MINDBODY WHITE PAPER

How to Build and Improve Customer Experience

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When was the last time you had a really great customer experience? Chances are, you remember it because of how it made you feel. That's because customer experience considers every impression and perception—from how you learn about a business, to the sounds and smells that greet you, to the way you think about the experience afterwards. While customer service describes only certain touchpoints or interactions between you and a business, customer experience represents your entire journey with them.

But what makes customer experience so important? For one thing, due to social media and online reviews, customers today are much more empowered. They can share or tweet anything about their experience, making it critical for businesses to be consistent and to get each touchpoint right. In addition, an excellent customer experience directly correlates with increased revenue. According to McKinsey, "companies offering an exceptional customer experience can exceed the gross margins of their competitors by more than 26 percent." [1]

This short guide dives into some ways to build and improve customer experience—so you can create the kind of lasting impressions that help your business thrive.

01 Consider every part of the customer journey (and sweat the details).

Put yourself in your customers' shoes and walk through every step they take with you. Audit with a fine-tooth comb, because—as you know from being a customer yourself—all it takes is one negative aspect to outweigh all the positive ones. As A.T. Kearney concludes: "Achieving high customer satisfaction scores depends on doing absolutely nothing wrong, and doing some things exceptionally well." Think about ways to stand out from other businesses in your industry. At which touch points can you offer something exceptional?

Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- **Be visible and inviting.** Before customers arrive at your door, you want to make a great first impression. This means not only making it easy for customers to find you online (there's nothing more frustrating than an out-of-date phone number or address), but also getting them excited about your business. Review your website and social media pages for aesthetics and simplicity. Add photos of your space, descriptions of services, information about your staff and publicise events or workshops that might attract people.

- **Create and curate your physical space.** Walk through your business and look at it as a customer would, making note of everything you see, hear, touch and smell. Consider the temperature, lighting and colours in each room. Do you want to play music or fill the air with aromas? Take a look at the furniture and other items in each space, and if they don't enhance the customer experience, consider removing them. Keep in mind that each customer will have different preferences, and try to make choices that accommodate all customers while still creating a unique space.

- **Give a little, get a little.** Your customer experience provides a wealth of opportunities to go above and beyond. What's something special you can offer your customers at some point during their journey with you? Complimentary water, tea or snacks after a session? Soft towels as they arrive? Give something extra and your customers will likely remember your gesture, and reward you with loyalty.

Quick tip:

"By taking the time to plan out an effective customer experience strategy, you're already ahead of the game. According to Econsultancy, "only 20% of companies have a well developed strategy."[3]

**02** Use technology to enhance customer experience (not create it).

We hear a lot of talk about technology replacing humans, but when it comes to customer experience, nothing takes the place of personal interaction. A 2009 study found that the most requested customer service improvement was "Better Human Service."[4] This means that when developing a customer experience strategy, you don't want to rely on technology to generate or own the experience. Think of ways to improve your customer experience through the use of technology.
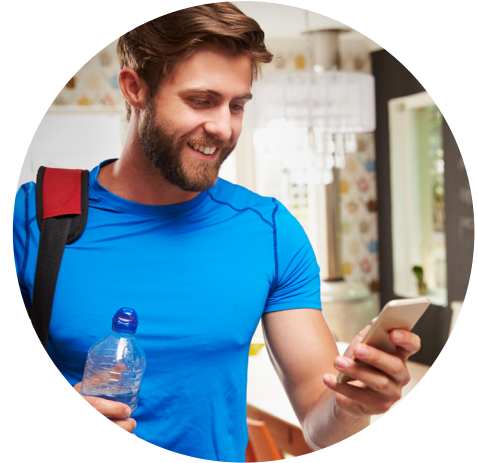
Here are some tips:

- **Use a sign-in system that lets you focus on your customers.** Avoid chaos at the front desk by using technology to speed up the sign-in process. This way, you spend less time staring at a screen and more time catching up with your customers. Check out Class Check-in by MINDBODY.

- **Allow your customers to book online or through an app.** If there's one thing that customers appreciate, it's freedom. Online booking lets your customers take charge of their schedules and book from anywhere, at any time. With the MINDBODY app, they can do it all in just a few taps.

- **Be efficient, but not at the cost of personal attention.** It's actually possible to be too efficient. Customers don't want to feel rushed or that they're just a number. If technology helps you hustle through transactions, make sure to slow down for some genuine interaction.

Improving customer experience doesn't happen overnight. It's important to continually measure how you're doing through surveys and checking in. Investing the time and resources to work on your customer experience is well worth it—because a happier customer journey means a healthier business.
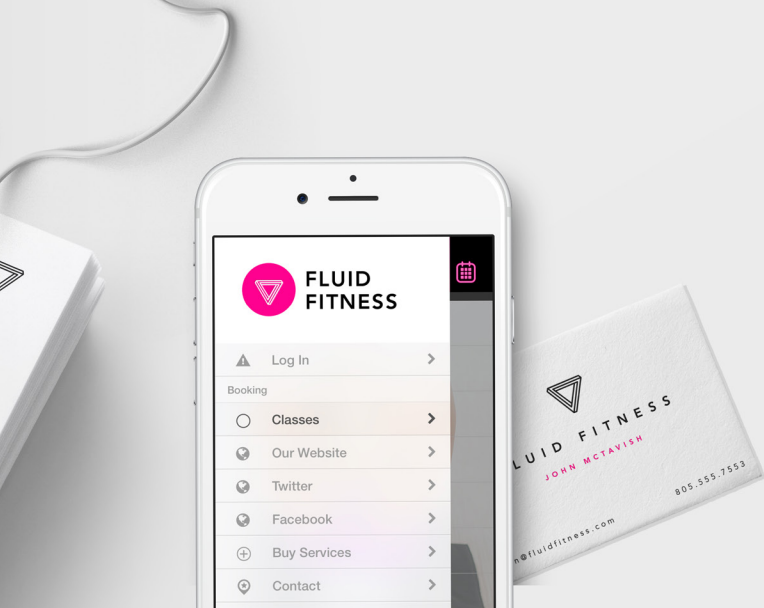
ENGAGE
BY MINDBODY™

Enhance your customers' experience by putting your business—and brand—in their hands. With a custom app in the App Store and Google Play, you can wow your customers and build ongoing relationships with them.

To learn how MINDBODY can help with building customer experience, call us at 1800 082 989 or learn more about MINDBODY at https://au.mindbodyonline.com/overview.

[1]"Customer experience: Creating value through transforming customer journeys," McKinsey & Company, January 2016.

[2]"How to Create an Entirely Different(iated) Customer Experience," A.T. Kearney.

[3]"Just 20% of companies have a well developed customer experience strategy" Econsultancy, Oct 17, 2013.

[4]"The Cost of Poor Customer Service," Genesys, Nov 2009.