

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE PARTNERS

How 'Deep' is the Customer Experience?



Much is discussed about the *total* customer experience. We have advised that customers repurchase based on a myriad of perceptions from their **overall experience** with a brand, product or service. Unfortunately improvement of customers' experience is often relegated to whichever tactics the currently-favored consultant has to sell (be it customer service training, improved website navigation, improved packaging, overseeing a call center, etc., etc.). Of course, this is self-serving (on the consultant's part) and produces a myopic solution. The truth is the relative importance of components of the total experience varies from category to category even, perhaps, brand to brand.

Customer Experience Partners believes a customer's experience with a brand or manufacturer is truly a 'dual-edged sword'. Brands earn either 'pluses or minuses' throughout the customer's lifetime of experiences with the brand (or manufacturer). Increasing the complexity, the experience occurs in the context of a continually evolving competitive frame. Throughout the relationship, the customer is continually calculating the perceived value he/she receives related to the money spent. We believe this calculation takes place consciously and sub-consciously, and includes multi-sensory input captured through **all** interactions with the brand.... (See our discussion of Gladwell's 'thin-slicing activity' - July 6, 2011.)

More Factors Than You Ever Imagined

Happily, more empirical substantiation of this view continues emerge. Consider a new report from YouGov (of a study conducted for Upstream). Surveying 4,150 consumers in the U.S. and UK, YouGov reported that 66% of the consumers said that they were bombarded with **too many digital ads** (online or on their mobile devices). That's probably not surprising. But marketers concerned with customer retention should seriously consider the full message of the findings - and recognize that those digital ads "count" in customers' *total experience*. **The impact of the ad-annoyance seems considerable.** 27% of the UK consumers and 20% of U.S. consumers claimed that a plethora of digital ads and promotions denigrated their valuation of a sponsoring brand to the point they'd **completely stop purchasing** the products or services of that brand!

Decisions You Must Make

The challenge facing marketers today is how to improve their customers' experience (increasing retention, share of wallet, and transmission of word of mouth) while controlling costs. The answer is in understanding which of the numerous *touchpoints* and their underlying *experiential components* carry the greatest importance. It's about identifying those that most impact your high-value customers; those which have the largest deficits (compared to competition); and thereby determining where to focus improvement efforts. It's about identifying the key positives that should be leveraged, and the critical negatives that must be corrected while optimizing resources.

We created **Customer Experience Management Optimization** to accomplish this very objective. Let us describe it to you, contact us:

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