

JAN
FEB
2021

the *cooper* group

STRATEGY
HQ

7 STEPS TO CX NIRVANA



SPECIAL
EDITION

1 pg 2

How to Become
a Customer-Obsessed
Organization

ARE YOU BEATING

2 pg 4

3 pg 7
YOUR COMPETITORS
AT CUSTOMER
EXPERIENCE?

Do You Know
Your Brand's True Value?
Your Customer Does.

4 pg 9

Connect with
Your Customers
Wherever
They Are

HOW TO BECOME
A CUSTOMER-OBSSESSED
ORGANIZATIONAL
CULTURE

6 pg 14

5 pg 11

Want More
Effective
Messaging?
Get Your
Empathy On.

7 pg 17
CX Metrics Matter –
But Understand Your What,
Why & When

How to Become a Customer-Obsessed Organization

by **David Cooper**

Is your organization focused on your customer – or obsessed with your customer? There's a huge difference. Step 1 in our 7 Steps to CX Nirvana explores what customer-obsessed organizations do differently and the steps you can take to place customer delight at the very heart of everything you do.

Let us guess. You've heard "listen to your customer" somewhere before. Not exactly groundbreaking advice in 2021. For most organizations, the end goal of listening has always been selling, or creating a more appealing product. And yes, of course you need to sell the right product or service to the right customer. But effective sales targeting isn't enough anymore. Not nearly enough.



Make no mistake. CX is king, queen and everything in between.

Staying competitive today means positioning customer experience (CX) at the top of your priority list, across everything you do. Every part of your organization – not just customer service and support – must become obsessed with customer experience.

Make no mistake. CX is king, queen and everything in between.

Customer Obsession Starts with Your Customer

The first step in becoming a customer-obsessed organization is understanding your ideal customer's story and the role you play in it. Hint: They are the star and it's their show. This will never change.

Winning and retaining customers today is contingent on their interaction with your brand at every touch point. It isn't that your products and services don't matter. Of course they do. But consumers now expect the white-glove, red carpet treatment. Today's over-delivering becomes tomorrow's basic expectation.

In fact, white-glove service is both inevitable and economical, and the key differentiator of successful organizations. More and more, consumer feelings and attitudes about you are your business, not a part of your business.

Are you obsessed with your customer experience yet? If not, maybe this will motivate you. A study by HotJar sorted companies into mature, competent, novice and ignore. Thirty-seven percent of mature companies, compared to only 19% of those considered 'ignore,' prioritize and value customer experience more than any other goal, including increasing sales. Clearly, they understand the game has changed.

The Hard Part: Buy-In and Alignment

Reorienting your organization around customer experience isn't easy or simple. Even with a sound strategy, you'll encounter confusion and pushback. Departments and teams that haven't traditionally been customer-facing in their roles will need time to process this new way of thinking. For example, your engineers might tell you they didn't sign up to work in customer service.

So expect resistance. But persist, above all. Without internal alignment and unity, you're unlikely to succeed in creating necessary change. Instead, you'll find yourself applying Band-Aids and other temporary fixes, and they won't be enough to keep up with skyrocketing customer expectations.

It's also crucial not to assume that everyone will 'get it' the first time. Or the second. New paradigms mean an ongoing commitment to seeing a culture change through, with accountability for everyone.

What Customer Experience-Obsessed Companies Do Differently

Again, becoming a customer-

obsessed organization demands a clear strategy. Your customers won't be fooled by a few superficial changes. But in case you're wondering what best practices look like today, here are a few things CX-focused organizations are doing differently:

- Commit to hiring people with a customer-obsessed mindset.
- Educate and retrain existing staff.
- Relentlessly simplify every point of customer contact to remove friction.
- Monitor social media mentions and respond fast. Waiting until tomorrow is a relic of the past.
- Get creative and find ways to over-deliver and delight customers.
- Personalize experiences everywhere possible.
- Reduce jargon everywhere. Use a conversational, approachable voice in all communications.
- Offer seamless interactions. Let customers easily transition from one channel to the next.
- Focus on an omnichannel approach for customer convenience.
- Design consistent experiences across all channels.

There's an upside to all the work required to become a customer-obsessed organization. Your competitors will need to put in just as much work. And that means an opening for you. Every cultural shift brings both challenge and opportunity.

If you'd like to prioritize customer experience throughout your company but could use an outside perspective, reach out to us. We welcome discussing opportunities, challenges and strategy with you.

ARE YOU BEATING YOUR COMPETITORS AT CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE?

by David Cooper



Customer experience is an ongoing challenge, but also the greatest opportunity to leave your competition in the dust. Step 2 in our 7 Steps to CX Nirvana explores how you can exploit openings and win on the new battleground of outstanding customer experience.

Blockbuster. Dell. Kodak. Sears. Toys “R” Us. What’s the most memorable example of a company that took its eyes off competitors and ignored key trends until it was too late to change course? Take your pick. There are many.

Such companies learn the ultimate lesson: No brand lives in a bubble. You can’t afford to ignore what’s happening around you. For most brands today, the key trend is customer experience. In 2021, and for the foreseeable future, outperforming your competitors means anticipating customer expectations and over-delivering throughout the customer journey.

Who Are Your True Competitors?

At the risk of stating the obvious, you must have a clear understanding of who you’re competing against. And they aren’t always the obvious suspects. Are you sure you know who your competitors really are today?

Let’s take Subway as an illustration. It’s no secret they’ve battled declining sales since 2012. Yet according to [Restaurant Business](#), their strongest competition isn’t other sub sandwich chains, or even independent sandwich eateries. Instead, Chick-fil-A and restaurant delivery services are eating their

lunch (sorry, couldn’t resist). Innovation, disruption and changing customer attitudes mean your competitors aren’t necessarily offering a similar product or service. Until the last couple of years, Subway’s appeal was always location. You couldn’t walk more than two city blocks without spotting one.

What’s even more convenient than walking a block to Subway for mediocre food? Sitting on your couch or in your office, and having your favorite restaurant food delivered fast and cheap. The true competitor here doesn’t even make sandwiches.

So, when you’re listing your rivals, look beyond the obvious. They might not be who you think

find yourself jousting with windmills like Don Quixote.

CX, Your Opportunity to Differentiate

Once you’ve correctly identified your competitors, how will you differentiate your brand from theirs? Twenty years ago, even 10 years ago, you’d probably answer with a better product, service, market fit or price point. But today, winning and retaining customers means anticipating and delivering the experiences your competitors can’t, or won’t.

Let’s take Chick-fil-A, for instance. Their success isn’t just about making a tastier sandwich. Instead, it’s their lightning-fast service, clean facilities and strategic, family-friendly branding. Have you ever

No brand lives in a bubble. You can’t afford to ignore what’s happening around you. For most brands today, the key trend is customer experience. In 2021, and for the foreseeable future, outperforming your competitors means anticipating customer expectations and over-delivering throughout the customer journey.

they are, and they can quickly change. Unless you know who your true competitors are, you’ll

purchased one of their kids meals? Instead of cheap, throwaway plastic toys promoting the latest Disney



Given their attention to CX, it's no surprise Chick-fil-A consistently leads the category in the American Customer Satisfaction Index.

click, you'll find a higher-quality toy or a carefully chosen book. Given their attention to CX, it's no surprise Chick-fil-A consistently leads the category in the [American Customer Satisfaction Index](#), ahead of all other major fast food chains. In fact, courtesy and helpfulness of staff was rated even more important than taste or food quality.

Differentiating your offering and communicating that difference is Marketing 101. And today, more than ever, prioritizing customer experience (see Step 1) throughout your organization is the best opportunity for you to win in a crowded marketplace.

So Who's Getting CX Right in Your Industry?

A recent [report](#) by Brandwatch surveyed consumers to rate the brands consistently delivering the best customer experiences. Among the winners are Sephora, a beauty company that replies to most

messages within two hours, and Delta Air Lines, for responding to 30% of all social media mentions. Just think about that for a moment. Isn't that an impressive feat for a major airline?

Make no mistake. Delta made a strategic choice to invest in epic responsiveness and personalization. And at this touch point, at least, they blew away their competitors. In nearly every industry you can think of, consumers are rewarding CX-obsessed organizations and ignoring the rest of the pack.

Keeping the Balls in the Air

It has always been crucial to look beyond your own organization to your true competitors. And it has always been important to think ahead and be proactive, not reactive, to trends. And yes, it has always been a juggling act to allocate resources to those things while running the rest of

your business, managing staff and delivering products or services.

So how does your CX stack up against your competitors? Are you exceeding their efforts at every step of the customer journey – and keeping all those other balls in the air?

If you'd like to discuss boosting your brand with better CX, feel free to [reach out](#) to us. Let's put our heads together and develop a strategy that leaves your competitors in the dust.

by David Cooper



Do You Know Your Brand's True Value? Your Customer Does.

Consumers today hold more power than ever before. With social media and online reviews only a click away, your brand reputation is always on display. Step 3 in our 7 Steps to CX Nirvana argues that only your customer determines your brand value.

Who do you think really determines your brand's true value in the marketplace? Is this debated and decided around a conference table? Diagrammed on a whiteboard, neatly captured in a PowerPoint presentation and eventually blessed by key executives?

If so, we propose a radically different approach. Consider this simple equation: Your brand's value is precisely equal to your customer's perception of your brand's value. And increasingly, this perception is shaped by their experiences and outcomes at every stage of the customer journey.

If you want to boost brand value, you must dissect and analyze customer experiences – from initial awareness to purchase and well beyond. And one of the best tools for improving your CX across the board is a customer journey map.

Map the Journey, and Start with the Customer

To see where you're exceeding expectations, and where you're falling short, a visual representation of your customers' journey is essential. Be careful, though. Your journey map must capture data based on actual customer feedback. Never make the mistake of substituting your experience for their experience.

No matter how well you understand your business and product, you are not your customer. You need their feedback on every touch point, on every channel. This points to the need for both quantitative and qualitative data gathered from a variety of sources:

- Surveys
- Interviews
- Questionnaires
- Chat logs
- Analytics
- Support logs and emails
- Social media mentions

Once you've compiled the data, you'll find there's no shortage of user-friendly customer journey templates and platforms available to represent it. Whatever software solution you choose, remember the goal should be clarity and accuracy. To bring a return on investment, the journey map must help you identify areas for improvement and differentiation.

The Customer Journey Is Complex

Wouldn't it be wonderful if capturing your customer journey were a simple, linear progression? Like a train leaving the station and moving predictably through all the stops to its final destination? Unfortunately, the process is usually messier and far more complex.

Your customer might move back and forth between steps, and possibly even skip some. Consider all the different ways consumers can first encounter your brand – word-of-mouth, search engine, ads, social media, and the list goes on. For each of these steps, you must document what you're doing and how it's working, and what your

competitors are doing at the same stage.

Creating a useful journey map will not be accomplished in a week's time. The process requires significant but manageable investment in data collection, analysis and presentation. In our experience, it's well worth the effort. You'll discover new opportunities to compete and win beyond product or price.

Reality Check: Does Your Brand's Value Live Up to Your Promise?

The only useful answer to this question will come from your customers. In theory, it's a simple concept. But sometimes the simplest lessons, like this one, are the hardest to put into practice.

It's frightening to admit that we are not in control of our brand. Instead, our customers are in the driver's seat. We can influence the relationship and their perception, but we can't control it. And how do we influence it? By committing to customer-centricity at every stage of the purchasing journey.

Sometimes you can benefit from an outside perspective. We help organizations like yours leverage CX to turn customers into fans and advocates. Interested in a consultation? [Let's talk.](#)



Connect with Your Customers Wherever and Whenever They Are

C From Baby Boomers to Generation Z, what matters most to consumers when deciding on a purchase? If you haven't seen the Global Omnichannel Consumer Shopping Research Report by [BigCommerce](#), it's worth a read. The answer can be summed up in one word: convenience.

Step 4 in our 7 Steps to CX Nirvana focuses on this: Convenience means

speed and simplicity, but also availability and easy access. If your business hopes to thrive or even just survive, you must meet your ideal customers on their preferred channels – even if theirs are not your preferred channels. In 2021, a seamless omnichannel presence is no longer a luxury reserved for elite brands. Meeting your customers where they are is a must, a key component of customer experience.



by David Cooper



The Inconvenient Truth: They Won't Come to You

The line between engagement and e-commerce is blurring. For example, almost 25% of business owners choose to use Facebook for sales, not just build brand awareness. In fact, 40% of businesses are now using social media to sell, rather than to simply answer questions, educate or introduce themselves.

What does this mean for you? Now, more than ever, social media engagement isn't optional. You must be present on the channels your ideal customers are using.

In the past, many organizations relied on highly optimized SEO to attract customers. But you can no longer count on consumers searching and finding you. And what about potential customers who haven't yet heard of you? Unless you're present and engaged where they are, they probably won't discover you.

Of course, being where your customers are means knowing your ideal customers inside and out. You'll need far more than demographic-based marketing personas. Instead, your research should reveal deeper, psychographic factors that reveal

values and motivations, along with analytics that track consumer behaviors and preferences.

Once you understand their daily habits, you can then begin to develop an effective omnichannel strategy that allocates resources where they're needed.

Make It Easy

We are all consumers. Let's say you begin a customer service conversation through a chat bot on your desktop computer. You later continue it on your smart phone. Isn't it nice when you can pick up where you left off without having to explain your issue all over again?

Everyone has always appreciated convenience, but consumers today don't simply appreciate it. They expect it. In fact, 77% of companies considered strong in omnichannel are those that store customer data across channels, while only 40% of those considered weak omnichannel companies do so. Seamless customer support is a vital component of stellar customer experience.

The bottom line is this: Companies that don't prioritize convenient omnichannel CX are being left behind. The easier and faster you make it for customers to accomplish their tasks, either off-line or online, the more you'll be rewarded with a return on your investment.

Your Customer Doesn't Care

About your omnichannel strategy, that is. Mainly, they care about completing their task, not about your organization, your strategy, your best-laid plans or your revenue goals. They don't even care how

much effort you put into pleasing them. Forget this fact and you lose.

And you know what else they don't care about? Your technology. They want the same lightning-fast service and delivery, regardless of platform or device.

In Steve Krug's classic book on web design, "Don't Make Me Think," he talks about user experience on websites. His point is valid for any customer touch point. He argues, correctly, that the second they have to "think," meaning figure out how to get the information or service they need, they'll bounce.

Each platform or channel should be absolutely transparent and dead-simple to use. Don't confuse them. Don't make them think. Just give them what they want and don't waste even a millisecond of their time.

Never Stop Listening

We wish we could assure you that your customers will stick with their current channel preferences for the foreseeable future. We wish we could tell you there will be time for you to catch up before innovation changes the game yet again.

But innovation never stops. The reality is that customer behaviors change over time. Our advice is to get obsessed with your customer, stay obsessed with your customer, and be wherever they are, ready to over-deliver at every opportunity.

If you'd like to discuss a winning omnichannel strategy for your organization, feel free to [contact us](#) to schedule a game-changing consultation.



Want More Effective Messaging? Get Your Empathy On.

by David Cooper

If you can't stand in your customer's shoes, you'll never be up to the task of delivering stellar customer experience throughout your customer's buying journey and beyond. Step 5 in our 7 Steps to CX Nirvana is all about the most important CX factor of all. And that is empathy.

"I get worried if I see customer satisfaction scores drop below 97%." That's a quote from Ali Ryal, head of Customer Experience for Slack, the popular collaboration tool for teams. According to the company, their average response time is under an hour. And here's one more nugget of CX goodness to savor: "We're trying to build empathy at scale."

Slack is one of the best examples we can think of for a company that gets it. By 'it,' we mean building your brand around outstanding, empathetic customer experience everywhere. While plenty of organizations implement CX tweaks, these are often add-ons, rather than core values and differentiators.

So, ask yourself this question: Does your organization get it? And how well are you communicating empathy in all of your messaging?

Empathy Starts with a Story

When we say empathy begins with a story, we're not talking about your brand story. We're referring to your customer's story. As Donald Miller explained so succinctly in his book "Building a Story Brand: Clarify Your Message So Your Customers Will Listen," they're more concerned with themselves than with you. And if you want to win them over, you have to prove it by reflecting their journey in

every single communication and interaction.

But be careful. Your product is not the star of the story, and neither are you. Customers are the heroes of their stories, and you are the guide who helps them solve a problem, overcome an obstacle and achieve transformation. You're the Yoda to their Luke Skywalker.

And Then What? Empathy Everywhere.

So, how do you make your messaging relevant, timely and emotionally resonant at every touch point? Whether it's on a support call, in an email sequence, a Facebook ad, your homepage or a brochure, talk less about the awesomeness of your features and more about the role those features play in helping your customers overcome their most pressing challenges.

Now, we're no copywriters, but here's a quick and dirty example of two statements that illustrate our point:



Your product is not the star of the story, and neither are you. Customers are the heroes of their stories, and you are the guide who helps them solve a problem, overcome an obstacle and achieve transformation.

■ **Choice A:** Our award-winning HR software platform is the leading solution for today's busy medical practices.

■ **Choice B:** Pulling your hair out over endless HR regulations? Our cloud-based software automates compliance, so you spend less time on paperwork and more time with your patients.

Choice B communicates understanding (empathy!), solution and transformation. All your messaging should reflect this central unifying theme.

It isn't that you never talk about yourself and your product or service. Of course you do. But your product or service exists for one reason: to improve your customers' lives and businesses. They're not interested in your agendas and initiatives. So when you talk about yourself, the message should always be filtered through their story.

Empathetic Customer Service

Customer experience is everyone's job, but your support team will usually have the most direct contact with those who purchase your

product or service. So it's crucial that they nail the correct tone and word choice. Employing true empathy can mean the difference between a glowing Yelp review that brings you 100 new customers over the next year, or a Facebook rant that goes viral with the opposite effect.

Using statements like, "I would probably feel the same way if I were in your shoes" and "I want to assure you that I'm going to take care of this problem for you today" each convey both empathy and responsiveness. You can also summarize and rephrase the customer's concern, using emotional mirroring to make them feel they've been heard and understood.

But don't stop there. Instead, experiment and innovate. The video hosting service Wistia's practice of creating personalized videos to solve support questions

resulted in a "98% Happiness rating." Sure, they could have taken the traditional route and stuck to phone calls, chat or email. But by personalizing and showing customers how to solve problems, rather than sending them canned responses, they lead the industry in stellar customer experience.

Consistency Is the Challenge

One of the most daunting challenges is unifying your messaging across all channels. It must be cohesive, strategic and present everywhere your customers encounter you. We understand. It's easier said than done. But until you tackle the issue and revamp your communications for consistency, you'll continue struggling to build and maintain the relationships that make your business thrive.

The Bottom Line: Empathy Always Wins

What would it look like for your organization to commit to 'empathy at scale'? Do you think your customers would notice? We do. How you implement and execute depends on your target customer, your industry and each individual touch point. But make no mistake. Committing to empathy in all your communications is a requirement from here on out, not an extra or a 'nice-to-have.'

In the simplest terms, customers must know that you get them, you care, and you're prepared to help – and keep on helping, long after the initial purchase. If you're interested in improving your messaging and communications, we help start-up, small and mid-sized organizations succeed in today's customer-obsessed marketplace. [Contact us](#) for a consultation.

In the simplest terms, customers must know that you get them, you care, and you're prepared to help – and keep on helping, long after the initial purchase.





by David Cooper

HOW TO BECOME A **CUSTOMER-OBSESSED** ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Step 6 in our 7 Steps to CX Nirvana explains how people, values and business clarity are the keys to building an organizational culture totally obsessed with your customer. It doesn't happen overnight, but you can get there. Wondering how? Read on!

This series has been exploring the tectonic shift from customer-focused to customer-obsessed, and shared in many ways how customers should be at the very heart of everything we do. Maybe some of these initiatives call for new business models. But without something more fundamental – a customer-obsessed organizational culture – getting to stellar customer experience is not possible.

In most organizations, the barrier between customer obsession and the same old, same old, is simply people. Change is hard, and almost all of us choose the familiar over what feels risky. So how can you begin the change to a customer experience, customer-obsessed culture?

In our opinion, it comes down to the right people, the right values and absolute clarity.

Your People: Everyone Is “Customer-Facing”

Let's dispense with the outdated notion that some departments are customer-facing, while others are customer-irrelevant. Now, of course, some of your people will have more direct contact with customers than others. No one is saying your engineers or supply chain department should be handling support calls eight hours a day. But they should be having some regular interaction

with your customers. Do they ever read support emails or chat logs? How about online reviews? Do they answer customer questions?

If your people are insulated by bureaucracy and an org chart, it's easy for them to lose touch with what matters most – converting customers to fans and advocates.

Customer experience is everyone's job, and no one should ever feel distant or disconnected from daily

for the culture you aspire to, the culture you need, not necessarily the one that exists today.

Now comes the hard part. This might mean some of your people need to simply move on. It's never the first option and never pleasant, but unfortunately, you cannot create the right culture without the right people. While many skills, such as creating a presentation or working with a particular software tool can be learned rather quickly,



customer concerns. And yes, we know. It's easier said than done.

So What's the Remedy? Hire CX-Friendly Candidates.

We've witnessed many jaw-dropping transformations over the years, from customer-oblivious to customer-obsessed companies. The truth is, moving people out of their comfort zones and away from entrenched behaviors is difficult.

For that reason, we recommend hiring people who are already customer-oriented and empathetic, rather than assuming you can instill these values. In other words, hire

an employee who tends to view themselves or their team as an island will have a hard time ever seeing things through the customer's eyes and allowing that to drive decisions.

Your Values: Expect Curiosity

Former Netflix VP Gibson Biddle gets it. He understands that organizations today must put customer experience ahead of everything else. We think [this post](#) by him is very inspiring. During his time at Netflix, simply understanding the customer's current problems wasn't nearly enough. Instead, their goal was

to understand the customer so well that they could anticipate and innovate new ideas for turning them into raving fans.

This difference might sound simple, but it represents a quantum leap and requires rabid devotion and insatiable curiosity. They constantly developed and tested new hypotheses and were always

Consider this statistic. According to an [Accenture survey](#), 81% of consumers “feel loyal to brands that are there when they need them, but otherwise respect their time and leave them alone.” This kind of next-level customer knowledge doesn’t come with the once-and-done survey or focus group. Instead, it only develops organically from a

be simply unaware of how much customer experience impacts the bottom line – and their paychecks. But if the connection between CX and ROI isn’t made consistently clear, part of the blame must lie with management.

Are you sure you’re adequately communicating that relationship throughout your business? In product development, logistics and supply chain, customer support and every department? As said earlier, we still believe that hiring CX-oriented people is a better approach than attempting to change everyone’s minds. But you can’t, and shouldn’t, replace everyone. And the shift will take time.

The Stakes Are High, But So Are the Rewards

Customers are not passive consumers waiting with open arms for our products and services. The truth is, they never were. But today, more than ever, our success is tied to their experience with us. And that experience can only be delivered through an organizational culture with the right values and people.

Maybe [Amazon](#) said it best: “Leaders start with the customer and work backwards. They work vigorously to earn and keep customer trust. Although leaders pay attention to competitors, they obsess over customers.”

We couldn’t have said it better. Changing your culture is tough. If you’d like an outside perspective on how to implement customer obsession in your organization, feel free to [contact us](#). We help small and mid-sized companies focus on what matters most.

their (Netflix) goal was to understand the customer so well that they could anticipate and innovate new ideas for turning them into raving fans.



open to new insights – even when they went against everything they previously believed about what customers wanted. Netflix was built around curiosity about customer experience.

It isn’t just Netflix customers who crave personalized experiences.


culture that values curiosity and experimentation.

Clarity: Making the Connection Clear

Maybe we shouldn’t be so quick to condemn those employees stuck in traditional, non-CX-obsessed cultures. In many cases, they may

CX Metrics Matter – But Understand Your What, Why & When

by David Cooper



Analytics, analytics everywhere! Yes, you must measure to improve customer experience. But it's crucial that your metrics align with the right goals and strategy. Do you know which metrics to use, and just as important, why you're using them? Step 7 in our 7 Steps to CX Nirvana dives right in.

"If you can't measure it, you can't improve it," the legendary Peter Drucker famously said. And we'd be hard-pressed to disagree. No one today could argue against the need for both quantitative and qualitative customer data. Regardless of your industry or product, measurement and execution are essential to keeping your customers close.

Just as important, you must understand not only the 'what' of your metrics, but also the why,

when and where. Otherwise, all your careful measurements are unlikely to bring a return on investment. They must be goal-driven, diversified and understood in context.

Priority One: What's the Goal?

Would it surprise you to know that many organizations are floundering in mountains of functionally useless customer data? It's true. Unless you can glean insights from the information, it isn't worth much in the long run.

There's more than one reason for this drowning-in-data problem. One of the most significant is simply that customer metrics sought are not always aligned with company goals. And it can't be just any goals. For best results, your goals should be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely.

This means that strategy should drive your choice of metrics, not vice versa. Yes, measuring allows you to gauge how well you're achieving your goal, but the objective must always precede the tool.

What are the most important goals for your business? There are so many metrics to choose from, so it's critical to employ only the ones that are pinpoint-relevant to you.

If you make the mistake of choosing the easiest or most popular goals or metrics, you're squandering resources and worse, wasting your customer's precious time. Given consumers hold so much power and influence today, that's a mistake you can't afford to make. If you're asking them for any kind of feedback, make sure you understand why you're asking.

Don't Rely On a Single Metric

One of the most used ways to measure customer loyalty (at the moment, anyway) is the Net Promoter Score (NPS). And why not? It's simple, accessible and flexible. Since it predicts how likely customers are to recommend your services or products to others, it's a natural for measuring satisfaction.

But like any other metric, NPS has its drawbacks and limitations. For one thing, it doesn't tell you the reason for the score – only a number that equates to promoters, passives or detractors. And even if NPS were perfect, no metric should stand in isolation. Metrics work best when you're using a variety of measurements across the complete omnichannel customer journey. See Step 4 in this series: [Connect With Your Customers Wherever \(and Whenever\) They Are](#).

What about assigning each of your customers their own dashboard, where you can view a variety of metrics for each one? Whenever anyone follows up on the customer to monitor CX, they're looking at a more complete and comprehensive perspective. They're not limited to one isolated measurement, frozen at one moment in time.

And remember that metrics aren't necessarily numbers. In fact, some of the most useful and valuable information will be qualitative feedback from your customers. This can inform your messaging, and also give you a deeper understanding of their true priorities and motivations.

Understand the Metric in Context

Like any tool or initiative, you'll only

get the results you're looking for with buy-in from your organization. And that meaningful buy-in only comes if everyone concerned understands the what, why, where and when of the metric. They must comprehend what you're measuring and why, how it will be interpreted, and why it matters – to the organization and to their job performance.

Results should be accessible and accessed often by everyone concerned. It's simple enough, after all, to know whether your people are regularly logging in and monitoring these metrics. If it's a case of set-it-and-forget-it, they'll never make the connection between their duties and customer experience.

Finally, understand that the right metrics can bring many benefits. They can help you make the right decisions, know where to focus your resources and of course, build the kinds of customer relationships you need to thrive in a hyper-competitive marketplace.

But never forget that the most fundamental purpose of all is learning. If metrics are not offering you meaningful, relevant insights that nurture customer relationships, it's time to re-evaluate what you're measuring and why.

Since 1998, we've been helping customer-focused organizations become customer-obsessed. If you'd like to discuss what you're measuring and why, feel free to [contact us](#).

CUSTOMER REVIEW



VALUE ✓
ENDURANCE ✓
WHAT ELSE
DO I NEED!

The Cooper Group, Inc.
5 Concourse Parkway
Suite 3000
Atlanta, GA 30328
678-474-9678

To subscribe, e-mail us at
StrategyHQ@thecoopergroup.net

the **cooper** group

www.thecoopergroup.net

 @TCGInsights