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The evolution of customer experience measurement

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Rob Edwards, Client Service Director, KPMG Nunwood

Customer experience measurement (CXM) is no longer just about Voice of the Customer programmes, it has evolved as a concept to be an integrated data gathering framework that enables decision making within organisations.

The integrated framework needs to connect multiple data sources: brand metrics, operational data, social listening etc. But again, these elements need to work together to deliver a single view of the customer and provide the business with clarity for informed decision making and commercial growth.

This ecosystem of data feeds can then be used to identify quick wins and big wins, systemic and specific issues and key levers to pull, identified through a diagnostic approach, to impact commercial growth.

The balance of data then needs to be based on the '**relevancy of data**' to allow for clear decision making; '**depth of data**' with more emphasis on root-cause and qualitative response to identify strategic themes; and '**speed of data**' with systems in place to allow for both key metric measurement and rapid service recovery.

Relevance of data

**There are two broad strands to relevancy;
relevant data collection and relevant reporting.**

Relevant data collection can be summarised as collecting the right data at the right time. Within an integrated insight framework, data collection methods can be finely tuned to measure specific behaviours. Through a consistent collection architecture, the specific data feeds will connect to provide a holistic view of the customer experience.

With a general underlying principle of collecting information at the right time depending on the measurement layer, methodologies could include:

- Customer survey data at a broad perception or overall relationship level

- Customer survey data at a specific event or transactional level

- Customer survey data at the completion of specific journeys (e.g. mortgage application)

- Social media feed for overall perception and 'shock' tracking (e.g. product failure)

- Mobile phone tracking technology to measure retail store flow

- Customer ad-display tracking to measure awareness and action

- Wearable tech to collect data during key activities (e.g. Location orientated tracking)

Relevant reporting then ensures that the data collected is provided into an organisation in a way that is specific to the various audiences and stakeholders using the information. Insight programmes are in danger of being side-lined into marketing and communications tracking, or used as a high level metric tracker with little diagnosis of the symptoms being reported. An integrated measurement framework should be the driving force of how organisations truly deliver customer centricity. Key to engagement with insight within a business is relevancy. Each layer of an organisation demands a different view of the customer. Understanding this helps build relevancy into the reporting and outputs produced, allowing for engagement with senior decision makers and operational teams.

Depth of data

As we consider the relevancy, we must therefore understand the variable depths of data needed at different levels within the organisation. Again, if we consider the need for 'symptom' level data as KPI measurement and 'root cause' data as the underlying reasons, the variable depths of data have differing uses:

Depending on the stakeholder and sector needs, the depth then can be controlled to ensure the relevancy is maintained; this is the most effective way of creating engagement and mobilising an organisation to use insight to drive growth.

Simply put, too much depth can be overwhelming and unclear at certain levels; too little data will not provide enough information for action and experience recovery.

Tracking and benchmarking of KPI

Experience diagnosis through attributes

Verbatim analysis for sentiment and emotion

Unstructured data gathering for sentiment tracking

Campaign reaction and evaluation on social media

Connecting operational data

Connecting employee engagement surveys

Speed of data

As depth is aligned to relevancy, so speed is aligned to depth. Gathering rapid, in the moment data allows for fast feed but specific; gathering considered and broad data allows for depth but a potentially slower feed.

As with relevancy, there are two considerations to speed; speed of data capture and the need for variable speeds of information to flow into the organisation. High level metrics and C-suite key performance measures will be on a timely basis for strategic decision making, but likely at a thematic level and likely to be on a more measured timing. Granular tactical measures into operational teams may need to flow through rapidly, to allow for service recovery.

Within the future of CXM is the ever growing need for closed loop processes to be built on the back of measurement. This pushes the development of integration into CRM systems, use of digital 'in the moment' capture, mobile technology etc. of course, but also, again, positions CXM as a true business driver. Closed loop can only truly exist with a changed culture within organisations to have systems and people in place to react effectively, closing the loop, were technology alone will not suffice.

Speed of data creates the need for evolution in data gathering, but, the need for relevancy and depth creates the parameters around the quality of data gathered. The interplay of the three pillars should result in a quality process, aligned to specific business needs to inform growth. We still need to have a strong principle of quality (are we gathering the right data in the right way from the right people) or we fall foul of the old maxim 'rubbish-in, rubbish-out'.

Data strategy principles

Speed

Depth

Insight driven change
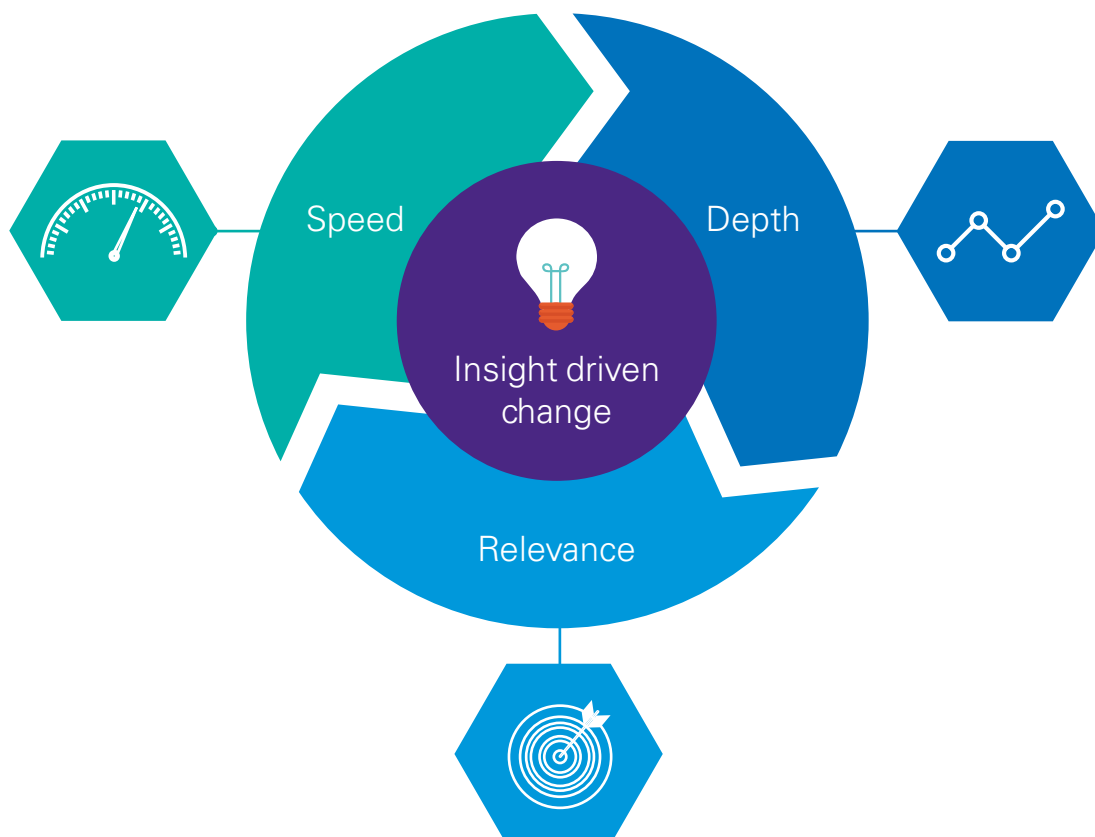
Relevance

The future of data gathering

Taking the principles that data has to be variable in: relevance, depth and speed, future developments of data gathering (some touched upon earlier) will include:

Voice analysis

Advancements in automated voice analysis are starting to produce stress indicators. In real time this could be used to moderate the call handlers responses and approach, empathy in action. With longer term analysis, themes of where stress occurs in processes can be identified and addressed as either a specific product/process issue, or as systemic problem.

Operational data joined up

If we see the future of CXM being a truly integrated approach and not 'market research' in isolation; the evolution of data must surely then lie in the merging of operational data with customer feedback. With API linkages to CRM systems, CXM can provide a holistic view of the customer and the ability to analyse by wider parameters (e.g. products purchased, channel contact strategy, tenure etc.), and for service recovery, create automated 'reactions' to feedback.

Expanding that to include cost to serve data can then allow analytics to look at how CXM moves affects bottom line and beyond KPI measurement, inform strategies based on hard business metrics. (In reality we already know there is not always a direct link, and bottom line growth may be more linked to longer term cultural change; but this doesn't mean we shouldn't strive to create the joined up approach).

Employee experience

In the realms of joining external and internal data, employee feedback is a future consideration for CXM. By breaking down silos within organisations and seeing the employee feedback as as part of an integrated approach to uncovering business critical issues, joining employee and customer feedback could provide extremely powerful evidence for growth. By applying similar codeframes for unstructured data organisation and root cause analyses, we could see patterns of data which affect employees and customers, highlighting those areas which are pain points for both. This could ensure the focus of resource is applied in the right place for maximum effect; look after your employees and they'll look after the customers.

Mobile and wearable tracking

There are many examples of exciting data gathering approaches, particularly in retail. We see companies tracking which store displays consumers pause to look at, which paths they take through stores and how often they stop in stores without purchasing anything. They do this by tracking unique signals from the communication signature of consumers' phones via the cell network, Bluetooth and other communication protocols.

This incredible source of behavioural information will help retailers tailor their displays, store layouts and even how customer interactions are managed. Building mobile location data into CX is a new and exciting frontier for the industry.

In summary, the future of CXM is of course in how we gather data in new and exciting ways, but also in recognising the true power of CXM to influence business change and growth.

In essence, the clarity of decision making and the potential efficiencies lie within successful integration. Also, by creating the consistent measurement framework, we reduce the need for project management and allow the insight team to concentrate on telling the key stories and becoming the lead on future thinking within their organisations.

Having worked with complex organisations with complex needs working to develop integrated measurement, I have consistently seen that a crucial part of the CXM answer is developing a connected view of the customer through multiple data feeds, and a clear governance strategy to allow the organisation to use the information effectively.

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Contact us

Rob Edwards

**Client Service Director,
KPMG Nunwood**

+44 113 3800381
rob.edwards@kpmg-nunwood.co.uk

Torsten Fritz

**Research Director,
KPMG Nunwood**

+44 113 3800387
torsten.fritz@kpmg-nunwood.co.uk

www.nunwood.com