

## Expand Your Thinking Around CX Strategy

— TIM HARNETT

These days, whether or not your business succeeds will largely depend on how much attention you give customer experience. CX is the new playing field and company differentiator. It's also more expansive in scope than some might realize. Sure, customer experience comes into play as customers interact with your employees. But beyond that, CX surrounds every step the customer makes with your brand. And customers take a lot of steps.



“It’s not trite to say that CX is everything,” says Michelle Brigman, senior director of strategic alliances for Medallia. “It’s how you communicate with potential customers, set expectations about your products or services and all the little ways they interact with you before you ever make a sale. Beyond the sale there’s the post-purchase period and how customers feel when interacting with your contact center agents. Then, there’s how a customer feels when they shop your brand. There’s a tendency to focus CX efforts just on obtaining customers, when what businesses should really be doing is thinking holistically about the entire customer journey and addressing challenges before they arise.”

Before joining Medallia, Brigman led CX at Citi, Dell and 7-Eleven. Here, she explains why businesses need to think of CX strategy as part of the larger business strategy.

### Expand How You Measure

Businesses need to think beyond “how do we acquire more customers?” They must also address customer retention and how to make current customers happy. And the metrics they used to use might not be as effective as they once were. “Brands really used to know their customers well but customers are more unpredictable these days,” says Brigman. “You can’t depend on historical patterns and you almost can’t depend on post-interaction feedback, because what worked for the customer today may not work for them tomorrow.”

Brigman continues. “If businesses want to stay nimble they need to capture the signals that indicate what works and incorporate those into the strategy. Global disruption has forced customers to change their habits and routines. Some habits they’ve picked up over the past few years might stick around; it’s up to you to uncover which habits are going to be long-term.”



### Expand Who You Invite To the Table

Taking a holistic view of CX naturally brings you to this conclusion: every department needs to be involved in discussing customer experience strategy, not just the familiar trifecta of marketing, sales and customer service. “Creating business success through customer loyalty requires everyone working together rather than working in silos,” Brigman says.

Even so, Brigman argues that there are several departments that have traditionally not been as involved in deciding CX strategy as they could be. “Finance is one of those departments that can be a key ally in championing CX,” says Brigman. “They have a high-level view and can direct you to opportunities for allyship within the company. Another advantage of where they sit within the company is that because they understand cause and effect at the business level, finance can show you how you align (or don’t) to metrics you may not have considered.”

Another department Brigman says businesses should involve in CX strategy discussions is IT. “The beauty of IT is that they have a high-level view of the technology that’s being used across the organization. If you partner with IT,

they can help you explore opportunities to use technology that integrates with the tools your company already uses, rather than adding more standalone tools. Integrating technology this way also gives you a more complete view of the metrics you track around CX.”

### Expand How You Define Success

It’s no secret that silos are the bane of any initiative. They’re certainly detrimental to CX. But while companies traditionally think of silos as departments not talking to each other, how departments measure CX success can also be siloed. Having one set of performance metrics for marketing and another for sales can lead to metric silos. And while departments may be considered successful according to their own internal metrics, they might be failing from a holistic standpoint. “Companies working collaboratively and using technology to assess where the customer is in the moment will win,” says Brigman.

### Conclusion

The days of “one size fits all” are numbered — if not already over. No single strategy will cover all customers, and no single CX strategy will make even a single customer happy. “What’s right for the customer yesterday might not be right for them today and might not even be right for them tomorrow,” says Brigman. “This is why it’s critical to have a CX strategy that’s adaptive and iterative, one that can address customer needs in the moment. Tomorrow’s customer experiences will be personal, predictive and proactive.”

Learn more about how Medallia can drive your CX strategy at [medallia.com](https://www.medallia.com).

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