

How government is reducing red tape in the experience economy

By Leigh Andrews

31 Jul 2019

Rashid Toefy, deputy director - general: economic operations in the Western Cape government, unpacked their mission of placing the customer at the heart of operations, and how the corporate sector and government should collaborate for true shared value in the experience economy.



Rashid Toefy, deputy director - general: economic operations in the Western Cape government presenting his keynote at the CEM Africa Summit 2019.

The always insightful Africa Melane MCed the 2019 CEM Africa Summit, with almost 400 attendees and a packed programme of speakers taking through the customer-centricity journey.

Melane set the scene for the two-day conference by quoting Jeff Bezos, who said if you make your customer happy in the physical world, he will tell 6 people, whereas if you make someone unhappy online, he will tell 6,000.

The rise of social media complaints is prove of this as technology is everything today. Customer experience or CX is front and centre as a result because most people only bother to post online when they've had a bad experience.

“ [@BrandLoveCxP](#) telling it as it is [@CEMAfricaSummit](#), the best customer feedback is from those who took the time to complain!! Hear their frustration and the story they've happily told each of their friends and at best they may even have the solution you were looking for!— Ma'ayan Jowell (@MaayanJowell) [July 31, 2019](#) ”

Melane handed over to Toefy who describes himself as a 'tempered radical' and explains he originally worked as [CEO of the CTICC](#), the venue for the Summit, for seven years before joining government. He's proud of the fact that few realise it's a 100% government-owned building as he worked to make it all about the experience economy, putting the customer at the centre of all they do.



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5 Oct 2018



Toefy still remembers all the values the CICC strove for, and that awards were given for staff who demonstrated both integrity and excellence - something he feels would go a long way in government.

So, when told he it was 'time to do his time' he joined government, he quickly realised that the need to upgrade customer experience with government has never been more essential.

Government departments around the world still struggle in trying to offer quality results and turnaround times, with poor CX hampering project and mission success.



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But the Western Cape government, in particular, is doing its bit to turn this around, one process at a time...

Reducing red tape - literally

Toefy says the Western Cape government, in particular, is working to put the human or business as the customer at the centre of the experience process.



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This ties into work by the Red Tape reduction unit (yes, this exists), which deals with other government departments. They take challenges faced by businesses and investigate why a process that should take eight weeks or less suddenly takes 16 weeks.

“ It's about meeting the expectations of customers rather than saying, 'these are the only tools in my toolbox, I'll have to send someone else to fix it for you.' We're working on filling the toolbox so we can go solve the problems faster. ”

One way they've done so is by totally digitising the business plan approval process in partnership with the municipality, which was formerly an onerous process.

According to [Deloitte Insights' report on CX and citizen trends in government](#), Toefy says important aspects identified

include listening to the customer, breaking down silos and turning all the data at their disposal into insights and intelligence.



Unemployment rate rises

30 Jul 2019



Given the worrying unemployment statistics that have just been released, with unemployment at 38% if you include those no longer actively searching for employment and at over 50% for youth unemployment, it's fitting that Toefy says their current drive is to put a job into every home.



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Towards an army of businesses: The shared value drive

They're also listening to community members who say we need an army not of police and guns, but of businesses to go into the problem areas and try to fix problems.

It's a move beyond ticking the CSI box to one of creating shared value, as need to go beyond the [triple bottom line](#).

The essence is that society's problems can only be reduced if corporates come to the party.



Toefy's slide on creating shared value by aligning with the Bill of Rights, UNs SDGs, SA's NDP and more...

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Toefy says their 'Wosa' or 'whole of society approach' also puts this into perspective, having brought together tiers of community and representatives from different departments sit down together and listen to community concerns.

It's a step towards doing a better job of joining the dots on the values and getting government to function as a business.

Unsiloeing, working together, First Thursdays

This ties in with the trend towards unsiloeing - not just internally but also in the way businesses work. In order to become truly customer-centric, government and businesses alike need to work closely with communities and be abundantly aware

of the impact they make.

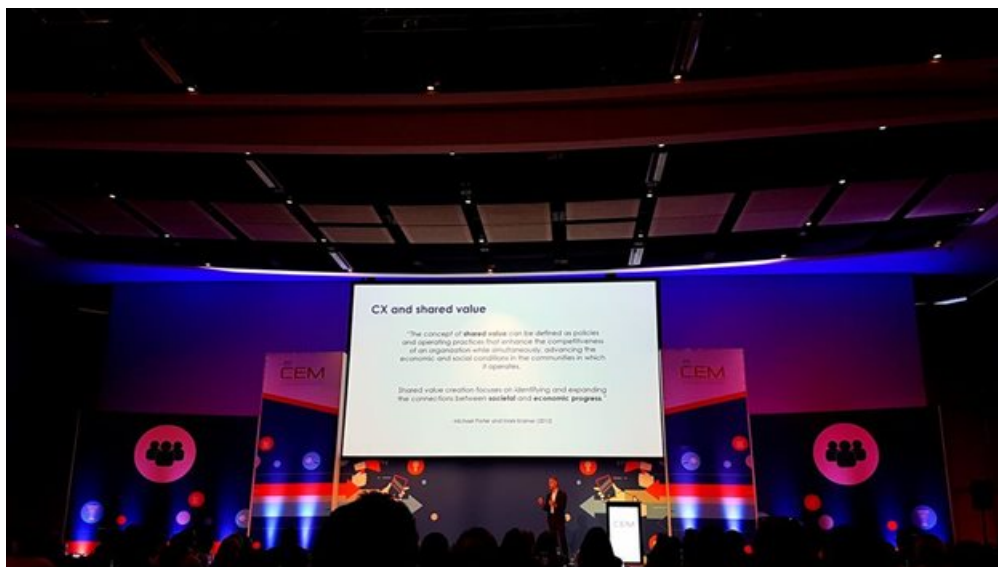


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Toefy adds that government budgets shrink to insignificance against the money corporates spend, so we need to leverage those amounts together in order to truly make a positive impact on society.



Toefy's slide on CX and shared value.

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Toefy also mentioned the UN's specific Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and SA's National Development Plan goals and how government is aiming to meet these on their journey to creating shared value.



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Toefy concluded that the 'CX promise' is possible in state-owned entities.

“ The Western Cape's slogan has always been 'Better Together'. Government can only do so much, so businesses are encouraged to step in. Register online with our supplier database and share your ideas. ”

Asked by Melane if it's realistic to expect corporates to go beyond bureaucracy and work on solutions to problems, Toefy responded that we either need to change current minds or bring in new people to make that change, and that it starts with leadership.

In this regard, Western Cape premier Alan Winde has announced that the team will be taking part in First Thursdays on 1 August, listening to what the people want and how businesses can help.

First at building a local Thursday cultural ritual

Leigh Andrews 15 Sep 2015





Sounds like a good place to start! You can [download Deloitte Insights' report on CX and citizen trends in government](#) and watch for my further coverage of the CEM Africa Summit.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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