The rise of enterprise experience

By Cleve Gibbon   18 Jul 2017

In today's experience economy, becoming customer centric is a necessary and well acknowledged transformative organisational challenge. Let's break that down. We see the customer as the **consumer** and the organisation as the **enterprise**. Over the last few years the focus has largely been on delivering superior consumer experiences. However, we should also recognise that great enterprise experiences result in better consumer experiences. With the current thinking splitting corporate investments 80/20 in favour of consumer experience over enterprise experience, are we missing a trick here?

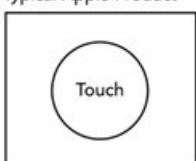© Duncan Andison 123RF.com

Enterprise experience

Consumer experience is the sum of all interactions we have with a brand throughout the consumer life cycle. If done right, we advocate for the brand and want to further engage with them. The enterprise experience is exactly the same but targets audiences **inside** the organisation rather than **outside**. These internal audiences – agencies, partners, IT, executives, vendors, business units – follow processes and use technology to create those superior consumer experiences. The organisational challenge is about empowering these internal audiences with modern tools and techniques that we have come to rely on as consumers.

If this is what enterprise experience is about, why are organisations falling short of the mark?

Lack of understanding

We all use Airbnb, Spotify, Apple, Google, Uber, and so on. These companies differentiate themselves on the consumer experience. However, when I get to work, I'm expected to "forget what good looks like" and embrace substandard enterprise

tools. To be become less productive. The consumer experience has already set the bar high and there's no going back. That's the new normal. The enterprise experience needs to be **at least** as good as the consumer experience.

This is a message that is failing to resonate within organisations today. We hit up against it a few years ago when we saw the need to promote author experience within organisations. Author experience is just a subset of enterprise experience that focuses on content producers. Today, author experience is front of mind in all our customer experience platform developments. We design process and tools for authors to make content creation, management and delivery simple, scalable and speedy. We need to extend that design thinking to audiences beyond authors – IT, operations, support, agencies, advertising, HR, finance, sales, marketing – to cater for the entire enterprise. Why? Because all these enterprise audiences have a role to play within a customer centric organisation looking to deliver the best consumer experience.

Lack of digital talent

Entrepreneurial organisations attract young, digital talent. Young talent follow companies that have visionary leadership and lower degrees of legacy IT. They don't like to go backwards. So, what happens if we don't provide these digital natives with the enterprise experiences they need to do their jobs?

- They can't do their jobs.
- They won't be productive.
- They can't help you shape digital in the way that your organisation needs.
- They will leave or never join you.

Consider how many times you've turned to LinkedIn to find work colleagues because it provides a better (consumer) experience than other HR tools? How many times you've preferred your own messaging tools rather than having to settle for internal alternatives? We need to fix this.

Lack of traceability

Be honest, what does your end to end process look like to deliver value back to the consumer? Do you have one? Is it clear to all? Do you know where you add value and by how much?

Typically, there isn't a clear attribution of enterprise effort along the value chain that highlights exactly how the organisation is contributing to enhancing the consumer experience. It's not uncommon for the consumer experience to be disconnected from the enterprise experience.

Consider an organisation that measures success by how well it sells product. Typically, that organisation would have a complete end to end breakdown of how the enterprise aligns around that goal. From the consumer, backwards it should provide valuable inside-out thinking that communicates the attribution of effort along the value chain. However, in the customer experience context that is rarely done and certainly seldom documented. Without that, it's impossible to determine what, where and by how much we should be investing in enterprise experience. And so, we don't.

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Of course, we will continue to develop better consumer experiences. But we should recognise that the enterprise experience is a hugely important consideration in delivering better consumer experiences. We need to shift the dial on the 80/20 investment currently in favour of consumer experience in order to truly deliver transformative digital change. That means understanding your enterprise experience needs, embracing and empowering digital talent and making the link between the consumer and the enterprise transparent. Only then can we know why and where to enhance the enterprise experience.

ABOUT CLEVE GIBBON

Cleve Gibbon is a technology evangelist with over 20 years' experience delivering digital platforms for large organisations. Currently the Chief Marketing Technology Officer at Cognifide where the team provides the technical expertise to effectively make, manage, measure and mobilise digital content.
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