

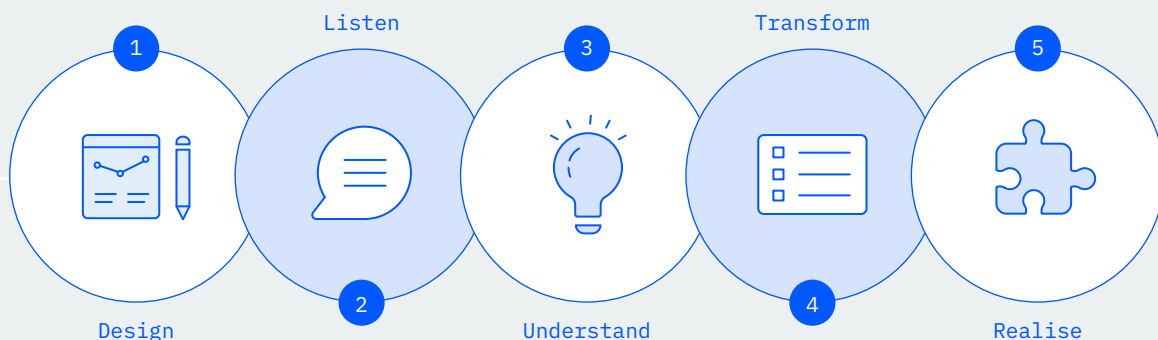
What Does A Best In Class Experience Improvement Vendor Look Like?

Customer experience (CX) has become the primary battlefield where today’s businesses compete and differentiate themselves. In order to excel, you need to work with a vendor (partner) that does more than push out surveys and collect data.

Working with a customer experience management vendor is a long-term commitment, often more than three years, so asking the right questions and fully understanding your options in selecting the right CX partner is extremely important. To help you make an informed decision, we have pulled together a checklist of the key questions you should be asking when selecting the right partner to assist you in meeting your organisational goals, objectives and KPIs.

This checklist follows a proven success framework of **Design, Listen, Understand, Transform and Realise** to ensure you are getting the right information at each stage of programme development—to gain success and prove value from your experience programme efforts. Whether you’re a small business or a large enterprise, you need an experience improvement (not just management) solution and the right partner that can deliver tuned in, actionable insights and a technology platform that will grow and evolve with you.

Let’s begin!



DESIGN

Whether you are taking on an experience programme for the first time, or redesigning an existing one, this is the most fundamental step. For a lasting impact, take the time to outline your CX vision, align it with your corporate objectives, and create a tactical strategy for how your experience programme will measure up to expectations.

1. Do You Have a Team Of Experts on Hand?

To succeed in today's competitive environment, you need a true partner who feels like an extension of your organisation's team, not just another vendor you simply work with. Having the best of both worlds means you will receive not only best-in-class technology but also expert help to identify the customer journey with you, build a survey, interpret your data, understand how and where to focus your improvement efforts and, most importantly, look for opportunities to drive real business impact and ROI.

2. Does the Vendor's Culture and Values Match Up to Your Organisation?

When choosing an experience partner, it is important to think about how well your team will get along. Remember, you are going to be working together on a daily basis so the relationship between your vendor and your organisation must be strong but also human and transparent. By partnering with a vendor who has similar aspirations and values it means that everything they do will reflect on you and your organisation. It's important to determine the vendor's vision and experience within the CX industry and if you'll have a smooth sailing relationship!

3. Do You Have a Governance Framework?

Putting a strategy in place is a great first step, but without the proper alignment, expectations, and processes in place, your impact will be limited. It's important for customer insights leaders to create a framework that makes it possible to define CX practices for the entire business, especially if you are looking after more than one location. With effective governance, your CX data and processes are held to a higher standard that drives accountability and action.

QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK YOUR VENDOR

- Is support available from expert teams?
- Is there a cost to talk to industry experts?
- Do you share best practices and thought leadership?
- What implementation and strategic consulting services do you offer?
- What are your support hours?

QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK YOUR VENDOR

- Can you describe your company vision, values, and strategy?
- Can we meet the team to make sure they are a good fit?
- How many years of experience does your company have?
- What industries does your company focus on?
- Does your company share best practices and industry knowledge?
- Are you a member of Valuable500?
- Can you make our surveys WCAG Compliant?

QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK YOUR VENDOR

- Does your platform offer scalability when we want to grow our programme across borders?
- How flexible is your surveying platform?
- Can you handle various data privacy and information security demands for different countries or regions?
- Can we weight the results according to the market size of the individual markets?

LISTEN

Once you have determined what you are trying to achieve and what success looks like for your brand, it's time to start listening to your customers in the moments that matter the most. Along a typical customer journey there are endless touchpoints—but it's up to you to identify and prioritise the high impact and high emotion moments to connect to your valued customers and to ensure customer listening is ingrained widely within your organisation

1. What Languages Do You Support?

When thinking about your target market and regions you operate in, you should also consider what countries, regions, and languages your vendor can support and their ability to handle large, multimarket complex programmes.

QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK YOUR VENDOR

- How many different countries does your platform run in?
- Can you list the languages you can collect feedback in?
- Can you list the languages your platform can analyse and report in?

2. What Types of Data Can You Analyse?

Consumers interact with your brand in countless ways and places, this means that you have to take a different approach to listening to your customers as a whole. Adapting your approach to customer feedback will give you a wider, more holistic view. Don't limit yourself to a single, transactional touchpoint or collect only one type of feedback. Instead, find a vendor who will help you change your methodology so you are agile and able to keep pace with your changing customer.

QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK YOUR VENDOR

- How do you help with respondent engagement?
- How diverse is the type of feedback your platform can analyse?
- Do you have the ability to collect and analyse different types of data like image, video, and voice as well as from different channels structured from surveys and unstructured data from reviews?
- Can your platform analyse social media data?
- What platform integrations do you have to ensure I am listening to my customers at the right time and right place?



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UNDERSTAND

When you've listened to customers and collected their feedback, making sense of the data is a natural next step. You'll need a complete view of customer data to be able to make informed business decisions, and decide which initiatives will actually move the needle. Metrics from CX surveys are only part one piece to understanding your customers.

1. Can You Link Customer and Employee Experiences Together?

A forward thinking CX vendor should also be thinking about employee experience (EX) to gain a holistic view of the customer experience from the people who interact with them on a daily basis—your frontline employees. That's why when thinking about any customer experience partner you need to also ask about the ability to capture your frontline employees' perspective so that not only are you gathering data from two different sources, you are also improving interactions for customers and at the same time boosting employee engagement and satisfaction.

QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK YOUR VENDOR

How does your solution help retain customers and employees?

Can you enable and engage frontline employees with the platform?

Does your solution identify coaching areas and training for employees?

Will we be able to link customer and employee data together?

2. How Do You Get Meaningful Insights From Our Data?

Customer journeys can change in an instant and the only guarantee is that today's journey looks nothing like yesterday's, and tomorrow's will certainly be something new. It's not enough to simply identify changes in the customer journey, you need to understand the entire customer experience ecosystem. Your partner should provide you with the capabilities to understand the nuances of your customers' thoughts, feelings, pain points, and desired outcomes at each step.

QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK YOUR VENDOR

How do you mine and store data?

How can we get insights which will help our organisation make decisions?

Does your platform utilise AI technology and how?

How can we understand our customers' specific likes and pain points?

Do you analyse the whole customer journey and map out the key touchpoints?

How can you help us understand our customers' emotions?

How can we predict and plan for emerging customer journeys?



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TRANSFORM

Once brands truly understand their customers and thus opportunities to improve themselves, transformation is the next step. Transformation means operationalising feedback, creating a customer-centric culture, and taking action on improvement opportunities.

1. How Can You Create Customer Centricity Within Our Organisation?

To develop and promote a customer-centric culture, all internal stakeholders, from C-Level to frontline, must be able to understand the benefits and value, both culturally and financially. Having clearly defined your customer and/or employee experience KPIs that drive business outcomes will allow you to showcase the value of your CX programme and prove the ROI to internal stakeholders in order to gain executive-buy in and promote a customer-centric culture.

2. Can You Guide CX Maturity?

A capable partner will give you guidance about growing the maturity of your experience programme in the short-and-long term. Maturity models developed by CX vendors or analysts are essential to helping firms understand exactly where they are and where they want to go. These models provide action plans to take your CX programme from fledgling to ever increasing levels of capability and sophistication. Make sure your potential CX vendor has the desire, expertise, and technological capability to guide that evolutionary process.

QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK YOUR VENDOR

How can you help us determine how to educate our employees on the importance of CX?

What reporting capabilities do you have so we can easily share insights with the wider organisation?

Do you ensure that our CX measures are aligned with our business objectives?

QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK YOUR VENDOR

Do you provide support in assessing our maturity?

How can you help us take our programme to the next level?

How often do you assess our progress and give us recommendations?

Is there a success framework we can follow to mature our programme?

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REALISE

Whether focussing on customer retention, lowering your cost to serve, attracting new customers, or something else, you will likely be accountable for showing the value of the programme. We get it—businesses want to prove that customer experience is actually delivering value. Realisation of the value and ROI is the final piece of the puzzle in transforming your customer experiences.

1. How Can we Future-Proof Our Experience Programme?

In order to run a successful experience programme you must always think about the future and take into consideration emerging trends and industry news that may affect the way you run your organisation and the way your customers interact with your brand. A true invested CX partner should use their expertise and knowledge to facilitate discussions around changing environments and generational differences.

2. How Can Our Organisation Continuously Improve?

Partnering with a CX vendor who is continually improving will not only benefit you as a client, but also your customers, as they will receive great experiences based on your organisation constantly improving. A great experience partner should be constantly innovating their technology offering to keep up with modern day requirements to meet your customers where they are and where they are going in the future.

QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK YOUR VENDOR

- Do you offer a client roadmap?
- How often do you conduct reviews?
- What does the next 3-5 years look like for the CX industry?
- How well can you expand internationally?

QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK YOUR VENDOR

- What type of flexibility will you offer us regarding programme changes?
- Can you help us prove the value of our CX Programme?
- Do you have testimonials and client stories that have improved their CX that you can share with us?
- How does your platform allow us to take action and learn about areas of improvement?
- What innovative technologies set you apart from your competition?
- Do you have specific experts on your team that help organisations define improvement strategies and action plans?



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The ideal customer experience platform will address all points on your business timeline, from the current state of your company and its immediate needs to your long-term goals.

If you would like to speak to us further on how we can help you ask the right questions when selecting a CX partner or would like to learn more about what we do and how we can help, **please contact us:**

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