

CLIENT STORY

Healthy CX Programs Never Stop Improving

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE GLOBAL DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER LOYALTY AT AN
AMERICAN MULTINATIONAL MEDICAL DEVICE AND HEALTH CARE COMPANY

ATTRIBUTION: FORRESTER CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE NORTH AMERICA CONFERENCE FIRESIDE CHAT



+ Nine Questions At-a-Glance

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+ Why Don't You Share a Little About Yourself and How You Came into Your CX Role?

I'm the Global Director of Customer Loyalty at an American multinational medical device and health care company. Customer experience (CX) is something I've always been passionate about. Before I came into this position I was running our service department for Latin American Canada. It was a great experience to interact with customers, help them solve problems, and learn about how our different voice of customer programs support us. When I had an opportunity to be more directly involved with our CX program, I jumped at the chance and it's been an exciting ride ever since. It's good to be in the midst of something that's so important.

+ What Does Your Company Do and What Does the Structure Behind Your VoC Program Look Like Today?

We make equipment and reagents to test blood. When you go to the doctor they take your blood and send it off to the lab. That lab testing equipment is what we manufacture. The service department, in particular, is involved in installing and servicing those instruments, making sure that everything is running smoothly, and providing a good experience for the customer.

Our program has evolved over the years and it now has three main features:



Transactional Surveys: We started with a transactional program. After an interaction with service we ask the customer the NPS question as well as some other questions.



Relationship Survey: We also have a relationship survey, which we do periodically throughout the year. It's completed by the managers of our labs and their management teams, all the way up to the C-suite of a hospital. They're our customers and we ask specific questions about our relationship with them.



Competitive Survey: We also have a competitive survey, which is a double blind survey that gives us insights into how our customers and our competitors' customers feel about our competition as well as about us. It gives us a good measure of how we're doing versus the competition.

In the last year, we've started supplementing our CX program. We added micro-surveys, which are short email-based surveys that we send out to customers after any interactions with our organization. It has one, maybe two or three questions that give us detailed insight into a specific interaction we've had with them.

+ Tell Us About the Thank You Letter You Send to Your Customers and Why You Send It?

At the end of every year we send out a thank you email to all of our customers we've surveyed throughout the year, whether or not they've responded to any of our surveys. The email says thank you for being willing to take this survey—or to at least receive the email or phone call with the survey—and here are some things we've done based on feedback we've received throughout the year. Last year, we had a list of things we did to improve our services and products based on customer feedback.

Taking the time to send this thank you letter is not a big effort, and it's not expensive to create and/or send out. More often than not, it can actually have a big impact when a customer gets it and says, "oh wow, I remember I said something about that and they listened to me."

+ How Do You Get Executives Engaged With Customer Experience and Listening to the Voice of the Customer?

I have some executives that I interact with that are all in—which I'm sure is true in every business. They can't wait to dig into the feedback from our customers and understand more about what they're saying. It's important to interact with your executive champions because they can become a strong voice to encourage other executives that aren't as engaged to get involved with the findings of the program.

For the executives that are not as interested in what your customers are telling you through your feedback channels, you need to try to understand why they aren't engaged. Is it because they don't care about the customer? Well, that's not likely. They're probably just engaged with so many other initiatives that they find it hard to pay attention, and they may not see the value that can be provided to them.

As you interact with executives, it's important to understand what's important to him or her. What is it that they need to get out of this? What are the questions that they have? They may ask, how can I better drive renewal rates? How can I help us to upsell customers? So figure out what they're interested in and provide insights to them. Then as they begin to see value they'll be more engaged in the process.

Another thing you can do is to set up thirty minutes on an executive's calendar to walk through what you've learned and heard from customers rather than sending them a dashboard or a powerpoint. When I sit down with our executives, I start by pointing out insights and listening to their responses when they ask questions. That helps me tailor my future conversations and reports to their interests and business needs. The whole point of this is to find value for those that are running the business and if we can't figure out how to do that then we're probably doing it wrong. So, the question to ask is, how do you tailor your customer intelligence to the people who need to have that data to drive the business forward?

+ What Have You Done Internally to Help Educate and Shape the Company Culture Around CX?

I remember the first presentation about Net Promoter Score (NPS) that I ever saw and the idea that we were actually going to listen to our customers. It seemed revolutionary. Then I look at where we are today, people talk about NPS and customers a lot more. But, that doesn't necessarily come naturally.

There has been a lot of work put into changing the way we think to a more customer-centric culture:

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We share our customers' insights in common areas in our building so people have a way to see the actual customer feedback. People think it's really cool, even when they see some of the negative feedback. At first, people were a little worried. "Aren't you worried someone is going to say something bad?" Well, that's why we're listening to our customers, right?

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We launched an internal podcast called the CX pod. It features short snippets of tips and things to think about when it comes to customer experience. We've also tried to set up conversations with executives and customers to expose executives more to customers and what they're frustrated with and what they're happy about. Our executives have absolutely loved it.

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Of course, we try to celebrate CX day every year and to create some sort of event around that, but it's really how we just keep customer experience top of mind, keep people thinking about what they're doing. Maybe I'm an assistant financial analyst, but what do I do? How does that have an impact on the customer? Trying to keep people thinking about customers as much as we can is important to changing the culture. And we're not done, we have a long way to go, but it's been exciting to see what's happening over time.

+ What Are Some of the New Things That You've Introduced to Your Program to Keep It Fresh?

I'll go back to those three principles again, making it easier to do business with us, ensuring our customers know we're listening to them, and driving more internal thinking about how data is used to validate decisions and drive change.

It's about understanding what we can do to help the customer in an easier way to give us feedback and make sure that feedback is valuable. That's where our implementation of micro surveys comes in. Very short email-based surveys that customers can respond to quickly. And, in China we're trying to work with WeChat to set up a new way to engage with our customers because WeChat is currently the most popular messaging platform in that region. Also, just having the opportunity to share with our customers what we're doing and to be more transparent about what we do with the feedback they give us. So that they can see that this isn't some survey that goes into a black box and nothing ever happens to their feedback.

+ What Kind of Advice Would You Give Those Just Starting Their Program and Making the Case to Their Management Team?

There's so much I'd like to share. I'd suggest that they should develop sophisticated models around promoters versus detractors and how much they buy or grow or upsell. The more they know about their customers the better, one thing we're doing is enhancing our understanding and interaction between financial data and our CX data which I believe is something every organization should do. Again, the more you know about a customer (or set of customers) the better.

Think about it in a more simplistic way. What if we could prevent so many customers from leaving or pinpoint the reason a customer was not happy? What would that mean to us financially from a resource and employee morale perspective? No one likes to lose customers, so if you can get your teams to start thinking about that and say, "what if I could help give you the tools to upsell better, keep customers longer, increase our renewal rate, or reduce churn?" Then show the executive team and every employee how you're going to ask those customers because the best way to know if a customer is happy or not is to ask them. Sometimes they tell and sometimes they don't, but at least you can get a sense of what their temperature is and then start to figure out what to do to avoid the challenges you've had in the past.

It doesn't have to be a super sophisticated model. If you can, that's great, but if you just show a basic model that includes, "what if we could avoid this, what would that be worth?", and then start to build the program around this type of a simplistic model, it will help you to show value to the business.



+ What's That One Thing You Would Tell Someone They Need to Have to Build and Mature a VoC Program?

The number one thing I would say is to continually look for improvement. Again, going back to those three principles: easy for the customer, the customer knows we're listening, and using the data to drive the business.

If you can always be looking at ways to improve no matter if you've had a program running for six months or less or over ten years like we have, then you're going to continue being successful if you're finding ways to do things in a fresher manner for your business and customer.



Interview with:

The Global Director of Customer Loyalty for an American Multinational Medical Device and Health Care Company. After spending over 10 years running a successful service team in Latin America & Canada, This Director moved into a global role managing the Voice of Customer programs for the Medical Device company. He loves to interact with customers and to find ways to make their experiences better. His vision is to find ways to use the Voice of the Customer to drive success at all levels of the business.

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