



The customer experience playbook

How to design memorable, meaningful moments to delight your customers & increase brand loyalty.

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“ Fall in **love** with your **customers**, not
your product ”

- TONY ROBBINS



It all started with the bag that got lost in Africa

A couple of years back, way to many in fact. I went to South Africa. On the return journey back to my then hometown London, one of our bags got lost. I was really upset and I walked promptly to the lost baggage counter of the airline with a devastated expression. Upon my turn I started to state the facts to a smiling staff member.

During the conversation I started to feel better. Once I left the counter I was smiling and the devastated feeling of losing my bag, was replaced with a joyous feeling of everything is going to be alright and in fact is a great day to be back in London. Even though I haven't had my first coffee of the day as yet.

The day after, the bag was returned and delivered safe and sound straight to my doorstep.

This airline is one that continuously know how to deliver to me, whether I'm flying to Las Vegas from SFO, or helping me arranging flights from Sweden to California.



Despite the fact that I fly economy, it's a fun airline that really delivers top notch customer experience even when I'm cramped up in a tiny space for 14 hours. And I keep coming back, no matter where in the world I happen to live. The airline I refer to is Virgin Atlantic and America.

The customer experience that Virgin airlines deliver are part of their competitive advantage. Virgin airlines was born from the thought of "what if there was a more pleasant way to experience flying".

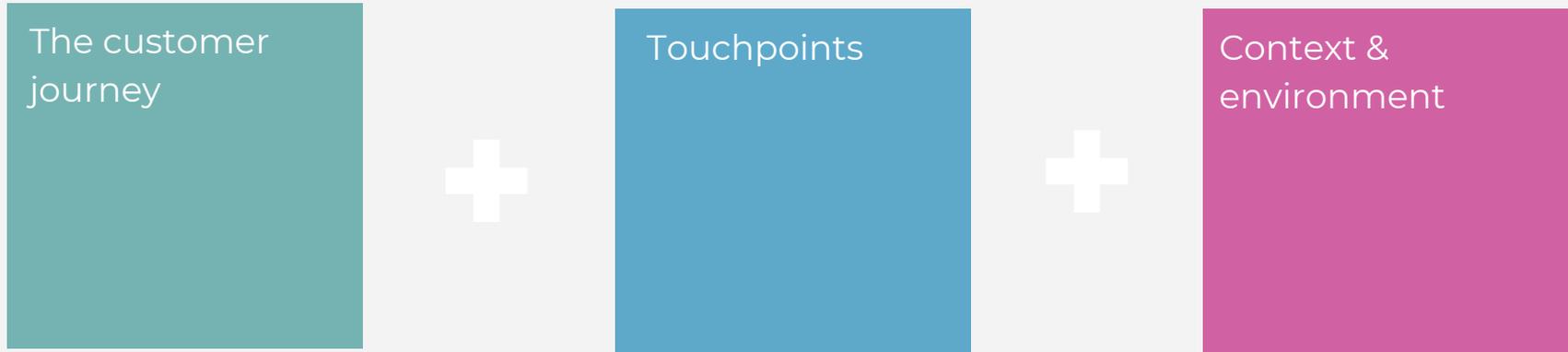
Now this playbook is not made to plug Virgin in anyway, but that's a relatable story about when I started to think more about these things. My curiosity to learn more about crafting customer experiences that actually makes memorable moments for other people. Merge this with all the recent technological advances and we can now create magic.

This is a patchwork from my best resources merged with personal experience, ranging from luxury brands to the travel market. That I have created both to help others understand their customers and help them create better customer experiences. Because who does not want to have moments that matter? And who does not want to have returning customers?

With this playbook, you will get two tools. These will help you get into your customer's shoes and identify how to create a customer focused service to gain competitive advantage in your marketplace. I do however recommend that you read this document before you start you work because I have some good stuff lined up in here for you.

What is customer experience?

The customer experience is the perception of your brand by your customers. It consists of the following three components:



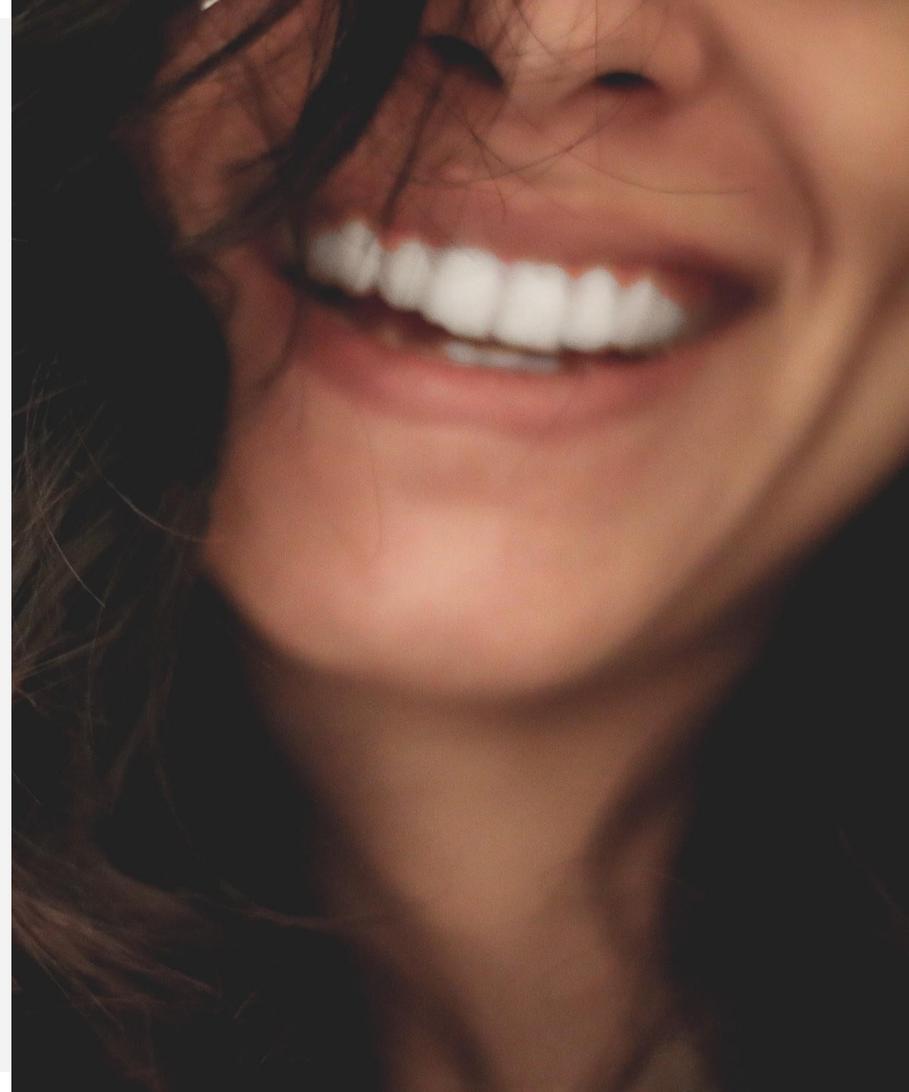
These three parts are medium independent. I.e these can happen in any channel and medium. Direct or indirect with your brand. Dividing our work in these three components helps us make our work more tangible.

Customer experience encompass everything from how your staff treat your customers to how easy it is to purchase from you, through any channel. What each interaction with your brand has in common is the human and the way the interaction with your brand makes them feel and perceive your company in any given moment.

If we look at larger brands, a noteworthy development is that they are merging customer experience and brand managers. With the goal to make them responsible to both understand and create better customer experiences. As they realise that the customer experience is the ultimate way to deliver on their brand promise as this is the customer's perception of the brand.

Customer experiences are medium and touchpoint independent and should be treated as such. That's why we want to map out various scenarios and really get ourselves in our customers shoes. But before we do that we need to understand the customers context and our human mind, and the limits of it.

Because in order to stand out, in both overcrowded landscape and the multitude of choices customers have. Companies need to be the brand that is both effortless and memorable, to position themselves as the choice before all others.



The ultimate perception of your brand

So if the customer experience is the ultimate perception of your brand. And your building blocks are the customer journey, your brand touchpoints and the context and environment that the customer experience your brand in. You need to be able to deliver a consistent experience throughout any customer interaction with your brand.

Within branding, this is referred to as coherence. In the book *Designing Brand Identity*, Alina Wheeler shares her framework for the overarching elements that help you achieve this. Her framework consists of the following:

1: UNIFIED VOICE, A DYNAMIC CENTRAL IDEA - the company is clear about its positioning and how it wants to be perceived. Every communication uses a consistent voice and evolves from a central dynamic idea.

Keywords: brand perception, management, certainty

2: ONE COMPANY STRATEGY - as companies diversify into new areas of business, consistency jumpstarts awareness and acceptance of new initiatives.

Keywords: consistency includes employee buy in, company culture, attitudes and how your staff treat your customers

3: EVERY TOUCHPOINT - coherence emerges from understanding the needs of the target customer and designing a brand experience that produces a desired perception. Every touchpoint is considered a brand experience.

Keywords: relevance and consistency in every touchpoint

4: LOOK AND FEEL - a brand identity system is unified visually and structurally. It builds on cohesive brand architecture and utilizes specially designed colors, typeface families and formats. The identity system advances immediate recognition of the company and supports brand attributes across various media.

Keywords: consistent brand execution into the smallest of detail. Use of attributes that help strengthen the perception

Source: Designing Brand Identity - Alina Wheeler. The keyword additions are my additions and thoughts.

5: UNIFORM QUALITY - a high and uniform level of quality imparts a degree of care that is given to each of the company's products and services. Anything less than superior quality reduces the value of the asset on both a conscious and unconscious level.

Keywords: quality of your service, your product and marketing materials

6: CLARITY AND SIMPLICITY - using clear language to communicate about products and services helps the customer navigate choices. Naming that is logical and consistent within the brand architecture also makes it easier for the customer.

Keywords: less is more and simple is better

Why is this important?

These elements are useful to have in mind when creating your own company customer experience framework. From how to structure your work, what elements to include to what departments to both involve, educate and empower. Chunking and organising our work makes it easier for us, as this type of work is about experiences, emotions and perception.

“ Two things to have in mind when designing customer experiences ”



The peak end rule - what do we actually remember?

Vast amounts of research are being done in terms of trying to understand the human mind and our memories. What is discovered thus far is that instead of remembering an entire experience of something, like a movie in our mind of our experience. We remember a collection of moments, so instead our memories are more like a trailer collecting memorable moments for us to remember in a much shorter format. Either good or bad.

Our human memory is disproportionate. Research on this subject has identified that we are in fact wired to remember the peak and the end of an experience. A good example to illustrate this is the Disney paradox. Which you may be able to relate to if you've been to any amusement park anywhere in the world. The queing to rides and toilets, the prices of food, all the people all over that you are trying to co-exist with. However that's not what you remember, though we are in fact queing more then we go on rides when we visit an amusement park.

What we do remember is the peak of the experience, the thrill of being upside down in the loop of the roller coaster and the end of the ride. Your blood pumping with adrenaline, because, you did in fact survive and how cool wasn't that?! So instead, at the end of the year when you think back on this particular experience, instead of remembering that you spent 90% of your time in ques or paying too much money for food, you remember the 10% of the visit where you where either strapped into the ride, the ride itself or the feeling afterwards. This is the peak end rule.

Why is this important?

Even though every moment matter when your customers interact with your brand. Pay particular close attention to the height aka the peak of the experience and how your customers leave an interaction with your brand. How can you create a peak for your customer?



How to create defining moments

These are the four identified elements that all positive moments and experiences share and have in common. Either it's one of these or a combination of them that create defining memorable moments:

1 : ELEVATION - an experience that rises above everyday. A performance, a birthday party, a football game to a date. The person experiencing this is absorbed in the action. The context around us is different than our day to day life. Our entire consciousness is observed in the experience.

Keywords: total immersion, focus, in the moment

2 : INSIGHT - moment of insights that are abrupt realisations or transformations. Instant realisations. Like this is the person I want to marry, or I can't stand another day of my job, type of experiences.

Keywords: abrupt, disruptive

3 : PRIDE - moments when we have accomplished something we were unsure of that we had the capacity to do, or when we are recognised by our peers. To moments where we stand up and show courage.

Keywords: recognition, accomplishment, courage, gratitude

4 : CONNECTIONS - connections between individuals, where emotional ties are deepened. Or connections to groups or in a group. For example when a group has worked together to accomplish something, a really challenging project. They have struggled together. This cements the group connections.

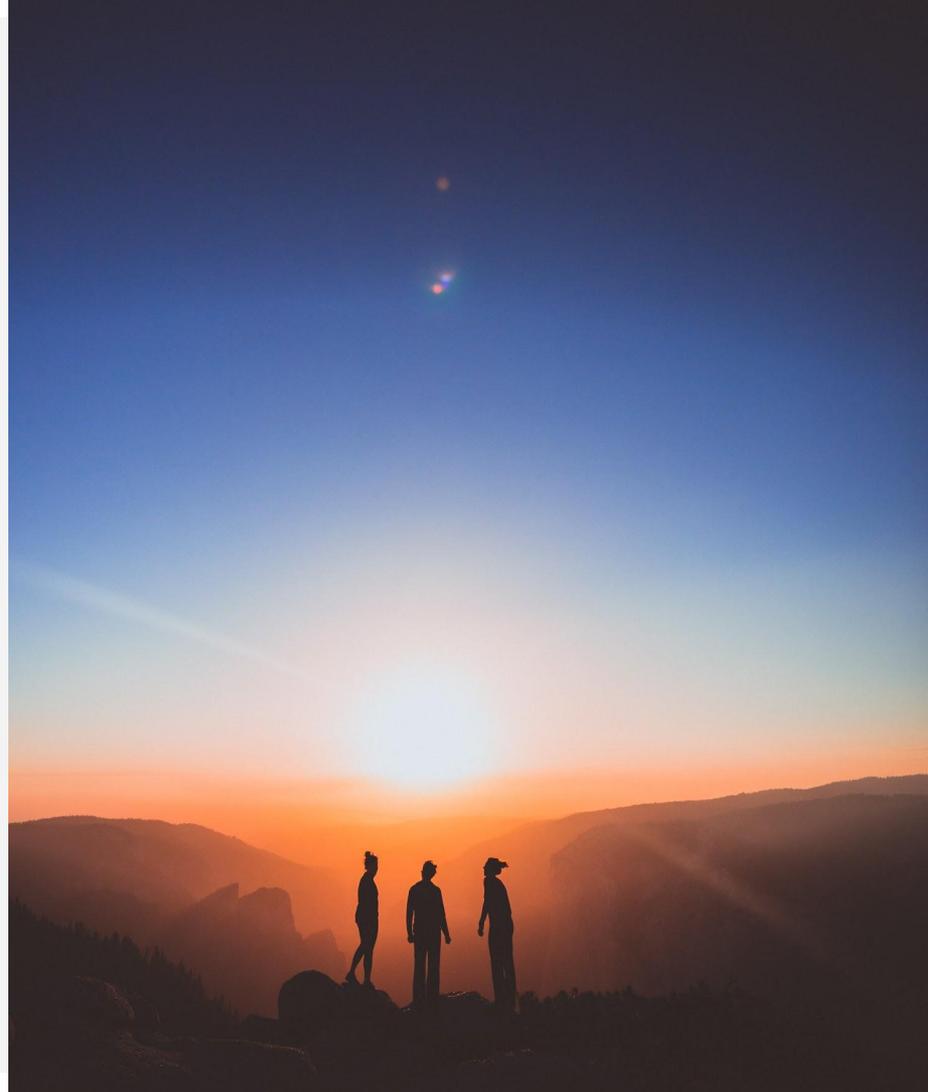
Keywords: connection, social connection and ties between individuals

Your sources for customer insight

If your company does not work with customer experience management in any capacity, a good place to start is to get further insight. As this helps you identify where you should start and what your specific priorities should be. If you are unsure where to start and where to go to gain more insight on your customers, here's a few ideas for you:

Your staff - talk to various customer facing staff, departments and disciplines to get a throughout and well rounded understanding of different customer scenarios.

Customer support - listen in to customer support calls. Ensure you get the full and broad spectra of calls, from happy customers to unhappy customers and everything in between.



CRM data - if you only have transactional data on your customers. You can enrich your data by purchasing additional data about the customer. Often based on probability and not certainty. However helps you be in a better position to understand your customer.

Web analytics - view any audience insights available within your web analytics software. Review channel performance and attribution.

Hire shadow buyers - that perform various tasks, from purchase to returns. Have them document their experience with your brand.

Social media - review everything from Facebook company wall posts, messages and comments. Search for online reviews to Twitter mentions. Chances are that you'll have an abundance of information to tap into already.

Customer surveys - create one if you don't have already.

Talk to your customers - invite them over or call them up. Talk to a variety of customers from different target groups. Get to know them.

How to define & measure success of your CX work

Depending on your specific business you need to find the KPIs to both define success and evaluate performance in terms of measuring customer experience. There are overall industry standard measurements such as NPS® - net promoter score, which you can use. This is particularly useful to view benchmarks within your vertical and understand how you are doing in regards to your competition in your market.

There are various ways you can approach the measurement of CX. Either you can take a holistic view and from a customer journey perspective identify common touchpoints and areas where you can assign KPI's for each overarching area in the customer journey and have one overarching metric. Or you can go even deeper and identify ways to measure CX at each touchpoint and interaction. You'll have to find a way to make the measurement relevant to your business, customer and organisational capacity and maturity.



A good starting point is to find at least one KPI to measure and follow-up on CX, instead of having none at all. Here are some suggestions for metrics that you can use as an indication for customer experience and satisfaction:

- **Customer churn rate** - helps you identify how many customers that leave your company during a specific timeframe. You'll get this by dividing the amount of lost customers with the amount of new customers during a period of time.
- **Loyalty club member acquisition rate** - or number of customers that join any loyalty club that you may have. This helps you understand if your customers find your brand good enough in terms of wanting more from you. An indication of a relationship if you may.
- **Customer satisfaction scores** - in any customer surveys you do, even in newsletters. Design a scale where the customer can easily grade their experience with you. Ensure you use the same scale throughout the company.
- **Reviews** - either it's product or company reviews on Facebook, this can give your brand insights on what type of customer experience you provide.
- **Response times** - how long does it take to respond to customer queries in the channels you are present in?
- **Customer Support query resolution/case times** - before closing queries. Are these improving? I.e are customer support closing queries quicker?
- **Sentiment** - add this to your social listening and analytics to follow up on the tone of the online conversations about your brand.

The playbook tools overview

These tools are designed to help you build the foundation for working continuously with improving your customer experience and identifying your competitive advantage. Each template includes an instruction and a fictional scenario.

Step 1 - a template for creating a customer journey and map out the various touchpoints for a specific user scenario.

Download:

<https://goo.gl/ouiNxZ>

Step 2 - go further and use this template to capture and map out pain points and identify the opportunities once you done step 1.

Download:

<https://goo.gl/enHzuP>

About me

I work as a Strategist at a digital agency, helping various businesses solve equally as various problems. My aim is to find digital solutions to these problems..

During my career I've worked with both luxury fashion brands to travel brands, being involved in meeting client expectations and designing better customer experiences. Hence my interest for this subject.

I use my free time to listen to podcasts, read books, watch videos on subjects that I find interesting. One of those subjects are customer experiences. Because in anything I've done throughout my carer there has always been one constant, my customers and their customers.

You can find musings, templates and other goodies on my website:

www.veronicastenberg.com

If you'd like to drop me a line sometime, you are most welcome to do so on: me@veronicastenberg.com



Resources & further reading for CX enlightenment

Podcast:

Tony Robbins - How to create life changing moments:
<https://www.tonyrobbins.com/podcasts/create-life-changing-moments/>

Books:

The Power of Moments: Why Certain Experiences Have Extraordinary Impact - Chip Heath and Dan Heath

Blue Ocean Strategy - Renée Mauborgne and W. Chan Kim

Designing Brand Identity - Alina Wheeler

Links:

More on churn rates:
<https://www.referralsaasquatch.com/calculating-churn-rate-12-customer-churn-statistics/>

NPS: <https://www.netpromoter.com>

Did you like this?

If so please share this with others. As this is created from pure curiosity, sleepless nights and a simple desire to help and serve others.

There is no economical reimbursements for me in this. Just a passion to create and to bring value to others by sharing my resources and knowledge on subjects that I love.

So, please take a moment share this so that others can find this and hopefully find ideas and inspirations to craft better customer experiences for their brand.

Have questions? Opinions? Then do get in touch, I'd love to hear from you: me@veronicastenberg.com

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