

Why qualitative data is key to unleashing great customer experiences

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There is no disputing that customer experience (CX) is the key differentiator for companies looking to stay ahead of the competition, especially for those where product parity is the norm. CX is the sum of all interactions a customer has with a company, from initial contact to sales process to post-purchase follow-up and support. It is a critical factor in customer retention, emotional commitment and loyalty, and especially those priceless word-of-mouth referrals that money cannot buy.



Liesel Jonkheid, director and founder of the Consumer Psychology Lab. Image supplied

With CX now more than ever the lifeblood of sustainable, profitable and successful brands, it's more important than ever to understand what drives CX and how to improve it by gathering customer feedback – what is referred to as the 'Voice of the Customer'.

Traditionally, businesses have relied on surveys to gather customer feedback. However, surveys have their limitations. They are often impersonal and do not provide a complete picture of the customer's experience. They tend to focus on the quantitative data in the form of metrics and measures, at the expense of the gold that lies in having real conversations with customers.

Conversations with customers can provide far deeper, authentic insights into what drives CX, that comes straight from your customers' own experience, rather than being led by pre-defined Q&A type forms that leave little room for hearing the customers' true vantage point.



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When businesses engage in conversations with customers, they can get a better understanding of their needs, wants, and pain points. They can also learn about the emotions that drive customer behaviour, and what exactly makes the difference – the stand-out – in their customer journey. This information is invaluable in designing products, services, and experiences that meet customer needs and exceed their expectations.

Moreover, conversations with customers can help businesses build emotional connections with their customers. When customers feel heard and valued, they are more likely to develop an emotional commitment to a brand. Emotional commitment is a key driver of customer loyalty, which is critical to sustainable business growth.

Word-of-mouth referrals are another benefit of a positive CX. When customers have a great experience, they are more likely to recommend a company to their friends and family. This type of referral is more powerful than any advertising campaign and can have a significant impact on a business's bottom line.

Investing in a programme that specialises in talking to customers should be a business's first consideration. These programmes can help businesses gather valuable insights into what drives CX and how to improve it. They can also help businesses build emotional connections with their customers and generate word-of-mouth referrals.

In conclusion, conversations with customers are a powerful tool for understanding what drives CX. They provide a more complete picture of the customer's experience, help businesses build emotional connections with their customers, and generate word-of-mouth referrals.

Investing in a programme that specialises in talking to customers should be a business's first consideration when looking to improve CX and drive sustainable business growth.

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