, up-sell, cross-sell, advance the brand, and take the business forward.

# SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION

## STEP 5

### 5.4

#### LET YOUR CUSTOMERS' VOICE BE YOUR COMPASS

Listening to the Voice of the Customer helps you transform into a customer-centric company by:

- Understanding the customer perspective throughout their lifecycle, analyzing and extracting the deeper insight within customer feedback and interactions
- Identifying actionable insights, isolating and prioritizing them automatically and providing them to the right person at the right time
- Changing the dialog with your customers, by changing the way you interact with them, from leveraging innovation for “humanized” feedback interactions to closing the loop

Capturing the Voice of the Customer includes the direct, indirect and inferred voice to provide actionable insight to key stakeholders across the business.

- A Voice of the Customer platform captures comprehensive direct Voice of Customer data across every interaction and channel to help the business determine what action should be taken in response to customers' sentiment.
- Interaction Analytics listens to the indirect Voice of Customer by automatically deriving customer insight from an interaction, including uncovering dissatisfaction and root causes by call type.
- A customers' cross-channel journey can be tracked, visualized and experience patterns developed by combining transaction and Interaction Analytics data.



# LEAD, THE VOC WAY

## STEP 6



With a well-implemented CX practice in place, organizations are just one step away from a leadership position in today's dynamic environment. The secret to sustaining the customer-centric brand image is to continue to listen to the customer voice and adapt to changes accordingly; all while openly voicing the efforts being made. Listening to ongoing real-time customer insights is critical in accomplishing the business's customer experience aspirations. A business should monitor CX sentiment by customer segment, channel, user group, geography, and so on, in order to bring relevancy and reliability to what is tracked and to achieve continual improvement. Missing the metrics at key touch-points, neglecting to immediately respond with the required action, or failing to share relevant customer insights with employees lead to only partial realization of potential benefits.

As important as it is to monitor, listen, and measure the voice of customer, there is yet another valuable aspect that must be integrated into a successful strategy. Organizations need to heed what they can glean from the voices of competition and the competition's customers as well.

# IN A NUTSHELL

**AT EVERY MOMENT, ON EVERY CHANNEL, YOUR CUSTOMERS WANT TO BE TREATED AS INDIVIDUALS, TO KNOW THAT YOU ARE THERE FOR THEM, ATTENTIVE TO THEIR PERSONAL NEEDS.**

Customers choose to interact with you over many different channels. They are the "empowered customer" who wants a consistent experience across all interaction channels, while expending as little effort as possible. That is why 96% of them reward low effort with greater loyalty. In fact 76% of customers choose to switch channels according to their needs at any given moment, as opposed to 56% who switch channels due to interaction failure.

Their expectations are high! They expect excellence. Timely and accurate service should be the standard. They expect their interaction history to be known at all times and in all channels. And when they do speak to an agent, especially after experiencing challenges on other service channels, they expect an authentic and engaged partner - who cares.

They are delighted when they receive a personalized experience. This is the "delight factor" – a customer who feels you know them personally, and whose preferences are acknowledged across their touch-points. In fact, 88% of customers choose to interact with you through an agent. Customers highly satisfied with their most recent agent interaction, report significantly increased loyalty. After all - people still like people.

## And why is that?

Because a customer may not remember what he was told, but will always remember how you made him feel. Now is the time for personal, effortless, cross-channel customer experience.

The key? Be attentive, stay agile. Listen cleverly to what your customers are telling you, and find smart, scalable ways to deliver it across all touchpoints.

In today's ever-increasing wealth of information, advice, choices, likes and dislikes, people prefer personal and personalized experiences – where they can feel the human touch that shows you care.

We make that possible in an intelligent, scalable way.

We empower organizations' performance with our end-to-end CX solutions. We use state of the art technology to get you closer to your customer. We cushion every interaction with intelligent solutions to create an exceptional, memorable experience. This empowers employees to concentrate on their customer and be in the moment. Once you deliver a straightforward, seamless experience, and you hear your customer smile – it all comes together and makes sense.

**THIS IS HOW WE GET CLOSER TO OUR CUSTOMER AND PROVIDE AN EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE.**

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