



برنامج الإمارات للخدمة الحكومية المتميزة
Emirates Government Service Excellence Program

In cooperation with:

KINETIC
CONSULTING
SERVICES

WHY CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE MATTERS





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THE NEW INDUSTRIAL WORLD



IN OUR DIGITAL ERA, THE COMPETITION FOR MARKET SHARE AND CONSUMER LOYALTY HAS NEVER BEEN MORE FIERCE OR COMPLICATED.

Economists have described the digital wave of disruption as the Fourth Industrial Revolution, because of the degree of change affecting so many aspects of industry, government, and consumers. Traditional industry built from brick-and-mortar business models has found that the commercial advantages it once held, thanks to captive markets and trade barriers, have all but disappeared. Organizations now compete in a global marketplace where physical barriers are no longer pertinent. Advancements in technology have enabled organisations to create new business models, products, and services that can distribute their wares anywhere—and do it all at lightning speed.

As these new competitors enter the marketplace, they erode market share from traditional industries. Without legacy systems or business models, these new entrants can quickly win new customers by offering higher value offerings at lower costs. This is leaving brick-and-mortar businesses with a declining margin and lower profitability.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE FOR THE UAE GOVERNMENT

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE UAE GOVERNMENT?

How can we create a sustainable competitive advantage in today's business environment? The answer is straightforward, though not exactly simple: by forging a unique positive emotional bond with all people living in or visiting the UAE. Collectively we consider all people living in or visiting as customers of the UAE government.

The key to this premise is that the value of customer experience resides in your customers developing a unique emotional relationship to our goods and services. A positive experience without a unique emotional relationship does not constitute a point of differentiation. A customer relationship based on transactional interactions without an emotional attachment is nothing more than customer service, and this is easily replicable.

On the other hand, a truly unique emotional bond with a customer can be difficult to replicate, because creating this distinctive relationship requires the core of government to change and move in a new direction. As difficult as the task may be, however, it is invaluable to the country's future and prosperity.

At the core of the government's vision for the UAE is the creation of the happiest place in the world. This goal cannot be achieved without the united effort and commitment of all to make changes that deliver positive emotional bonds for people in the UAE. People will develop a positive emotional bond with the country once we accomplish this goal. People's happiness translates into a higher quality of life for family and individuals. All people around the world are ultimately striving to live in a country that offers a better quality lifestyle. This is why customer experience is so important for the UAE.



¹ The term was first used in April 2011 at the Hanover Fair, the world's biggest industrial trade show. By October 2012, the Working Group on Industry 4.0, chaired by Siegfried Dais (Robert Bosch GmbH) and Henning Kagermann (acatech), had developed a set of recommendations for companies implementing Industry 4.0.

WHAT IS CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE MANAGEMENT?

Customer experience management is the process an organisation follows to forge an emotional and spiritual bond with its customers.

- Customer experience management aims to create a unique bias for an organisation's products and services by meeting and exceeding customer expectations. Every interaction customers have with your organisation, at every stage of their lifecycle, shapes and determines the emotional relationship they have with the organisation. Customers are loyal to the brand only when there is a very tight correlation between what the brand promises and what customers experience. Your department's ability to consistently deliver positive emotions builds a level of trust between brand and customer, and this trust fosters the long-term loyalty that supports the country's success. The unique relationship established between the customer and the organisation from these experiences is known as a branded experience.
- Customer experience, as a market differentiator, must be part of your strategy and embedded within your organisation's DNA. Customer experience management is part science and part art. The organisation needs to develop and implement a CX program that will manufacture and maintain uniquely positive experiences for customers to reap the rewards of a branded experience.
- The science part of customer experience management is about focusing on each touchpoint throughout the customer journey. Documenting the customer journey needs to be based on facts and analysis needs to be taken on what your customers experience at each touchpoint. Simply put, customer experience management is the coordination of all interactions customers have with a brand. Every place a customer can interact with the organisation — either digitally or physically — is a touchpoint, and the experience customers receive at each touchpoint shapes their perceptions. When brands consistently produce positive impressions, they develop trust with their customers. Trust is an essential component of building loyalty and creating customer satisfaction.



Designing the best touchpoint experience depends on customer needs and the voice of the customer. For example, the first stage in any government service is the enquiry stage when the customer is looking for answers on a particular topic such as applying for a service, the nearest location of a branch, or the cost. Fundamental questions that each government service provider needs to think about is how to offer their services in a manner that delivers the best experience for their customers. The voice of the customer can help determine how to acquire such information. Essential information needed includes the operating hours, the preferred channel of service delivery, the languages used, and the customer expectations on timeframes to complete a transaction.

To design the best touchpoint experience, you need to know your customer needs and expectations. The “art” part of customer experience management is knowing what changes you need to make that will lead to higher emotional engagement and satisfaction with customers. Understanding customer behaviour is a primary component of customer experience management. The four main factors that affect consumer behaviour are:



-1 Cultural behaviour: Culture plays a vital role in determining consumer behaviour. Common values that are shared by people from the same nation, religion, racial group or the same geographic location will help define consumer behaviour.



-2 Social factors: Family, reference groups, and social class plays a role in determining the behaviour of a society, its values customs and traditions.



-3 Personal factors: Age, occupation, financial and economic situations influence how consumers behave



-4 Psychological factors: A person’s mental state determines how they feel at any given moment in a day. A tired consumer in the afternoon is unlikely to have the same patience as a well-rested consumer in the morning.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT THE IDEAL CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE?

AS A LEADER WITHIN YOUR ORGANISATION TO DELIVER THE IDEAL CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE, YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE SCIENCE BEHIND CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE MANAGEMENT.



- Whether you are considering employees, business processes, technology, or leadership, each component has diverse characteristics that require specialised skill-sets and focused attention to keep them working harmoniously toward delivering the desired customer experiences.
- The story of CX is ultimately about how people can reorganise their work, behaviour, and thought processes to achieve an extraordinary outcome for their customers and their organisation. The starting point is to understand your current customer's journey. Learn about how they interact with your organisation and what their cognitive and emotional experiences are. How do you know what your customers need or expect? The best way is to ask them directly. Customer focus groups can give you the insights required to make informed decisions about what you need to do to improve your customer experience. Once you have factual evidence, you can then proceed to brainstorm ideas on how to deliver an experience that will not only meet customer needs but offers happiness because it exceeds their expectations.

- There are many moving parts in mastering CX management to achieve measurable and sustainable results. These benefits cannot be accomplished without taking a scientific approach and having a structured and well-thought roadmap that outlines the journey toward achieving customer experience excellence. The roadmap should consider how staff, processes, technology and organisational culture impact the customer experience. Each of these dimensions influences your CX strategy, and none can be neglected or disregarded in the whole equation. This roadmap should have definable initiatives that are clear and outline how each will contribute towards enhancing the customer experience and lead to happiness.



BEST PRACTICES FOR IMPLEMENTING CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE EXCELLENCE

Here is the truth: all people, regardless of race or religious beliefs, have the same desires for happiness.

While we all may have a different definition of happiness, we do know there are common attributes that lead to universal happiness. People want to live worry-free and have the freedom to be creative and pursue their passions without unnecessary constraints.

The UAE government can help deliver happiness by implementing best practices in customer experience excellence. What are the essential best practices for providing the ideal customer experience? Here are the ten most important practices:



1. Understand and document your current customer journey: the starting point is to understand the underlying triggers that require a consumer to use your services and then document the steps they take to complete a successful transaction. This is the customer journey, and by capturing all the interactions, you will get the insights on what your organisation needs to do to improve the customer experience.



2. Get insights about your customer expectations directly from your customers: factual evidence should be collected on what your customers expect. The voice of the customer can be best captured through structured focus groups with target customer groups.



3. Focus on eliminating your customer's pain points first: there is no purpose in trying to design new experiences for customers without first removing the pain points experienced by customers. You cannot achieve customer experience excellence unless you eliminate all your key customer pain points.



4. Analyse each problem area using root-cause analysis techniques and then remedy the root -cause problems: the ability to deliver consistently great experiences for customers requires you to correct the root-cause of the problem that created the pain point in the first instance. Use a technique such a five-whys to get to the real reason why this problem for the customer exists.



5. Always focus on reducing the effort for your customers to do business with you by making it very easy for them to transact with you: customer expectations have now changed due to our obsession with smartphones, applications for just about everything and the convenience of online shopping through the internet. The modern day consumer demands convenience and low effort to complete a transaction. How does your service compare?



6. Deliver your services using multiple channels. Let the customer choose: consumers want to be the ones who choose the channel and not have it forced on them. Remember, not all your customers are comfortable doing all their transactions online.



7. Give customers the freedom of self-service options: customer research highlights that many consumers want to be in control of the interaction. Research also highlights that consumers also want to be able to have the freedom to conduct business on a 24x7 basis. Self-service is an essential aspect of meeting the demands of the modern consumer.



8. Standardise the quality of services across all channels: consumers today are seeking a uniform experience across all your channels. They don't want, for example, to call your contact centre and receive one response and then get a different response from your website. Standardising services and information across all channels is essential for building trust and confidence with your customer.



9. Focus on personalised messaging and clear and brief communications: sending out generic messages that are not personalised does not build any emotional engagement with customers. A personalised message is a way of building a relationship with your customers that reflects their importance to the organisation. Also, keep your messages brief and try and use video to communicate your messages.



10. Ensure you have a governance model to ensure your CX initiatives are sustainable and improved on an ongoing basis: no customer experience program will generate long-term results unless there is a governance model in place to ensure your initiatives are monitored and continually improved on an ongoing basis. Remember, customer expectations are continually evolving so you need to have the mechanism in place to constantly adapt and innovate to meet changing customer needs.

One of the challenges facing organisations in the execution of excellent customer experience programs is bureaucracy and legacy business practices. The most significant hindrance for achieving the UAE's vision for becoming the happiest place is bureaucracy and the inability to break away from existing practices that hinder how customers can transact with an organisation. The leading organisations in customer experience around the world are the ones that have reinvented how people effortlessly receive goods and services. Think of Apple, Netflix, and Amazon. These organisations have prospered because they dared to be different. The challenge for UAE government is also to reinvent how services can be delivered to our people so we can deliver on our vision of becoming the happiest place on earth.



