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Customer Experience Insights by Stepping into the Customer's Shoes

by Lynn Hunsaker

If we could 'be a fly on the wall' observing customers' experiences what a treasure trove of wisdom we'd have! Surveys, user groups and advisory boards are common tools for understanding customers — but what is their scope? Do we have a comprehensive suite of tools for stepping into our customers' shoes?

Customer Experience Scope

We often short-change our perspective of the customer experience. A panoramic view of the customer's pressures, delights, wishes, and circumstances enables us to step into their shoes. What's a panoramic view?

- **Start:** Customer experience begins with the customer's awareness of his/her need or desire for a solution
- **End:** The experience extends through the customer's full use of the purchased product or service, including use after new models have been released as well as eventual downgrade/upgrade/disposal
- **Who:** Include *all persons influencing* the decisions to purchase and re-purchase
- **What:** Tailor customer data collection to each influencer's "care-about's" from start to end
- **When:** Collect voice of the customer (VOC) at the moments influencers care most about the product or service
- **How:** Involve influencers in ways that are most convenient for them

Customer Data Integration

Untapped customer data is rampant! Consider the sources of customer data that exist in our companies. Have we considered how to integrate this data to paint a panorama of the customer experience?

- Sales call reports, service call reports, call center logs, accounts payable call reports
- CRM databases, trade show conversations
- Complaints, blogs, communities
- User groups, advisory boards, references
- Transactional pulses, focus groups, surveys, executive listening
- Customer profiles, competitor analysis, social media comments by customers of our customers

Customer Experience Management

To really understand the customer experience we need a panoramic view of customers' pressures, delights, wishes, and circumstances. Asking the right questions of the right people at the right time is a key



to this panorama. Integrating our customer data sources aids a holistic view and improves VOC ROI. And most importantly, we can operationalize customer feedback throughout our organizations to prevent customer hassles. By doing this with pure motives to make it easier and nicer for customers to find and use solutions, customer experience management minimizes customer churn, drives positive word-of-mouth, and reaps higher customer lifetime value.

Find out how to customize these tips to your situation; contact the author lynn.hunsaker@clearaction.biz.