

MULTICHANNEL

## Forrester outlines 6 steps to customer experience

June 28, 2012



By RACHEL LAMB

[Sign up now](#)

[Luxury Daily](#)

NEW YORK – All marketers claim that they have the framework to offer the best customer experience, but there are six crucial business disciplines that brands need to undertake to see profits, according to a speaker at the [2012 Forrester Customer Experience Forum](#).

The disciplines should be enacted to ensure that brands improve and transform their company to make sure that the customer is completely satisfied. However, the other major step is to maintain this new culture.

“The first step is to figure out where you stand and to the extent to which your company has adopted these disciplines,” said Kerry Bodine, San Francisco-based vice president and principal analyst at [Forrester Research](#).

“Then you must plot the path to customer experience maturity,” she said. “There is no singular right way, only to improve and transform.”

Here are the six steps:

1. Strategy. This is what brands intend to provide to customers, and how to do it.

For example, the Holiday Inn was losing customers at dinner and at breakfast to other

chains and gas stations.

To improve itself, it started developing new and improved social hubs that made guests want to stay at the hotel.

Now, consumers could have everything that they wanted at the properties, including dining, entertainment relaxation and connection.



*Ms. Bodine at the Forrester forum*

2. Customer understanding. This includes not only understanding who the customer is, but how they perceive their experiences with the brand.

Virgin Mobile conducted a series of surveys online that helped it understand how customers saw the brand and what they wanted from the provider.

The company was not interested in being up to par, but creating a differentiated customer experience, Ms. Bodine said.

It would not have moved forward thinking what their customers wanted, rather than actually asking them and knowing what they wanted.

3. Design. Great customer experiences do not happen by accident, Ms. Bodine said.

The Mayo Clinic realized that much of its customer interactions happen in an

environment that may not be comfortable to patients – the physical equipment dominated most of the room, but the majority of a doctor’s visit is conversational.

Therefore, the Mayo Clinic ran a trial period of “Jack-and-Jill” rooms. These consisted of three rooms: two consultant sit-down rooms sharing one exam rooms.

The clinic tried this tactic with several doctors and patients and tweaked based on feedback.

When the company was ready to take the plans to headquarters, it had an arsenal of data that was able to help them make the changes permanent and drastically increase the customer experience.

4. Measurement. JetBlue’s strategy was “bringing the humanity back to travel.” But, it was not tracking how well its progress was doing.

Therefore, JetBlue enacted a series of surveys sent via email that tracked a consumer's experience from when they bought the ticket to when they stepped off the plane.

They also measured what they would be doing next, such as if they were planning on traveling again or recommending JetBlue to a friend.

JetBlue went through a process of what it thought customers felt, a description of what really happened and whether or not they are going to do this again.

Therefore, the brand could measure what it was doing right, what it was doing wrong and how to better control the customer experience.

5. Governance. Brands must be proactive with customer experience management and oversight.

Adobe uses many customer insights and metrics and makes sure that the data does not go to waste. The company meets on a regular basis to go over the data and size, scope and prioritize what it thinks will have the biggest effect on the business.

Some companies have a business process improvement council, per Ms. Bodine. This allows one person to clear through any roadblocks and have people on different silos work together effectively.

6. Culture. A brand culture involves changing people’s belief systems and behavioral norms so that they easily mirror the image of the company.

John Deere Financial has a program where there are monthly training sessions during the first year where employees learn about the brand.

The second year involves them enacting customer experience projects at their home offices.

Getting people to enjoy what they do as well as deeply understanding customers is part of this DNA.

These programs enabled employees to ask better questions, get more relevant

information and ultimately were more successful in managing accounts, per Ms. Bodine.

Final Take

*Rachel Lamb, associate reporter on Luxury Daily, New York*

Embedded Video: <http://www.youtube.com/embed/QwDZWYLUbVM>

---

© Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your **feedback** is welcome.