

CEM for the tech-enabled African future

 By Leigh Andrews

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You need to keep an eye on future trends from the rest of the world to better manage your business' current customer experience. Some of these trends were shared in the Customer Experience Management Africa plenary session...

The CEM Africa advisory panel opening on Wednesday, 22 July kicked off with moderator Jordan Gray introducing the panel, comprising Angela Mumbi Odame, head of client experience at Nedbank; Claudia Ramsden, group manager of customer care at ACSA; and Simon Cranswick, managing director of Anana Africa.

Understanding the current customer experience

Only one of 26 customers completes a survey - so we need to ask what's happening to the other 25, says Cranswick. To keep track of their experiences, we ultimately need an omnichannelling approach, where all are fed into one system that's easy to access. In the digital marketing space in particular, businesses are unsure where their customers are in the journey. Making this even trickier is the fact that there is an overwhelming amount of data out there, says Odame. If you're looking to tap into this, the richest source of data is what's being said to your customer service agents. By putting customers at the heart of your business you're guaranteeing customer retention and revenue-generation so it would be silly not to, added Cranswick.



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The future of customer experience management

Ramsden then said we need a master plan of 40 to 50 years and should keep an eye on developments. For ACSA in particular, these include all forms of disruptive innovation like the [Hyperloop](#) mode of transport, developed by Tesla and moving at 1,200km/h. While safety is a primary concern for ACSA, they also feel it's imperative to keep track of technologies like skin-embedded technology, which needs to be screened at airports, and using Google Glass as part of the process shows just how disruptive technology is at the moment. In the next year you'll be able to print your boarding pass at home, tag your bag and board yourself with your print-out. Get ready for hologram customer experience helpers in airports, too.

All in all it takes 12 positive experiences to negate just one negative. There are lots of tools available to assist with this, and Odametse feel rather than burying our heads in the sand, we need to embrace the rate of change and that humans' limitations are merely in our minds.

That said, robots are not the end of a human workforce, it's just changing at a rapid pace - for example, think of children born in the 1990s, some of which are already in the workforce, with all their digital skills.

At the end of the day, customers still want to deal with a warm body, so keep investing in your people.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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