

# 10 TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

BY BILL HOGG

Today, customers are no longer looking for great customer service -- they want more. Today customers demand a great customer experience and will not settle for anything less.

It is no longer good enough for companies to provide good customers service -- rather, companies need to create memorable interactions with customers that help establish a loyal relationship and promote brand advocacy.

Creating a memorable customer experience is based on the creation of an ideal experience that your customers would want to have throughout their relationship with your company. These interactions take place on a number of channels such as in person, over the phone, through email, and on social platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.

Successful customer experiences are scalable and can be managed consistently across multiple channels. Your customers experience must be unique. And, for it to be successful it needs to be clearly defined so that each one of your employees understands how to deliver the experience you want to create for your customers.

## 10 tips to improve your customer experience

Here are 10 ways that you can improve and refine your customer experience and improve your relationship with customers:

1. **Make your customer experience clear:** A great customer experience must be scalable across your company, consistent, and be easily understood and implemented by your employees. Have you defined the key elements that must be delivered to every customer? Review your customer experience documents and ask your employees if they understand what is expected of them.
2. **Make your customer experience simple:** If your customer experience is too complex, your employees will have difficulty delivering a consistent experience. Keep it simple. Do your employees understand what is expected of them? Are there too many rules? Consider relaxing the constraints on your employees so they can focus on creating an experience that creates a positive customer outcome rather than simply following a list of rules.
3. **Define customer experience by channel:** Customer experiences will vary by the channel that customers use to interact with your company. In person and online experiences are different and this needs to be reflected in how companies approach their customers on each channel. Does your ideal customer experience vary by channel? If not, clearly outline the experience you want to create for each platform and point of interaction with your customers.
4. **Address the emotional need:** The focus of customer experience management needs to be on addressing your customer's emotional need. Do you understand your customer's emotional needs? What are you doing to ensure their emotional need is addressed?

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5. **Make sure all levels of your organization are involved:** Creating a truly great customer experience is a company wide effort. There needs to be a consistent experience across the board. Does your company have an internal feedback process in place? How do you know your customers experience is consistent? Implement a regular review process and collect feedback about the customer experience.
6. **Get your employees to buy in:** If your employees do not buy in, your customers experience will suffer. If employees are not buying in, it is often a sign that your customer experience is too complex, or worse, isn't relevant to the customer. What are you doing to ensure that your employees are buying in and creating the experience your customers want?
7. **Talk to your customers:** Ask your customers what they want. Be direct -- ask them what your company can do to improve their experience. These conversations will help to build relationships. What can you do to better understand your customer's emotional need? Create feedback channels that will help you capture and respond to your customer's emotional needs.
8. **Test your customer experience:** Before launching any new customer experience initiatives, ask some of your customers to test drive your approach and provide feedback. You will be surprised what you will learn and uncover some of the oversights that you have missed. Plus you'll avoid the expense of a false start that doesn't really resonate with customers.
9. **Narrow your focus:** If you do not understand your ideal customer, then the experience you have created for them will be off target. Who are your customers? Do you have an ideal customer profile? What do your customers want to get out of their interaction and relationship with your company? Offer incentives to customers to get their opinion through surveys and focus groups.
10. **Measure the experience:** Measure, measure, measure. If you do not have the tools in place to measure your customer's experience, then you will not have the ability to refine the experience and gain new insights. What tools are you using to measure your customers experience? Develop a system to measure your customer's experience.

Creating a highly engaging customer experience will lead to better relationships with customers that will not only generate consistent income, but also develop brand advocates out of current customers that will help generate a new stream of business.

### **Leadership Expert | Professional Speaker | Performance Excelsator™**

*Bill is the "just do it" guy who has walked in your shoes. Senior leaders at organizations like Anheuser-Busch/InBev, the Bay, RBH and ServiceOntario hire Bill to navigate change and influence and inspire higher performing teams that deliver exceptional customer service, higher productivity and improve profits.*

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