



The Customer Experience Manifesto

29 **thought provoking ideas and observations** (in no particular order) based on our work, experience and research over the years covering our approach to customer experience, what we believe, and how you too can become passionate about delivering a great customer experience.

1. Targets and financials are important but more so is the customer. They're the group that make the numbers possible. Don't obsess about the bottom line, get obsessed about your customers. The bottom line will follow.
2. Saying and doing are different – you need total congruency between what you say you do and what you actually do. If you say you're customer centric – you have to be and act customer centric. Customers can tell the difference.
3. The customer is smarter than you think – you need to treat them that way.
4. If you waste customer's time and money then of course they're going to complain and tell all their friends and family and then not buy from you again.
5. A loyal customer and a customer held hostage are not the same.
6. Start with the end in mind when designing processes that interact with customers.
7. Are your processes convenient for you or the customer? There's a difference.
8. Customers want simplicity, speed of service, convenience, value for money and to invest a minimum amount of effort when dealing with you and your organisation. Don't you as a customer? Why would they be any different?
9. Customer experience is about the WHOLE experience (before, during and after) and that includes some form of social media.
10. If you say customer experience is important, you have to make it important. Put it on every agenda, at every meeting. Circulate customer feedback around the organisation to everyone, not just front line teams. Bring it to life by being inventive with it.
11. Customer experience is everyone's responsibility. The quicker employees realise that, then the quicker it can improve.
12. You have to empower employees to think and act creatively when dealing with customers. Both groups will be happier in the long run this way.
13. Sometimes the customer just doesn't care about the same things as you. It's not personal and you'll feel disconnected from them when it happens, and it will happen. Try then to find out what they do actually care about.
14. Communicate, communicate, communicate...
15. Manage the customer expectation and manage it realistically. Then beat it.
16. As Tom Peters says 'be of service always.'
17. Excel at delivering the basics, consistently and flawlessly. It's the core of your business and that's what your customer's expect you to be great at. Trust me, if you're not, it doesn't matter how many bells and whistles you add onto your products or services, it won't make one blind bit of difference to the customer – although you think it will.
18. When did you last visit a customer? No seriously when?
19. What's most important to your customers? How do you know?



20. Customers want to be treated as individuals which often is contrary to how organisations want to treat customers. Of course it's more cost effective for the organisation like this but is there a real hidden cost to this approach on sales and customer loyalty? I'll wager there is. How can you make the customer experience more personal without reinventing the wheel or breaking budgets?
21. Contrary to organisational belief, most customers are reasonable and are not out to scam you at every opportunity (ok some actually are but anecdotally these are in small numbers) They're also realistic if you say you can't do something now as long as you tell them when you can do it and you stick to it.
22. Call the customer back anyway even if you haven't got the answer when you said you would. They'll appreciate it I promise and research shows that it maintains and even boosts customer satisfaction. Clearly if you don't call them back when you said you would, that has the opposite effect.
23. Days, weeks or even months from now people won't remember what you said but they will remember how you made them feel.
24. Perception is reality. I know it old but it's true and understanding customer perceptions of your organisation, brand experience, motives and actions are significantly important. From a cognitive perspective, perceptions and first impression once formed are incredibly difficult to change, making it all the more important to make sure customers form the correct perceptions. Often it's not what you do but what you don't do that gives rise to the wrong perception. If customers perceive that you don't care or value their business, whether in reality you do or not, that will become the customer's reality.
25. Daniel Kahneman the famous psychologist suggests memory of an experience is defined by two aspects; peak experience (high or low) and parting experience. Make sure then that you send your customers away happy.
26. If your organisation is medium to large in size, top down support is imperative (as it is for a lot of things). If the board, its members or the management team aren't passionate customer advocates, then it's likely the organisation won't be totally customer focussed despite what it says.
27. Dan Pink writes in his book 'To sell is human' "This is what it means to serve: improving another's life and in turn improving the world. That's the lifeblood of service and the final secret to moving others." – Personal and purposeful service.
28. Improving the customer experience is more like a marathon than a sprint. It won't be done by tomorrow but it will happen if you take the long view.
29. Don't confuse simple with easy. They're not the same. The customer experience should be simple and that can be hard to achieve. The benefits however are significant and worthy of pursuit.

That's great customer experience. Simple.

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