



Executive summary

**Global Customer Experience Excellence
2025–2026 report**

Total Experience: Redefining excellence
in the age of agentic AI



The 2025–2026 Global Customer Experience Excellence (CEE) report marks a pivotal moment in the delivery of customer experience. The next evolution of AI, agentic, will unleash a fundamental shift in how organizations serve customers and how they connect employees, processes, and technologies into a single, adaptive experience layer.

This is the foundation of **Total Experience**, the unification of customer, employee, partner, and digital touchpoints into an integrated, intelligent whole. It is built on five core principles: designing around the customer, using data to personalize and improve, integrating processes and technology seamlessly across functional areas and channels, empowering employees with the tools and autonomy to deliver value, and making technology the backbone of every interaction.

Organizations can no longer succeed by delivering isolated moments of delight. The leaders of this year's Global CEE Index excel because they orchestrate Total Experience, a seamless integration of customer, employee, and partner interactions, underpinned by data, technology, and empowered people. In doing so, they create Total Value: measurable benefits for customers, employees, shareholders, and wider ecosystems.

For sixteen years, KPMG's research has tracked how organizations across the world deliver value to customers through The Six Pillars of Total Experience. This year's findings demonstrate that the fundamentals of experience excellence remain constant, Personalization, Empathy, Expectations, Resolution, Time and Effort, and Integrity, but the way in which leading organizations deliver against them is transforming.

Drawing on numerous case studies, the report examines how the world's leading brands are architecting next generation experiences, embodying The Six Pillars to deliver a Total Experience.

Key findings

- **Most markets experienced year on year growth in overall customer experience** with the UK, France and Australia recording the largest improvement.
- **60 percent of the number one brands increased their scores**, by an average of 3.1 percent, demonstrating that once attained excellence becomes a habit.
- **Total Experience is becoming the new standard.** The highest performers are moving beyond traditional customer service models, embedding customer experience (CX) into their entire operating model and creating connected, adaptive enterprises.
- **Integrity and trust remain foundational.** In an age of digital disruption and AI, the ability to build and maintain trust is the single strongest predictor of sustainable customer relationships.
- **Healthcare sets the standard for CX** across all sectors with the highest CEE score.
- **There is a shift beyond organizational boundaries into connected ecosystems**, healthcare, retail and airlines are examples, a trend that will be accelerated by agentic technology.
- **AI and agentic systems are enablers, not substitutes.** The leading brands are those that harness AI to augment human empathy and efficiency, orchestrating experiences across journeys and ecosystems.

The Six Pillars of Total Experience

The KPMG Six Pillars of Experience remain the universal foundation for customer experience excellence. In a Total Experience environment, each pillar must operate seamlessly across customer, employee, data, and technology touchpoints, with agentic AI enabling consistent delivery at speed and scale.

Below we outline how each pillar can be assessed and intentionally designed to deliver a unified, intelligent, and human-centered experience:



Personalization

Is personalization accurate, relevant, and context-aware in every interaction, regardless of channel or whether it's delivered by a human or AI?



Empathy

Do customers feel genuinely understood, supported, and valued in every interaction, whether with a person, a chatbot, or an automated process?



Expectations

Are customer expectations accurately understood, set, and met consistently across every channel, employee, and AI interaction?



Resolution

How quickly and effectively can issues be detected and resolved across integrated customer journeys, without hand-offs or repetition?



Time and Effort

Do customers experience frictionless, efficient journeys where effort is minimized across digital, physical, and assisted channels?



Integrity

Are trust, fairness, and transparency consistently demonstrated across all customer and employee touchpoints, regardless of channel or context?

In short, the world's CX leaders show that Total Experience is not a project or initiative, it's an organizational mindset. It's the thread that connects every decision, from product design to frontline service, and it's what transforms great interactions into lasting loyalty. What emerges is a distinctive, coherent brand experience that is resilient to market change and difficult for competitors to replicate. Total Experience delivers relevance at scale, trust in every interaction, and a sense of belonging that binds customers, employees, and partners together.

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