

Will CX make or break your business?

Spoilt for choice and digitally-empowered, today's customers want exactly what they want, when they want it and the way they want it.



Nathalie Schooling, CX specialist and CEO of nlighten

It's all personal. They put far more weight on free recommendations from their social media networks than they do on expensive brand messages. The vast majority won't bother to complain if they are unhappy with your product or service; and they have little to no reason to give any business a second chance. After all, they can click away from you in a split second and find your competitors the next instant.

According to Nathalie Schooling, CX specialist and CEO of nlighten, a client experience company, research shows that 70% of buying experiences are based on how customers feel they are being treated. It's personal, and emotional.

Schooling highlights the importance of customer retention when acquiring a new customer can cost five times more than keeping a current one.



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"Loyal, repeat customers are not something that's 'nice to have'," points out Schooling. "When you consider that a 2% rise in customer retention can make the same impact on profits as cutting costs by 10%, then it's clear that CX is a major driver

of business growth and sustainability.”

The millennial generation, with its insistence on personal attention and cautious, well-informed spending is now the largest customer segment of our times. Across the board, the economic landscape is tough, and more and more consumers are highly selective about how and where they spend their money. Tech innovations are changing customers' expectations from wanting responsiveness to their demands, to assuming the business will be able to accurately predict what they want when they want it.

Today's customers have undeniably raised the bar, not just for one-time sales service, but at every touchpoint during their entire experience with your brands and your business. Studies show that we remember negative events with greater clarity and accuracy, and they re-trigger our emotional responses more than our positive recollections.



Brands, pay attention to these new urban tribes

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According to Right Now Technologies, 87% of all consumers will not go back to an organisation after a bad experience. So, one shoddy engagement with your brand, website or employee carries far more weight than what has made them feel good on their customer journey with your business so far. This facet of human psychology is why business owners have their work cut out to properly manage CX, and ensure client satisfaction.

“From our research, development and testing of various CX models, what we know for sure is that client satisfaction and sales need to be linked. Formulating, executing and then, measuring your end-to-end CX strategy is arguably, the great business challenge of our time,” says Schooling.

“Like all great challenges, it is both daunting and incredibly exciting. This is the opportunity for businesses to really purposefully engage with their customers. This demands a new and deeper than ever understanding of who your customers are and what matters to them most. It means getting your entire team on board to put your customers at the very heart and soul of your business. It means getting a handle on your data and investing in new generation tech that enables you to unlock instant insights about your customers and keep monitoring their satisfaction.”

Latest tech developments are moving customer service forward and enabling the design of end-to-end customer-centric experiences. According to Schooling, in 2017, 63% of marketers were prioritising technological investments to improve CX. This percentage will continue to grow as more business leaders come to appreciate the value in digital advancements.

Schooling also prioritises multi-faceted research to empower business owners to inform the CX design and strategy that can truly put the customer at the centre of their companies.



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3 Apr 2019



“You can’t get personal with someone you don’t know well,” she points out.

“You can’t make them feel good in their engagement with you if you don’t understand what makes them feel good, or what’s important to them. Investing in research is critical to accurately mapping the CX journey.”

However, Schooling doesn’t see research as a mere starting point. She advocates ongoing measurements and metrics, so that you stay in tune with the rapidly changing market forces in the interests of continuous improvement of CX.

What going through the process of mapping the CX journey does for the business is highlight how everyone’s work ultimately impacts on customer satisfaction. This is the bedrock for training your entire team to deliver the behind-the-scenes or customer-facing services that are necessary for a customer’s seamless experience with your brand or business.

Getting CX is right is not a one-stop, top-down affair. It is complex and multi-faceted, but don’t let that put you off. We’ve got the tech available to draw insights, meaning and understanding out of the biggest data. With a sound process, deep-rooted expertise and appropriate investments in research, design, training and ongoing monitoring and evaluation businesses can rise to the challenge of delivering high quality CX. This is going to be the difference between the winners and the losers of the near future.



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Juanita Pienaar 2 Apr 2019



At a snapshot, here are Schooling’s 5 fundamentals of getting customer service right:

- **Play the name game** - when communicating with your customers, use their names. This is Business Communication 101 and may be stating the obvious, but you’d be surprised at how many businesses still do not go this extra little mile to win their customers’ trust.
- **The customer journey and all-important personae** - The potential for personalisation presents itself at many stages along the customer journey with your organisation. This includes the channels, platforms and devices you use to communicate with customers, as well as what days of the week or time of day consumers tend to engage with you.
- **Getting to know your customer** - personalising services or products means tailoring messages to individual customers based on their behaviour and has been one of the biggest marketing trends in the last two years. However, to personalise effectively, you need to spend time getting to know your customers.
- **Involve your team** - An organisation’s most valuable asset is its human capital and, when personalising, it is important to get the input of your teams, especially customer-facing employees. Invite them to brainstorm ideas on ways in which you can offer your customers a more personalised experience.
- **Measuring and tracking** - It is important to ensure that you measure and track the impact of a more personalised approach. First you will need to identify what it is you want to measure and track, then establish a baseline against which to measure future performance and do so meaningfully.

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