



Using CX Tech the Right Way Creates Human Experiences, Not Just Numbers

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DOMAIN, DESIGN, AND DATA

Phrases like “technology shapes our world” have been platitudes in the business world for decades. I’ve seen countless companies proclaim over the years that there’s no problem that can’t be solved by throwing technology at it. Got a problem with your customer experience (CX)? Try technology. Are there breakages in your workplace processes? The solution is technology. And, on and on it goes.

The truth, though, is that technology is as much an art as it is a science. And it’s an art that a lot of brands are way too eager to treat as a bandage you slap on a problem instead of a finely tuned instrument. Companies that go the bandage route create numbers; brands that go the instrument route create the fundamental human connections that result in both a great bottom line and true Experience Improvement (XI). This means that your company must make this paradigm shift if it hasn’t already, and it all starts with three core CX program and product design pillars: domain, design, and data.

DOMAIN

The best customer experience programs are not defined solely by technology and engineering. Those things are definitely important, but there’s a twin element to improving experiences that a lot of vendors overlook, and that’s domain. In this context, “domain” refers to human expertise—strategists and practitioners who ride the bleeding edge of best practices. Technology can be useful enough on its own, but employing human expertise is what truly allows brands to identify the priorities and problems they need to address. In short, the domain approach allows you to load the very best practices and technology directly into your initiative.

More specifically, these domain experts and practitioners can help you define what your experience program looks like in a way that best suits your specific brand, determining which products to use and which features to build. They can critically analyze what your organization is doing well for customers and employees, as well as identify opportunities for transformative



improvement to keep you ahead of the curve. Finally, domain experts study the marketplace at large and come back to you not with generic feedback, but with the critical insights you need to build a world-class experience program. Technology alone cannot provide all of that, which is why domain is absolutely *essential* to roadmapping a powerful, intentful Experience Improvement program.

DESIGN

Using experience technology the right way empowers brands to create experiences that are beautiful, not just functional. It allows you to dive beyond metrics (NPS, CSAT, CES) to truly understand customer and employee experiences from an interaction standpoint, which is crucial to meaningfully improving those experiences. That's why I challenge the brands I talk to to aspire for more than making experiences 'just' functional.

Customers seek meaning and human connection in even the smallest interactions—the organizations that understand this are the ones customers and employees regard as marketplace leaders. That's the value of good design; it's critical to setting your program up correctly from the very beginning and ensuring its long-term success. Without design, and designing with the end goal in mind, you end up with a lot of rework and, frankly, a strong chance of failure down the road.

Achieving this understanding is one of my favorite things about Experience Improvement and why I know that technology is as much an art as it is a science. This understanding also stems from what you use your experience tools for. A lot of vendors think it's enough to encourage clients to use listening tools to react to numbers, and many of those clients are happy to do just that. However, becoming a leader that creates bold, human experiences demands much more than reactivity—it demands that you create a program strategy with the end goal in mind, leverage deep domain expertise and best practices, and implement the right technology so you can get to the correct cultivation and execution of data.

DATA

Program design can get into trouble without data to check it. Brands can (and should) come up with all sorts

of wonderful ideas on how to make their experiences fun and meaningful, but data is what lets organizations validate hypotheses and learn what they can accomplish with their experience programs. In other words, data is what allows organizations to validate solutions before they're attempted. Therefore, the best way to ensure that your program's design is solid is to make sure your data is, too. If you can ensure that your data supports what you're doing on paper and supports your goals, you'll find that it'll do more than 'just' verify solutions; it will shape experiences.

Gathering good data means doing more than turning listening posts on in every channel. Using technology to make your experiences more human requires creating a different approach for reaching every audience, then executing. This method is more targeted than the blanket listening favored by far too many vendors and will get you the data you need to make intelligent domain and design decisions. The more you can target your listening and pull data from everywhere,

the better your data will be. The better your data is, the more you know about what your brand can accomplish from design and user perspectives.

A PERFECT BALANCE

The reason why this domain, design, and data model is a better guiding ethos for your experience technology than the other models you'll see out there is because all three elements check and balance each other. As an example, data can help you create a model that grades the quality of a customer comment. Design validates the scorecard that the data relies on to accomplish this grading. Domain allows for expertise that vets the entire approach. Brands need all three of these elements in place if they want to wield technology like a finely tuned instrument, and should bear them in mind while searching for an experience platform.

Approaching technology like a holistic instrument instead of a reactive cure-all makes all the difference when it comes to improving employee and customer experiences. It allows brands to aspire

for more than reactive management and to create proactive, predictive, and improved experiences. It creates a space for the human expertise that no amount of high-end technology can replace and that a meaningfully improved experience requires. Finally, approaching technology from this perspective lets it shape something less abstract than 'our world.' It shapes emotion, connectivity, relationships, meaning, and the moments that matter.



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