The One Customer Experience Management Tool That Every CX Leader Must Use

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Customer experience (CX) doesn't just happen. CX is a multi-disciplinary business venture that requires the systematic and deliberate development, alignment, and integration of capabilities throughout the organization. To unleash its value creation power, CX leaders must reach for and achieve increasing and evolving levels of CX maturity. That's why the one customer experience management (CEM) tool that every CX leader must use is a CX Maturity Model.

A CX Maturity Model is a framework that identifies the different areas of development that CX requires, along with key milestones in each area. CX leaders can use a CX Maturity Model to assess the current state of CX in their organization, diagnose where improvements should be focused, and guide the evolution and optimization of CX.

From Emerging to Excelling

The following CX Maturity Model is an example. It incorporates learnings from CX approaches at a range of companies as well as the transformation and competency models developed by CX software company MaritzCX, CX research firm Temkin, and Altimeter, a digital transformation research and consulting firm.

CX MATURITY MODEL	EMERGING	LEARNING	COMMITTING	ACCELERATING	EXCELLING
VISION & STRATEGY					
Clarity	Need for vision & strategy identified	Necessary elements of vision & strategy understood	Initial vision & strategy defined	Vision & strategy fleshed out and codified	Vision & strategy revisited and evolved as necessary
Brand & business strategy alignment	Need for experiences aligned to brand & business strategy understood	Experiences tangentially tied to brand & business strategy	Experiences ladder up to brand & business strategy	Experiences integrated with brand & business strategy	Experiences instrumental to brand & business strategy
Measurement	Broad metrics (e.g., NPS)	Touchpoint-level metrics	Journey-level metrics	Customer relationship-based metrics	Metrics integrated into KPIs
Implementation	Customer service & standards informed by general CX guidelines	Specific touchpoints optimized / customer service pain points addressed	Journeys that meet aggregate customer objectives identified and optimized	Different experiences for different segments implemented	Experiences that deepen and develop future relationships implemented
LEADERSHIP & ALIGNMENT					
Priority	Support for	Support for CX	Experience	CX considered a	CX adopted as

	initiating work on CX provided by a few influential leaders	implementation provided by top executives from the sidelines	strategy identified as key strategic initiative by several members of the C-suite	strategic priority by all top executives	core business strategy
Executive engagement	Initiation of CX assigned to one top executive	Shared understanding of CX and its requirements understood by several C-suite members	Top executives aligned on CX values, but not actively engaged in creating the strategy Itself	Members of C-suite actively championing development and delivery of CX	Significant time spent by CEO and Board on experience strategy
Cross-department involvement	A few people in one department tasked with initiating CX	CX driven primarily by one department	Several departments involved in CX implementation & working together to span silos	Many departments actively involved and working together to develop and deliver cohesive CX	Experience strategy an integral part of every business unit; cross-function teaming

ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS

Customer intimacy	Account-level data used; customer satisfaction regularly measured	Customer data collected and analyzed at the touchpoint level, single product or process	Customers understood from the perspective of multiple departments / offerings	Organization-wide alignment on customer needs being addressed	Customer data continually used to drive decisions and actions
Employee engagement	Need for employee engagement in CX understood	CX understood and designed by a few specialists	Select departments trained on CX mindset and behaviors	Widespread support for and participation in CX initiatives	Employees throughout organization empowered to improve CX
Systems & processes	Existing systems and processes assessed for CX capabilities	System and process issues identified and addressed at touchpoint level	Data, technology, and engagements integrated into CX solutions	All platforms seamlessly integrated throughout org	New systems and processes actively pursued
Skills	Employee skills gaps identified	New roles, hiring profiles, and on-boarding practices initiated	New capabilities contributed by new hires; training initiated for select groups	Training implemented throughout organization as needed	CX capabilities continuously improved through ongoing learning and development

CX Maturity Model by Denise Lee Yohn

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1.   **Emerging** – In this first stage of CX maturity, key players within an organization have discovered that its product-, operations-, or finance-led approach has diminished in effectiveness and they realize their company needs to become customer-centric. These CX drivers lead conversations about the necessary transformation, assess existing CX capabilities, and/or initiate early efforts to improve specific touchpoints or processes.

2.   **Learning** – Next, experimentation with CX process and improvements grows as does customer research on needs and pain points and trial of basic CX tools such as journey mapping. CX leaders start reporting on CX and customer metrics at the touchpoint level. More people in the organization become engaged in CX projects, but most efforts remain isolated in functional groups.

3.   Committing – Support for CX is secured among several key executives in this stage, so the organization formalizes CX: It defines strategies, allocates resources, establishes teams, adopts new technologies, teaches new skills, engages CX programs, and sets specific targets for CX. Cross-functional collaboration is cultivated as CX developments involve greater integration, and therefore, impact.

4.   Accelerating – Quantified ROI on CX is achieved and the need for integration of CX with business strategy is understood, so an ecosystem of CX touchpoints, teams, tools, processes, and partnerships is established. The organization increases its proficiency with the data and digital technology instrumental to identifying and implementing CX solutions. It also ensures employee experience (EX)/CX alignment and employee brand engagement.

5.   Excelling – For organizations at the most mature CX stage, CX becomes a way of business as all executives embrace and empower the transformation. An organization-wide CX skill set and mindset is established and CX gets embedded into organizational structures and practices. The CX ecosystem continues to scale and evolve as the organization proactively identifies new customer opportunities and seeks to innovate breakthrough experiences.

Each organization is different and begins its journey at different points, so CX leaders may find the progression differs at their organization. These five stages indicate general milestones on the journey to CX maturity.

Three CX Development Tracks

As organizations progress through the five stages of CX maturity, leaders must develop three building blocks of CX:

A.   **Vision and Strategy** –- the desired future and the path to get there.

This building block addresses the problem that if you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there. As an organization matures in CX, it achieves greater levels of clarity about its intentions, alignment of CX with business and brand strategy, measurement methods and rigor, and implementation of the overarching vision and strategy.

B.   **Leadership and Alignment** – engagement of organizational leaders.

CX excellence depends on leadership from the top of the organization and alignment throughout it. With increasing levels of CX maturity, companies place greater priority on CX, more top-level executives become CX drivers, and collaboration across departments/functions develops.

C. **Organizational Readiness** – the state of competencies and resources.

CX leaders must cultivate the preparedness of the organization to get to subsequent stages of maturity. Customer intimacy is the most important dimension of this building block, but employee engagement, skills, and systems and processes must also grow and evolve.

Development of all three building blocks is necessary and the descriptions of the building blocks at each stage in the CX maturity model indicate the typical ways in which they develop. These building blocks are interdependent and, when developed effectively, can be mutually reinforcing.

Destination: CX Excellence

Whether CX leaders use this particular CX Maturity Model or if they choose any others that exist is less important than simply using one. Without a model, CX efforts can become a bunch of difficult-to-manage, direction-less, disparate initiatives with no definitive outcome. And if companies approach CX in a disjointed way, their customers will experience CX in a disjointed way. But with a CX Maturity Model, CX leaders have the compass, map, and engine needed to get the destination – CX excellence.