



The Effortless Experience: Conquering the New Battleground for Customer Loyalty

By Matthew Dixon, Nick Toman, Rick DeLisi

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Everyone knows that the best way to create customer loyalty is with service so good, so over the top, that it surprises and delights. *But what if everyone is wrong?*

In their acclaimed bestseller *The Challenger Sale*, Matthew Dixon and his colleagues at CEB busted many longstanding myths about sales. Now they've turned their research and analysis to a new vital business subject—customer loyalty—with a new book that turns the conventional wisdom on its head.

The idea that companies must delight customers by exceeding service expectations is so entrenched that managers rarely even question it. They devote untold time, energy, and resources to trying to dazzle people and inspire their undying loyalty. Yet CEB's careful research over five years and tens of thousands of respondents proves that the “dazzle factor” is wildly overrated—it simply doesn't predict repeat sales, share of wallet, or positive word-of-mouth. The reality:

*Loyalty is driven by how well a company delivers on its basic promises and solves day-to-day problems, not on how spectacular its service experience might be. **Most customers don't want to be “wowed”; they want an effortless experience.** And they are far more likely to punish you for bad service than to reward you for good service.*

If you put on your customer hat rather than your manager or marketer hat, this makes a lot of sense. What do you really want from your cable company, a free month of HBO when it screws up or a fast, painless restoration of your connection? What about your bank—do you want free cookies and a cheerful smile, even a personal relationship with your teller? Or just a quick in-and-out

transaction and an easy way to get a refund when it accidentally overcharges on fees?

The Effortless Experience takes readers on a fascinating journey deep inside the customer experience to reveal what really makes customers loyal—and disloyal. The authors lay out the four key pillars of a low-effort customer experience, along the way delivering robust data, shocking insights and profiles of companies that are already using the principles revealed by CEB’s research, with great results. And they include many tools and templates you can start applying right away to improve service, reduce costs, decrease customer churn, and ultimately generate the elusive loyalty that the “dazzle factor” fails to deliver.

The rewards are there for the taking, and the pathway to achieving them is now clearly marked.

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Editorial Review

Review

“This is what every business book should be like: stuffed with practical advice, well supported by research, and written to keep you eagerly flipping the pages.”

—**DAN HEATH**, coauthor of *Decisive*, *Switch*, and *Made to Stick*, from the foreword

“Most current customer support and customer experience improvement programs are merely replays of age-old concepts with some new terminology thrown in. The customer effort research and approach recounted here is different. It is truly the first really novel idea that I’ve heard—and implemented—in a long time. This is an approach that drives innovative, significant improvement within my teams . . . actions grounded in solid data . . . actions that yield measurable, customer-visible results that we just couldn’t achieve via other means. It really has changed the way I think about the support my team delivers.”

—**DAN ROURKE**, director of software support, HomeAway, Inc.

“A must-have for any true customer experience leader’s library. Matt, Nick, and Rick are the ‘MythBusters’ of customer experience, dispelling many commonly held but inaccurate beliefs around the drivers of disloyalty and delight and what will really drive true value to your business.”

—**LYNN HOLMGREN**, vice president, customer experience strategy, Frontier Communications

“If you are looking for one resource to keep on your desk that will bring you back to the right focus for delivering a better customer service, this is that resource.”

—**CHRIS HALE**, vice president, reservation services, Hyatt

“Every business is looking for the secret to creating loyal customers. This book not only builds a compelling case for effortless customer experiences being the key to loyalty, but also provides a clear road map for any business to achieve that goal. It’s a must-read!”

—**DEB OLER**, vice president and general manager, Grainger Brand, W. W. Grainger

“What’s brilliant about *The Effortless Experience* is its pragmatism, illustrated by the observation that we can easily make things worse for customers and often do more harm than good. Here is real, practical, implementable guidance to help avoid those pitfalls.”

—**RICHARD JOYCE**, operations director, Home Retail Group Customer Services

“*The Effortless Experience* provides a well-researched foundation for customer experience transformation. Reducing customer effort links the work of the service organization to the business-wide goal of increasing

customer loyalty. The concepts themselves are pragmatic and actionable and this book will get you under way.”

—**SUE ATKINS**, head of service experience, Telecom NZ Ltd

About the Author

MATTHEW DIXON is executive director of the Sales & Service Practice of CEB. He is a frequent contributor to *Harvard Business Review*, and his previous book, *The Challenger Sale*, was a *Wall Street Journal* bestseller and won acclaim as “the most important advance in selling for many years” (Neil Rackham) and “the beginning of a wave that will take over a lot of selling organizations in the next decade” (*Business Insider*).

NICK TOMAN is senior director of research for CEB’s Sales & Service Practice and is a frequent contributor to *Harvard Business Review*.

RICK DELISI is senior director of advisory services for CEB’s Sales & Service Practice and a noted public speaker and facilitator.

CEB is the leading member-based advisory company. By combining the best practices of thousands of member companies with its advanced research methodologies and human capital analytics, CEB equips senior leaders and their teams with insight and actionable solutions to transform operations.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Eugene Brown:

As people who live in the modest era should be upgrade about what going on or info even knowledge to make these individuals keep up with the era and that is always change and progress. Some of you maybe can update themselves by reading books. It is a good choice for you personally but the problems coming to you is you don't know what kind you should start with. This *The Effortless Experience: Conquering the New Battleground for Customer Loyalty* is our recommendation so you keep up with the world. Why, because this book serves what you want and want in this era.

Charles Bock:

Reading a publication tends to be new life style within this era globalization. With looking at you can get a lot of information that can give you benefit in your life. Having book everyone in this world can certainly share their idea. Textbooks can also inspire a lot of people. Many author can inspire their reader with their story or perhaps their experience. Not only the storyline that share in the ebooks. But also they write about the ability about something that you need example. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your kids, there are many kinds of book which exist now. The authors on this planet always try to improve their ability in writing, they also doing some study before they write with their book. One of them is this *The Effortless Experience: Conquering the New Battleground for Customer Loyalty*.

Lynn Lambert:

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Mark Morrow:

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