

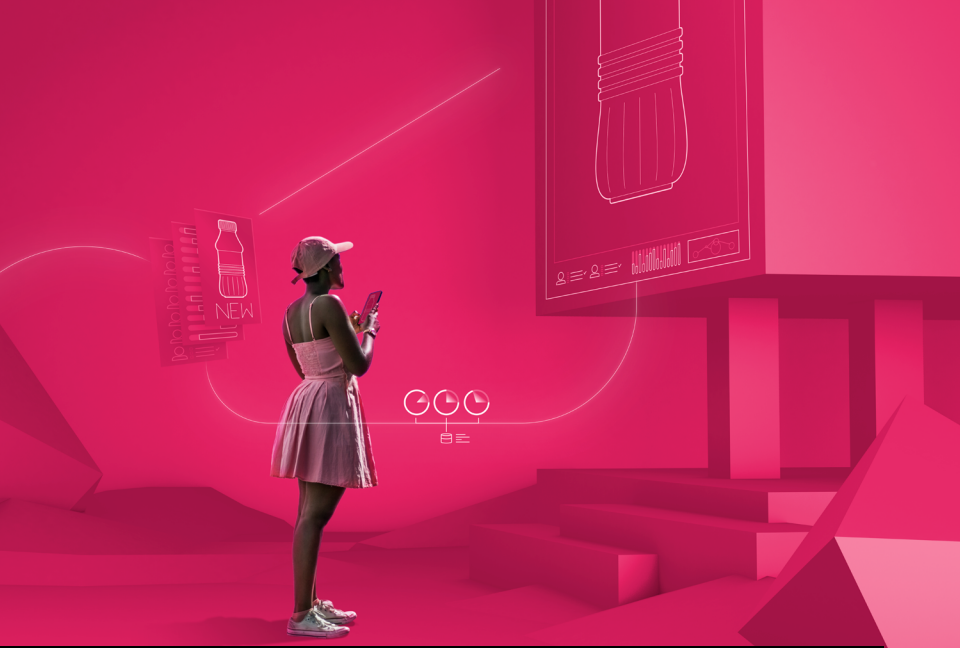


THE CMO CLUB SOLUTION GUIDE

Customer experience
essentials for *enterprise.*

In thought leadership with:





Customer experience is the *new management* *battleground.*

Over the past decade, singular differentiators including placement, product, price, and promotion have eroded. Brands and businesses across all industries now compete on customer experience. Having a customer-centric engagement strategy is a critical starting line for any business, particularly for brands with limited resources. Competing on experience spans the lifetime of a customer's engagement with a brand.

Customer experience (CX) is defined by the tactics, tools, and touchpoints that influence your target buyer. It impacts the shopper's perception of your brand, and their propensity to buy and advocate for it — in effect, driving growth.

Most customer experience philosophies are based on small and medium-sized businesses. There is currently a lack of understanding about enterprise-level companies, and their customers, who can have much more complicated demands.

Enterprise businesses need to deliver seamless experiences across all channels enabling audiences to “pick up where they left off.” This means becoming as frictionless as possible — from your engagement platforms, to your shopping and fulfillment mechanisms, to your post-sale execution. You want to keep customers coming back for more.

This survey and benchmark report uncovers the customer experience management challenges faced by enterprise business leaders across a variety of roles and industries, as well as the role of various business processes and strategies in effectively collaborating to enable great customer experiences.

Acknowledgments

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Esther Lem
CMO, Chegg



Vanessa Fiske
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Gloria DeCoste
Director of eCommerce Marketing,
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Tariq Hassan
CMO, Petco



Jeannine D'Addario
CMO, Guitar Center



Julie Collins
Recent CMO, Alcon



Executive Summary

The evolution of digital and the introduction of self service has given way to an era of extreme opportunity for brands.

Engagement is not relegated to one channel or piece of content, as consumers move swiftly from online to in-store, glean information via word-of-mouth, ratings and reviews. Consumers know now more than ever how to get what they need when they need it, with or without the help of brands.

The knowledge and empowerment that your audiences are armed with creates a lot of expectations for brands to meet and exceed. But it simultaneously offers new ways to delight, entertain, and develop lasting relationships that benefit both brands and buyers.

The CMO Club surveyed 72 senior marketing leaders to uncover — from the changemaker’s lens — which aspects of the customer experience are creating challenges, but more importantly opportunities, to constantly evolve engagement.



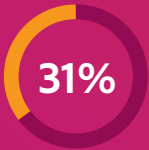
69% of respondents cited “growth” as the most important customer experience objective.



49% of respondents said that while they prioritize the customer experience, there is still work to do to improve their strategy.



42% of respondents indicated their business strategy is entirely customer centric and it reflects in their retention rates.



31% cited “retention” as the primary driver of customer experience management.

Survey responses show an interesting circular commitment to customer experience management, in that their commitments are paying dividends, which fuels a continued focus on enhancing the way they engage and grow their businesses over time.

Experience essentials for the enterprise.

Savvy changemakers understand the role of a varied set of customer experience management tactics in strategic growth and retention. This means they're developing more defined workflows to reduce acquisition costs and repeat successful engagement.

"Though larger corporations say they're customer centric, it's common to spend an enormous amount of time talking about meeting quarterly or yearly numbers. In my previous role, we talked about customers in context of financial contribution to the company. 'What price would they pay?' So it was more customer management than it was customer centricity. I thought that was customer centricity. When you know better you do better, but what you don't know you don't know. Then I spent time with startups that truly build their business model around the customer, a close connection to the customer, and their first questions were: 'What would a customer think about it?' They used a different F word: feeling. It's more relationship based than financial!"

— JULIE COLLINS, RECENT CMO, ALCON

Successful companies realize that experiences rise above everything else and can build their businesses on this knowledge. Customers are the ultimate judge of success or failure. The data uncovered four key trends in effective CX commitment:

- **Data** is the lynchpin for organizations to achieve more meaningful experiences that foster engagement and loyalty — a connected view of insights across the business and unified customer profile is critical.
- **Compelling brand experiences** are composed of a series of interactions that span across a variety of touchpoints and engagements, so a core commitment to omnichannel is a must to compete and win audience attention.
- **Experience management** is a collaborative endeavor, as core leaders across data management, marketing, and loyalty are cultivating greater roles in connecting the touchpoints that compose audience experiences.
- **Technology decision-making and adoption** remains a challenge for experience leaders seeking to glean the value of their existing and future investments.

We asked survey respondents which of the following were their top challenges in managing operations related to delivering stellar customer experiences. Here's what they said:



Data collection and management for improving targeting.



Talent acquisition and mining the appropriate digital skill sets.



Content development and production.



Budgeting and financial resource allocation.



CX in action across *audiences.*

Savvy experience makers are seizing the variety of opportunities presented to delight, engage, and inspire more meaningful interactions with their audiences. The key to continued engagement optimization is in mining and prioritizing new ways to add value and delight to your audiences' lives.

"We have an influencer marketing program. We created a gamification system where people post within the platform so then we're able to meet FTC guidelines as well as track the value of their activities. DVDNation. It's an awesome program. We went in with premise of what to do with micro influencers. The result is that we've had almost \$100,000 in content created by this group. The key is consumer insights, not just building things to build. One of the reasons the app was built is because we surveyed our customers and they cited this as a change they wanted us to move forward with."

— VANESSA FISKE, RECENT DIRECTOR OF MARKETING, DVD.COM

Part one: Customer experience takes a village.

Given the ongoing experimentation and the lack of clear-cut ownership, many organizations are opting for a collaborative approach. Specifically, they're creating cross-departmental, cross-functional teams that together create, deliver, and own digital experiences.

Owning the digital experience journey as a group eliminates lack of accountability and curbs the blame game. By understanding your workflows and determining who owns what or who's involved in cross-departmental collaborations, you'll be better positioned for a customer experience-driven future.

As more emphasis is put on the customer experience, collaborative digital experience ownership becomes increasingly important. And it will no doubt lead to better, more immersive, and more relevant digital experiences that build brand awareness, advocacy, and success by businesses that get it right.

Having a single view of the customer — which is critical to the best experiences — means resolving identity across many different data sources from different interactions, online and offline.

And the data from these interactions needs to be normalized so their value can be realized. Then, governance, security, and privacy need to be applied on top of the data, adhering to current regulations and policies, like GDPR.

A key partner in achieving a centralized view of data sources is the chief information officer (CIO). Because **CIOs** are so close to existing tech stacks, they know that piecing together legacy software to create this unified

customer view is painful and ineffective. This positions the CIO role as a core advocate and collaborator for strategic and concerted customer experience management (CXM).

We asked survey respondents who their key strategic collaborator was on digital experience management or customer experience. Here's what they said:



CX is primarily a marketing led and driven function.



CIO — Information is key in understanding the right offers and opportunities to pursue for the customer and business.



CXO — As the title "chief experience officer" is rapidly emerging as a sign of dedication to the experience as a driving business force.



CTO — This indicates an opportunity for improvement in the alignment of the application of technology to support amazing experiences.



SVP digital commerce

To meet these new tech challenges, organizations have to transform drastically. It starts with people. As individuals, the ability to place yourselves in a customer's shoes gives us a unique advantage — so it's important to recognize great opportunity and seize it. It takes a village. Behind every experience management leader, a plethora of teams and functions support the various touchpoints that are both customer facing and internal to make the CX engine sing.

"We've repositioned Petco as a company and a brand focused on pet wellness — taking our first stance toward an experience that gives customers confidence by announcing the removal of dog and cat food products with artificial ingredients, which is the first step of a new experience expectation. You now have us positioned as a store and the only national pet retail partner that has taken a stand against artificial ingredients for pets. This pivots toward building an expectation around what experience you have."

— TARIQ HASSAN, CMO, PETCO

Enterprise conversations need to revolve around audience campaigns, journeys, and customer lifetime value, with teams aligned around the taxonomy and tactics that will drive their strategic visions forward and meaningfully impact the customer experience. Although the promise of cross-channel personalization is great, the obstacles are many, even for sophisticated organizations. Because internal teams aren't connected to each other, experiences are often executed and measured in isolation.

Organizations aren't designed for the new cross-channel world order. So a terrible experience with the operations department isn't connected to a good experience with the sales department — in fact, the two departments don't know these experiences even occurred, or how to learn from them.

Transform the data dilemma into opportunity.

Our study revealed companies look to transform how they access and capitalize on data — swiftly and easily. Companies looking to transform customer experiences need customer data that is real time, intelligent, and predictive to deliver relevant and personalized customer experiences at scale. This is the new world of CXM. Yet many businesses struggle to grasp a complete view of their customer interactions and operations because they simply cannot get to this data. Some of the information is relegated to

Must-haves for new digital talent

“Marketers need to be tech geeks, proficient at data analysis to gain insights and creative problem solvers.”

— ESTHER LIM, CMO, CHEGG

“We need to bring back more emotional intelligence. There are so many implications with the technology we have. There has been a premium put on the technology such that we forget about people. Anything we do as a marketer is because we're trying to make somebody's life better — whether it's B2B software that minimizes manual requirements, or simply delivering more nutritious meals to my family.”

— VANESSA FISKE, RECENT DIRECTOR OF MARKETING, DVD.COM

internal systems, serving only one or a few functions of an organization. Other customer and company data lives in external silos managed by third parties, limiting a company's access and completely eliminating the benefit of leveraging that data in real time.

In the past, companies tried to answer the data access problem with massive budgets, attempting to connect to various data sources, all in the hopes they could better serve their customers and grow their business.

A majority of survey respondents (about 61 percent) cited data collection and management for improved targeting as the top challenge in managing operations related to customer experience.

Without the proper use of data, brands will fail to see the warning signs from customers and lose business to other brands that are better at anticipating needs. As a result, we need to shift from marketing products and services to marketing experiences. We need to continue this from first engagement all the way through to customer lifetime and advocacy.

Brands that have individual conversations with customers that are focused, adapted, and relevant will be the new loyalty leaders. This is data-driven loyalty.



Art of content + science of data = *delightful experiences.*

To truly transform and deliver world-class experiences, you need a real-time picture through behavioral, transactional, financial and operational data of what your customer is doing right now, on any device, through any channel. And that takes a solution that reimagines customer experience management and allows you to weave all of your data — CRM, ERP, commerce, sales, product usage, and more — into that complete, single customer view that lets you take action in real time.

“At Guitar Center, we realize that being a musician is about more than just playing an instrument. It’s an experience that offers all the support you need to excel at your craft. So the other part that differentiates us is what you can’t do online. For example, we rolled out music lessons at nearly every single store in the last year. Some of our stores have as many as 500–1000 people taking lessons, from beginner level, through to intermediate and experienced players of all instruments.”

— JEANNINE D’ADDARIO, CMO, GUITAR CENTER

Distinguished experience makers employ solutions and tools that are focused on helping ensure companies of all sizes can create more value from their data and deliver better digital experiences.

Survey respondents indicate that data is the foundational base to building an effective house of meaningful interactions. This means it has become critical for brands to develop strategic measures that tie together information sources in a way that helps refine marketing communications and offers. Data is a company's most valuable resource for success in today's world, but also a core challenge for businesses to grapple with across a variety of sources and channels.

Beyond the standard transactional data, such as purchases made and time spent shopping, digital profile data (engagement across email, social, and marketing channels) and customer relationship management (or cumulative) data, were cited as the sources organizations are mining to help drive enhanced experiences. This is especially important in providing pertinent and compelling offers that are going to complement an existing purchase, for cross or upsell opportunity. There's unique value in offering things that are going to support, enable, or celebrate an existing purchase.

We asked respondents to select all data sets their organization was mining to help drive enhanced experiences. Here are their responses:



Transactional data
(i.e., purchases; time spent)



CRM
(i.e., cumulative data)



Digital profile data
(i.e., engagement across email, social, marketing channels)



Behavioral data
(i.e., actions on brand properties in-store/online)



Make marketing tech work for *experiences*.

As the experience management initiative continues to evolve as a valuable and essential business growth driver, technology is a catalyst to break down walls and bring teams closer together by unifying data, content, and workflows. This will unlock innovation through integration. Experience businesses are focused on providing intuitive and contextual experiences, and technology can help develop context at scale.

“Finding the right pieces to invest in from, a tech perspective, and the bandwidth to get it done, is the biggest challenge we face — especially when short on resources. There’s no lack of ideas on what to do, but we’ve definitely been challenged by capacity and dollars.”

— TARIQ HASSAN, CMO, PETCO

Context gives you your cues, but you must deliver the right experiences by designing for speed and scale. You need agility to deliver content messages and offers to millions of audiences worldwide, which means you must rethink your entire content supply chain.

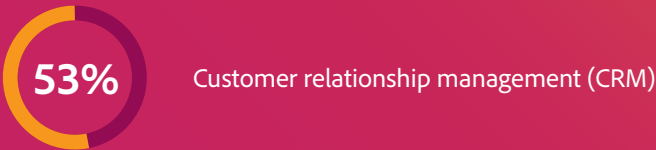
Relationships are based on a series of interactions across multiple channels, devices, and departments. Relationship management should be transparent and seamless for customers. But it’s a massive task from the view of the enterprise, particularly when you’re managing legacy systems that were not intended to function at that scale, or in real time. Technology is giving us the mandate to empower the change agent in all of us. It’s time to grow from experience thinkers to experience makers.

“The data allocation and linkages are a definite challenge. It’s less about adoption and more about integration — we’ve removed some frustration and we’re almost done with significant tech improvements, but the company is going through an enterprise-wide tech transformation that has challenges to it. We may come up with programs that can’t be supported at the point of sale level, for instance.”

— TARIQ HASSAN, CMO, PETCO

We asked survey respondents to rate the importance of the value the following tools bring to their ability to deliver engaging digital customer experiences.

A majority of respondents cited DMPs, CRMs, and commerce platforms as "very important" systems for their efforts:



More than any other role in the C-suite, the CIO is well-positioned to advance how their companies use emotional data to drive their CX strategy. They can take the lead in developing a technology stack that will creatively apply sentiment data to improve customer engagement, propelling their businesses to succeed when it comes to competing on experiences.

Changemakers harness the value in technology and talent.

The key to change management is to evaluate which experience attributes are most pertinent to your experience objectives, and implementing tactics to support your priorities.

“Tech is still only as good as the people who enable it. Otherwise we’re going to all be making decisions as robots. So, we’ve got to have people who can be agile and who can find insights with the tech, not just turn it on to spit out insights at us. This is all new. How do we dig in to get meaningful info? No one is lacking volume of data. What we tend to lack is the data that matters and the insights that come from them.”

— GLORIA DECASTE, DIRECTOR OF ECOMMERCE MARKETING, NESTLÉ

"We actually have 15,000 store and regional partners coming together over the next 2–3 weeks to refine the understanding of and ability to create a sales solution culture. Moving the organization from thinking about navigating the store just to help find what you came in for, to actually engaging with you to understand your pet's situation, life stage, health issues, etc. And engaging in a thoughtful dialogue that leads to a different experience by gaining knowledge."

— TARIQ HASSAN, CMO, PETCO

"Nestlé is a really large company. We can use heritage systems but there is a pretty strong willingness to explore new technologies to ensure enablement."

— GLORIA DECOSTE, DIRECTOR OF ECOMMERCE MARKETING

Compete confidently on *experience*.

The fundamental truth and challenge facing every business today is that people buy experiences, not products. Businesses must now deliver great experiences to win in an increasingly competitive world, competing for the hearts and minds of customers, exceeding their expectations.

Customer experience is a substantial competitive differentiator that businesses know to prioritize. Savvy businesses understand that in seizing the opportunities to enhance the customer experience, they can continue to grow.

The modern consumer expects experiences that cater to their likes and needs. They know what's possible in the realm of personalization, and they'll continue to gravitate toward brands that demonstrate a continued commitment toward evolving meaningful, personal interactions.

Experience change agents should enlist a subscription service mindset—customers can choose to renew or cancel their relationship with your brand at every click. This commitment enables genuine transformation in how your enterprise business operates. You must sustain exceptional experiences at every touchpoint to drive growth and keep customers coming back for more.



The CMO Club is the world's most engaged, inspired, and exclusive community of over 850 senior marketing executives who help each other solve their biggest challenges, within a candid, trusted, and sharing environment. Collaboration fueled by inspiring events and within the Digital Clubhouse raises the standard for what is required to be a successful chief marketing officer. Visit us at [thecmoclub.com](https://www.thecmoclub.com).

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