

How to improve your B2B customer experience

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26 Oct 2016

Customer experience is naturally at the forefront of any B2C company. The same focus is not, however, always seen in B2B companies, where marketers have little to no contact with influencing the buying decision, which creates and sustains profitable sales.

What do B2B customers want?

As the B2B marketplace becomes better informed, there are specific changes and shifts in focus that marketers need to take note of. These changes are evident in the purchasing process all the way from awareness to post-purchase.



These changes include the disruption of data and technology to better understand how consumers move around your products and website, the prioritisation of customer retention and the importance of customer experience (CX).

B2B marketers need to understand these changes, why they are happening, what customers expect and how they plan to adapt to keep up with the pace of change.

1. Accommodating the disruption of data and technology

The traditional route of purchasing is no longer the only method marketers can rely on.

“Collecting, correlating and analysing data from customer interactions, across channels, is the key to transforming the customer experience from nightmare to nirvana,” says *Forbes* contributor, Kurt Marko.

Data can no longer be ignored and by using technology, such as analytics, the buying process can be better facilitated. Why? More informed and efficient interactions between the consumer and the marketer enable a mutually-beneficial partnership and aids both customer retention, growth and loyalty.

Customers who feel their needs are being met and heard, will return, simple as that.

2. Prioritising customer retention

Customer retention is the blood of an organisation. It can be a growing concern when B2B companies cannot address this. Sometimes this struggle is at no fault of the marketer, but the customers' expectations which can transition without much

notice.

In fact, according to [Marketing Week](#), 'customer satisfaction and loyalty' is one of three top challenges for B2B organisations in 2016.

3. Realising customer experience (CX) is the game changer

Many marketers have taken to developing several personas that they believe need or use their product. These are fleshed out and expanded on when optimising all content, whether it be on social, onsite or otherwise.

For [CompareGuru](#), this could look like an under 25 year old who is just starting to take control of their financial future in the form of car insurance, financial planning, or medical insurance. Or an over 40 year old who needs life insurance, building insurance, or other types of financial assurance to support their assets.

Using an 'en masse' strategy by pushing out generic content simply doesn't produce sales anymore. Customers want to know that you are aware of their specific life struggles and challenges.

B2B companies who recognise that the customer experience is critical to growth and competitor differentiation are experiencing noticeably larger growth than their average benchmark.

Getting the customer experience right before a competitor does is vital and 90% of B2B executives plan to either maintain or increase CX spending.

According to Accenture's 2013 Global Consumer Pulse Survey which surveyed 13,168 consumers, "85 percent of customers are frustrated by dealing with a company that does not make it easy to do business with them; 84 percent by companies promising one thing, but delivering another; and 58 percent are frustrated with inconsistent experiences from channel to channel."

Research company, Gartner has data that shows executives are taking note of the customer experience and that 89% of executives believe CX will be their primary mode of competition by the end of 2016.

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