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The Power of Customer Experience

HOW TO PROVIDE A WORLD CLASS OFFERING

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Introduction

Quality service matters. So significant is the Power of Customer Experience, it's rise has led experts to describe experience as the new "brand".

Providing your clients with as optimal and enjoyable an experience as possible has to be high up on your agenda. Not least because there is a growing trend of experience based, not product based loyalty.

Whilst the majority of organisations acknowledge this, backing the concept up with with a solid strategy of action is where many companies fall down.

It's all too easy to slip into a trap of focusing on revenue figures and forgetting that, behind the numbers, there are the individual contributors.

They are the face of the company, they are the people who's daily actions influence and mould the public perception of the organisation they're representing. Your people are the Customer Experience.

Without having robust processes for both current customers and prospects alike, you leave yourself open to inconsistencies in quality.

On average, we tell ten times more people about a negative experience than a positive one.

It is up to us to ensure the scales tip in our favour to earn the rave reviews.

In this guide we will provide you with actionable tips to shine a light across your own business, to question current practices and ensure your Customer Experience is truly world class.

What's In An Experience?

If you are serious about sustained growth for your organisation, the Power of Customer Experience dictates a remarkable service as critical.

Positive experiences promote loyalty and encourage brand advocacy helping to not only retain clients, but organically create more through the provision of an experience so good, people want to shout about it.

Every time a prospective or current client engages with your business, the interaction affects their perception of you and their behaviours.

Customers' priorities have changed. Loyalty is no longer based on price or product but given to companies who align with their social values or provide a world class experience.

Creating consistency in your processes is the first step to creating consistency for the customer and the building blocks of excellence.

Customer Experience doesn't end with a sale; that's just the beginning of the journey.

If you can provide value at every stage in the buying cycle and continue to show a customer they are valued after acquisition you are well on the way to providing the experience they desire and edge out your competitors.

Having delineated the value of elite Customer Experience, we'll begin to explore how it can be facilitated... starting with Process.

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Define Your Process

Having a clear, well defined customer process is essential in maintaining high satisfaction levels when it comes to Customer Experience.

Process becomes even more important, as we were all acutely made aware of throughout 2020, when multiple teams, dispersed across locations or stages of the process, all contribute to the same Customer Experience.

Using technologies to coordinate communication, illustrate the buyer journey and control how customers engage with your business will help ensure that any interaction with you is consistently excellent.

A useful task in defining your processes is to sit down with colleagues from across the organisation and map out the desired customer journey.

Doing so will help you establish a blueprint for success that can be easily rolled out to every member of staff and customer alike.

Consider the following questions to get the ball rolling:

- What needs to happen when?
- Why is it important for that experience to be the same for everyone?
- What processes do I need my staff to follow?
- What internal resource is required to support these processes?
- How should different teams share information and work together?
- Which current actions are essential and which can be streamlined?
- At every stage, are we putting our, or the customer's needs first?

Know Your Audience

Customers want conversations, not correspondence. They also want to contact you where they are.

What do we mean by that? Consider for a second, where you are speaking with your customers. If it's not face to face in store, is it where they spend most of their time?

For example, is it via email, over the phone or on social? 84% of companies who claim to be customer-centric are now focusing on the mobile Customer Experience.

In essence, are you accessible and geared toward your customer's preferred method of communication?

Now think about how you are speaking to them? Is it OK to use jargon? Can you include lots of technical terms in your conversations or is it best to keep things simple?

By knowing and understanding your audience, you can begin to predict their behaviour patterns and match your Customer Experience to their expectations ensuring their interaction is a positive one.

A customer should leave an interaction with your business informed and satisfied, not frustrated and confused.

This means that not only are you providing them with the information they want, but doing so in their desired language, tonality and location resulting in client communications that delight rather than disappoint.

Track, Track, Track

Data is invaluable, yet ultimately useless if never actioned upon.

Without tracking your service levels and customer processes, you are making business critical decisions blindfolded.

Think what information would be most helpful in improving my customer experience? How effective are my current customer communications? Am I giving the customer everything they need or am I fielding several questions due to gaps in information provided?

Can you answer those questions? Are you tracking the right data to?

Your staff are the personable, smiling face of your business and their attitudes are vital in making customers want to deal with you, share their great experiences with friends and return again in the future.

Tracking activity can highlight resourcing issues, knowledge gaps and training requirements, all of which contribute to Customer Experience.

Evaluating data allows you to provide your teams with more of the information they need, and less of what they don't. Consider tracking:

- How many customer issues are being create and closed?
- What stages of the journey is producing the most customer problems?
- How long does it take your staff to resolve customer issues?
- What are the root causes of these issues?
- What channels are your customer issues being submitted by?
- What is the satisfaction rate for customers following resolution?

Welcome Feedback

Feedback is your friend.

Every company wants to have countless positive reviews, who wouldn't?

And yet, the short term pain of hearing about a negative experience could actually be more beneficial in the long run.

Customer feedback enables you to unearth otherwise unknown issues or problems as well as providing an invaluable insight into how your processes are being both followed by staff and received by customers.

Using automated surveys, triggered at key stages in the customer process, can assist in keeping customer satisfaction on track and prevent those damaging negative reviews from ever surfacing.

A proactive approach is far superior to being reactive.

By identifying obstacles early on, you can action a response before an issue gets out of hand.

Nipping the problem in the bud will avert a future crisis which can often become a significant drain on resource.

A constant feedback flow is the way to address this and also ensure your customer feels like a valued partner to your business rather than a mere number on a financial spreadsheet.

Review, Learn, Evolve

Even the most intricately planned and creatively formulated projects in the world could be improved upon. Your Customer Experience is no different.

If you are not always seeking ways to move forward, you are in fact falling behind your competition.

Constant, iterative improvements are essential, no matter how large or small your company is.

Using data is key in making sure that the decisions made by the management team actually work in the real world.

Here are seven discussion points for you to get your own Customer Experience revolution underway:

- Can we make it easier for customers to get in touch?
- Are our customers adequately informed throughout the sales process?
- Do staff fully understand the latest products and offerings?
- Where are our bottlenecks?
- Should we capture more data from customers to better serve them?
- Which marketing channels are the most effective?
- What part of the process can we automate for efficiency without compromising experience?

Conclusion

Leading customer centric businesses across the globe have set a new standard in experience that customers now unanimously expect across the board.

This is the Power of Customer Experience.

Without the right tools in place to support and guide staff, the risk will always be present that customers are being left frustrated and rather than converting, are instead turning to your competitors.

Self reflection isn't always easy yet it provides a clear path to stand up to the facts and make the changes you need to in order to deliver world class Customer Experience.

At the end of the day, the critical thing to have at the front of your mind is to question whether or not each interaction will leave a smile on your customers' face.

In using best of breed technology, companies can turn disappointed customers into walking, talking brand advocates the power of whom can't be underestimated.

Your clients are your most powerful marketing tool and in an age where loyalty is determined by experience over price, there is huge opportunity to become an industry leader without the industry leading budget.

Make your Customer Experience a delight, not a disappointment.

Anthill's mission is to help companies provide an outstanding Customer Experience across teams, channels and locations.

Designed for workforce synergy, Anthill helps you plan your unique Customer Journey into customisable workflow streams, then monitor performance via live and interactive role-based dashboards.

Improve efficiency, drive productivity, refine operations and increase sales.

To find out if your company would benefit from Anthill, request a free process review from our team of specialists by visiting www.anthill.co.uk