# Who Owns Customer Experience?

**F** forbes.com/sites/deniselyohn/2017/03/08/who-owns-customer-experience/

3/7/2017

Hey, marketers! Here's some news for you -- you don't own customer experience at your company. The sales department doesn't either. In fact, asking "Who owns customer experience" is asking the wrong question says Tiffani Bova, Salesforce's Global, Customer Growth and Innovation Evangelist.  Tiffani  recently shared with me about the current state and future direction of customer experience (CX) -- and some of her points might surprise you.



Credit: Tiffani Bova

Tiffani has developed a perspective on CX that combines her current bird's eye view of business from speaking to CEOs and other leaders around the world, plus insider's knowledge having spent 10 years as VP, Distinguished Analyst and Research Fellow at Gartner specializing in the development of comprehensive sales strategies. She knows what it takes to excel at CX and one thing is clear: most people operate with a myopic, territorial view of CX.

"The gap between sales and marketing is getting bigger," Tiffani observes. "When people say 'CX should be owned by marketing,' they don't acknowledge that when a customer reaches out to talk to a brand, it's usually to sales.  And then if there's a problem, they reach out to service -- not marketing.  You can't ignore the resources that are touchpoints for customers -- sales and service."  It matters less who owns CX and more who executes on it  , she says. And everyone in an organization executes on CX.

So instead of asking who owns CX, the most important question to ask is whether or not the company has made CX its true north -- and doing that is a leadership responsibility.  "It has to start at the top," Tiffani explains. "The company at the executive level has to make CX a part of the company's DNA."  She adds, "CX means different things," so leaders must be clear about what the target is.

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Tiffani recommends company leadership ensure that CX is measured in relation to revenue and other organization-wide CX metrics in order to support organization-wide CX engagement.  According to Tiffani, "The disconnection between teams is the result of disconnected metrics and manifests in disconnected CX."  She recommends interconnected metrics such as Net Promoter Score and measures of customer satisfaction, customer success, and customer loyalty.

Also she suggests considering measures gleaned from social listening and indices of brand strength and trust.  These metrics serve as early indicators of CX performance and can be used to diagnose problems and provide learning.  The best approach is first to leave current metrics in place, no matter how silo-ed they might be, and add new ones.  Then over time, eliminate some of the older ones and rely more on the new.

Finally, Tiffani says leadership must demonstrate a commitment to the longer term outcomes of CX.  For example, in sales, the customer is changing and the business is heading more toward predictive analytics and automation.  As such, salespeople have to adopt different strategies and methods, some of which may result is not hitting their numbers in the short term.  Tiffani advises CEOs to give sales the permission to adopt those changes and not be short-sighted about what seems to be a drop in sales performance.

"What got us here isn't going to get us there," Tiffani says.   Operating in a CX-centric world requires interconnected metrics, process, people, and training to come together.  Her best CX advice:  "Disrupt yourself."

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