

# The brand advertiser's guide to CX improvements

Case studies and tactics for the evolution of customer journeys



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Brandwatch

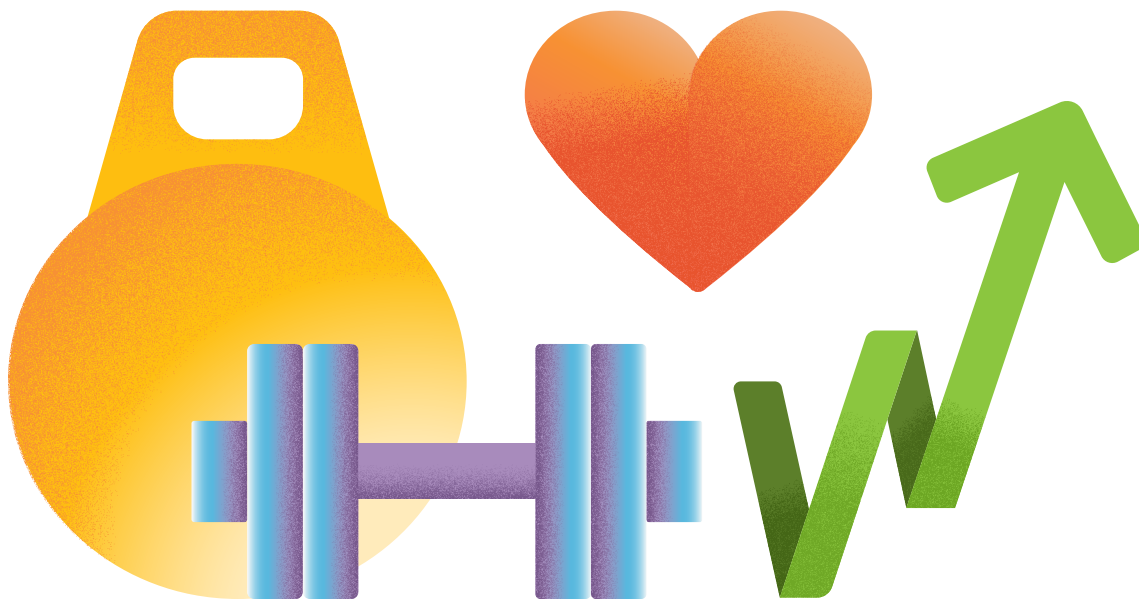
## The brand marketer's guide to CX improvement: Always-on tactics for the next generation of customer journeys

The most successful brands are continuously refining the customer experience (CX), whether it's a retailer seeking ways to improve their customers' online shopping experiences or an ad tech firm researching solutions to enhance client campaigns. Every brand has a unique approach to CX, derived from their industry sector, voice and many other factors. What's universal? The goal is to make audiences happy enough to rave about the brand online and extend the marketing team's reach.

Without attention to continual improvement – an always-on approach – marketers risk losing out to competitors

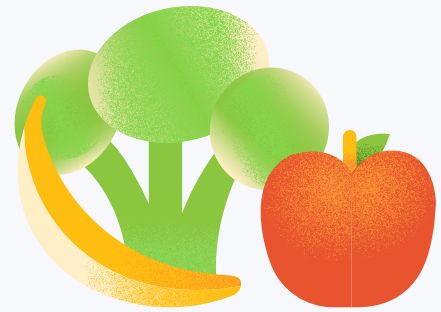
that are more tuned into the target audience's preferences and interests. To ensure customer satisfaction, brands are turning to CX improvement tactics tailored to each stage of the customer journey. They are building processes that can continually glean actionable insights from customer interactions. Without this constant feedback, brands will have difficulty keeping up with shifting customer journeys.

In this tactical guide, Digiday and Brandwatch present tactics for marketers that will help them create an always-on approach to improving customer experiences for years to come.



## Approaching CX with continual improvement in mind

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The CX is never static – it’s a dynamic relationship between customers and brands that can either attract and retain or alienate and lose audiences. This is where the notion of continuous improvement comes in: A brand’s CX must constantly be evaluated and modified to meet changing customer behaviors and preferences.

How do brands measure and track CX progress when every marketing team has its own set of KPIs, priorities and even definitions of engagement? What are the benchmarks, and who sets them, audits them and ensures that CX refinement is truly continual?

These questions highlight the paradoxical nature of continuous

improvement. Brands working on improving CX require a solid structure supporting their campaigns so they can track performance – whether it’s ad engagement, email opens or some other metric. Yet these strategies must also be flexible enough to adapt to ever-changing customer preferences and behaviors.

CX enhancements aren’t one-time campaign fixes; they’re processes requiring continual revisiting so they don’t become ineffective. Continual CX improvement demands marketers pay close attention to customer needs.

As Freya McAnally, senior content manager at Pets at Home, explained in an interview with Brandwatch and

Digiday, “We listen to our customers, and we create content across our channels that directly responds to their needs. We are also [listening] across trends and conversations – both within our industry and from a more cultural and seasonal point of view – to ensure that we feel useful and relevant as a brand.”

As McAnally notes, brands remain relevant by creating experiences that resonate with customers’ concerns, which are constantly changing. The insights from these interactions can serve as the foundation for CX applications and processes such as personalization, automation and accessibility frameworks.

## Tactics and insights

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Successful CX teams extend their focus beyond industry channels and look for customer sentiment and preferences based on cultural and seasonal factors.

Once the CX team takes in customer interaction information, this data can be directed at applications and processes such as personalization, automation and accessibility.

Brands focusing on CX improvement continually listen to customers, ensuring their CX strategies resonate with audiences.

## Utilizing social media to refine the customer journey

Social media is one of the most effective tools for improving CX. The data gleaned from these digital interactions can help brands gain a more comprehensive understanding of their audiences, including insights into the type of products they're searching for, the content formats that resonate with them, the offers they're most likely to claim and more.

Many brands use analytics tools to collect social data. These platforms can provide marketers with behavioral insights such as ads clicked, posts shared and relevant keywords used. This information powers social media marketing campaigns.

However, a growing number of brands are employing increasingly in-depth approaches to gain contextual insights from their audiences. For instance, McAnally and her social media team regularly review social data to inform

their content marketing efforts and further refine the customer journey.

"We use data to inform our content planning process," she said. "We get together as a team every quarter and review customer insight and search trends and feed this into all our content creation and campaigns. We also review other data sources daily to ensure we are aware of key trends and topics of conversation within our social communities so we can respond accordingly."

Those data sources include social media.

In partnership with Brandwatch, Pets at Home developed specific panels that categorized lists of authors from various social media platforms, generating insights into the topics they were discussing. Serving as digital focus groups, analyzing the panels made it easier for the two teams to identify

trends among different demographics, replacing outdated modes of audience analysis. Instead of limiting groups to restrictive categories such as age and gender, this tactic allowed Pets at Home to pinpoint the motivations of consumers across all kinds of groups, segmenting their audience by interest, profession or a given topic.

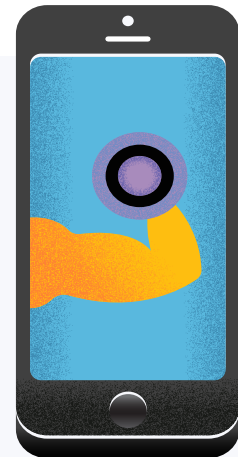
Brandwatch and Pets at Home could also find relevant chatter by searching for a specific social media query within public conversations in their panels. Insights could then be drawn manually and with the help of artificial intelligence.

In the end, leveraging the social data gleaned from the panels provided a comprehensive view of the CX data. This enabled the teams to build agility into their responses to customer feedback while prioritizing response time.

## Tactics and insights

Reviewing social data from multiple sources informs content marketing efforts and further refines the customer journey.

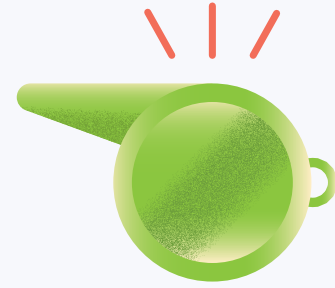
Marketers use social panels – categorized lists of social media audiences – to find trends and commonalities among demographic groups.



## Cases and learnings from CX teams

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The following examples come from three of Brandwatch's partners that enhanced campaign performance with CX improvement.



### Crafting engaging customer experiences

Skincare and beauty brand Glossier brought their social media and customer experience teams together to allocate CX responsibilities more effectively across each channel. These teams used a social management suite to gain visibility

into internal processes and capitalize on their growing audience. Through these processes, Glossier has offered an engaging space for customers, eventually seeing a 1,002% increase in new fans across social channels.

"I think people are excited to hear from brands that they like," said Courtney Carmona, Glossier's gTEAM editor. "It makes people feel more connected. If you're meeting people where they're at, that makes them feel comfortable."

### Leveraging social data to improve the customer journey

Monzo, an online banking company, has unlocked significant value with its social media data. Monzo's team uses social listening tools to answer many critical brand questions: Who is talking about the brand? What are they saying?

What are the most popular trends in the industry? The insights drawn from these audiences help this brand extract meaning from social data.

"I find this area of where data meets storytelling really interesting," said Richard Cook, Monzo's social media manager. "Not only is this data possible to measure, but we can actually do stuff with it – we can tell a story with it."

## Tactics and insights

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When social media and CX teams collaborate across channels, they unlock cross-department insights into audiences. Those insights drive engagement.

Data is not only a targeting tool, or an avenue to optimization; social listening generates insights that empower brands to tell stories that stem from the customers they serve.

## Activating customer feedback to create better CX

The data collected from websites, apps and social media is invaluable, but it's often difficult to synthesize everything when it comes to numerous sources, especially customer feedback. The challenge is that customers respond differently depending on their specific touchpoint: A buyer leaving feedback on a product review site will more likely leave a lengthier message than a user responding to a social media poll. Bringing these disparate data pieces together is not a simple task.

For marketers responding to this challenge, sentiment and emotion analysis comes into play. These tactics help teams categorize customer feedback into positive, negative and neutral segments from any platform or device. Extracting subjective information

from the message's text itself helps marketers better understand the audience's experience at each stage of the customer journey.

While sentiment analysis focuses on extracting the general feelings from customer responses (the words, emojis and other markers used), emotion analysis goes deeper by considering more complex audience feelings. These always-on solutions can help brands engage with customer feedback more meaningfully.

A brand's ability to prevent customer responses from disrupting CX is the key to activating feedback. Marketing teams like McAnally's are testing strategies that allow quick responses without affecting these experiences.

"It's important to split out 'customer service' queries that come in via social – and for these to sit and be managed by customer service specialists," she said. "It's also important to have the ability to scale up (whether that be internally or through a third party) for any crisis management. A separate team is then needed to manage all the content creation and calendar to build a relationship with your social community through engaging, useful and relevant content."

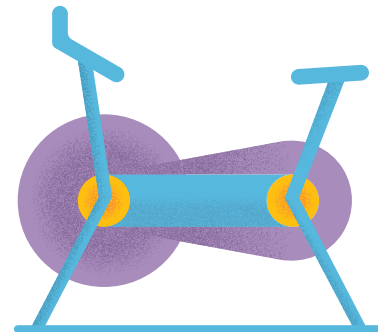
Successful CX relies on seamless brand interactions. When these are sustained, brands will have more opportunities to connect with customers.

## Tactics and insights

Even with a wealth of CX data, brands may have difficulty synthesizing the information without the proper analysis processes and tools.

Not all feedback is equal, so marketers must look into how people respond on different platforms and how best to connect with them.

Sentiment and emotion analysis helps marketers understand audience perceptions and respond to feedback more effectively.



## Identifying CX improvement resources

Simply implementing these strategies and processes won't be enough to improve CX if brands lack resources or necessary technologies. Even large companies can only rely on brand recognition and their current audience for so long.

Improving CX requires resources and expertise many companies lack, especially those brands still migrating to digital spaces. That's why many companies are looking for partners to help activate these tactics and ensure CX improves at each touchpoint.

There isn't a one-size-fits-all solution for CX improvement, so brands should first highlight the issues they've identified during the social panel and feedback data analysis. Then they can share these insights with potential brand partners to find those with the resources for which they're looking.

Whether it's a mobile website issue, a lack of personalization in marketing emails or something else entirely, teams need to identify which areas of CX need the most help and prioritize those that will impact the bottom line. However, brands must also be sure potential

partners are aligned with their CX goals. This will help avoid wasting time and money on tasks with little to no impact on CX improvement. In addition, the partnership should allow for a significant amount of transparency to make collaboration easier and build trust.

Customer preferences, impressions and behaviors are constantly changing. If CX isn't keeping up with these trends, brands will have difficulty creating sustainable audiences. Successful marketers are investing time, money and effort into CX partners and resources to increase engagement for years to come.

## Tactics and insights

Many brands lack the resources and expertise to bring their CX strategies to fruition, so they're looking for external solutions to fill in the gaps.

To help activate campaigns, brands are turning to partnerships to improve CX via personalization, automation and accessibility tactics.

Brand partners must align with campaign goals to avoid wasted time, money and CX resources.



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