

# IS YOUR BUSINESS FAILING CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE 101?

FOLLOWING FIRTH  
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**MIP**

A SOCIAL SOLUTION IN A DIGITAL DIMENSION

For years, companies have been promoting the importance of customer experience (CX) in improving their performance. These days, entire departments are devoted to CX management, with many having evolved into digital experience management (DXM) in order to ensure that customers encounter seamless experiences across their preferred digital channels. And yet, thousands of companies are still dropping the ball in one of the most fundamental customer touchpoints: Email communication.

According to Gartner, 70% of businesses are prioritising digital experience improvements, driving a 20% increase in customer satisfaction. The Zendesk Customer Experience Trends Report 2023 found that 81% of business leaders see customer experience and support as growing priorities over the next year, proving that organisations see this as a differentiator in the marketplace. Why, then, do so many companies still have “do-not-reply@” at the front end of any of their email communications?

Either these organisations have overlooked this detail, which is doubtful when you consider that billions are spent every year on CX initiatives, or they don't intend for their customers to communicate back. If this is the case, companies are setting themselves up for long-term failure.



## Get with the digital age

Statista reports that 80% of consumers are more likely to make a purchase from brands offering personalised experiences. Zendesk's CX Trends Report found that 73% of consumers will switch to a competitor after multiple bad experiences. In other words, businesses that fail to prioritise CX can suffer from customer churn and lose business to competitors.

Any company that employs the "do-not-reply@" approach for email communications is effectively highlighting the fact that they are merely paying lip service to customer-centricity. This won't go unnoticed by an increasingly demanding customer base. Consumers have become so accustomed to the rich and intuitive digital experiences offered by CX leaders like MIP locally, Uber and Amazon internationally that they now expect to be able to interact with all companies in a similar manner. They are therefore starting to demand more positive, memorable experiences, and the pressure is mounting for businesses to meet their expectations.

Many business leaders have therefore invested heavily in modernising their call centres, which has helped to improve customer service. However, in many cases, digital interfaces also need modernising, and companies have to understand that their chat, mobile or web experience no longer merely serves to augment the sales process, but has become the primary sales process. This is very important when considering the impact that digital technology is having on the 5 stages of the buying journey; awareness, consideration, advocacy, retention and purchase. Awareness is no longer driven by what a sales broker tells a potential customer about their company or product during the sales process, in less than 60 seconds, the potential customer can get a social media profile of the company with customer experiences, quality and outcomes of the company! Any company hoping to survive, if not thrive, in today's business environment therefore has to understand the role digital plays in their ecosystem before they can understand customer engagement and customer experience. In fact, any digital experience is almost always a window into the organisation's overall business proposition, and is so tightly interdependent with all aspects of the business that it can't be assessed or optimised in isolation.

## Listening to customers

Customer feedback is at the heart of DXM. In order to identify and meet customer wants and needs, companies must dig into multiple engagement channels to gather and analyse the information provided by each individual that interacts with the business. While surveys, customer service logs and social media are the most common touchpoints used by businesses to inform their CX strategies, they can't afford to ignore email.

Allowing a customer to interact with the company through their preferred channels is CX 101, and any company forcing people to respond to their email communications through a different channel by effectively blocking a reply is basically a dinosaur, on its way to becoming extinct through a loss of customer support. Customers are not all created equal, and what is important to one segment may not necessarily be notable for another. Email should therefore not be ignored in favour of other digital experiences.



A multitude of analysts and research reports have made it clear that a customer-centric business model and mindset is the top brand differentiator for today's businesses. Companies should strive to deliver exceptional experiences, and as part of that, they need to align every touchpoint and channel with an optimal customer experience. The same way a person will always remember the tailor who happily completed a last-minute alteration for an important event, they will also remember a company that provided bad service and didn't bother to remedy the situation. Don't allow your organisation to become memorable for failing to provide something as simple as an easy way to respond to email communications.



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