

Relook at how customers experience communication

By Brent Haumann

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2020 was the year many of the usual rules were thrown out the window - especially when it came to customer communication. As carefully planned schedules and content calendars were thrown out the window overnight, organisations had to re-learn and adapt on the fly.



Source: Alexas Fotos©www.pexels.com

In the midst of the chaos, advice came in thick and fast. “Communicate with your customers as much as possible,” some said. “No wait, customers are feeling overwhelmed with all the email in their inboxes,” others cautioned. Still others pointed out that all customer engagement was important.

As the dust settles, it’s time for organisations to stop worrying about how much communication they’re sending out and instead focus on “why” they’re sending it. It’s time, in other words, to reimagine the experiences they provide within customer communication.

A return to purpose

The first step in doing so is to regain sight of the real purpose of customer communication. Why does your organisation send out all the communication it does? Is it just to tick a box, or because legislation requires it? If that’s the case, are you leaving great opportunities on the table by not fully leveraging each touchpoint with a customer?

“ Ultimately, every customer communication should aim to achieve three core requirements: build a stronger relationship, add value to the customer’s life, and drive the right behaviour. ”

That’s not to say different types of customer communication shouldn’t have different purposes. Some aim to promote self-service or increase adoption of a channel or product. Others aim to create the ideal onboarding experience that builds trust, provides reassurance and gives a powerful first impression that will set the tone of the relationship for years to come.



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That said, every message your company sends should add real value to your customer’s life and motivate the right behaviour through relevance, convenience or reward. If you are able to achieve this across the full customer journey, your customers will reward you with increased loyalty, engagement and a massively reduced cost to serve.

Creating experiences

Achieving this level of customer engagement in a world full of noise isn’t easy. Whatever form it takes, your communication must pique their interest, cause inquisitiveness or generate excitement.

The best way to go about doing this? Manufactured experiences.

“ A manufactured experience is a complete, ground up redesign of an experience that is perfectly tailored to meet the customers exact needs, at a particular touchpoint. Manufactured experiences seamlessly incorporate the functional purpose of the engagement in a way that brings awareness of the potential break-out points such as alternative channels or calls-to-action. The experience drives mutually beneficial behaviour that improves the service the customer receives and reduces the company’s cost to serve. ”

A good example of a manufactured experience is Disney World. Even the most cynical adults invariably walk away with a sense of magic and wonder. That’s because Disney ensures that the whole experience puts the customer first and leaves nothing to chance (right down to making music levels consistent throughout the park).

In doing so, it ensures that every visitor feels like the park is putting on a show just for them. As a result, visitors leave the park "magically" feeling like everything was just perfect from start to finish, and they can’t wait to return.

Similarly, every piece of customer communication you send out is an opportunity to manufacture the perfect experience for your customer, and for each of these communications to build on the next to create a "magical" level of loyalty and an "enchanted" reduction in your cost to serve.

Changing customer behaviour

If you’re prepared to make this shift from simply communicating for communication’s sake, to providing your customers with an experience that feels like it was created “just for them”, you’ll nudge them to behave in ways that serve your business goals. It’s vital, however, that these experiences engage your customer and provide useful and convenient options to adopt, accept, self-serve or learn.

ABOUT BRENT HAUMANN

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