

# Retail Customer Experience

## Create experience by design



## Introduction

Customer experience leaders, lauded by their customers, peers and beyond, formulate and implement enterprise-wide CX programmes underpinned by a well-crafted strategy. End-to-end delivery is aligned to their customer promise - at every stage. Customer experience is defined and managed. It's about vision, people and behaviours. Effective, measurable customer experience happens by design, not chance.

It requires a root and branch audit of how, why and where CX matters. **Retail Prophet** founder **Doug Stephens** believes that 'most retailers wrongly assume that customer experience is primarily an aesthetic concept and more about how stores and websites look and feel'. Doug argues that authentic CX design is about breaking the end-to-end customer journey into its constituent parts and redesigning these to work differently than what went before, and crucially, differently to competitors. One thing's for sure. When there's no plan and framework, the chasm between aspiration and organisational practice gets wider and it becomes difficult to unlock the value of embedding a customer focus.

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## Designing your programme

We've highlighted five helpful areas to think about when planning your customer experience programme:

### #1 Leadership commitment

Are leaders actively and passionately championing a customer led vision - through their words, their behaviour and through the priorities they set? Top down leadership is crucial when articulating a clear customer vision to align and inspire the whole organisation. People take more notice of what leaders do rather than say, so engage leaders in ways that are visible to the organisation.

## #2 Organisational structure

Customers operate horizontally and most organisations are structured vertically. Figure out ways to serve customers and respond to their needs that are faster, easier and more valuable by overcoming the constraints of your organisational structure.

Conversations should be company-wide and as an organisation you need to clear about:

- > Shared customer experience objectives and goals
- > How your business organises around your customers
- > Where accountability sits and how responsibility will be shared
- > Customers' needs - both functionally and emotionally
- > How to create a dramatically different experience that they value

## #3 Collective responsibility

Establish a cross-functional governance process - implementing a branded customer experience requires collective engagement. All teams need a seat at the CX table and the customer should sit at the head. While CEOs should drive strategy, and CMOs, CXOs or COOs usually take 'ownership', responsibility should be everyone's.

## #4 Customer experience innovation

Best-in-class brands create a customer promise that becomes a rallying cry across their business. Developing a compelling customer promise that clearly states what target customers can expect from you is a key element of CX design.

**Here are a few questions to think about:**

- > Have you clearly identified the critical touchpoints which make up the customer experience touchline?
- > Have you designed new service experiences which deliver your customer promise to target customers in a consistent, valuable and differentiated way?
- > Have you defined the specific employee behaviour required to deliver the customer promise at each touchpoint?
- > Are your teams empowered to take specific action to improve processes, products, services and build people capability in order to deliver the customer experience?



## #5 Customer obsession

Is there a rich, multi-faceted approach to the collection of customer views through a range of methods including unsolicited customer comments and employee feedback? Is this data brought together, analysed and mined for actionable insights?

Listening to your customers to understand what they are saying, need and want will give you actionable insight to provide real-time value. Identify priority touchpoints and analyse interactions and feedback on the channels where your customers are. This will give you a holistic view of what they experience, how your brand is perceived, what resonates, what works well and what needs fixing or improving. It will give you deeper insight on what matters to your most valuable customers. Understanding, and anticipating, these customers' needs - both emotionally and functionally - will help you prioritise investment, resource and effort.

### A few further questions to consider:

- > Have you identified your target customer segments and the profit they represent to the company?
- > Do you have a factual understanding of what your most profitable customer expect and value from the company?
- > Do you know which customer expectations (loyalty drivers) impact your target customers' intention to repurchase and recommend you?
- > Do you have a factual understanding of how your customers rate your performance vs your competitors against these loyalty drivers?
- > Do you have a formal process for continually collecting customer and employee feedback on your customer experience and how this can be improved?

### Discover more

This 'mini guide' includes extracts from our new **Customer Experience Playbook for Retailers**. **Download** your copy to learn how, why and where customer experience adds the most value for your organisation. Discover:

- > Why retail customer experience leaders outperform CX laggards
- > Why most retailers are facing a digital dilemma
- > How to empower your people to deliver your customer promise
- > Why omnichannel and hyper personalisation matter
- > How the pioneers are experimenting with value-add technology
- > The value in embedding a data-centric approach
- > How to measure the return on experience





## About cp2experience

cp2experience is a specialist customer experience consulting and training company. We help clients improve their customer experience in ways that drive profitable growth. We know that organisations which put customers and their people at the heart of their business outperform the competition. These enlightened companies create better places to buy for customers, better places to work for employees and better places to invest for shareholders. We are committed to sharing our knowledge, experience and insight with clients, friends and partners. To that end we hope you find this guide of value.

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