

COMCAST

The New Comcast: Empowering Employees to Drive a Customer Experience Transformation

CASE STUDY

Overview

CHALLENGE:

Focus 91,000 cable employees on customer experience (CX) and empower them to make change happen.

WHAT THEY DID:

Comcast adopted a Net Promoter System® to understand and improve customer and employee sentiment and loyalty. To do this, the company deployed Medallia Experience Cloud, which captures customer and employee feedback, integrates it with other operational data, provides reporting in real time, distributes the data and insights company-wide through role-based dashboards, and drives action to improve the customer and employee experiences.

TEAM EMPOWERMENT:

Customer feedback flows to the frontline every day. That same frontline provides feedback and ideas via monthly pulse surveys. Frontline managers and supervisors bring the voices of customers and team members together in regular team huddles, during which members review and discuss scores, comments, shout-outs, and “Elevations” (ideas for action). Once submitted, their progress is tracked and communicated back to the teams.

ABOUT COMCAST:

\$80B consolidated Comcast Cable and NBCUniversal in revenue in 2016
28.5M Customers **91K** Cable Employees

OUTCOME:

In the first year of deploying the Net Promoter System, Comcast saw a significant improvement in customer NPS and an average 20-point increase in employee NPS across the initial sites deployed. And after the company followed through on feedback from both groups, those call centers experienced a reduction of several million incoming customer calls, resulting in a positive ROI on Comcast’s Medallia investment within a single month.

HOW THEY DID IT:

The program started with pilots at a small number of locations, including the Beaverton, Oregon, Sales Center of Excellence. Within the first year, close to half of all Comcast employees were trained in NPS and CX and the other half to be trained by the end of 2017. Supervisors go through additional huddle immersion training. Huddles are now a staple of Comcast life, with daily liftoffs to review CX data and brainstorm CX improvement opportunities, and deep-dive team-focused huddles biweekly or monthly. A CX Forum has been established to review Elevations at every level, from district leadership up to the CEO, who reviews the current top three Elevations every week.





MEET

Denny Bray

Denny Bray's smile is infectious. His friendly laugh fills a room, and his twinkling eyes reveal a warmth and generosity of spirit. Having followed a somewhat unusual path—two attempts at an undergrad degree in his early and mid-twenties, both cut short by Navy deployments—Bray now has an impressive resume spanning over thirty years in business.

As an empathetic change-maker, Bray has built a career involving people development, process improvement, and life-changing employee experience. "I've always focused on people performance," he says. "I learned at a very young age that you don't get anywhere without your employees. You take care of your employees and they will take care of your customers."

In 2015, Denny Bray made the biggest step of his career yet, accepting a senior director position that would enable him to dig into employee and customer experience where it was most needed.

He accepted a position at Comcast.



A search for “Comcast” reveals that while they have led the way with product creation and innovation, customer service has not kept up. Some of Comcast’s 29 million customers have stopped believing that an exceptional customer experience is possible. Because how can any business of Comcast’s scope—one of the largest video providers in the U.S, the largest internet provider in the U.S., and also the third-largest home telephone service provider in

the U.S.— provide a level of service that leaves customers feeling heard, much less delighted? How do you start this customer experience transformation?

As Comcast has learned, you start with your employees.

TIME TO RESET

Generating \$80 billion in annual revenue in 2016, and almost quadrupling its stock price since 2010, Comcast has achieved remarkable business success in its 50+ years. One metric, however, has consistently fallen short: customer experience. For years, Comcast has languished in the bottom third of customer satisfaction ratings, from J.D. Power to the American Customer Satisfaction Index.

“We have world-class products, and we have great people, but we also have had a customer

service issue that needed to be addressed,” says Graham Tutton, Vice President of Customer Insights.

So two years ago, realizing customer experience was an integral part of continued growth and success, Comcast reset its goals to include Net Promoter Score® (NPS)* and made customer experience its number one priority. It has been a radical mindset shift. “We needed to bring the customer to the forefront of everything we do,” says Tutton. “We are focused on doing the right thing for our customer, creating a world-class experience from the very beginning and making things right the first time they go wrong. We needed real-time customer and employee feedback to do that.” A true Net Promoter System—one that incorporates the voices of the customer and the employee into the daily operations of every team member, from the front line to the CEO—was their answer.

**Net Promoter Score, ranging from -100 to 100, is a metric that gauges customer loyalty and employee engagement.*

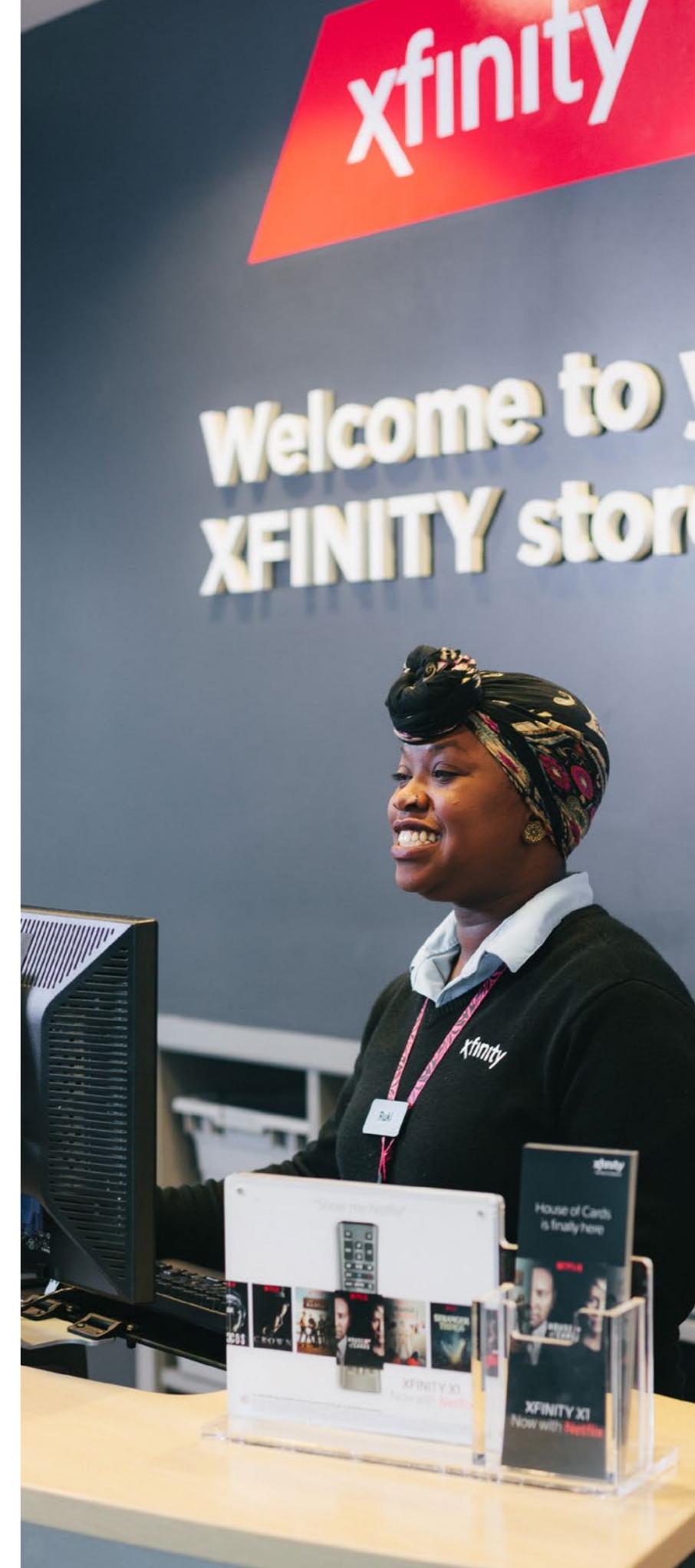
CULTURE SHIFT TO IMPROVE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

The company evaluated and tested software solutions that could embed the Net Promoter System into its operations and selected Medallia.

“We did a comprehensive review,” Tutton says. “The top three reasons we chose Medallia are first, street cred—they were one of the first to the game. Second, their platform is simple, and, frankly, infectious once you start getting into the information that comes in. And third, it’s highly scalable—they’ve done large-scale, diverse implementations with many major companies.” In addition, functionalities like a mobile app and Text Analytics put the power of analysis right in the hands of employees, from frontline store managers to C-suite decision-makers, enabling everyone to dig into the “why” of Net Promoter Scores.

The true challenge in evolving to a more customer-centric model was not to just introduce a new software platform. Rather, it was to transform the culture at a company as big and complex as Comcast. It was not just to collect customer feedback, but also to operationalize it—to adopt, influence, and enable new behavior. “We need to get over 91,000 cable employees to focus on the customer, not only from a cultural perspective, but also a measurement and motivational perspective,” Tutton says. “Many of them are frontline: customer care, chat, retail, tech ops. They are the face of Comcast.”

Every employee needs to have customer satisfaction as the primary goal. “If there’s an outage, the questions need to be ‘How does this affect the customer?’ ‘How many are affected?’ ‘What are we doing to educate them, manage their expectations, and do right by them?’” Tutton says.



“We realized that to do this in a meaningful, lasting way, we couldn’t just expect our employees to change course overnight,” says Tutton. “We realized that it doesn’t start with thousands or even hundreds. It starts with one person, then one team, then one location, and so on, until eventually you have a company-wide, customer-centric transformation.”

A CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TRANSFORMATION STARTS WITH EMPLOYEES

To start, Comcast chose a handful of locations to test the new system. Among them was their Sales Center of Excellence in Beaverton, OR, near Portland, where Denny Bray had just stepped into his role as director. He began by selecting one team to pilot NPS. The premise was simple: collect feedback from customers and employees regularly, provide access to the relevant results immediately, and enable action at every level. Customer feedback was to

be collected daily, while employees filled out a pulse survey every two weeks. Frontline agents and supervisors would have relevant data at their fingertips, along with encouragement from their leadership to take responsibility and make change.

To operationalize this new listening ability in a meaningful way, Comcast redefined and reintroduced the ritual of huddles—daily 15-minute “liftoffs,” and bi-weekly check-ins that last 30 minutes or more. “Historically, a huddle was a supervisor talking about a topic,” says Mike Fasching, whose team of supervisors was the first to roll out NPS in Beaverton under Bray’s watch. “Now, the supervisor will drop an insight or an issue gathered through Medallia and allow the employees to run the huddle themselves. There is an enormous amount of information exchanged as employees brainstorm what can improve the customer and employee experience.” The discussion topics range from customer scores and comments, to employee feedback on what’s

working and what’s not, to peer recognition, to problem solving.

After a month of piloting NPS, one team expanded to two, then two weeks later to four, and then, as Bray puts it, “It was go, go, go.” Within a couple of months, the call center was buzzing with anticipation, and by late 2016, the full Beaverton team had adopted NPS.

In addition to facilitating a behavior shift through huddles, the Medallia platform enables supervisors to conduct much more targeted employee coaching based on specific customer feedback. With closed-loop feedback capabilities, call center supervisors can quickly get in touch with dissatisfied customers while the agent who originally serviced the customer shadows and learns. Agents now look forward to these one-on-ones as an opportunity for learning, validation, and praise. And on the supervisor side, it allows for a clearer understanding of whether coaching is having the desired effect.



REGULAR HUDDLES

“The huddles are infectious, just like the Medallia platform. The employees feel empowered and know they are heard.”

Graham Tutton

VICE PRESIDENT OF
CUSTOMER INSIGHTS

The learning doesn't stop there. Because the feedback from both customers and employees gets delivered up the leadership chain, call center directors like Bray are now empowered to track the successes and challenges of their people and to coach as appropriate. “Before Medallia, allocating my discretionary time and efforts was a bit like shooting in the dark,” he says. “It was difficult to identify what my teams were most concerned about and how those concerns differed between teams. Employee feedback would come at me in the form of texts, emails, phone calls, Post-its, you name it. It was chaotic and hard to manage.”

Now, with organized, actionable employee feedback data at his fingertips, Bray is able to tackle issues head-on.

In one pulse survey, there was feedback that employees did not feel leaders were listening. Bray, who reads all the comments from the front line, quickly sprang into action. He reviewed the team's trends and comments on the Medallia platform, came to and participated in the team's next huddle (in the process making team members feel heard), and then went to work with the team supervisor on a path forward. Could this have happened in the Comcast of the past? “Not likely, given we did not have a single system for real-time employee feedback,” reminisces Denny.

TAKING ACTION ON FEEDBACK FROM THE FIELD — EMPLOYEE ELEVATIONS

Erica Bailey is a sales team supervisor at the Comcast Sales Center of Excellence in Beaverton.

With a no-nonsense style and the capacity to absorb and execute on a dime (“I’m a worker bee,” she says proudly), Bailey has come far in her 15 years at Comcast. Having worked in multiple locations, teams and roles, she has a unique perspective on the massive overhaul of the last few years. Historically, she says, if she identified a common customer complaint or employee frustration, “There wasn’t much I could do. Things had been done the same way for many years and the employee escalation channels were limited.”

Tutton readily agrees that the system was not what it needed to be. “Most organizations of our size do not have an effective process in place to make changes based on

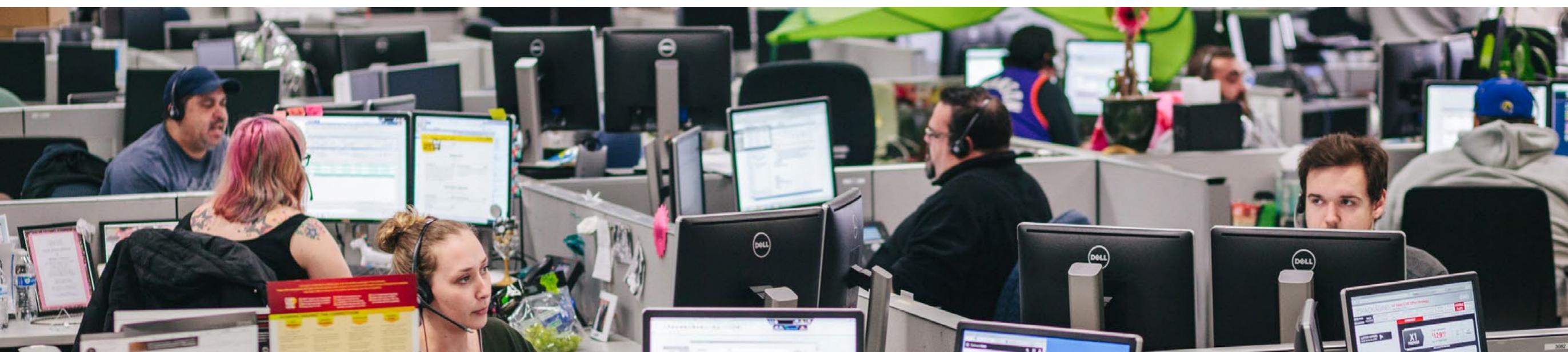
employee feedback,” he says. “Ideas would get raised up the flagpole, and in many cases, no one would hear about them again. Improving that process was a major priority for us.”

Now, when employees identify a change with potentially broad impact, they raise it to management using a case management methodology called Elevations. This allows everyone involved to track the issue, ensure it’s reviewed within agreed-upon time frames, and see what changes result.

For example, as the result of an elevation frequently raised by call center agents, Comcast doubled the dollar limit on

credits that agents can issue on their own. Historically, credits above a certain limit required management approval, which created a backlog of customers waiting on answers and agents wasting hours on redundant return calls. An analysis of feedback in the Medallia system showed that management routinely approved 90 percent of the requests, so Comcast doubled the limit and then tested the change through Medallia.

“The total amount of credits given did not increase, and it actually decreased in some instances,” says Tutton. “Agents made our checkbook their own, and managed customer expectations. We were reminded of the importance of trusting our employees and



customers.” Employee engagement soared as a result of the credit increase, with Employee NPS (eNPS) jumping as high as 60 points in some locations. “That was a big one,” says Bailey, whose team was directly impacted by the change. “My team’s morale improved noticeably just by knowing we had the option to issue more credit.”

Another elevation involved a situation in which customers who had signed up for autopay were having their cable service unexpectedly shut off with no explanation. Customers assumed it was an issue with Comcast’s service, and management struggled to find the root cause. But call center agents, having dealt with these customers, identified the real issue and elevated it up the chain—it was actually a matter of billing schedules. Autopay sign-ups took over a month to process, and when customers didn’t pay their next bill manually, Comcast billing assumed they were delinquent and service was suspended. In response to the elevation, Comcast focused on reducing the processing time and solved the issue.

EMPLOYEES DRIVING CHANGE THROUGH NEW “ELEVATIONS” PROCESS

- Based on elevations, a number of Comcast facilities introduced priority parking spaces for expectant mothers, whether they’re customers or employees.
- A call center employee who is also a customer found that many nights when he was catching up on his DVR,

his X1 box would suggest a reboot. Because this box was not his primary X1 box, he could not delay or defer the reboot and would get kicked out of his DVR during the reboot. After an elevation to the Technology and Product team at Headquarters, a change was made so that X1 can now detect if a customer is using DVR and delay the reboot until the DVR is no longer in use.

- In one store, computer monitors were obstructing the line of sight between Comcast employees and their customers as they talked at their stations, making it difficult to form a meaningful connection. Through a local elevation, the store invested in moveable monitor brackets, not only enabling critical eye contact, but also allowing employees to more easily share their screens with customers while working through their issues.

“Now, if you think something could be done a different way, there’s a way to get your voice heard.”

Erica Bailey

SALES CENTER OF
EXCELLENCE SUPERVISOR





“Employee NPS has become an incredibly powerful tool that our employees are embracing because they see things getting done.”

Denny Bray
COMCAST CABLE CUSTOMER CARE

“We saved weeks, if not months, and saved money, by focusing on the right solution to the autopay problem, rather than chasing what we thought was at the core of the issue,” says Tutton.

Comcast still has a long way to go, but its NPS program is having a clear impact on empowering employees to help customers.

THE BEGINNINGS OF A NEW COMCAST

The NPS program is likewise starting to have an impact on customers, with Comcast's average customer Net Promoter Score up significantly year-over-year. "As NPS has increased," says Tutton, "we've reduced incoming customer calls by several million due to our customer experience focus and related changes, and NPS and Medallia have played an extremely

important role. When you account for the cost per call, the payback on our investment in Medallia was realized within one month."

But this is just the beginning of a long journey. "We expect this process to take several years," says Rodrigo Lopez, SVP of Comcast's Western Region, who has been at the helm of the retail changes in Oregon. "We're moving towards a culture where employees ask themselves 'How do I engage with the customer?

How can I be empathetic with a situation whether it's good, bad, or indifferent? How do I manage expectations, and ensure they will be met?'"

When Comcast introduced Medallia, a number of employees greeted it with skepticism. Said one member of Lopez's organization: "I've been at Comcast for years, and every year there would be a new initiative. Nothing ever changed."

This time is different. "The Elevations process and team huddles are straightforward concepts and we've been doing them in some form or fashion for the last 54 years," Lopez says. "But now, with Medallia, we have a platform for holding everyone accountable. Is it perfect? No. But it's light years ahead of where we were; it formalizes and gets a customer focus into people's DNA."

"We are in the middle of a massive transformation. We're listening, we're innovating, and we're starting to see real results."

Charlie Herrin

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT OF CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE



And Erica Bailey? In a matter of months following the Medallia implementation, Bailey not only saw a shift in her team's morale, but felt it herself.

"NPS has changed my life," she says, laughing. "Not only do I pay better attention to the customer service I receive elsewhere—restaurants, hotels, stores—but now, I have a voice here... I feel like a valued individual. I can contribute to improving our customers'

experience and my team's experience." She pauses. "Now that my team is empowered, they see me as their ally. I'm no longer as stressed by the end of the day. I'm actually a happier person."

And any outsider can tell. Spend five minutes in Bailey's weekly huddle and the affection and trust her team members feel towards her is obvious. They laugh, they dig into issues, and they care deeply about each other.

Lopez sums it up best. "There's no better feeling," he says, "than to see your employees getting happier, your customers getting happier, and your business results getting better"—a triple play, so to speak.

And the best part for Comcast is that this is just the beginning.



"I'm actually a happier person"

Erica Bailey

SALES CENTER OF EXCELLENCE SUPERVISOR



About Medallia

Medallia, the leader in Experience Management cloud technology, ranked #15 in the most recent Forbes Cloud 100 list. Medallia's vision is simple: to create a world where companies are loved by customers and employees alike. Hundreds of the world's largest companies and organizations trust Medallia's cloud platform to help them capture customer and employee feedback everywhere they are, understand it in real-time, and deliver insights and action everywhere—from the C-suite to the frontline—to improve business performance. Medallia has offices worldwide, including Silicon Valley, New York, Washington DC, Austin, London, Buenos Aires, Paris, Sydney, and Tel Aviv. Learn more at www.medallia.com

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