

The Experience Imperative:

Customer Experience Executives Share Their Stories

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Insights from the Retail Industry

Organizations that embrace Customer Experience (CX) report higher revenue, lower costs, increased customer loyalty, and more engaged employees. In a recent research brief by FORTUNE Knowledge Group in collaboration with North Highland, Chief Customer Officers (CCOs), CEOs, and other CX executives shared their experiences. When examined by industry, powerful insights emerged.



Buying, selling and customer loyalty

The simple act of buying from a vendor and selling to a customer has become so complex for modern retailers that it can feel like a game of multilevel chess. The quest to be fully omni-channel and provide a seamless customer experience across every aisle, device or platform a customer touches, has never been more pressing. When retailers think about the customer experience, they consider how after-sales service, and the handling of customer complaints can lead to new realms of employee engagement and customer delight.

“You need to understand your business in logical chunks based on how the customer would experience it, think about it, or both.”

— Lara Lee, Senior Vice President, Customer Experience Design, Lowe's Home Improvement

In our interviews with retailers, three key themes surfaced:

1. Use customer complaints to solve bigger business issues.

Studies indicate a variety of benefits by resolving a customer complaint quickly, including repeat business or the deletion of a negative comment. But when repeated complaints show an underlying pattern, there is an opportunity to build a more permanent solution into business processes. Complete the loop by sharing those changes, and the CX reasons for them, with your customers on public platforms.

2. Allow your employees to do their best work.

Eliminating waste and creating greater efficiencies are an important part of good fiscal management, but not if it's at the expense of the customer experience. Let your frontline associates help you determine which rules and processes are hindering their ability to meet customer needs, and abolish them. It delivers an immediate win to employees, and shows a commitment to CX improvements.

3. Confidently engage customers where they live online.

It's not enough to have an online content and marketing plan. All businesses, not just retailers, must have a conversation plan to deal with the many ways that customers telegraph their delights and disappointments on social channels, where you have no control over what is shared.