

Winning and Retaining the Modern Customer

Develop a Robust CX Strategy to Reach Today's Hard-to-Impress Buyers



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Understanding Who Your Customers Really Are

A strong understanding of who your customers are, what they want and how much they're worth is essential to meeting their needs. Insights into the mind of individuals and the broader customer base are critical to this understanding, but surveys are increasingly ineffective because they're too coarse and customers view them as a waste of time.

But customers are telling you more than they're saying, even if they don't realize it. It is possible, broadly speaking, to know more about what customers want and need than they know themselves. To access these insights and encourage long-term loyalty, **organizations must use tools to “hear” what customers are saying and feeling**, and to infer as much as possible about what really matters to them.

Takeaway: Modern analytics tools provide a way to gain insight into the customer's mind and guide organizations to outcomes that satisfy the needs of both parties.

Learn from Customer Behaviors

Predicting a customer's needs and behaviors keeps expectations realistic. Potential buyers want information, choices and advice, while existing customers want speed, consistency, constant attention and empathy. The goal is to establish a relationship from the outset that leads to long-term retention and to customers that act as advocates for the brand.

For this, **organizations need to put resources towards intelligence gathering and analysis**: what are customers saying, and what do they actually mean? Successful CX strategies look at the customer over a stretch of time beyond the buying or service moment and harness systems using conversational AI or natural language processing (NLP) to determine customer sentiment. Tools like these allow the organization to better predict how customer needs evolve and present offers that are relevant to the precise stage of each customer's journey.

Takeaway: Adding AI and analytics tools throughout the buying process gives the organization a better understanding of—and more control over—the customer journey.



Guiding the Buyer's Journey

A complete CX strategy is more than just listening to customers; **it is a form of intelligence-gathering about ways to make the buying journey more effective for the customer and more certain for the organization.** Of interest are buying decisions stemming from marketing efforts, face-to-face connections in stores, kiosks and field service engagements, and communication via chat, email, social media, website visits and more.

Customers want the option to change their minds and direction at will, narrowing the opportunity for organizations to impress and lock in a purchase. Organizations that successfully take advantage of these opportunities use real-time data to predict how customer needs evolve and present offers that are relevant to the precise stage of each customer's journey. Yet our research indicates **only 22% of organizations analyze data in real time.**

Takeaway: Modern CX strategy relies on real-time data throughout the customer journey to respond in the moment and anticipate future needs.

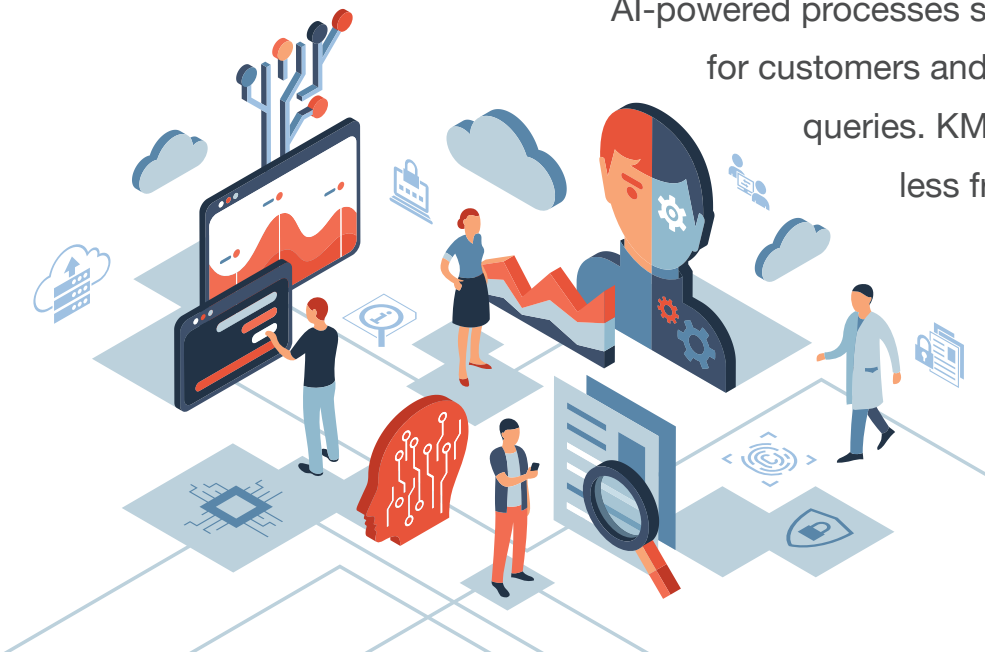


Invest in AI and Knowledge

Adding AI to knowledge management (KM) and analytics tools enables CX teams to guide customer behavior. Advanced analytics can be used in marketing for journey analysis and orchestration, in service interactions for detecting sentiment and underlying issues, and in sales to qualify and score leads, among other use cases. Our research shows **nearly 9 in 10 (87%) organizations either already use or plan to adopt AI**, with 59% of organizations planning to include NLP in their adoption within a year.

AI-powered processes speed the delivery of self-service knowledge resources for customers and prepare agents with appropriate responses to customer queries. KM enhanced with AI also provides a more consistent and less fragmented experience by helping agents close more cases on the first contact.

Takeaway: AI-powered insights about customer expectations help drive desirable organizational and customer outcomes.



Invest in Automation

At its heart, CX is about looking at the customer's journey well beyond any individual interaction. But personalized experiences need to be handled at scale without overwhelming costs. When properly implemented, automation technology can be used to do some of the heavy lifting in CX, providing answers that were once dependent on manual analysis, researching and collecting survey data. Automation can knit together workflows across teams, and relieve agents of mundane, repetitive tasks. This allows them to focus on more complex interactions and helps reduce agent attrition. For these reasons, **one-half of organizations (49%)** in our research **consider process automation important**.

Consider an automated platform that extends CX practices as widely as possible across an organization to give leadership a high-level view into customer trends and allows them to fine-tune best practices while getting quick ROI on technology investments.



Takeaway: Technology upgrades and investments in automation technology can support continuous innovation.

Break Down Silos for Better Visibility

A single, unified platform provides greater value than niche applications because it:

- **Allows innovation at the platform level** to be used by multiple applications that interconnect, rather than having to rely on piece-by-piece integrations.
- **Allows people in different roles to engage** with customers—or data about customers—based on their persona needs.

Most organizations still develop their CX strategies around existing tools, thereby reinforcing existing silos in data and process. Single platforms provide an organization-wide view of the truth and put CX efforts into the hands of marketers and sales teams, using the same data resources across CX, CRM and line-of-business tools. That brings together processes that cross departments and that involve people who don't normally interact with customers directly. This also gives the agent more data about the customer to help calibrate their approach to each interaction.

Takeaway: By automating data collection, organizations can pull data from the contact center and across the enterprise to provide complete visibility of the customer across all data points, for all departments.



Building a Modern CX Business Case

The key to building a business case for CX investment is to understand the desired outcomes from CX tools and processes. And this starts with understanding customer expectations. An organization can then match those expectations to reality by analyzing the types of experiences provided and the outcomes of those experiences. Assess customers based on factors including loyalty, value, longevity and profitability, and tailor experiences to those factors.

The business case for CX investment is driven by analytics, which provide the insights to create unique CX processes and allow an organization to find and utilize the moments of leverage that exist in customer relationships. That overarching goal should be embraced by leadership across the organization, including CX, Digital Transformation, IT and Operations.

Takeaway: Business cases for CX investments rely on analytics to characterize customer expectations and leverage opportunities within customer relationships.



Measuring CX With a Wider Lens

Organizations can build consensus by emphasizing the combined ROI of CX technology and the impact of more advanced analytics on understanding key metrics like customer loyalty, value and longevity. These metrics reflect how well an organization is anticipating and shaping customer behavior to generate revenue, and we believe that **by 2027, one-half of organizations will focus on customer value and loyalty as the key metrics defining success in customer relationships**. Organizations in our research identify customer satisfaction scores and customer lifetime value as the most important customer metrics along with customer effort, acquisition costs, and revenue per customer and per interaction. Other valuable metrics are related to retention rates, sentiment and loyalty. These contrast with traditional contact center KPIs (Average Handle Time, Average Speed of Answer, Average After-Call Work) that don't provide awareness of customer sentiment and intention.

Takeaway: Key metrics related to customer sentiment and intention are needed when building a comprehensive CX platform and should be included in KPIs.

Customer Experience

Market Assertion

By 2027, one-half of organizations will focus on customer value and loyalty as the key metrics defining success in customer relationships.



Keith Dawson
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Exceed Customer Expectations

Building a modern CX framework means investing in three key areas:

- Data and knowledge through **knowledge management, customer data platforms (CDP) and customer relationship management (CRM)** that produces consistent information formatted for people in multiple roles, many of whom can benefit from seeing a fuller picture of the customer journey.
- **AI-powered analytics** that better describe the relationship between actions taken and customer outcomes as expressed in revenue-related terms.
- **Process automation** that encourages cross-departmental activity to be standardized rather than ad hoc.

With the right investments, it's possible to develop sustained satisfaction that prompts increased spending and leads to customers becoming lifelong brand advocates.

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