



A different service for a new reality

2020 UAE Customer Experience Excellence report

KPMG Lower Gulf Limited
November 2020



Foreword

Covid-19 has changed consumer behavior around the world. New attitudes and values have emerged. The flight to digital has forced companies to be more adaptive, to drive technical innovation as rapidly as they can, and to get closer to their customers.

Crises have a habit of bringing the future forward and catalyzing several macro trends to spark a fundamental market shift. Covid-19 is a compelling incentive for organizations to accelerate their drive to get to the future first, to embark on the digital transformation of their organizations, and to become more agile, responsive and connected.

Covid-19 has led customers to become increasingly digital, display unfamiliar patterns of demand and develop specific physical needs driven by social distancing.

We have seen many firms reacting, in the short term, to establish their integrity, striving to act in the best interests of their customers, doing the 'right thing' regardless of profit impact, showing care for their employees and their customers.

For most companies, however, this can be a prelude to seismic disruption. Existing trends have been accelerated and new ones introduced. Customers can feel more vulnerable and less in control than before. Values have evolved, with renewed demands that brands put integrity and purpose before profit. The basis for many customer decisions may have shifted.

In the UAE market, from our research and interaction with our clients, we see organizations increasingly characterized by innovation and driven by the desire to be world leading across every function. Implementation of new technology such as artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning can enable experiences that are highly personalized, frictionless and

easy to navigate. The rapid pace of change increasingly requires organizations to be digitally connected end-to-end, to consistently innovate, and develop a more iterative "learn by doing" approach.

We explore three important themes:



The New Customer:

How have customers changed?



The Six Pillar experience: What are the qualities needed to deliver excellence, create loyalty and drive growth – and remain relevant?



The Connected Enterprise: How should CEOs transform their enterprises to compete for this New Customer?

For organizations able to navigate these challenges, there are likely opportunities to accelerate economic recovery, lock in long-term cost savings and create enormous value, for both shareholders and society.

I hope you enjoy the read, and we would be delighted to discuss the contents of the report with you.



Pilar De Miguel Veira

Partner

Head of Experience Design & Innovation
KPMG Lower Gulf (UAE and Oman)

Contents

A woman with dark hair and glasses is looking down at a smartphone in her hands. She is wearing a light-colored trench coat over a dark top. She stands on a rooftop or balcony with a metal railing. In the background, a city skyline is visible at night, with many lights from buildings and a prominent, tall, illuminated skyscraper. The scene is dimly lit, with the primary light sources being the city lights and the phone's screen.

Key findings

2020 CEO Outlook survey: Covid-19 special edition: i



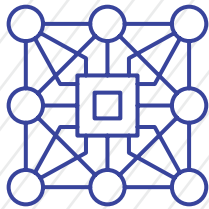
70%

of CEOs worldwide say
Covid-19 has **accelerated**
digital progress



70%

say this has resulted
in a more **seamless**
customer experience



1 in 3

are concerned about
organizing effectively
for digital



90%

say their corporate **purpose**
is driving action, **70%** have a
stronger connection to their
purpose since the pandemic began

From the UAE Customer Experience Excellence report:ⁱⁱ

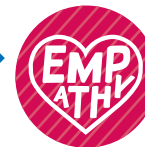


7%↑

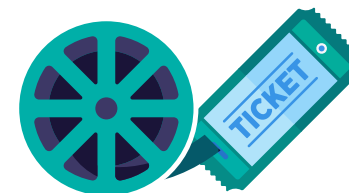
The UAE's overall performance on customer experience has **increased by 7% since 2018**



Emirates Airline is again the **number one brand**, leading across The Six Pillars



Expectations and Empathy show the **biggest improvement since 2018: +12% and +8%**



Entertainment & Leisure is the leading sector for customer experience





Embracing the New Customer

Much has been written in the past on digital disruption and “the age of the customer”. The research suggests these previous movements, whilst relevant at the time, will be historical footnotes to the level of change businesses may now face.

Through the difficulties of Covid-19, a changed customer has emerged with adapted behavior; some of the traits were already present but have been accelerated or sharpened. Some are timeless, long term, habitual psycho-social behaviors, but many attributes and refinements to purchase are new. This New Customer will be a hybrid of all of these and represents a paradigm shift in a post-Covid-19 world.

Globally, consumers believe they will be living their lives very differently for the foreseeable future. They expect the brands they interact with – digitally or, as lockdown eases, physically – to deliver better, safer, and more seamless interaction at a lower cost.



More digitally savvy

Covid-19 has amplified the need for easy access to products, services and information. Many customers are now comfortable using online channels to buy what they need. They are reducing physical purchase occasions and gravitating towards touchless shopping and contactless payment. Eighty-two percent of global consumers stated they are more likely to use digital wallets or cards in the future, as per the KPMG Global Covid-19 Tracker, Customer Connections: Competing in the new reality June 2020.ⁱⁱⁱ

Use of chat technologies and social media has grown with a threefold increase in consumers who claim they use social channels, webchat, messenger apps and SMS chat as their main means of communicating with organizations.



Trust becomes multi-dimensional

Integrity and trust are therefore two sides of the same coin. Integrity is how the organization thinks and behaves and trust is the outcome gained as a result.

During lockdown, many customers have become more aware of environmental and corporate behavior. They are more questioning as to whether brands behave credibly when it comes to their environmental and social obligation. They have added further dimensions such as safety and support of the local community. They are concerned about data privacy and the security of interactions. They seek reassurance that all elements of trust are being controlled.

The customer evolution

Customer 2.0

The principles of Customer 1.0 were still alive, supported by the development of consumerism and marketing. The concept of a brand first emerges, and demand for products and services were heavily driven by marketing.

Customer 1.0
(Pre-1950s)



Customers benefited from the production or delivery capability of the business. They had little choice and bought products that were available and the best that could be achieved at the time.

Customer 1.0

Customer 2.0
(1950-2000)



Customer 3.0
(2000-2015)



The principles of Customer 1.0 and 2.0 continue, though expanded by the explosion of globalization and the internet. Customer retention and loyalty are key features, and the focus of competitive action is on delivering the best possible customer experience.

Customer 3.0

Customer 4.0
(2015-2020)



The principles of Customer 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0 continue to evolve, but are now complicated by vast choices, online platforms and the emergence of a new type of customer. Influenced by Millennial and Generation Z values, the New Customer is one whose personal goals outweigh persuasive marketing: one who seeks to influence and be influenced by other customers; who employs new ways of working and thinking, who has high expectations that a provider will change the way they deliver to fit with their needs. And where the customer's journey is their unique journey, businesses play a part in enabling them to achieve their goals.

Customer 4.0

Customer 5.0
2020+



The principles of Customer 1.0, 2.0, 3.0 and 4.0 continue to evolve but have been heavily altered by Covid-19. The majority of customers will likely have moved online to a large extent, reduced their physical purchase occasions and gravitated towards touchless shopping and contactless payment. Self-service will prevail in a multitude of different ways and the desire to feel safe and secure will be ever present for the foreseeable future. Purchasing patterns have changed as many consumers shift from discretionary spending to essentials. Value and price will now be at least as important as other aspects of the experience. They are also changing more deeply, psychologically, as the New Customer may be more purpose-driven and demand integrity. A company's environmental and social credentials will become an increasingly important factor in purchase decisions.

Customer 5.0

The background of the slide features a person in silhouette, holding a smartphone. A complex, glowing blue digital network of nodes and lines is superimposed over the person and the phone, suggesting a digital or technological theme. The network is denser around the phone and fades out towards the top and sides. On the right side of the slide, there are two large, overlapping, semi-transparent geometric shapes: a dark blue trapezoid and a light gray trapezoid, both pointing towards the right edge. The overall color palette is dominated by dark blues and greys, with the glowing network providing a bright blue contrast.

The Six Pillar experience



Faced with a new customer, every business leader needs to re-evaluate their offer: the experience. This spans products, sales, service, marketing and countless other interactions. The experience is the layer between the New Customer and the high performing business of the future. It is the focus of our 11-year Customer Experience Excellence program and is more important this year than ever before. Getting this right is key to competing in the new reality.

Overall, the quality of customer experience has improved across the UAE since the last survey.

UAE CEE performance

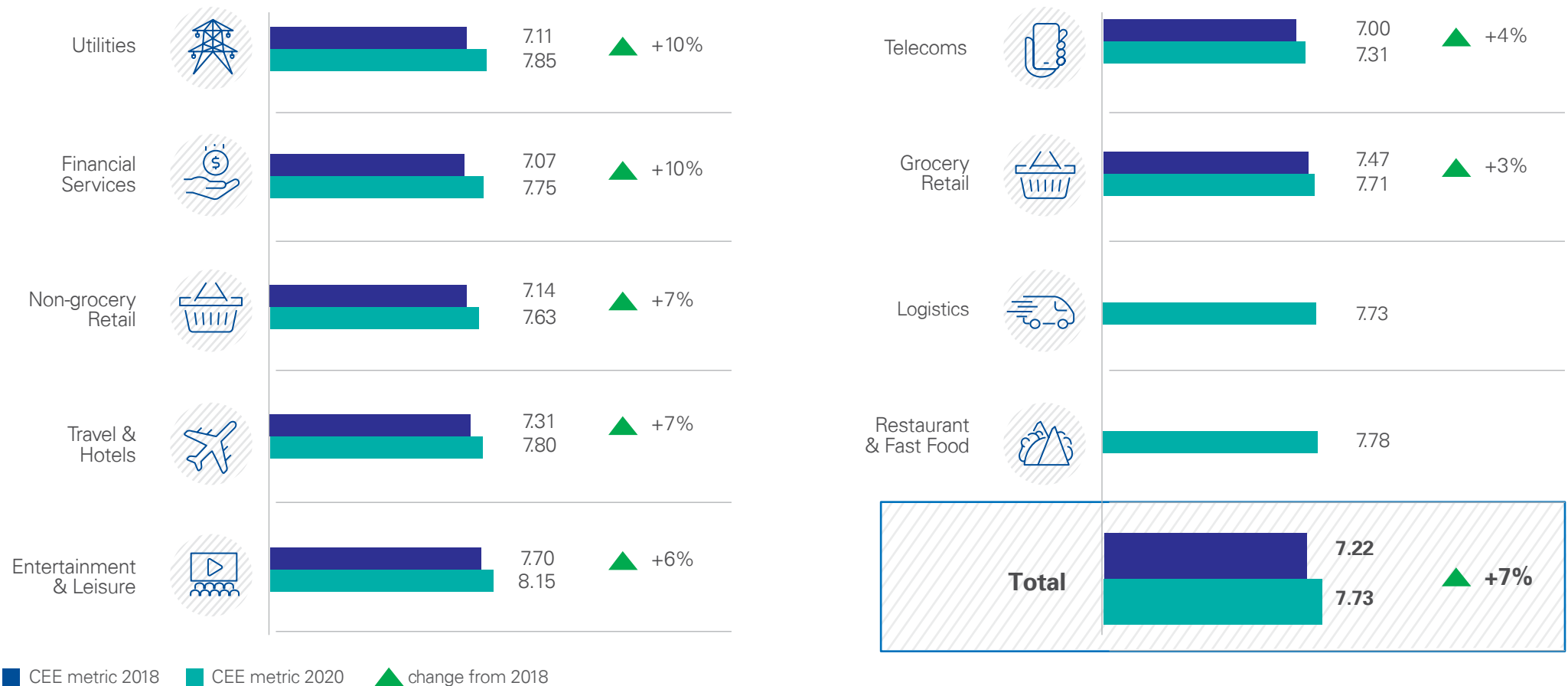


▲ +7%
change from 2018

Every sector has seen an improvement, with Utilities and Financial Services seeing the largest increase. Entertainment & Leisure have the highest score for the quality of the customer experience, overall – a function of the high levels of innovation in

the sector. Despite the impact of Covid-19, the Travel & Hotels sector performed better in the UAE than in most other countries.

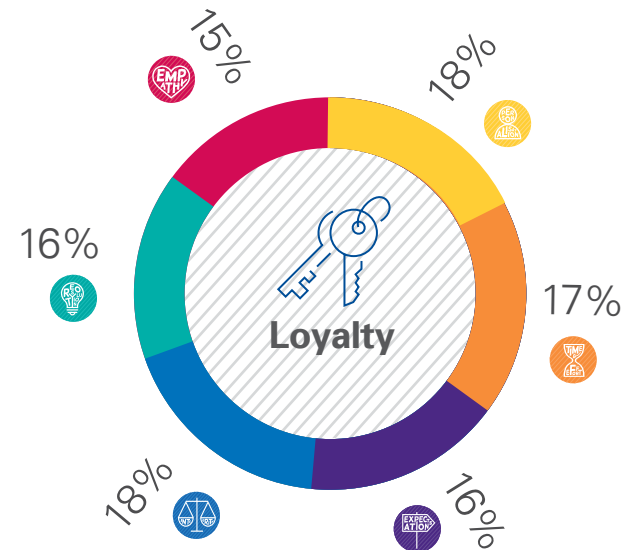
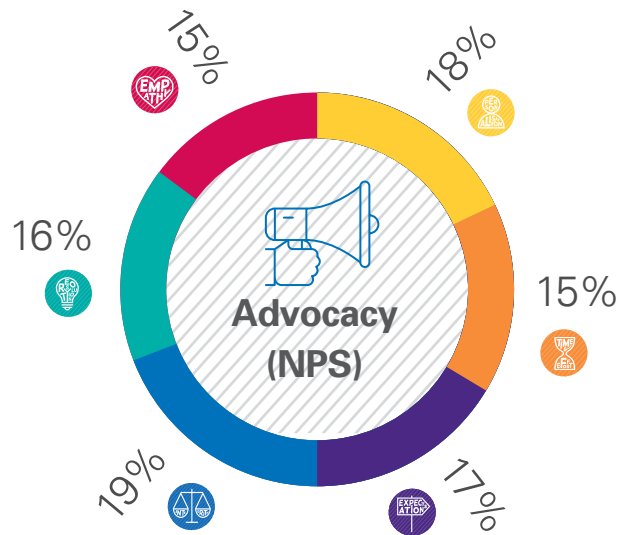
Sector performance



Covid-19 and The Six Pillars

Strong performance across The Six Pillars leads to improved brand Loyalty and Advocacy. In order to understand customers' likelihood to recommend a brand (Advocacy), we asked them to rate how likely they would be to recommend each brand to a friend or colleague. In addition, we probed customers with respect to Loyalty—how likely they were to continue buying goods or services in the future.

When it comes to driving both Loyalty and Advocacy, this year our study finds UAE customers to be most focused on a brand's Integrity and Personalization. Unsurprisingly, the scores for these are slightly lower this year due to Covid-19 – likely related to customers increased concern about having their expectations set accurately and their problems resolved.



Personalization



Time & Effort



Expectations



Integrity



Resolution




Empathy

The Six Pillars

Eleven years of research with four million customer evaluations of approximately 3,500 brands globally have shown that there are six dimensions of customer experience that firms need to excel at if they are to reap the financial rewards that result from Loyalty and Advocacy. These are Integrity, Resolution, Expectations, Time & Effort, Personalization and Empathy.

In normal times, they are powerful tools for creating successful, sustainable and ethical businesses. When faced with the unprecedented challenges of the New Reality, they provide an invaluable guide to navigating the changes that will be required by defining excellence in both customer and employee experiences. They show business leaders specifically what they need to create in order to compete for the new reality customer and become or remain high performing CX leaders.

This year's research shows that they are more relevant than ever, but now have additional requirements attached.

 This icon represents interactivity. Please click to discover more





Integrity

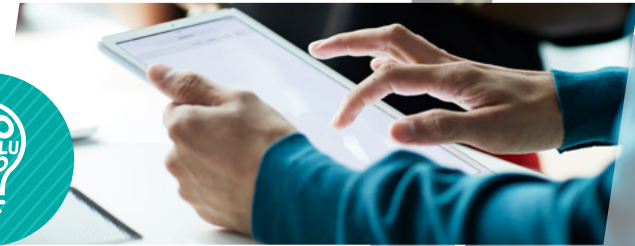
Acting with integrity and engendering trust

Trust is an outcome of consistent organizational behavior that demonstrates trustworthiness. There are trust building events where organizations have the need to publicly react to a difficult situation, and trust building moments where individual actions by staff add up to create trust in the organization as a whole. Behavioral economics holds that as humans we trust people we like. The ability to build rapport is critical in creating trust with customers.

During the pandemic, customers have perhaps for the first time seen organizations put their customers and their people's wellbeing before profit. Leading organizations have acted compassionately and sensitively to the factors that affect trust. Firms will need to be careful they do not undermine this newly acquired trust.

Golden rules

- Stand for something more than profit
- Demonstrably act in my best interest
- Show concern for me as a person
- Do what you say you will
- Keep me informed
- Be competent
- Be likeable



Resolution

Turning a poor experience into a great one

Resolving customer issues is highly important. Even with the best processes and procedures things will go wrong. Great companies have a process that not only puts the customer back in the position they should have been in as rapidly as possible, but they also make the customer feel good about the experience.

Historically, organizations have majored on service recovery. Covid-19 has driven rapid innovation because customer problem solving has come to the fore. This mindset, in turn, has accelerated a focus on solutions rather than products and driven engagement.

Golden rules

- Assume my innocence – see my point of view
- A warm and sincere apology
- Own the resolution – fix with urgency
- Surprise me in how well you fix the issue
- Go the extra mile, if required



Expectations

Managing, meeting and exceeding customer expectations

Customers have needs and they also have expectations about how these needs will be met. Customer satisfaction is the difference between expectation and actual delivery. Understanding, delivering and, if possible, exceeding expectations is a key skill of “great” organizations. Some are able to make statements of clear intent that set expectations.

For our CX leaders, ongoing, non-sales led communication was already a way of life; for others, a circumstance-driven necessity. There are few companies now that do not understand the need to be clear on the expectations they set, and the vital role customer communication plays in enabling consumers to plan their lives. Proactive expectation setting communications will now be expected as standard.

Customer expectations have become fluid, shaped by the events around them and the responses of their different suppliers. Understanding these changing expectations is a vital component of designing the right solutions and experiences.

Golden rules

- Set my expectations accurately
- Agree on timings with me
- Respond more quickly than I anticipate
- Use plain language– no jargon
- Fulfill or exceed your promises
- Guide me through the process
- Provide information openly



Time & Effort

Minimizing customer effort and creating frictionless processes

Customers are time poor and are increasingly looking for instant gratification. Removing unnecessary obstacles, impediments and bureaucracy to enable the customer to achieve their objectives quickly and easily have been shown to increase loyalty.

Covid-19 has amplified the need for easy access to products and services, convenience and relevant information. Home delivery has become a way of life. Multi-channel engagement is now the norm, as customers are happy to use any channel that is most convenient at that point in time. The CX leaders in this year’s research have discovered how to use time as a source of competitive advantage

Golden rules

- Make my time investment pleasurable
- Give me clear instructions
- Maximum of three steps to my objective
- No longer than two minutes of waiting time
- Provide the answers I need when I contact you
- Advise me of pitfalls ahead



Personalization

Using individualized attention to drive emotional connection

Understanding a customer's individual circumstances is key to human relationships. We remember things that are personally meaningful to us and this, more than any other factor, influences future behavior.

Personalization involves demonstrating that you understand the customer's specific needs and circumstances and will adapt the experience accordingly. Use of name, knowledge of preferences and past interactions all add up to an experience that feels personal and more human. It makes the customer feel important and valued and begins to build emotional connections.

The leaders in our research have responded to Covid-19 by recognizing the personal circumstances of customers, front line health workers who need special access to goods and services, the elderly or vulnerable who require additional support and assistance, and the need to help those who are working from home. Experiences that are tuned to personal circumstances are now critical and expected.

During the crisis, customers described the feeling of being in an infinite present, unable to see beyond tomorrow. Our CX leaders have been focused on ensuring that, as far as possible, customers can take control over their lives by providing experiences that are more strongly tailored to their circumstances, that make them feel valued and important and put them back in control.

Golden rules

- Greet me
- Show me you know me
- Recognize our history together
- Make me competent
- Surprise me with something relevant
- Understand my needs and circumstances



Empathy

Achieving an understanding of the customer's circumstances to drive deep rapport

Empathy is the art of understanding your customers, putting yourself in their shoes and showing them that you are changing what you do because of that understanding.

It is time for all firms to show that they care, that the safety and wellbeing of their employees and customers is their prime concern. Corporate kindness are two words not usually put together, but they are now fundamental to how a company operates from within.

Our CX leaders have embedded empathy, creating behaviors to establish strong relationships with their customers. To an extent, this has been facilitated by lockdown. Companies and their leaders have all shared this experience and reacted accordingly.

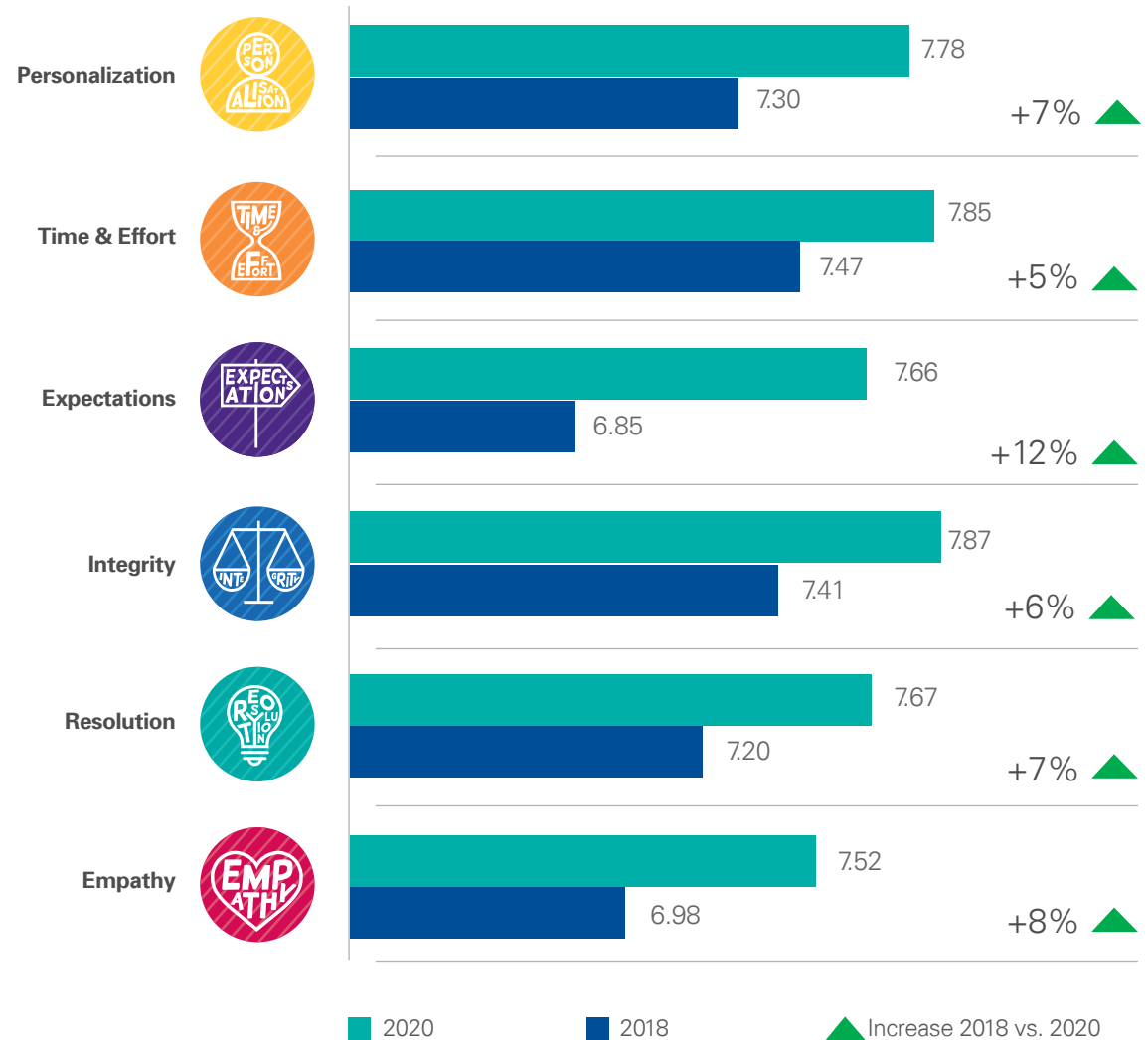
Golden rules

- Invest time to listen to me
- Provide the right emotional response
- Share your similar experiences
- Treat me as your priority
- Take ownership of my issue
- Show you care

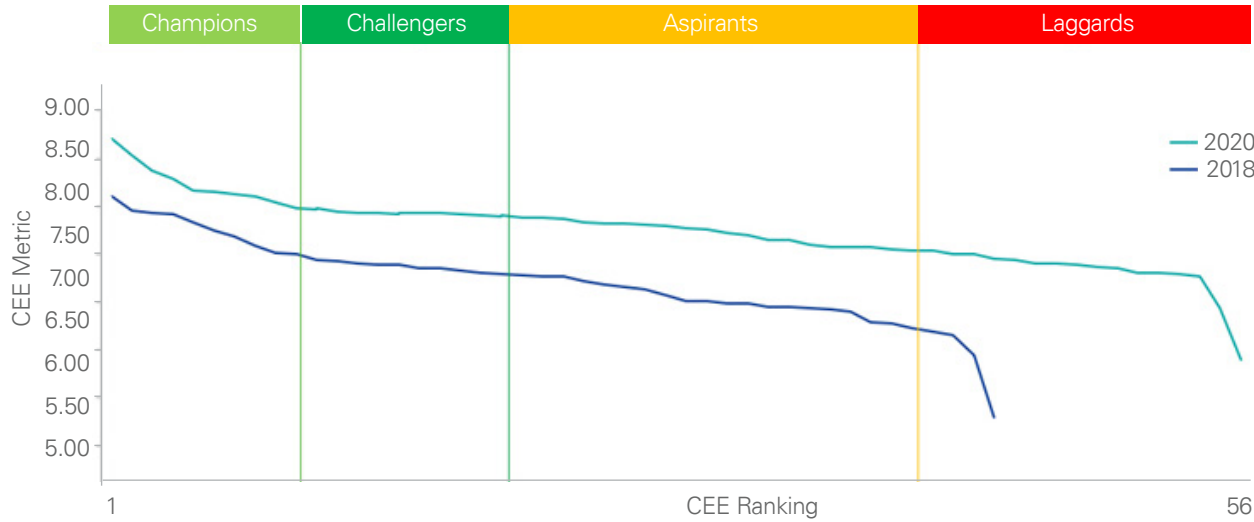
Six Pillar performance

There has been a significant increase in performance across The Six Pillars in this year's research, with Expectations seeing the greatest improvement (12% average increase across all brands). These pillars represent the key elements of customer interaction for brands during Covid-19, setting new standards in an unprecedented situation.

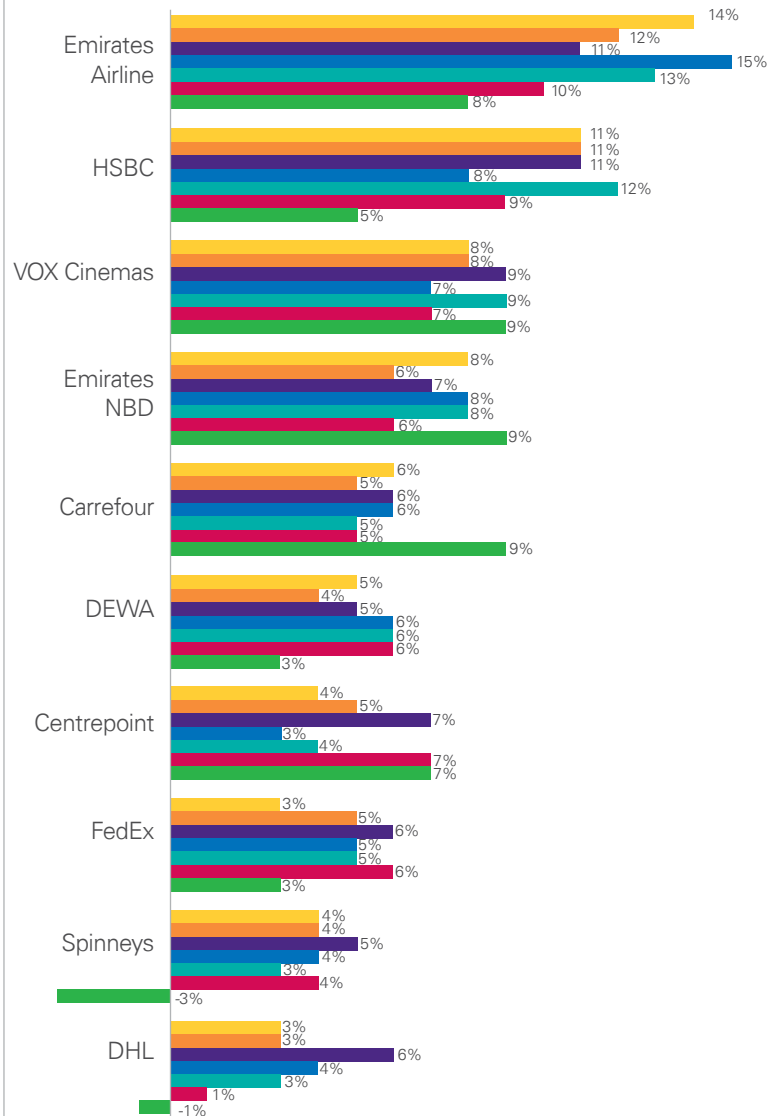
Overall average pillar scores



The distribution curve showing the score of each of the 56 ranked brands from highest to lowest scoring demonstrates that all firms made a year-on-year improvement. The curve has flattened because the lower ranked firms have improved the most.



Top 10 brands pillar scores vs. UAE market average



Personalization



Time & Effort



Expectations



Integrity



Resolution

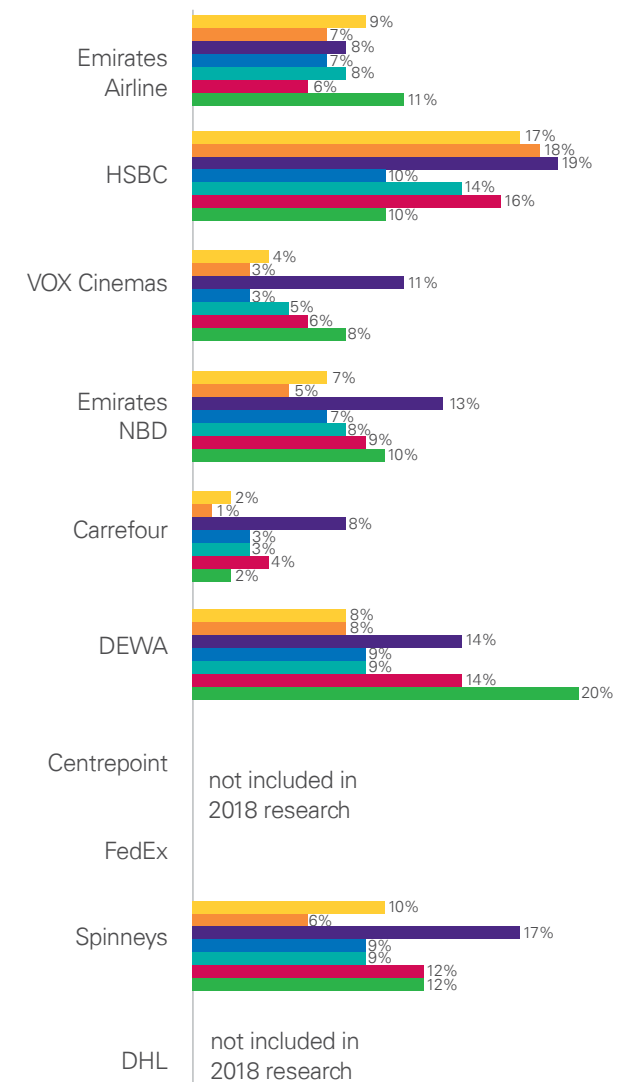


Empathy



Value

Top 10 brands Six Pillar performance 2018 vs. 2020



Disclaimer: Mentions of individual companies should not be interpreted as an endorsement by KPMG International or its member firms.



UAE top 10 performers

Our research of published sources for each of the top 10 brands has identified a number of common contributors to their success:



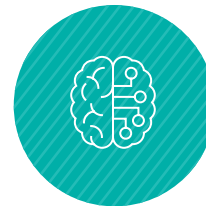
Continuous innovation driven improvement



A desire to deliver the best customer experience in their field



Thorough knowledge of their customers, they uncover hidden needs



By being adaptable and responsive they are often first to market with game changing innovations

Emirates Airline (Travel & Hotels)

Emirates, one of the world's largest international airlines, concluded last year with a series of product, network, and customer experience initiatives, all cementing its position as the leader in customer experience per this survey - not just across the UAE, but many of the destinations it serves.

In common with every airline around the world, Emirates' operations were severely affected by Covid-19 but it took the following measures: simplifying its waivers and refunds policy with one unified approach worldwide; easing concerns about pre-booked summer travel by extending the waiver policy to tickets issued before 31 May 2020 and for travel before 31 August 2020; and offered three options:

- *Keep the ticket for 760 days*
- *Exchange ticket for travel vouchers valid for up to two years*
- *Full refunds on unused vouchers or tickets^{iv}*

In addition, Emirates was the first airline to offer its passengers free Covid-19 illness insurance.^v It was also one of the first organizations globally to institutionalize customer journey mapping. It focused on removing frustrations and irritations for customers across all stages of their travel journey. President Sir Tim Clarke states that despite several structural issues in the airline industry, Emirates has "stayed focused on delivering our "fly better" promise to customers through enhancing our product and service proposition at every touchpoint." Over the past twelve months it has:

- *Continued to reduce the average age of its aircraft*
- *Expanded customer choice, connectivity and convenience*
- *Built on its promise of being the "Netflix of the skies," with over 4,500 channels on ICE*
- *Launched biometric boarding and facial recognition technology at its departure gates^{vi}*

For some individuals, a flight on one of their aircraft is an event-based experience – it could be a once-in-a-lifetime journey to a particular destination, or it could mark the beginning of a honeymoon for a pair of newlyweds. Emirates seeks to embrace big data in order to create a customer experience that can be tailored to the individual, facilitating such innovations as personalized music and film playlists so that customers can enjoy their favorite forms of entertainment once airborne.^{vii}



HSBC (Financial Services)

HSBC rose 13 places to number 2 in our index. HSBC has focused on accelerating the digitization of its customer service capabilities with the goal of delivering a simple, convenient, fast and secure banking experience.

This includes extending self-serve access and adding enhanced functionality such as biometrics. Blending customer touch points with intelligent technology allows HSBC UAE to focus on the customer's banking experience.

This is evident in its latest innovation, designed to deliver an improved digital banking experience with a Customer Service Unit (CSU) in Mirdif City Centre. The CSU has undergone a digital upgrade to provide a mix of technology-enhanced and in-person advisory services.^{viii}

The new all-digital experience contributes to a paper-free environment. Service staff are equipped with customized smart watches to alert them when a customer needs help and requests are activated by SMS. By using tablets and touchscreens to fill out digital e-forms, customers can open a new account and apply for a credit card in real time. Any signatures required are recorded digitally on tablets.

Where customers have financial advisory and wealth needs, a relationship manager can be contacted via video conference and, using self-serve kiosks, customers can emboss and print their HSBC debit and credit cards, and checkbooks in the branch.^{ix}

HSBC UAE also extended the use of Jade, its high net worth account, to the UAE, recognizing the particular needs of this customer segment.

A dedicated relationship director helps Jade clients create their own wealth strategy, including access to preferential investment solutions. In addition, the HSBC Jade concierge service offers access to a range of bespoke luxury experiences.^x





VOX Cinemas (Entertainment & Leisure)

VOX Cinemas won 'Global Achievement in Exhibition' award at CinemaCon in 2017 and has won numerous awards and accolades throughout the year.

VOX Cinemas is the cinema arm of Majid Al Futtaim, the leading shopping mall, communities, retail and leisure pioneer across the Middle East, Africa and Asia, and is the Middle East's most innovative and customer-focused exhibitor. With 536 screens across more than 30 locations in eight markets, it is also the Middle East's largest and most rapidly growing exhibitor.

Customer experience is a key pillar at Majid Al Futtaim and, VOX Cinemas is continuously innovating and investing in new concepts to ensure that guests enjoy a world-class and immersive experience. It was the first cinema in the region to introduce IMAX with Laser, 4DX, a multisensory movie-watching concept, KIDS, a unique cinema concept for little movie fans and THEATRE and GOLD, luxury cinema experiences that combines fine food and film. VOX Cinemas has also introduced Distraction-Free Screenings and OUTDOOR open-air cinema, as part of its ongoing commitment to diversify its offering in line with guest feedback and emerging trends.

In response to Covid-19, and while cinemas across the region were closed, innovation remained at the heart of VOX Cinemas' agenda. Following insights from guests who still wanted to watch movies on the big screen, VOX Cinemas launched the VOX Cinemas Drive-In, under the Ski Slope at Mall of The Emirates. VOX Cinemas also carefully reviewed the end-to-end experience to incorporate health and safety measures as well as launching a contactless experience for customers. In the wake of Covid-19, VOX Cinemas also introduced Family & Friends Private Cinema to offer cinema lovers a safe out of home entertainment experience in the company of loved ones. It has since been rolled out across various markets due to its popularity.

Listening to guests is a core value at Majid Al Futtaim and VOX Cinemas receives daily feedback from guests through the Voice of the Customer (VoC) programme, which asks guests to rate their visit. The insights are then aggregated and used across the business to define the strategy and continuously identify areas of improvement to ensure complete customer satisfaction.

It was recently awarded ComScore's Highest Grossing Exhibitor of the Year in the Middle East at the 2020 META Cinema Forum for the second consecutive year and Best Cinema Experience at the 2020 MENALAC Awards for the second year running.^{xi}

Emirates NBD (Financial Services)

Emirates NBD's overall vision statement: "Every day we make our customers' lives simpler by providing solutions that help them fulfil their financial aspirations", supported by the core values of 'Customer Focus' and 'Service Excellence'. A detailed service charter sets out how customer service is to be delivered.^{xvi}

In recent years, the bank has made investments in customer service focusing on both cultural re-engineering programs for employees, as well as adopting technology-driven solutions to simplify customer engagement points.^{xvii}

The bank has focused on accelerating its digital capabilities including artificial intelligence and machine learning. This has led to simplified customer processes, enabling customers, for example, to open a new account in minutes or the launch of an interactive teller machine which allows the customer to complete most transactions without the need of visiting a branch. Emirates NBD is the first bank in the region to introduce this service and there are plans to expand the network over the year.^{xviii}

Customer feedback is reviewed and if required, processes and policies may be revised to make them more customer friendly. The research results help benchmark services against defined goals in order to raise service standards.^{xix}

The bank addresses the needs of the emerging Generation Z by using gamification techniques, introducing games such as Super teller and Cash IT. The bank's customer service academy offers two day-long training programs for all staff to ensure they understand their TOP Service Model (Trust, Ownership and Personal Touch.) During 2018, more than 6,000 staff members completed the program.^{xxi}

// We undertake comprehensive testing, research and trialing to make sure that we are meeting individual customers' needs. Simultaneously, we focus on understanding and anticipating products and solutions needed by customers, based on their profiles and lifestyles. An example is remittances, which is an important banking requirement for the large expatriate customer base in the UAE. Our teams have analyzed and addressed pain points in the customer journey to create a digital remittance platform that allows customers to send money home in less than 60 seconds."

Vikram Krishna

Executive Vice President
Head of Group Marketing & Customer Experience



Carrefour (Grocery Retail)

Carrefour is committed to enabling access to fresh, organic and local foods to communities. Their approach includes transforming their existing business model and shifting towards a system that benefits stakeholders - customers, partners, producers, public authorities and charitable organizations.^{lxii}

Carrefour was launched in the UAE in 1995. Today, Carrefour operates 31 hypermarkets and 80 supermarkets, employing more than 10,000 colleagues across the emirates.^{xxii}

Carrefour operates different store formats, as well as multiple online offerings to meet the growing needs of its diverse customer base. In line with the brand's commitment to provide "the widest range of quality products and value for money", Carrefour offers a choice of "more than 100,000 food and non-food products".^{xxiii}

In response to Covid-19, Carrefour launched Click and Collect to address increased demand for online shopping. The new service allows shoppers to fill their online grocery baskets, place an order, select the store they wish to pick up their items from and a timeslot. Groceries will be packaged, and where necessary refrigerated, until customers pick up their orders from participating Click and Collect stores.

Prompted by Covid-19, Carrefour is also looking to the future, as retailing moves onto platforms replicating the traditional shopping model. Grocery retail and lifestyle brands are brought together in one location by building 'an ecosystem of suppliers and partners to meet a wider range of customer needs in a single place'. The marketplace on carrefouruae.com currently lists more than "250,000 products and is reaching over 1,300 average daily orders".^{xxiv}

Carrefour recently unveiled Mobimart, the region's first grocery bus, bringing shopping to the doorsteps of underserved neighborhoods and communities across Dubai, six days a week.

"Carrefour Mobimart offers customers an extensive variety of daily groceries and fresh food, including a selection of organic produce, frozen food, snacks, beverages and light household items". The bus visits various communities along its assigned route, with timed stops.^{xxv}





DEWA (Utility)

DEWA launched Digital DEWA as its digital arm, making it the world's first digital utility to use autonomous systems for renewable energy and storage, and has expanded its AI adoption, and the provision of digital services.

The Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA) believes 'future challenges require a radical transformation that enables it to keep pace with the rapid developments all around the world'. DEWA started its AI journey in 2017 and has developed a road map for related techniques. It has introduced services and initiatives that use AI to enhance and add value to the customer, employee and stakeholder experiences.

DEWA launched Future Customer Happiness Centres in late 2017. It is one of the first organizations to launch this kind of center, providing digital services through smart apps, AI and robots.^{xxvi}

These technologies include smart, self-service platforms that help customers complete their transactions without paper. Rammas, the virtual employee, and Tayseer, the smart collection platform, enable customers to pay bills through smart apps; receive remote support through a live chat with a robot; and a future services section to engage customers in shaping and developing DEWA's services.

Rammas is a virtual employee who learns and understands customers' needs based on their enquiries, while analyzing queries based on available data. Since its launch in the first quarter of 2017, Rammas has responded to over two million requests through various channels. DEWA recently added an instant voice chat feature to Rammas in both Arabic and English.^{xxvii}

Digital DEWA is based on four pillars: the launch of solar technologies; the operation of a renewable energy network using innovative energy storage technologies; the expansion of integrated AI solutions; making Dubai the first city to provide electricity and water services using AI technologies; and Moro, DEWA's smart data center and data hub platform.^{xxviii}

Centrepont Stores (Non-grocery Retail)

Globally, retailers are seeking to integrate online and offline shopping experiences. For some, this is a transfer of the physical experience online. For others, digital is being used to drive the instore experience. Centrepont is seeking to do both, using technology in a true omni-channel way.

Centrepont is a leading family shopping destination in the region, with a range of fashion, beauty, kids and footwear products through its in-house brands of Splash, Lifestyle, Babyshop and SHOEMART.

Understanding its customers and their needs is a key driver. It has responded to Covid-19 by conducting research to more deeply understanding parental concerns in sending their children back to school. Based on findings, the business has developed back to school packs that contain health and hygiene products.^{xxix}

Its first “Store of the Future” was launched at Ibn Battuta Mall in Dubai, bringing together both the online and offline worlds. Spanning 42,384 sq. ft, the launch of the new store marked a “significant step forward” in the company’s customer-centric omni-channel strategy. The latest store brings the Centrepont brand to the forefront, positioning it as a host that caters to its shoppers while enhancing and elevating the brands. Promoting cross-shopping was a key objective with the new store, in order to encourage people to explore more brands than they usually would.

The store has open walkways with digital interfaces and LED screens, and has been designed with customer convenience at its heart.^{xxx}

New features include mobile cashiers to enable faster and easier checkouts and a mother and baby room. The brand has also introduced personal stylists on-call in the store to assist shoppers.^{xxxi}

Other innovations include e-commerce platforms, including click and collect, online returns and cancellations and easier navigation on iOS and Android apps. Combined, they represent Centrepont’s efforts to further improve its e-commerce and omni-channel experience and effectively bridge the gap between online and offline shopping.



FedEx (Logistics)

FedEx believes that its competitive differentiator lies in the quality of its people. It is their commitment to the customer that helps enhance customer experience.^{xxxii}

Their Dubai hub commenced operations in 1989, acting as a regional hub for the Middle East, Indian Subcontinent and Africa. This hub serves weekly FedEx Express flights that connect to and from airports in France, India and Hong Kong. FedEx connects directly to locations in the region using commercial line-haul and trucking routes. It provides round-the-clock connectivity between neighboring countries and FedEx operations worldwide.^{xxxiii}

FedEx continues to enhance its customer experience, with the goal of building brand loyalty. They believe that FedEx employees should have the skill, knowledge and display the right behavior to exceed customers' expectations. This is reflected in the training and development given to all employees and measured via a number of customer research programs.





Spinneys (Grocery Retail)

This grocery retailer is rapidly expanding its e-commerce operations and its delivery network to offer an omni-channel experience.

Spinneys Dubai operates 50 Spinney's supermarkets and eight Waitrose stores. Spinneys works to keep pace with the changes in eating trends by offering new products from around the world. Food standards, safety and freshness have always been at the forefront of the company's ethos.^{xxxvi}

Due to Covid-19, the demand for home grocery deliveries has accelerated dramatically. Spinneys launched a new e-commerce delivery service to offer customers an efficient, convenient and safe way to shop for their groceries. Spinneys anticipates demand for online grocery will continue to gather pace, and it is committed to delivering the best omni-channel customer experience.^{xxxvii}

It is also dedicated to the health and wellbeing of its customers and the environment, the company's mantra 'Eat Well, Live Well' is reflected in its product offering and the implementation of its sustainability program 'Let's Do Better Together'. With growing demand from conscious consumers for supermarkets to provide a broader variety of food products, from natural ingredients to organic and free-from products, Spinneys seeks to ensure its customers' needs are met.

In the UAE, sales of organic products constitute 10% of total volume, which is much higher than in Europe where the average is 5%. The country is also committed to the war against plastic.

The UAE contains a wide spectrum of consumers among its 10 million population, and Spinneys has a particularly strong European, Emirati and Asian customer base.^{xxxviii}

“Environmental and social practices have been important factors for many of our customers for a long time. The pandemic has increased their importance. As a result we have moved to make this an even greater priority for the company and actively shortened the time frames to implement a number of key initiatives that focus on this, such as the Spinneys Local Business Incubator, Spinneys local farmers club, and our introduction of fully recyclable paper packaging in a number of our departments as well as in our checkouts.”

Paresh Buch
Deputy CEO
Spinneys Dubai LLC



DHL (Logistics)

For DHL, service leadership underpins their business model – DHL believes it is the key driver of long-term customer loyalty, which in turn drives growth and profitability. This inspires an “Insanely Customer Centric Culture” where understanding the customer’s experience, needs and requirements drives the delivery of the promise “Excellence Simply Delivered”.^{xxxix}

DHL's vision is to be “the employer of choice, investor of choice and provider of choice.” They state that this is their motto, work ethic and commitment to customers and stakeholders across the world. Every function and operating unit seek to fulfil this strategy and strive towards keeping the customer the center of attention. They believe that being customer-centric in everything they do ultimately results in customer loyalty and contentment, which drives growth and profitability.

DHL offers several types of online customer service support, from tracking services and an e-commerce helpdesk, to an online feedback platform called ‘Straight to the Top,’ whereby customers that have any concerns, complaints or compliments can write directly to the senior management team.

In addition to NPS, DHL takes steps to gather large amounts of data on the various touch points to understand how processes are performing and benchmark them for further improvement, even if there are no issues that need to be addressed.

Highest Riser: ADWEA

The purpose of the CEE Top 100 index is to identify the exemplars who are outstanding at customer experience that we might learn from. We are also interested in companies that make significant progress. In particular, how they have changed and the methods they have used to improve the quality of the customer experience.

The year we saw some significant risers in our index versus 2018. HSBC rose 13 places, Spinneys, 12 places and DEWA seven places. The company that moved the most significant number of places was ADEWA (Abu Dhabi Water and Electricity Authority) – up 20 places, to number 15.

Large moves such as this often seem to occur overnight. However, the reality is different – it often takes years of effort before the experience has improved so significantly that customers notice.

And so it is with ADWEA, who set the target of revolutionizing their customer experience by 2020. ADWEA's vision of aligning itself to world class utilities called for a formal review of how technology could help. This had implications in many areas of IT, including the vision, strategy, roadmap and the delivery IT service provision model.

Work started in 2015, with a fundamental structural review of the organization's IT infrastructure and the generation of a five-year development roadmap to integrate IT systems with operational technology (OT) – water and electricity – network systems. In 2020, a single integrated network provides efficient and personalized experiences for its customers.^{xiii}





Covid-19 examples of excellence

Businesses which already invested in CSR were able to respond more effectively to new challenges created by Covid-19. This was possible because they focused on the right thing to do rather than simply introducing initiatives designed to improve their reputation.

Businesses in Dubai investing in corporate social responsibility (CSR) were able to respond more effectively to new challenges created by the Covid-19 pandemic, according to a survey from Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Centre for Responsible Business.^{xlvi}

The survey, conducted in May and June 2020, revealed that the Dubai businesses community quickly responded during the early stages of the Covid-19 outbreak by safeguarding employee health, safety and well-being and putting processes in place to ensure business continuity.

The following are just some of the examples of excellence demonstrated by the UAE business community during the pandemic:



Leading banks such as **Emirates NBD, Dubai Islamic Bank, Mashreq Bank, Emirates Islamic and Commercial Bank of Dubai** announced relief measures for their individual and corporate customers to deal with the impact of the outbreak.



The emirates of Dubai and Abu Dhabi also implemented a number of measures to counter the economic impact of Covid-19. These actions aimed to reduce the cost of doing business and simplifying procedures, especially in the commercial, retail, external trade, tourism, and energy sectors.



Etihad Airways amplified its CSR initiatives to support those affected by Covid-19. In an effort to provide additional safety for medical staff interacting with patients, the **Etihad Airways Medical Centre (EAMC)** collaborated with Etihad Engineering to develop personal protective equipment (PPE) that would add an additional layer of protection for healthcare professionals working in medical centers across the UAE. For example, face shields were designed and manufactured using 3D printing technology.^{xlvii}



Food delivery platform **Talabat** announced contactless delivery to safeguard its customers and prevent the spread of the virus.



Majid Al Futtaim-owned **Carrefour** has seen a spike in online grocery orders, which prompted the company to transform many of its supermarkets and hypermarkets into fulfillment centers to cope with the demand. Majid Al Futtaim is also reskilling staff by redeploying workers from cinemas and other entertainment destinations to work in supermarkets.



Al Futtaim Group has said it will make substantial contributions to ease the financial burden of its retail tenants by offering a fund of AED 100 million to help affected retail businesses as a result of the slowdown.

A man with short dark hair and a beard, wearing a blue denim shirt, is sitting at a wooden desk. He is smiling and looking down at a white mug he is holding with both hands. In front of him is a laptop, and to his left are some papers and a blue pen. The background is a blurred office or home workspace with shelves and a window. A white rectangular box with a diagonal line pattern is overlaid on the image, containing the text "Building the Connected Enterprise".

Building the Connected Enterprise

Covid-19 has changed the rules. From a new economic and environmental reality, a New Customer has emerged – one whose behavior and values have changed immeasurably in a short period of time. Companies need to assess customers' change in expectations in terms of their own capability to respond and determine how their enterprise model needs to adapt.

In looking at how organizations around the world are responding to the challenges of Covid-19, we identified two different mindsets governing the responsive postures of businesses: Type A and Type B.



Type A businesses put everything on the table. They are thinking through how to rebuild their companies from the ground up, to be more resilient, more agile and more responsive to changing customer requirements. Type A businesses plan for where the customer is going to be post crisis and rely on a working assumption that 'things will never be the same again'. Type A organizations will use this crisis as a means of reconceiving and reinventing their business to accelerate transformation programs and embrace new ways of working permanently.



Type B businesses, by contrast, expect the world to return to the previous normal. These businesses are shaped by the prevailing belief that the customer will revert to pre-Covid-19 behaviors. The working assumption is that 'the world will return to where it was' and this will shape and define the mental model of the leadership team.

Depending on the industry and company, either type may be valid. However, for many companies caught in a strait jacket of silos and departments, a Type A mindset is the only solution.



The connected organization: key capabilities

Our research shows that there are eight key capabilities that companies will need to sustain an effective and competitive response – not just to the challenges of Covid-19, but also the challenges of future competition.



Insight driven

It is no longer enough to have a passing understanding of customer needs. All organizations will require a deep understanding of a customer's life and be able to translate that understanding into decision making, prioritization and experience design.

Organizations need to:



Unify data and analytics capability to generate rapid insights



Orchestrate disparate data sources intelligently and securely in a self-service and automated manner



Leverage data platforms such as data lakes, machine learning and other analytical techniques



Drive proactive enterprise performance management



Innovative

A deep understanding of the customer's life drives innovation. A problem-solving mindset is required which, when coupled with a strong sense of purpose provides focus, and a test and learn mindset enables continual refinement.

Organizations need to:



Establish redefined business models, products and services



Create newly tailored customer value propositions and routes to market



Underpin innovation by digital means with flexible pricing mechanisms and consumption-based models



Experience centric

The experience must be intentional, not the default outcome of multiple internal processes. It is how the brand promise is delivered at each touchpoint and how the brand is made real for customers every time they interact, such that a strong relationship is formed.

Organizations need to:



Iterate experiential designs quickly and adapt to market feedback



Action pragmatic design thinking approaches



Gauge the true impact of experience designs and execution using sophisticated customer and market sensing solutions



Seamless

With the shift from physical to digital, organizations will need frictionless end-to-end customer interactions, with safe, secure payment options.

Organizations need to:



Accelerate the shift to optimal delivery channels



Enable the business to generate, convert and service demand under evolving conditions



Harness emerging channels and integrate them with existing operations



Lead with cyber security



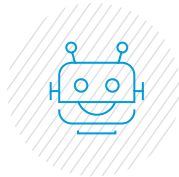
Responsive

Covid-19 has demonstrated the need for organizational flexibility and responsiveness as companies pivot to maintain and service through supply chains. The last mile has come to the fore and it is the end-to-end delivery of the experience that drives Advocacy and Loyalty.

Organizations need to:



Establish agile, resilient and responsive supply chains and operations



Leverage advanced data and AI tools, providing real time and predictive insights



Enable seamless processes and effortless decision making across the end-to-end supply or value chain



Incorporate micro supply chains and supplier diversification for protection and flexibility



Be supplier centric with procurement to better integrate suppliers across tiered procurement efforts



Empowered

Employees underpin great customer experiences. Leaders, employees and the working culture are to be aligned through a brand purpose and a set of values that both inspires and shapes behaviors. Employees need to be able to make the judgements and decisions that customers expect at a point of interaction.

Organizations need to:



Thrive (not just survive) with new workforce models, including working from anywhere



Create collaboration platforms for virtual workspaces when face to face isn't practical or possible



Support with a culture which values and recognizes contribution based on accomplishments and collaboration versus hours worked



Digitally enabled

A technology architecture that is built around the customer and is responsive to their needs and preferences is critical. Indeed, it must be supported by an agile mindset so new technologies and new products and services can be implemented rapidly.

Organizations need to:



Access the underlying architecture and digital infrastructure to run at pace in a hyper-connected world



Rewrite how IT functions within the business, in order to be responsive and experience-centric



Deploy a digitally native architecture grounded in modern infrastructure and applications



Be supported by reimagined service delivery models backed up by an engineering mindset



Integrated

The ability to identify and leverage synergies with third parties and external ecosystems is increasingly important as it is not always feasible for a company to do everything itself. The move to platforms is driving wider partnerships to satisfy related and often interconnected customer needs.

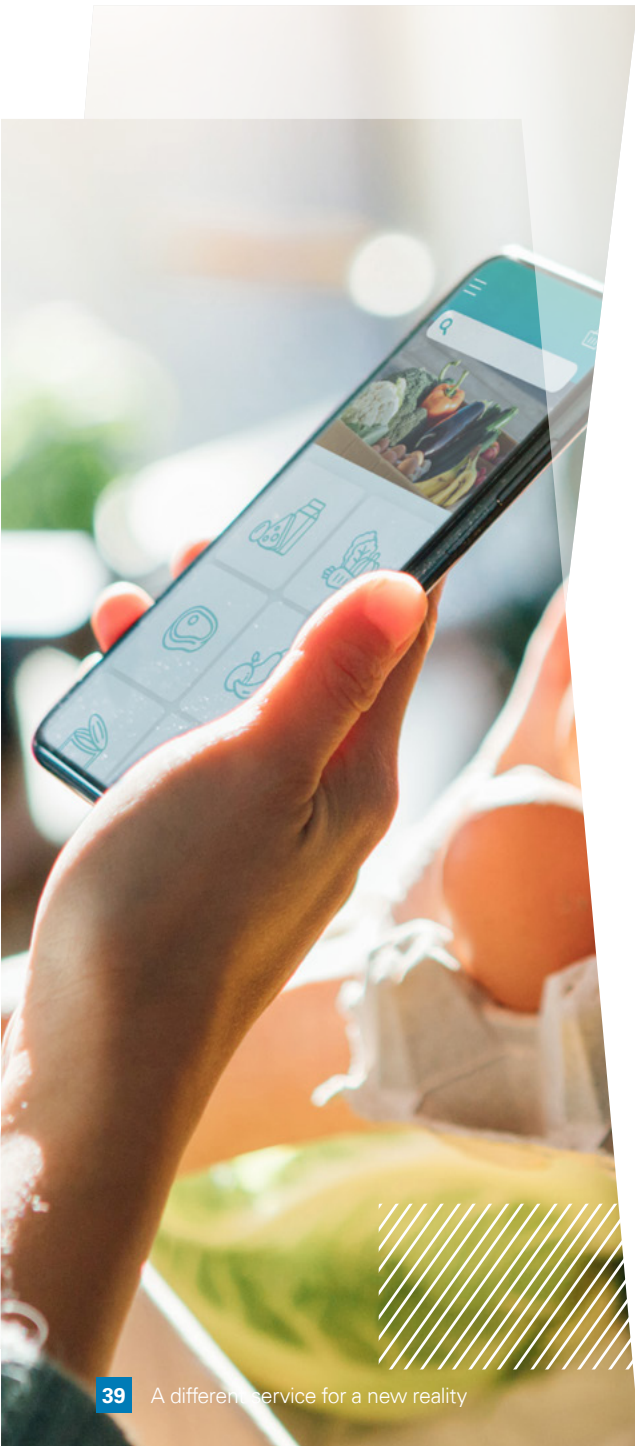
Organizations need to:



Establish a "shock proof" ecosystem of partners who understand and enable the power of collaboration and communications



Jointly execute against a clear set of business outcomes broader than service level agreements and cost, but inclusive of risk mitigation, execution, flexibility and trust



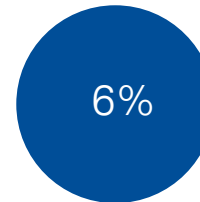
Sector considerations:

In order to compete in the coming months and years, organizations must adapt to the New Customer more rapidly than ever before. This means being extremely clear on what they need to offer – defined as a Six Pillar Experience – in order to build an enterprise that is lean, digital and fit-for-purpose. Clearly this is not a one-size-fits-all model: there are important considerations at a sector level.

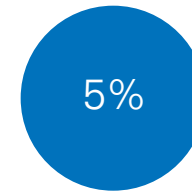


Retail

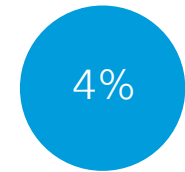
Top three performers versus market average:



Carrefour



Centrepont



Spinneys

	New Customer	The Six Pillar experience	The Connected Enterprise
Grocery Retail: CEE score: same as market average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Online and delivery expansion – Personal space – social distancing continues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Touchless/contactless – Localness, sense of community – Integrity and Empathy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ESG strategy – Seamless ecommerce – Responsive operations and supply chain
Non-Grocery Retail CEE score: -1% vs market average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Sustainability and the environment 		

The UAE is a highly developed market, with hypermarkets and supermarkets dominating the retail space. Leaders in the sector are all significant players and are undergoing a step-change in nearly every aspect of their businesses. Customers are shifting, technology is evolving, new competitors are entering the market. Future success in the grocery sector is about putting the customer first, getting all the basics right, embracing new technologies to achieve this and creating more innovative and rewarding instore experiences.

Crises such as Covid-19 have a habit of accelerating macro trends. This is particularly true of the retail sector. Where social distancing and a focus on customer and employee health and safety have driven new customer behaviors and fundamentally changed the instore experience.

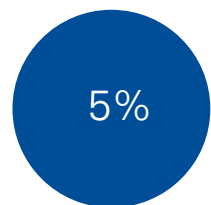
Digital ordering, home delivery and curb side pickup have now embedded buying behavior across demographics. Grocery outlets have rapidly innovated in response, accelerating e-commerce and using creative ways to effect home delivery, with larger supermarket chains recruiting new staff to meet the increase in demand. Non-grocery retailers have seen their business move online as customers become increasingly confident ordering non-traditional items on the internet.

Those that had an omni-channel mindset have made this journey quickly. Others, who see digital and physical stores as separate channels, now face diminishing numbers of physical customers and structural change in the balance of their business.

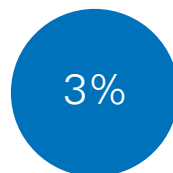


Logistics

Top three performers versus market average:



FedEx



DHL



0%

Emirates Post Group

	New Customer	The Six Pillar experience	The Connected Enterprise
Logistics CEE score: same as market average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Trust and integrity of delivery firms – Rapid growth in online purchasing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Time & Effort: track and trace sophistication – Next day delivery is the standard – Expansion from increases in online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Responsive operations and supply chain – New processes and simplified procedures for delivery – Scalable digital infrastructure, automation and robotics

Prior to the pandemic, according to the Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority, the logistics sector in the country was expected to contribute 8% to the UAE economy by 2021, up from 5.4%.^{xlviii} It is very likely this figure will now have to be revised upwards.

During the early stages of the pandemic, the business-to-business logistics market almost came to a standstill. Impact was significant, as supply chains were seriously disrupted and new regulations rapidly introduced.^{xlix}

Meanwhile, the business-to-consumer market has grown dramatically, as people in lockdown moved online to make their purchases. Not only did volumes grow, the profile of goods being shipped changed, with more consumers ordering even the largest purchases online. Furniture, fashion and even cars are now being purchased over the internet. In response, the leading logistics companies in our index have fast-tracked their growth and development strategies, quickly expanding to seven days a week and making significant investments in e-commerce, people and assets to cope with demand.

They have also responded to the challenge of making deliveries safer for employees and customers. Contactless last-mile delivery solutions have been crucial to the industry's Covid-19 response. Signatures are no longer required as photographs provide proof of delivery.

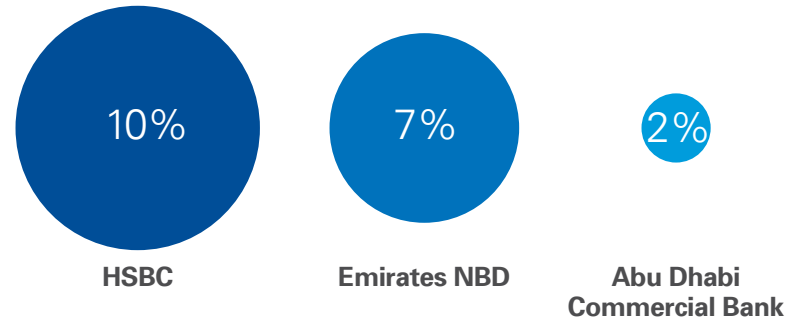
In fact, across every part of the logistics landscape, companies have realized they need to optimize their operations, with data and technologies as critical enablers. Gaining greater visibility across the supply chain is key, by collecting and sharing data to track packages in real time from point of origin to destination. New data sources are making this possible. Tracking data can come from logistics companies' operational and planning systems, from sensors in warehouses, on pallets in transit, and from telematics in trucks and on ships. All provide a real time view of supply chain progress.





Financial Services

Top three performers
versus market average:



	New Customer	The Six Pillar experience	The Connected Enterprise
Financial Services CEE score: same as market average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Focus on Value – Savings, re-establishing financial security – Desire for control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Want multi-functional online capabilities – Resolution and Personalization: solving customer life problems – Role of branch versus digital technologies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Insight driven – Innovative products and services – Experience centricity by design

There are many banks in the UAE, but it is the larger banks that are setting a high benchmark for customer experience.

Before the pandemic, the 2020s were being framed as the decade for digital bank transformation. Such changes reflected a growing desire for innovations including seamless, hyper-personalized user experiences.

This shift also reflected a practical need for more efficient operations as well as increasing pressure for banks to boost their return on capital and decrease cost-income ratios. Meanwhile, systems such as open banking (allowing third-party applications access to bank accounts) is a potential disruption to the European and US industry and is likely to extend globally in the near future. This may split the value chain into distribution and manufacturing and increase the likelihood of competition from new entrants, particularly from big technology firms. For customers, it will usher in a new era of integrated, more seamless, financial services.ⁱⁱ

Covid-19 is accelerating the demand for easier, more convenient, added value banking. It has also changed consumers' behaviors, pushing them to consider new tools and technologies. As customers become "digital first" across age groups, the traditional banking model of separate (and often unintegrated) channels comes into question.ⁱⁱⁱ

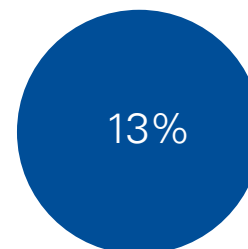
The challenge today comes from a variety of digital assets that do not sit on the balance sheet of banks: cryptocurrencies, electronic wallets, stablecoins, or balances with a telecom or a retail provider. New entrants have focused on payment technologies. The convenience of payments they provide, as well as the connection to other parts of the growing digital life of consumers and business alike, will all need to be accelerated.





Travel & Hotels

Top three performers
versus market average:



Emirates Airline



Etihad Airways



Careem

	New Customer	The Six Pillar experience	The Connected Enterprise
Travel & Hotels CEE score: same as market average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Insecurities around travel – Geographic constraints – Focus on air quality and pathogens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Integrity and Empathy: long term recovery – Covid-19 protections and safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Managing catastrophic impact – Innovative products and services – Partner and alliance eco-system

Expecting a lengthy recovery period, airlines are dealing with a structural change in air travel economics. The costs of idle aircraft run high.ⁱⁱⁱ Full-service airlines depend on the business traveler to make their economics work and low-cost airlines depend on utilization and passenger density. Both are under threat.

The full-service airlines that have historically led the index pride themselves on providing a high touch, personal service. This is, however, the antithesis of a Covid-19 world where limiting touchpoints and reducing interaction between passengers and crew is a vital element of minimizing the opportunities for the virus to spread. It also requires removal of the luxury symbols that attract passengers to airlines such as high-quality amenity kits, noise cancelling headphones, pyjamas and gourmet meals which have been replaced with snack packs and personal safety kits.^{liv}

Many hotel groups have acted with integrity and social conscience during the epidemic, providing beds for key

workers, ensuring that the homeless and vulnerable had shelter and providing meals and support where it was needed.^{lv}

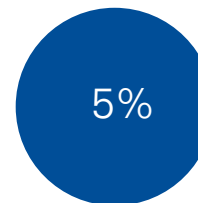
The pandemic has, however, left the hotel sector in a difficult state as travel (both business and leisure) is curtailed for the foreseeable future.

In future, the nature of the hotel experience will likely change. For luxury hotels, where staff interaction is critical to the experience, this will be more difficult as customers seek to minimize staff touchpoints. Luxury amenities will need to be removed for sanitary reasons. Rooms will be decluttered as stationery items such as pens, notepads and in-room menus are removed from rooms and replaced with digital alternatives or provided solely upon request. Leisure hotels may suffer from restrictions, with second and third waves driving impromptu lockdowns and movement limitations.

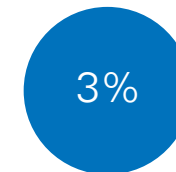


Utilities

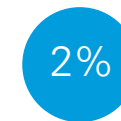
Top three performers
versus market average:



DEWA



ADWEA



FEWA

	New Customer	The Six Pillar experience	The Connected Enterprise
Utilities CEE score: +3% vs market average	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Search for Value– The desire for environmental and societal purpose from providers– The green economy - heightened awareness of decarbonization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Empathy: help with my home haven, vulnerability– Resolution: solve my problems with home appliances– Time & Effort: service responsiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Agile at scale– Innovative products and services– Partner and alliance ecosystem

Utilities in the UAE have been going through a substantive restructuring as growth in prosumers, electric vehicles, zero net energy buildings, micro-grids, the Internet of Things and connected homes put the traditional utility business under significant pressure. Decarbonization, decentralization, digitization and sector convergence will radically change the fundamentals of the industry.^{lvii}

Utilities around the world are used to dealing with a captive customer base with limited alternatives, long-term capital investment and relatively stable regulatory contexts.

However, customer expectations are rising rapidly as forces outside the sector are having an impact. Customers are

increasingly expecting a similar level of service from utilities providers which they receive from other service industries like telecommunications, retail and banking. Consumers are demanding a frictionless, personalized, trust enhancing experience that simplifies their lives.

Technological advances are unlocking the door to new niche players offering technology-driven energy-related services that present new ways to meet customer needs by offering better service, greater transparency, and more efficient, cleaner energy at a lower cost than the incumbents.



Telecoms

Top two performers
versus market average:

-5%

Etisalat

-6%

du

	New Customer	The Six Pillar experience	The Connected Enterprise
Telecoms CEE score: -5% vs market average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Future home working – Bandwidth and internet needs. Video conferencing and socializing – Track and trace app 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Withdrawal of data limits and usage restrictions – Time & Effort: seamless interface for problem resolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 5G and change in data usage – Integrated partner and alliance ecosystems – Innovative products and services

The telecoms sector in the UAE has had to quickly adapt to the changes and disruptions caused by the Covid-19 outbreak.

Similar to other countries around the world, an increase in working and studying from home created a surge in demand for fixed services, including video streaming.^{lvii}

Over this period, the value of high-quality connectivity has never been more evident. If the Covid-19 outbreak had happened only a couple of decades ago, when the digital infrastructure was less mature, home working and home schooling would have been immeasurably harder. A lack of connectivity would have almost certainly led to a far more profound impact on society and the economy.

Certain new behaviors are likely to remain permanently: more video conferencing among businesses, greater usage of online shopping portals, additional e-learning for schools and universities and more frequent use of remote healthcare services. In theory, everything from medicine to exercise classes could see some form of lasting change.

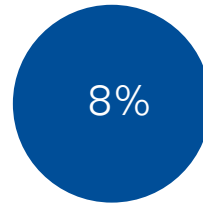
High-quality connectivity will become an increasingly pertinent need and should be a positive trend for operators. Assuming long-term demand for greater connectivity continues, so too will the need to invest. The only difference could be to more starkly highlight the need for operators to consider new business models and more adaptable and cost-effective forms of network deployment.



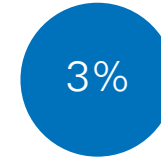


Entertainment & Leisure

Top two performers versus market average:



VOX Cinemas



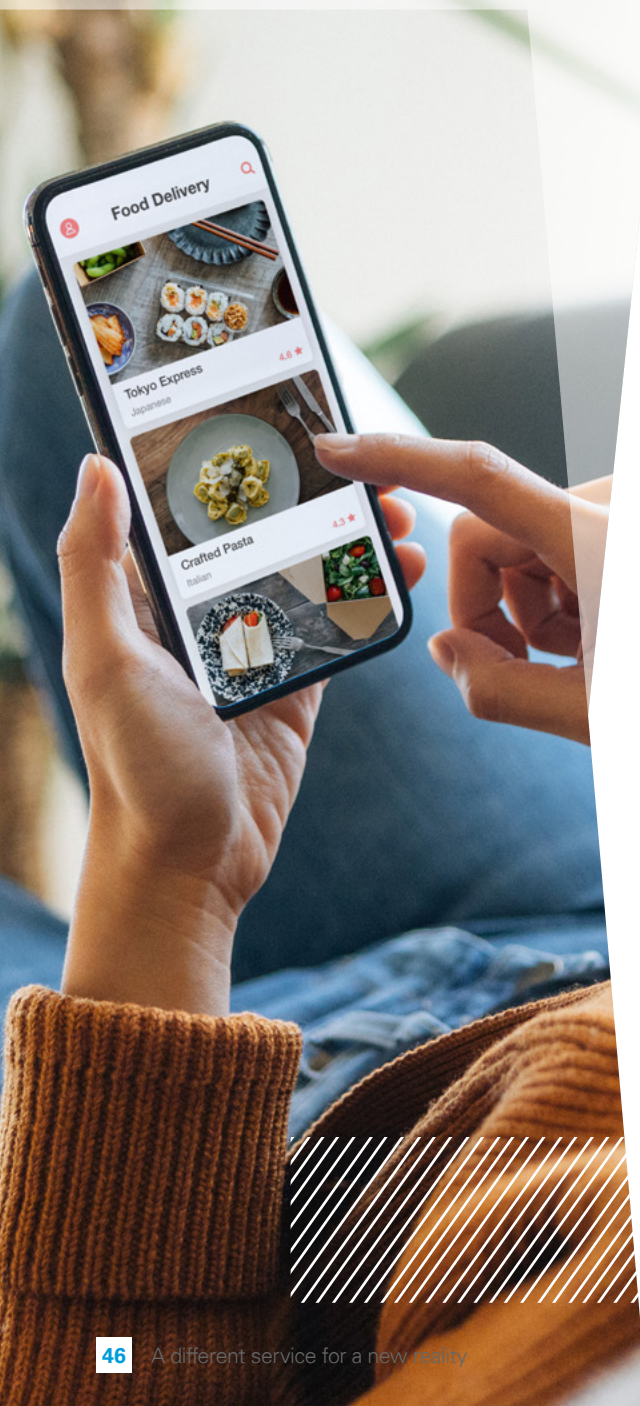
Novo Cinemas

	New Customer	The Six Pillar experience	The Connected Enterprise
Entertainment & Leisure CEE score: +6% vs market average	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Greater adoption of live streaming– Boom in online content usage– Desire for a memorable experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Pent up desire for novel non-home experiences– Integrity: establish trust in Covid-19 restrictions– Less travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– New business models– Seamless interactions and ecommerce– Partner and alliance eco-system

With cinemas closed across the UAE for some time, Covid-19 has had a significant impact on the industry. However, it has driven reflection on what can work in a pandemic and the return of drive-in movies, so that up to two people can watch the movie together in a safe and secure environment.^{[viii],ix}

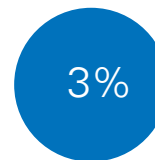
Prior to the pandemic, the industry was burgeoning, with new cinemas being opened across the emirates. Movie theatres in the UAE are unique, as ultra-modern technologies such as Dolby Atmos, 4D, and Dreamscape, which uses virtual reality, are deployed to provide an immersive experience.





Restaurants and Fast Food

Top three performers versus market average:



Starbucks



Costa Coffee



Talabat

	New Customer	The Six Pillar experience	The Connected Enterprise
Restaurants & Fast Food CEE score: +1% vs market average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Social distancing impact – Order from home – Pre-prepared meals delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Gradual reopening – Adapted to new normal – Customers need to feel in control – Delivery/takeaway expansion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – New business models – Innovative products and services – Partners and alliances

For many fast food and restaurant operators, Expo 2020 was to be a major simulant to growth.^{ix} For the 200+ restaurants preparing for its launch, its postponement until 2021 has caused ripples across the industry as firms who have made investments no longer have the predicted inflow of tourists.

The 2018 KPMG report on the industry “Food for thought,”^{xi} identified the growing trend of “deliverization” something operator Talabat has benefited from. Increasingly, UAE consumers are seeking convenience and that means a growing tendency to have their meals delivered.



About this
year's research



About the research

For eleven years, KPMG member firm professionals have been asking consumers about their individual experiences with brands.

Over that time, more than 385,000 consumers have been interviewed and about 3,500 brands have been measured, providing approximately four million individual evaluations across 34 countries to support our knowledge in customer experience.

This year, we considered the views of more than 100,000 consumers across 27 markets.

The UAE research was conducted via an online survey, completed in Q2 2020. A consumer sample was targeted for each market, to be representative in terms of age and gender, whilst also targeting regional representation.

To participate in the research and to be able to respond to questions on a specific company, respondents must have interacted with that company in the last two months. This has been updated from previous years where a six-month period was given, to capture interactions and experiences specifically during the time of Covid-19, and to fairly compare the reactions and resilience of brands.

An interaction was defined as making a purchase, using the company's products and services, contacting a company with a query, or even browsing their website or store – so not all respondents would have been existing customers of the brand they evaluated.

To be included in the final rankings for each country, each brand must have achieved a minimum number of consumer responses (80). This year:

56

organization feature in the UAE rankings

1,512

consumers were surveyed

7,870

evaluations carried out across the 56 ranked brands

Sector coverage

For this report, we analyzed brands across the following sectors: Retail (grocery and non-grocery), Logistics, Financial Services, Travel & Hotels, Utilities, Telecoms, Entertainment & Leisure, Restaurants & Fast Food

Customer Experience Excellence (CEE) scores

The rankings are determined by the CEE scores of the brands surveyed.

The CEE score is derived for each brand via a weighted average of the brand's score for each of The Six Pillars. The weighting is calculated through regression analysis to understand the relative importance of each pillar in driving two commercial outcomes measured in the analysis: Advocacy and Loyalty.

Disclaimer: Mentions of individual companies should not be interpreted as an endorsement by KPMG International or its member firms.



About KPMG

For almost 50 years, KPMG Lower Gulf Limited has been providing audit, tax and advisory services to a broad range of domestic and international, public and private sector clients across all major aspects of business and the economy in the United Arab Emirates and in the Sultanate of Oman. We work alongside our clients by building trust, mitigating risks and identifying business opportunities.

KPMG Lower Gulf is part of KPMG International Cooperative's global network of professional member firms. Now entering its 150th year, the KPMG network includes approximately 219,000 professionals in over 147 countries. KPMG in the UAE and Oman is well connected with its global member network and combines its local knowledge with international expertise, providing the sector and specialist skills required by our clients.

KPMG is widely represented in the Middle East: along with offices in the UAE and Oman, the firm is well established in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Egypt, Jordan and the Lebanon. Established in 1973, KPMG in the UAE and Oman employs 1,485 people across four offices, including about 100 partners and directors.

As we continue to grow, we aim to evolve and progress in order to ensure the highest levels of public trust in our work. Our values are:

- **Integrity:** We do what is right.
- **Excellence:** We never stop learning and improving.
- **Courage:** We think and act boldly.
- **Together:** We respect each other and draw strength from our differences.
- **For Better:** We do what matters.

To meet the changing needs of our clients, we have adopted an approach aligned with our global purpose: Inspiring Confidence, Empowering Change. Our three pillars – exceptional quality of service, an unwavering commitment to the public interest, and building empowered teams – are the foundation of our firm.

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