

In this edition of “The 330”, TribeCX Chair Mark Harrison spoke with Mark Evans – Marketing Director of Direct Line Group, Marketing Society Fellow, and Marketing Leader of the Year 2018 – about practical insights on what works and what doesn’t to drive performance from experience. Here are Mark Evans’ key points.

“The 330” is a series of podcasts dealing specifically with customer experience. If you want to drive improved performance directly from CX, you need to talk to proven CX practitioners. That’s what “The 330” is about: proven senior CX practitioners discussing how to succeed and what pitfalls to avoid while improving your businesses performance through customer experience.

Customer equals commercial

Every single project you take on should come down to this simple equation – the experience campaign equals commercial results. Generally, companies have a difficult time proving the commercial case for experience. Experience initiatives aren’t just an expense, because it drives the brand, but it also needs to fix actual pain points. There is a direct correlation between retention and net promoter score (NPS). ROI analysis can be proven by showing that improved Customer Experience results in a higher NPS score, which increases commercial success by decreasing the number of repeat calls and complaints.

CX RAW TIP

Involve your CFO and/or finance team’s key players in the CX program to help prove customer = commercial.

Find the intersection of what’s good for the customer is good for investors

Customer Experience is often misunderstood. Stakeholders need to see more than just cost. It requires leadership understanding, buy-in and “walk the talk” to avoid any confusion. The organization must be galvanized and focused on an agreed-upon CX goal, a “north star” to follow that focuses on where you are collectively heading. This will make results much easier to achieve.

CX RAW TIP

Create a senior cross-functional team to help design and spread your “north star”.

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The right formula

Not all CX programs are the same. It's up to every program to determine the key formula, the "what would it take to convince executive leadership". Agreeing with senior sponsors up-front, the right combination of key stakeholders to involve, KPIs to deliver and messages for customers and colleagues will make everything easier. Agreeing to this formula up-front and "working back from this" will mean you'll convince colleagues, senior leadership, and all stakeholders that the experience program delivers business results and provides hard evidence that it should be deployed across the organization.

CX RAW TIP

Agree on the numbers up-front, then choose the proof points that will deliver them and validate your program.

Manage the optics

One of the easiest ways to establish clarity with your stakeholders is to build proof points. Choose proof points that validate the practice and identify KPIs that are measurable. In addition, if a project hasn't been as successful, and didn't hit expectations, explain why and describe the lesson. Practitioners need to be proactive about that – it's much easier to admit something isn't working and use this to clearly pivot. Remember this is about achieving the best commercial outcome, not about being defensive of your work.

CX RAW TIP

Not facing up to the "elephant in the room" – something that's clearly not working – just erodes credibility. If and when things aren't working, call it out, be clear on why and the learning, make it work or fix it, but don't hide it.

Everything to scale

Perfecting an experience program is a juggling act. When you have multiple stakeholders – customer, employee, leadership, investors – it can be hard keeping everyone on the same page. One of the ways to avoid juggling is to roll your programs out as rapid pilot projects (or sprints) and build confidence, credibility, and learning from the outset. Projects should be agreed on by all stakeholders as something that needs fixing; they should be focused on a single goal; and everyone must do their bit to ensure it's a success. Remember that everything needs to be proven, so determine up-front with senior leadership the KPIs to measure.

CX RAW TIP

Get everyone to agree to the proof point – get them involved to help ensure it's a success. Agree to the required outcomes up-front so they will stand up to scrutiny.

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Empowering your employees works

To get the most out of your CX programs, all colleagues need to “own it” and feel the value of working together to meet business goals. Identifying and elevating colleagues who are “getting with the program” helps build momentum, and sharing their learning provides colleagues with the right practical support to be successful. It enables them to more easily and efficiently deliver the intended customer experience.

CX RAW TIP

Have experience initiatives brought into the onboarding of new colleagues, so it's part of their culture and you start to build it into the company from the outset.

Oh, the places you'll go

Remember that with all projects, there are ups and downs throughout the journey. Customer Experience is a passion profession – leaders need both credibility across the organization and the personal resilience to drive the program. It's a labour of love. But you will only be successful if you prove your case – and you need to realize it might not happen every day. You need to get through the tricky times – a network of peers outside your organisation can help here. Bottom line: You'll only be successful if you prove the business case.

CX RAW TIP

Build your personal network inside and outside your organisation – it will help you get through the tricky times.

In closing: Remember to agree to the goals up-front; prove the commercial case; collect proof points; make sure they can be scaled; and ensure each activity purposefully delivers on the CX ambition “north star”. Build the muscle inside the organization, as this isn't something you can outsource.



Mark Harrison, Chair

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I've been an active CX professional for over 20 years. As CX lead for Shell's global customer experience initiatives I was responsible for ensuring that the customer experience strategy and operations were best-in-market.

TribeCX, for CX people by CX people

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