LISTEN TO
THE VOICE OF CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

The Four Essentials of a Customer Experience Program
LISTEN CAREFULLY, LISTEN INTELLIGENTLY

Clearly, surveys aren’t enough. A mature customer experience program has to listen carefully and intelligently to the voice of the customer across every channel, and at each stage of the customer’s journey. The insights gained form the basis for predictive analysis and – the critical stage – for action that improves the customer experience.

By anticipating customer needs, rather than just reacting to expressions of dissatisfaction, and adapting accordingly, a company improves its brand loyalty. A loyal customer is generally a source of advocacy, which in turn brings in more customers and contributes to the business’ bottom line.

In order to effectively implement such a comprehensive and effective customer experience program, four elements are essential:

- Total Voice of the Customer
- Customer Journey Mapping
- Personalization
- Single Customer View

Let’s examine each aspect separately and in depth.

WHERE CX PROGRAMS STUMBLE

Many companies recognize the value of a customer experience (CX) program, which they promote internally as a strategy for identifying customer dissatisfaction or pain points in the hopes of alleviating them. The most basic and common approach is asking the customers directly via transaction-triggered surveys and periodic feedback polling.

Yet, only 27% of organizations define their customer experience efforts as “very effective” and 52% of executives find it challenging to maximize the return on investment (ROI) in a CX program. Moreover, companies are often unable to accurately measure the impact of their efforts.

In part, this is a product of the rapid pace at which new interaction channels emerge, as 90% of companies still don’t have a clear omni-channel strategy. With relevant customer data from different sources captured and archived in different places and in different ways, it is no surprise that most corporate executives think the biggest obstacle to delivering a consistent CX is systems integration. Half of all companies admit that they simply do not have the means to provide a single, coherent view of their customers.

The result is that 75% of CX professionals say they cannot prioritize their efforts nor allocate resources in a way that have the most beneficial effect on customers and on their company’s revenues.

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TOTAL VOICE OF THE CUSTOMER
Companies have found that setting up a holistic voice of the customer (VOC) program has a significant positive impact on customer experience.

EVERY CUSTOMER INTERACTION HAS A MESSAGE
A total VOC approach captures and applies analytics to every interaction and across multiple channels, such as phone calls, email, SMS, IVR and online forms. This feedback can be indirect, using real-time natural language analytics to identify negative sentiment during a call, for example; or it can be direct, as when customers are invited to reply to survey questions immediately after an interaction. Experience shows that personalized surveys and customer engagement generally ensure a positive feedback experience.

FROM ANALYSIS TO ACTION
Total VOC includes using numeric scoring of direct feedback and analysis of verbatim comments in order to obtain root cause and other customer behavior insights. This is more than just measuring dissatisfaction. The intelligent combination of direct and indirect VOC feedback across all channels, as well as listening for the emotion between the lines, reveals the drivers of customer experience.

The ultimate goal of any CX program, including its total VOC component, is to provide actionable insights to key stakeholders across the business. The insights obtained from the comprehensive VOC approach make possible the process and policy changes that best address the drivers of customer satisfaction. The real-time indirect feedback analysis is also a major key to identifying at-risk customers and hidden detractors in time to take action, improving customer retention rates. And VOC insights shared with the frontline staff promote long-term employee engagement and motivate improved capabilities. All of these insights, when acted upon with understanding and determination, will increase the CX program's ROI.
CREATING A PICTURE OF CUSTOMER TOUCHPOINTS

An effective CX program breaks down enterprise silos that obscure a consistent view of the customer. Separate data sources, support teams and tools, as well as customer attitudes, attributes and behaviors, are connected across touchpoints and channels. At both the individual and aggregate level this long view provides an intuitive and holistic understanding of the customer and of his or her journey. Shifts in customer behavior, key interaction patterns, agent performance, and process bottlenecks all become evident from the perspective of the customer journey. Tools such as machine learning and predictive analytics applied to the journey data can guide decisions in real time, while longer-term cross-channel strategies can be prioritized to increase business value.

PROACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

With the comprehensive understanding of customer history and context provided by journey mapping, a CX program can incorporate proactive engagement to drive action that shapes customer behavior at each touchpoint. This can include flagging high-effort journeys for interception and correction at their earliest stages, as well as identifying and prioritizing reaching out to high-value customers. A full journey map provides the context necessary to identify probable reasons for a customer contact. That analysis can also provide agents with real-time guidance as to the next best action, improving first call resolution rates and customer satisfaction.

MEASURING THE EFFECTS

A mature CX program measures the impact of changes in the customer journey, gaining insight into areas or touchpoints that may need more attention. The effects of customer journey mapping have been seen in practice, with operational costs reduced by 10% to 20%. Improved customer satisfaction (CSAT scores) have been correlated 30% to 40% more strongly with journey performance than with the customer experience at individual touchpoints along the way. Similarly, business outcomes - such as high revenue, repeat purchase, low customer churn, and positive word of mouth - have also been 20% to 30% more strongly correlated with the customer’s experience of the overall journey than with any individual stop along the way.
GETTING A PICTURE OF THE CUSTOMER

A mature CX program leverages all available data, feedback and interaction analytics to anticipate and meet each customer’s particular needs – sometimes even before the customer is aware of it. Tracking anonymous and authenticated behavior across all interaction channels can begin to create a picture of the customer. Mapping out this behavior on a propensity score map provides even better information for service personalization. With sufficient instances of customer interaction and analysis of their behavior, it is possible to identify customer intentions and to personalize a response.

With personalization, customer-specific real-time CX program decisions and triggers can be made across all channels and touchpoints. Such personalization insights can signal, for example, which products and self-service options should be offered to a particular customer to improve their experience.

THE SHORT- AND LONG-TERM ROI

Personalization, as a CX program element, has been shown to improve acquisition efficiency rates, as well as increasing up-sell and cross-sell conversions. It has also been key to reducing churn and optimizing service to meet a long-term goal, such as maximizing a customer’s lifetime value (in some cases improving ROI for the CX program by an order of magnitude).

Current estimates are that by 2018 organizations that have fully invested in all types of online personalization will outsell companies that have not by more than 30%.

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CONNECTING THE DATA

While a customer may see a brand as a single entity throughout their journey, the company at times needs to take steps to consolidate information across multiple channels and touchpoints in order to see and treat the customer that way. This is a critical aspect of a well-planned CX program, as it prevents customers from becoming frustrated by needlessly repetitive interactions with agents or sales representatives.

To establish a single customer view, many different customer data sources are assembled to form a complete record of every interaction an individual has had with a company. These series of touchpoints or, when available, full customer journeys can be assembled into a customer identity graph (these graphs can also be built around households or organizations). Cross-checking and correlation of information on a single customer over time creates a richer image of the individual and their personal timeline with the company. Eventually, with frequency of interactions and identifiable patterns of authenticated and anonymous online activity, the customer’s behavior becomes more predictable.

THE VALUE OF SEEING THE CUSTOMER AS AN INDIVIDUAL

Structurally linking diverse data from customer systems driving mobile, web, call center and physical channels allows companies to interact with customers as individuals. With a rich enough identity graph, personalized experiences can be created for individuals based on their previous interactions and state of mind.

A responsive and flexible identity graph creates value from customer data by:

- Using every interaction in all customer journeys for guiding real-time decisioning.
- Reducing time to insight and action by leveraging all the available data immediately to assemble the most up-to-date view of any customer.
- Providing scalability, handling Big Data efficiently and connecting multi-channel customer journeys at any scale.
- Using each customer’s predictive profile to create powerful insights regarding which products and services are most appropriate for each customer at any given point in time.
- Documenting the outcome of any outreach to customers and automatically updating the customer profile accordingly.
BRING IT TOGETHER

NICE Systems brings the four key elements of a modern and mature customer experience program together.

NICE’s Voice of the Customer solutions include sophisticated surveys for obtaining direct feedback, as well as interaction analytics for analyzing both emotion and natural language in voice calls, text chats, emails, social media and any other channel customers use. This seamless, omni-channel capability is unique to NICE.

Using raw transactional data, NICE Customer Journey Solutions combine all interactions to obtain a complete view of the customer. Integrating in a single CX suite real-time next best action agent guidance, interaction analytics and voice of the customer elements turns this intelligence into a dynamic, up-to-date decisioning engine for effective customer experience programs.

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