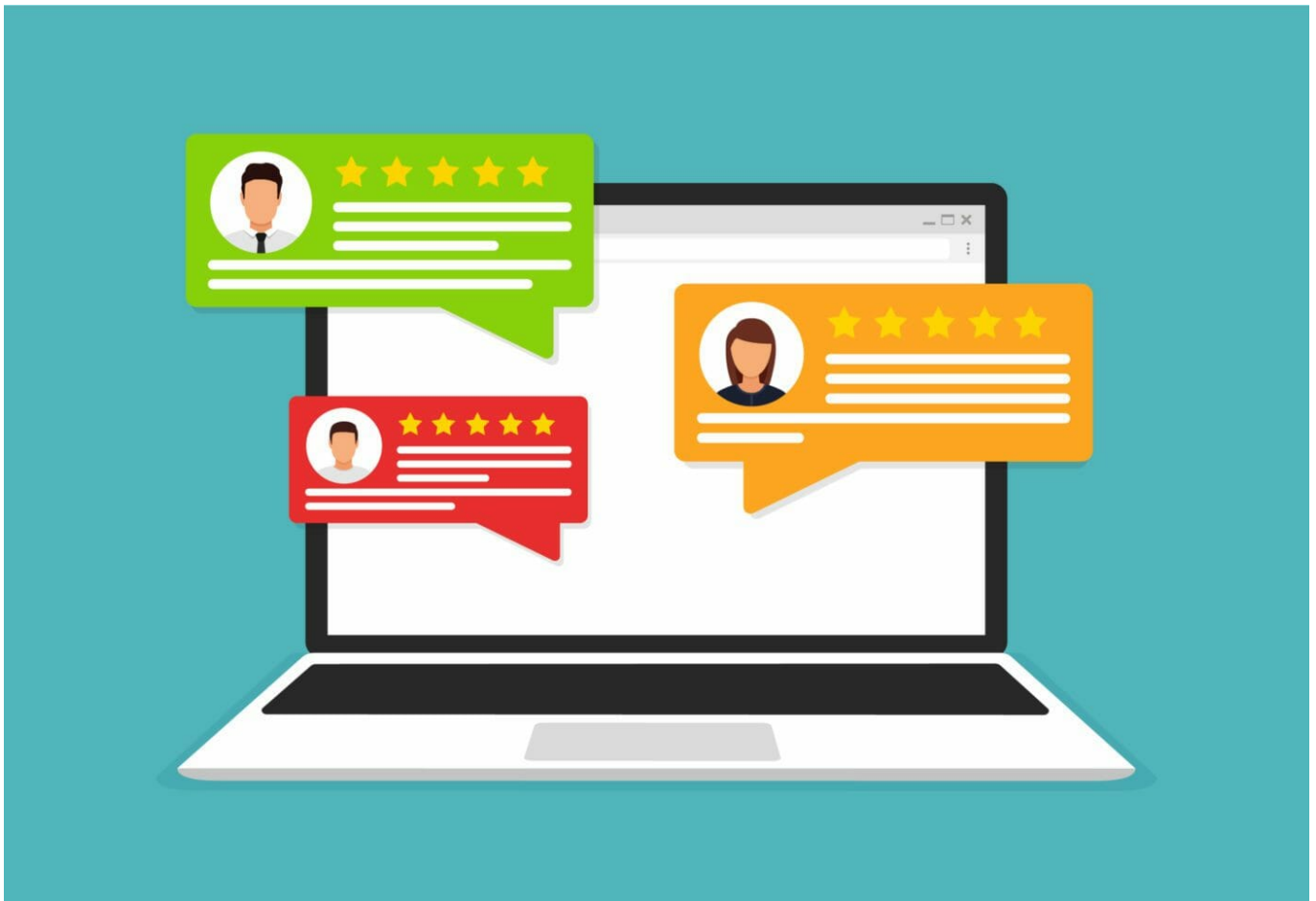


Customers Shouldn't Live with Experience - They Should Love It



Let's face it, it pays to get in touch with your customers' feelings. This is especially true in today's climate, where people and enterprises alike are "fleeing to safety," looking to minimize risk and simplify their world wherever possible. They also want to feel valued and looked after—and confident in every dollar they spend.

These are 2020's loyalty markers and you can't afford to ignore them.

[More than two-thirds of companies](#) have read the room and prioritized customer experience (CX), up from only 36% a decade ago. Leaders are propping up a new set of metrics including Net Promoter Score (NPS), social listening, customer satisfaction (CSAT), and referral rates. These are the indicators of future purchases and how your reputation will spread. You've probably heard the saying: "Happy customers tell three friends about you; unhappy customers tell 3,000."

Winning with modern customer experiences—those that come from being obsessed with your customers—isn't just good business, it's key to survival.

What Makes a Modern Customer Experience Modern?

Companies leading the pack have figured out how to innovate the customer journey by getting a handle on their data and figuring out how to use it. This gives them a better understanding of their customers, and clear insights into how their products and solutions are being used, so they can extend and personalize experiences proactively—far beyond the initial sale.

Brian Solis, global innovation evangelist at Salesforce, offered his take for the [Forbes CMO Network](#):

“Today, consumers are more connected, informed, and empowered than ever before. They expect information and services on-demand, and they increasingly expect personalized engagement regardless of channel. [They] value modern experiences that are seamless, efficient, and assistive across their devices. And many times, this is the deciding factor of which brand or product to purchase.”

Modern consumers have cars that can park themselves. They’re accustomed to search engines finishing their thoughts. And they install smart thermostats to help them save money (and the planet). They have spending on autopilot with subscriptions for everything from home security and identity-theft protection to clothing and coffee pods. They want digital interactions every step of the way, self-service, and instant responses.



“Reality is catching up with fiction, tech is catching up with expectations, and B2B is catching up to B2C.”

SHAWN ROSEMARIN

VP, WORLDWIDE SYSTEMS ENGINEERING | PURE STORAGE



Other pillars of modern CX include astonishing ease of use, environmental responsibility, deep integration between apps and services, personalization, and automation. This is how you surprise and delight: You proactively solve problems, intuit wants and needs, and let customers know you have their backs.

You also have to know your customers inside and out, which is where CX data points really start to multiply. Behaviors and preferences fluctuate widely across business segments and geographies, so tailoring customer experiences requires real-time listening, optimization, and experimentation. It also means harnessing all your innovation for customer-obsessed motives.

And you can’t do it without fast access to real-time telemetry data.

One company at the forefront of modern CX? Amazon. Of its core principles, the first mentioned is almost always customer obsession. CEO Jeff Bezos [has said](#) that it’s not enough to just listen to customers—you have to invent and innovate “on their behalf.”

GoDaddy is another example. They evolved web hosting from “necessity to strategic partnership.” Over a

decade ago, the company transformed itself to be ear-to-the-ground and customer-obsessed, prioritizing listening and experimentation. Even as it grew to host more than 62 million domains, the company has maintained a startup mentality to constantly adapt based on customer feedback.

GoDaddy's secret is a super-accelerated innovation cycle between data and development. The GoDaddy Customer Council transforms a constant flow of behavioral data into action items, which are delivered to the UX and dev teams in a matter of days. To respond with agility, the engineering department takes a modern, buy-over-build approach, leveraging microservice architectures and dev/test platforms as a service. This way, the team can rapidly release new features as soon as they get access to data and insights—innovating at the speed of life for an incredibly modern CX.

Prioritize CX Every Single Day—Long After the Sale

A modern CX needs to exist in perpetuity, extending long after the purchase date. While I understand that a salesperson's commission may be tied to the receipt of the purchase order, the real work is just getting started. Companies should consider the sale as the start of the experience. Yet, too many pull a disappearing act after the customer opens the box, installs the product, or downloads the app. It's a classic B2B pitfall—and a huge missed opportunity.

Great companies partner with their customers on a joint deliverable: getting the solution into production and delivering the committed value. For example, our technology partner VMware uses customer data in two ways to extend and modernize its CX. In addition to the real-time operational data collected for support and troubleshooting, VMware customers can opt into the [Customer Experience Improvement Program](#). This service delivers enhanced insights and recommendations on a by-customer basis so VMware's team can optimize installs, spot patterns, and help prioritize future product roadmaps. The data is shared cross-functionally with marketing and sales for extra context and support. It's the epitome of a vendor embracing a partnership for the long term.

Cloud-based human resources (HR), finance, and planning software company Workday also nails the relationship aspect of modern CX. The company lives and breathes customer feedback and adjusts offerings to grow and evolve with a customer's business. The company modernizes HR departments by putting B2C ease and innovation into B2B software, transforming disparate functions into value drivers. Workday is constantly improving products to best meet customers' needs, rather than locking them into an offering that can't grow with them. The company's customer satisfaction score? An amazing 97%¹.

At Pure Storage®, our Pure1® platform provides real-time access to more than 20,000 arrays across the globe. It not only powers our ability to provide proactive support but also feeds our Pure1 Meta® machine-learning model, which allows our customers to view their real-time consumption and model for future requirements. These insights go well beyond a traditional support model and are leading the way in helping customers solve for workload simulations and storage-class optimization.

The common thread here is that these businesses have revolutionized what they offer and how they offer it through modernization, proving that next-level experiences hinge on transformative thinking and better use of data.

Care About (And Be About) What Customers Value

Customer experience often plays out on a bigger stage, beyond the transaction. Really listening to your customers can do more than inform your relationship with them—it can inform how you contribute to the broader global community in a meaningful way.

Customer-centric companies typically balance four pillars, and the good ones care about them equally:

- Customer centricity
- Employee experience
- Innovation
- Environmental sustainability

The fourth is an interesting one, and to me, just the tip of the iceberg. But when it comes to environmental issues—[and how technology and utility companies can evolve to be more responsible contributors](#)—many companies are rising to the occasion.

Pure is passionate about transforming the old power-hungry data center into a more efficient and environmentally friendly operation. To that end, our technology is engineered to be next-generation smart and efficient, requiring less space, less cooling, and less power.

In challenging times and beyond, companies that live their customers' values and focus on doing better will foster relationships that last.

How We Do Modern CX at Pure

Modernization in the IT infrastructure space was long overdue when Pure came along. Our goal: to engineer the complexity out of storage, and liberate IT teams from menial tasks and headaches.

“Customers want services that grow and change as they do. We have heard loud and clear

that ease of use, interoperability, and a clear upgrade path drive long-term strategic relevance. We started a revolution in the category with our Evergreen model.”

Charles Giancarlo, CEO, Pure Storage

We also wanted to do this in the most affordable, convenient way possible. Pure is the only data storage vendor to offer all its core products as a service today, so you can pay as you go without worrying about over- or underprovisioning. Our Evergreen Storage™ model is an experience that [customers love](#)—simple, elegant, and always modern.

We started by asking “*What can completely modernize customer experience in the data center?*” That includes:

- **Ease of use:** Simplicity and ease-of-use are the hallmarks of Pure Storage, and these are things our competitors can’t touch. This includes all-inclusive software models, flat and fair maintenance pricing, and zero-touch remote installation options.
- **“Pay-as-you-go” convenience:** No hassle and simple contracts allow you to buy Pure as-a-Service™, paying only for what they need, when they need it, with full flexibility to consume block, file, or object storage, on-premises or in the cloud.
- **Always-new technology without disruption:** Our Evergreen subscription can be [as agile as you are](#). This means you never have to worry about data migrations or disruptive upgrades to your storage environment.

It’s a really exciting time to see how companies innovate to modernize their CX. How your modern CX looks will ultimately depend on who your customers are and what they want, but if you listen, you’ll get it right, and you’ll get results. In fact, [83% of companies](#) that believe in great customer experience grow revenue—proof that making your customers happy is the most modern thing you can do.

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1. <https://blog.workday.com/en-us/2017/news-highlights-from-workday-rising-executive-keynote.html>

