

What is Customer Engagement?

Customer engagement is defined by the customer, or, more specifically, the action(s) that customer takes.

- Opening or clicking in an email
- Responding to a text
- An impression on a social media post
- Online ad link
- Visiting a website and or personal web page
- Buying a product or service
- Video meetings with sales reps

Even entering a physical location counts as customer engagement.

Your ideal customer is engaging—taking action—with your organization and tells you about their needs in the process.

To orchestrate Customer Engagement (CE), marketing and sales must come together to ensure communications that are deployed elicit a desired response. Managing these interactions includes tracking customer behaviors—both in response to the communication and separate from the communication—and optimizing the next point of contact.

Build Customer Relationships

The concept of customer engagement as a strategy and platform **has only recently become a part of the marketing and sales toolbox.**

In the not-so-distant past, customer engagement was a one-way street. In its simplest form, it was a brand, creating materials to try to earn a positive response from its customers. Clicks and visits were all the rage, as were purchases, subscriptions, or email sign ups.

Today, customer engagement is more about creating a constant stream of two-way communication between brands and their audiences. No matter how small, every message or impression is part of an ongoing conversation.

CE isn't just about increasing the number of touch-points with customers, although that can help. It's more about **the quality of interactions** you're having across the customer journey.

And this relationship can be strengthened — or diminished—with every interaction.

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How do you make sure every touchpoint in your marketing journey is meaningful? You make the conversation hyper-personalized and connect the customer with someone who can help them wherever they want to be engaged.

The concept of personalization isn't a new one. But its importance is just emerging in traditional brick and mortar-driven businesses. If your organization doesn't lean into this type of communication, you will lose out to the competition.

Customers have come to expect personalized experiences—after all, a normal conversation is always personal. Why should a conversation with a brand and its sales channels be any different?

Fuel Customer Engagement with Data

You can't have a meaningful conversation with a customer without knowing relevant information about them. In normal conversations, you ask questions. In marketing, you gather it from forms and preference centers.

Leveraging every inch of this data for messaging is what will make your customer engagement successful.

CE uses the framework of the customer journey to guide every conversation. It incorporates omnichannel marketing into each stage to reach customers where they want to talk, when they want to talk. And real-time data is the crux of the operation, creating a seamless experience for the customer with messaging that changes to fit the new dynamic of the conversation.

The importance of gathering and maintaining excellent data about your customers must be a priority. Gather demographic information through opt-in forms and behavioral data through purchasing behaviors, and social media insights.

Bonus: With data in hand, it's imperative you organize it in a way that can be easily accessed and incorporated into marketing and sales messaging.

Benefits of a Customer Engagement Platform

Imagine being proactive instead of reactive with your messaging, anticipating the next want or need of each individual customer before they do. By adding your data to a CE platform, you can do exactly that.

A CE platform isn't just a way to store and leverage your data, it's a means to apply it to your customer journey messaging. Setting up omnichannel communications that drive awareness, welcome new customers, address customer satisfaction issues, and upsell and cross sell.

And you can do all this through online and offline channels.

These smart communications initiate person-to-person interactions and customize messaging based on what a user prefers, then curating existing content and tools and bundling it into relevant communications. You'll be everywhere the customer wants to interact with you without lifting a finger.

Create a Conversation with Customers

High-quality products and services are the hallmarks of the best companies. But in today's business world, that's not enough.

To stand out from your competition, you have to emphasize the difference between you and your competitors with CE. Automating the process with a CE platform is a no-brainer. With a quality CE solution, you can:

- Increase customer satisfaction and brand loyalty
- Earn more new customer referrals
- Decrease customer defections
- Increase new product and service adoption
- Integrate sales and service offline channels

Most important, you can start and maintain critical conversations.

A CE strategy is crucial in our digital first world. Remember it's an evolution not a revolution! Don't risk missing opportunities to connect and increasing your bottom line.