



POINT OF VIEW

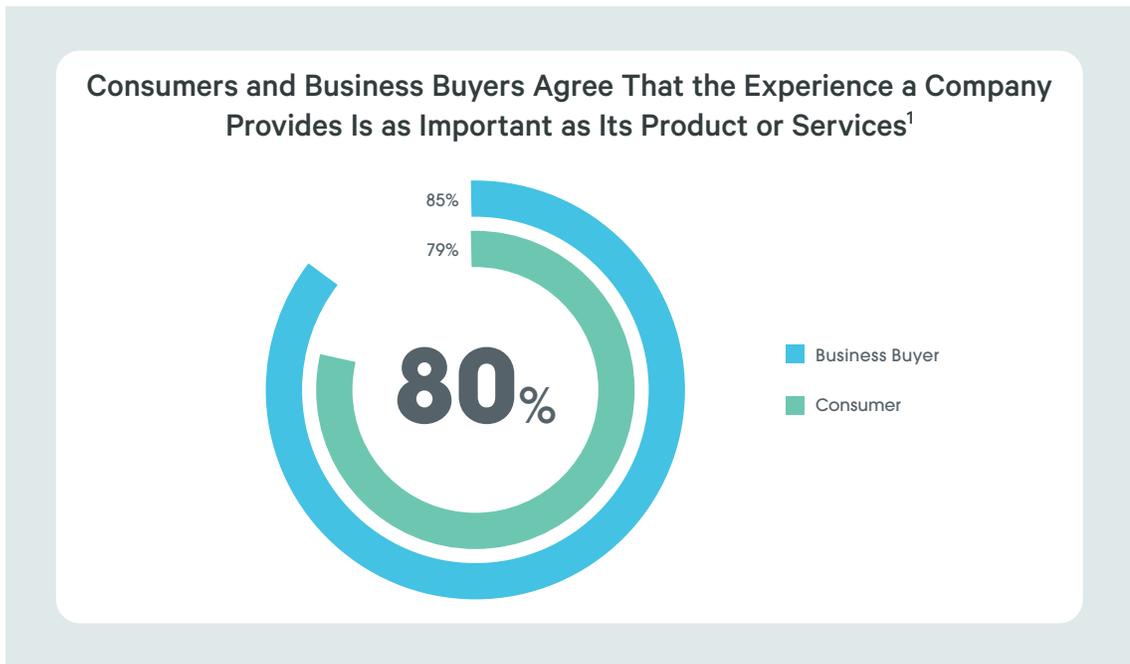
Designing a customer experience strategy rooted in empathy



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Customers today evaluate a brand's value proposition on how they do their business. To meet their expectations of receiving a humanized and personalized brand experience that is consistent cross all touchpoints, companies must have a deep understanding of their customers' end-to-end journey and its related bottlenecks and pain points.



Leverage existing data to enable customer centricity at every touchpoint

Each time brands communicate with their customers they have the opportunity to shape their perception of the brand and humanize their experiences with the company. It is imperative that companies see their customers beyond segmentation and as individuals with very pressing, human needs.

Today, only 34% of customers believe that the companies they interact with generally treat them as an individual¹ and fewer than half of patients (47%) believe pharmaceutical companies understand the emotional, financial, and other needs related to their condition.²

One way to leverage big data analytics tools to inform a brand's messaging and develop a greater empathetic understanding of their customers' personal experiences is to uncover any possible healthcare disparities impacting patients and physicians in a therapy's targeted disease state. For example, the University of Virginia recently implemented a real-time artificial intelligence platform that integrates directly with EHRs and extracts social determinants and clinical risk factors from unstructured notes for more timely interventions.³

As we've [previously detailed](#), large pharma companies have an abundance of rich customer data at their fingertips that offer opportunities to learn and improve their customers' experience. Across industries, eighty-five percent of companies are currently trying to be data driven, but only 37% of them say they have been successful.⁴ The critical challenge for companies today is figuring out how to draw meaning or value from all that data. Providing services that add value to a brand's customers' journey requires a deep understanding of their needs and motivations at each touchpoint that they have with the brand.



POINT OF VIEW (CONT'D)

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Questions to ask yourself: Do we have a clear understanding of our customers' needs? How do our existing services meet them? Do I understand the level of engagement that our customers desire throughout each point of their journey? How do our customers' individual needs and desires vary across different demographics and disease states?

Simplify the decision-making process by supporting stronger doctor-patient interactions

The human interaction between doctor and patient remains the foundation of medicine. Over time, new technology and the rise of the "informed" patient has fragmented this relationship, with 91% of patients relying on online research to better understand their diagnoses.⁵

Patients today have access to a surplus of unregulated resources to inform their medical decisions, putting them at risk of relying on inaccurate information. They use WebMD and Everyday Health to understand their symptoms, Healthgrades to review doctors and care centers, and Drugs.com to research their treatment options. Brands can support patients by identifying areas where their company can simplify the information-seeking and decision-making process.

Develop solutions that strengthen dialogues between physicians and their patients, and carefully curate a brand's messaging so that it resonates with them. Address any cultural differences and health- and/or finance-related inequities that patients may face, and remove complicated and complex jargon from websites so information is easy to comprehend. In doing so, it is more likely for patients to feel confident engaging in conversations with their physicians about a product or service.

Ultimately, supporting clinicians in listening to and empathizing with their patients' emotions can profoundly affect their patients' psychological and functional outcomes, as well as their experience of, and satisfaction with, care.^{6,7} The objective should be to provide trusted resources for potential customers to turn to for support, information, and guidance.

Questions to ask yourself: Are we communicating the value of our product using vernacular that not only educates but resonates with our customers? Are we clearly demonstrating how our products and services work and what the customers should expect if they decide to commit to a relationship with our company? How is our business supporting doctor-patient relationships and dialogues about our product to expedite and facilitate the decision-making process?



POINT OF VIEW (CONT'D)

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Deliver a connected customer experience to differentiate your brand

According to 2020 data from the Medical Affairs Professional Society, 40% of healthcare interactions will remain virtual after the pandemic.⁸ With this knowledge, brands will continue to emphasize improving and introducing digital solutions for physicians and their patients. On the other hand, category leaders should understand that investing in optimizing their digital touchpoints should not be done while neglecting to understand the overall experience of their customers, including physical channels.

Companies today fall significantly short of customer expectations, with 76% of customers expecting consistent interactions across departments and 54% saying that it generally feels like sales, service, and marketing teams don't share information.¹

A holistic and detailed customer experience journey is one of the strongest assets a business can leverage in understanding and addressing their customers' emotional and transactional pain points. The journey acts as a strategic framework to ensure cohesion across a brand's touchpoints with and among physicians and their patients and assists when outlining methods for evaluating and measuring the improvement of the customer experience using data analytics over time.

Questions to ask yourself: Is the experience we provide seamless and intuitive across our company's touchpoints with our customers? How is information transferred among the various channels that our customers must engage with to receive our product? How might we align our messaging and channel strategy to the customers' needs at specific points in their journey?

Customer experience may not be a new concept for most pharma brands, but integrating customer experience as a philosophy requires leveraging new mindsets and strategies. At Evoke, we take an approach to customer experience that goes beyond the process of building a journey. We help clients overcome both internal and external obstacles in ways that create competitive, enduring advantages. For more information, email us at business@evokegroup.com.

Sources:

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