Quick Answer: How Do We Motivate Our Organization to Embrace Customer Experience?

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Customer experience is a key priority for many organizations, but getting the organization to embrace an organizationwide commitment to CX requires knowing what motivates stakeholders. Application leaders supporting CX must build the case for a more customer-centric organization.

Quick Answer

How do we motivate our organization to embrace customer experience (CX)?

- Ensure executives understand and prioritize CX.
- Ensure that there is a business justification for CX that will satisfy shareholders.
- Motivate employees to achieve business outcomes by focusing on engagement.
- Align the organization's middle management on CX execution.

More Detail

It is important to answer the “why” of customer experience. The organization must have a sense of the purpose of investing in CX. This purpose motivates stakeholders in different ways. A rational business case will justify an investment for executives, but to motivate employees, you need to inspire them (see Figure 1).
Figure 1: Customer Experience Purpose Building Blocks

**Customer Experience Purpose Building Blocks**

- **Customer Experience Purpose**
  - Organization Goals
  - Employees motivated to achieve business outcomes
  - Organization is aligned on CX execution

Even though CX is a key priority for many organizations, 65% of B2C organizations and 80% of B2B organizations are in the beginning stages of CX maturity (see *Survey Analysis: Customer Experience Maturity and Investment Priorities, 2020*). A lack of a common purpose and approach for their CX initiative may be impeding these organizations from attaining greater CX maturity. This puts CX at a disadvantage, meaning that it falls below other priorities.

With a common purpose, stakeholders look at the big picture rather than focusing on the detail. They look to the future rather than the past — and at the customers, not themselves. We recognize that different stakeholders are motivated by different things. Gartner research points to four criteria that increase the odds of gaining organizational support for CX:
Ensure that executives understand and prioritize CX — In our discussions with thousands of clients over the years, CEO and executive support for CX was the single most important criteria for maturing the CX capability. Gartner is now seeing increased awareness and interest in customer engagement and customer experience among senior leaders. In our survey of members of boards of directors, we asked what their top expected outcomes were for their digital business investments. The No. 1 outcome was significantly enhanced customer engagement (see Survey Analysis: Executive Leaders Should Align to Board Priorities for 2021). The same survey showed that to enable these plans, the biggest increase in budget was increasing the funding of IT/technology investments. We asked CEOs and senior business executives in a separate survey what the meaning of digital business was for them. The top three results were “e-commerce,” “data and analytics,” and “customer experience” (see 2021 Gartner CEO Survey: The Year of Rebuilding). This interest in CX is also trickling down through the organization. Gartner inquiry volume on customer experience and related topics is up 20% to 30% over 2020. Employees need to see executives getting serious about CX — and taking action, rather than just talking about it.

Ensure that there is business justification for CX that will satisfy shareholders — Leading organizations gain and maintain executive-level support for CX initiatives when they can justify the investments. The four main approaches that we have seen be successful are:

- Comparing the differences in financial performance or lifetime value between happy and unhappy customers
- Using industry research to link the behaviors of satisfied customers to financial gains. ¹
- Using financial measurements including ROI, payback, net present value (NPV), and internal rate of return (IRR) analyses.
- Analyzing strategic gains, risk mitigation and “consequences of inaction” rationales, including the inability to compete when competitors advance their CX.
Motivate employees to achieve business outcomes by focusing on engagement — According to HBR's article, “Putting the Service Profit Chain to Work,” happier, more engaged employees build higher-quality products and services, which leads to improved customer satisfaction, loyalty and advocacy. ² Employees who are passionate about their work are willing to go the extra mile to help customers. The same attitude makes them better team players. They are more willing to collaborate and coach and, consequently, they help the organization to be more customer-centric. Rewarding and recognizing these employees helps build a culture of engaged employees. This is the essence of a customer-centric organization.

Align the middle management of the organization on CX execution — Organizations that have a well-developed CX governance approach are more likely to achieve sustained success in CX execution. A good CX governance structure has a lead, often someone who leads CX, supported by other functional leaders that directly impact the customer experience. This could include leaders from marketing, sales, customer service, operations, HR, finance and IT. This CX “steering committee” has two main functions:

- Consistent execution — This involves creating a common set of operating standards for serving customers and ensuring that all levels of the organization have the training and resources they need to support the overall CX vision.

- Efficient decision making — This involves making decisions on where to invest in CX, enabling cross-functional collaboration on key projects, and actively communicating the value of CX to the organization.

Recommended by the Authors

Infographic: Customer Experience Management Framework

The Gartner Customer Experience Management Model for IT Leaders

Survey Analysis: Customer Experience Maturity and Investment Priorities, 2020

Grab the Opportunity Now to Improve Your CX. The Board and CEO Are Expecting It.

The 10 Habits of Customer-Centric Organizations in the Age of Digital Business

Justify Customer Experience Initiatives Using 4 Approaches
How IT Can Strengthen Customer Experience Governance

Use Customer Experience Quick Wins as Momentum for High-Impact Programs

Findings on the Relationship Between Customer Centricity and Employee Experience

Evidence

Gartner’s 2020 Customer Experience Innovation Survey was conducted online with 238 customer experience (CX) leaders from 17 January through 24 February 2020. The study explored CX maturity, challenges to CX maturation, actions taken to increase CX maturity, and the role of technologies in CX initiatives. A recontact survey was conducted in late April 2020.

Disclaimer: Results of this study do not represent global findings or the market as a whole, but reflect the sentiments of the respondents and companies surveyed.

1 American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI)

2 Putting the Service-Profit Chain to Work, HBR.