

Seven ways to embed your EFM programme to drive sales

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Today's C-suite executives are familiar with customer feedback in ways that colleagues in previous eras could only dream of. They have measurement and management programs at their fingertips that allow them to actively manage the experience and, if done properly, to drive sales in an organisation.

Companies that have successfully harnessed these Enterprise Feedback Management programs to drive sales have done so under a broader vision of a commitment to customer experience, proving that collecting customer feedback alone is not enough to drive return on investment for these programs.

Why is that? Because success comes from ensuring that customer experience is understood and managed in the context of the overall business strategy. Successful companies see that it takes the combined forces of all parts of the organisation to optimise the customer experience. They see that strategy dictates investment decisions and priorities across a wide range of areas.



In short, a truly successful enterprise feedback management program is designed with the corporate strategy central to the program and has links to all the key functions of an organisation:

1. Link to C-Suite: Ensure senior leadership buys in to the concept. As with any corporate-wide program, support from the executive team will help to foster buy-in from across the organisation.
2. Link to corporate strategy: Use this to develop customer experience surveys so that managers are coaching to the desired interaction model, behaviours of staff and the experiences that are expected. While it appears obvious, not all organisations start with this in mind.
3. Link to omni-channel operations: While organisations are busy transforming operational delivery of the experience in an omni-channel world, customers have already moved on and are open to a new way of interacting with brands. In designing your customer surveys, think about journeys and not just interactions, putting yourself in your customers' shoes.
4. Link to brand messaging: Beware the Brand-Experience gap. There can be a disconnect between what is promised to the customer through marketing activities and what is being delivered to customers via the operations teams. The key

here is to recognise the difference, close the largest gaps and ensure that there are operational plans to support marketing plans, such as coupons and sales.

5. Link to training: Build any customer experience program into training and development protocols, including adapting and refining these as new opportunities are uncovered throughout the life cycle of a program. Ensure that skills needed to manage key customer experience issues are nurtured and measured.
6. Link to finance: Be smart about linking KPIs to compensation and do it in a way which drives the right behaviours across the business. Put sufficient weight behind the customer experience metric and balance with other key business metrics to drive the appropriate amount of attention.
7. Link to HR: Create Employee Engagement surveys alongside the customer survey. Use this to provide feedback that allows managers to understand how the customer is being served and how team engagement is driving this. Make sure to embed Employee Engagement within the same performance management platform.

The array of numbers, KPIs and initiatives that a manager needs to manage on a day to day basis can be daunting. In designing an enterprise feedback management program, it is critically important that the business recognises the complexity of this and develops a program which aids managers in driving a vision.

In developing your enterprise feedback management system, think broad and deep. Create real change by embedding your system to drive the overall business vision. This is what will provide executives with what they are looking for: a program that improves customer experience, drives strategy and increases sales.

Should you have any questions about this, please contact: ray.kong@ipsos.com

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