

It takes a village to get CX right, from the inside - Kantar

 By Leigh Andrews

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Marketing insights continued at Kantar customer experience (CX) advantage 2019 masterclass when Collective ID's Zanele Ntulini took to the platform to share a practical guide in explaining what we often forget in aligning the customer experience with the brand promise when tackling customer experience projects.



Ntulini said she's often asked, "How did a marketer get to run an ad agency?"

She laughs and says it's a wonderful thing being a marketer 'on the inside', at an ad agency – as marketers wear a commercial hat daily, which comes in handy when reviewing creative and deciding whether it makes sense practically for the business.



#Newsmaker: Zanele Ntulini appointed as CID's new managing director

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On the topic of how technology helps us deliver on customer experience (CX), Ntulini admitted that sometimes we fall into the trap of seeing it as "something that's alien and out there", but CX is in everything and we are doing it every day, naturally, whether we realise it or not.

Ntulini also said we need to acknowledge that as human beings, we wear so many different hats on a daily basis, which is part and parcel of what forms our opinions, behaviours, value system and mindset or outlook on life, especially when it comes to customer experience.

Many identities, one consumer

As a result, our identity includes how we see ourselves as children, parents, siblings, employers, employees and friends.

“ At least one of these 'identities' is strongest in each moment, and while the switch comes naturally to us as human

beings, it's something marketers tend to forget when they focus solely on customer personas. ”



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As human beings, there's also one thing we constantly search for with all our might – **happiness**.

We focus all our thoughts and actions on it as we want to live, eat, breathe it. As marketers, we need to be reminded of that.

Ntulini feels the following experiential marketing campaign, where a Coca-Cola vending machine delivers doses of happiness takes this concept to the next level:

The campaign launched globally when Coca-Cola turned 100-years-old. Ntulini feels it shines as the most brilliant thing you can do as a marketer is to be able to say, “My campaign sits on this. Inside this bottle, this commodity that I give you, sits happiness.”

That's the all-important emotional connection displayed through experiential marketing, which was mentioned earlier in the morning:



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We also tend to forget that the external customer isn't the only one involved in the customer experience. The customer ultimately derives happiness, satisfaction, peace of mind and trust from the experience, especially in financial services.

But we shouldn't forget that there's also a person on the other end who is delivering the experience, whether they're behind a store counter or a screen.

Seeing CX from the inside

It's all of us, as employees inside organisations. Part of that is the proud 'swag', of walking around knowing that you are empowered and respected and that you did your job well. That results in happiness as an employee.



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Don't forget the impact of good CX on the employee, as the marketer and brand as a whole sets the expectation of the experience.

Ntulini says:

“ If I tell myself I'm going to walk into an expensive store, I need to feel like I'm a queen through and through and that I'll be treated as equally as the next person to walk through the door and receive the experience. ”

For this to succeed, your brand needs to know that everyone's ready internally to deliver exactly what we put out there. There must be a match-up of the expectation in terms of what we say, and what actually happens or we're in for a nasty surprise when we get that customer feedback of the experience.



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Ntulini says when we head towards 14:45pm on 16 December, something happens where we can see the pina colada and almost feel the sand beneath our toes, even though it's still an eight-hour drive to our destination and we're still physically at our desks.

That's the expectation.

Unfortunately, sometimes the experience doesn't match up to the expectation...

Poor planning + bad decision making = awful CX

To put this into perspective, Ntulini shared an example of a 15-day dream cruise on the Norwegian Cruise Line's Norwegian

Sun Panama Canal Cruise, which people paid pretty pennies to attend but the experience was far from the expectation.

A decision was made for extensive maintenance work to take place during the cruise, with entire areas cordoned off and activities cancelled. This was so frustrating for guests that they organised a meeting in the observation bar, which quickly became unruly.



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The 500 passengers confronted the captain and demanded compensation for the fumes in the hallways, dust in their eyes, sheer inconvenience of having various parts of the ship closed off and the overall lack of ownership in taking responsibility for the decision to close off much of the ship during the cruise. The captain stormed out.

Ntulini says that whoever made the decision for maintenance to be carried out during the cruise didn't think through the potential impact on the entire ecosystem.

The cruise line is not alone, as Ntulini says marketers often forget that much of customer experience is about what you feel. It's also the physical outcome of what we do and the thinking behind it. Customer experience is about delivering proof on the brand promise, daily.



Ntulini says CX is like a layered cake, as many factors influence the end result.

There's the **brand** that has been built and put out to market; the **culture** when you walk into an organisation, which needs to match and align with the values its employees have grown up with; then come the **behaviours** and the **value system**, which both need to align with those of the organisation.

The business bottom line of CX-centricity

The end goal is the shared vision, true to the core of what's practised internally before it sets foot 'out there' in the real world.



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14 Mar 2019



Ntulini put more proof to the pudding in sharing research from [Qualtrics](#), which shows that organisations that lead in CX outperform laggards on the S&P 500 index by nearly 80%. When they practice good customer experience and really deliver on it, they retain higher share of wallet and have customers that are:

- 7 times more likely to purchase more from the company,
- 8 times more likely to try their other products or services, and
- 15 times more likely to spread positive word of mouth to other potential clients.

After all, Ntulini says as soon as someone tells you they've had a good experience with a company, you think: "Well, if you've had a good experience with them, why wouldn't I?"

Ntulini ended with shared hints and tips on the simple things that we can start implementing right away as marketers to start driving better CX on a basic level...

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Ultimately, Ntulini said it all starts inside, with **engaged employees**, so engage with them in order to create an authentic internal brand and employee experience.

This starts from their **first day on the job**, because when you apply for a position, you have a certain expectation and perception of the company before you even walk through the door. Then when you go for an interview, you're both testing each other out to make sure you're on the same page. So follow through on that once they become part of the team.



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Ntulini reminded us that **before we're marketers, we're consumers** but we sometimes forget this when we go into a meeting room as marketers and take a deep-dive in. "Don't we also buy these products? Why are we then trying to build it like that, when we know that as individuals in the room we wouldn't walk down that pathway?"

Ntulini says if there's a point of confusion, to put on your consumer hat and walk yourself through the process to see whether it really works or not. Find out where there are unnecessary restrictions in the process and make it as accommodating and open-minded as possible.

“ Often it gets to a point where it's the marketers (us) against the consumers (them), but we're actually all one thing. ”

Next, Ntulini said to be **customer-obsessed and remain consumer-led**. We need to walk through the consumer's pathway and remind ourselves that we're all human beings, constantly in pursuit of happiness. Customers are people, like you and I, so our ability to hear them out and connect with them is an act of humanity.



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18 Sep 2019



That leads to Ntulini's next point, that **humanity rules always**. "Good morning, how are you, thank you, can I help you?"

You shouldn't need to train someone on this, as these are the basic values we are brought up with and should bring into organisations.

It then gets to a point where humanity and technology start to work together and complement each other rather than relying purely on tech and creating a disconnect between what the brand stands for and what you deliver.

The human beings, from the security guards to the receptionist, are the first people who deliver the brand to the audience.



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As much as technology is meant to be an enabler and help consumers we need to keep in mind how much running technology on its own can do and where the disconnect creeps in before the customer decides to rather pick up the phone or turn to Twitter to rather deal with a human behind the brand, especially if it's 3am when all goes wrong.

Building brand advocacy, from within

Ntulini's biggest point is about **identifying, nurturing and engaging** with the brand ambassadors and brand advocates inside your business.

“ Whether they've been there for eight months or 18 years, they're the people who love your brand, so why wouldn't you use them as an extension of your marketing department, to help you manage what you need to deliver on the ground? ”

That's how you develop your brand culture, as it doesn't stand apart from the people and it takes a village to get this right.



Ntulini ended with a reminder that each and every touchpoint of the customer journey is equally important, and yes, the small things matter and often have the biggest impact in the long run, as those are the moments or experiences that delight or frustrate your customers.

To wrap it all together, Ntulini ended by showing the Telkom Molo ad:

Ntulini said to make the quality of the customer experience you provide as real a product as what you're selling.

Watch for my further coverage of the Kantar #CustomerAdvantage sessions on site, and follow [Kantar](#), [Ntulini](#) and [Collective ID](#) on Twitter for the latest updates.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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