

TOASTMASTER®

**How to create a
customer-centric club culture**

UNDERSTANDING



Features



16

PRESENTATION TECHNOLOGY

From Monologue to Dialogue: Inviting Audience Interaction

Use tools and technologies to earn instant feedback from listeners.

By Lars Sudmann



22

CLUB EXPERIENCE

Give Members and Guests a Compelling CX

How well does your club deliver an outstanding (C) customer (X) experience?

By Craig Harrison, DTM

Articles

12

PATHWAYS

THE PATH TO DYNAMIC LEADERSHIP

Learn to manage change and lead your team to success.

By Shaelyn Berg

14

MEMBERSHIP BUILDING

BUILD THE CLUB YOU WANT

Decide how many members to recruit. Then go find them!

By Ryan Urie

20

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

HANDHELD HELP: APPS FOR SPEAKERS

Try these tools to help eliminate filler words, practice pacing and ease anxiety.

By Dave Zielinski



Give Members
and Guests a
Compelling



How well does your club deliver an outstanding (C) customer (X) experience?

BY CRAIG HARRISON, DTM

The power and immediacy of the internet has elevated user expectations and emphasized delivery and delight like never before. In a world fraught with short attention spans and adults desiring instant gratification in every field, the smart providers are accommodating this urgency and desire.

As Toastmasters, we can learn from the world of marketing to create great customer experiences during each meeting. Guests and members are likely to respond most favorably to club experiences that offer personal value, enjoyment and absorbing connections.

Introducing Customer Experience (CX)

An evolution has occurred. Where once customer service—serving customers transactionally—was the standard, today the focus is on providing powerful customer experiences through immersive products and services designed from the perspective of customers. Depending on the field, customers may be called clients, shoppers, students, guests, patients or—in Toastmasters—current and future club members. Guess what? They all desire an experience! And Toastmasters clubs that provide great experiences are leading the field.

In today's economy, "the experience is the brand," proclaims Ruby Newell-Legner, founder of 7 Star Service, a consulting company in Denver, Colorado. As a fan-experience expert whose client list includes professional sports franchises, amusement parks and resorts worldwide, Newell-Legner helps organizations understand and design their processes *from their patrons'* experience, "turning every customer into a fan." That, in a nutshell, is what customer experience is all about.

While Newell-Legner helps clients form fan-experience councils to delight and deliver, Toastmasters clubs have a built-in council—their seven-person officer team.

By studying every aspect of a club's guest and member experience, officers learn how best to seamlessly transition guests into members, leaders and mentors. Newell-Legner uses the example of a relay race, in which runners take the baton in a flawless hand-off. In this scenario, club guests and members are deftly ushered in and acculturated into the meeting and club experience. It's all about connection. As officers, what connections are you creating through your guests' and members' experiences?

Newell-Legner speaks from experience. A past president of the National Speakers Association and a Certified Speaking Professional, she cites the uncertainty of being a first-timer in any new environment and the fear that may accompany it. She encourages clubs to design events that engage, excite and inspire participants.

Drawing on the Disney Approach

"Companies in other fields spoil us by giving us such high levels of service and great experiences. Our own customers now expect the same," says Steve Cohn, a Toastmaster, certified customer experience professional and director of learning for Strativity. The company specializes in experience design and transformation. Companies like Disney, Southwest Airlines, Zappos and other customer-experience pioneers have trained us that we *can* have it our way, be the center of the universe and often receive responses, updates and delight instantaneously. Their secret, according to Cohn? "They create

Your club's
CX goal: Walk
a mile in their shoes,
so you can enhance
the experience for
guests and
members.



Introducing Two Additional Competitors: WOW and NOW

Today's guests looking for a club want it all NOW and they also want, and expect, to be WOWed. Your club's magic formula for attracting new guests and future members: Provide NOW and WOW to woo and win them over.

Shoppers today use smart devices, such as cellphones, watches and tablets, to find what they want to wear, eat and experience. That's also how they seek public speaking help. And they may be shopping 24/7. Can you NOW and WOW these prospective members? Your club's future success depends on it. The club that's easiest to find, most responsive and consistently engaging often wins the competition for membership.

a customer-centric environment." At every turn they ask, "Is it good for the customer?" and design, or redesign, accordingly.

Cohn believes Toastmasters clubs can similarly nurture members and visitors by applying the "Disney approach" of managing guest experiences. Disney, he says, always asks *What happens here? And then what happens? And then what else happens? What if it's oppressively hot? What if it rains?* Every contingency is game-planned in advance to benefit guests, because the show must go on, Cohn explains.

Borrowing from the Disney philosophy can help clubs avoid what Cohn calls "service roulette," where meaningful interactions and "aha" moments are simply left to chance. Consistently high-performing clubs assign roles, set agendas, plan for fun and engagement, and use a full-circle approach to deftly integrate guests and new members into club culture.

Designers of great customer experiences analyze touchpoints between organizations and customers, and they use the data to plot customer reactions. Similarly, tools like Toastmasters' *Moments of Truth* let clubs analyze many aspects of guest and member interactions. Your club's goal: Walk a mile in their shoes, so you can enhance the experience for guests and members.

Whether you observe other clubs for ideas or interview your club's guests and members, you'll gather valuable insight. With this insight in hand, develop and implement improved processes to create engaging, fun and fruitful experiences for meeting participants.

The How of WOW

WOW begins when customer expectations are exceeded, and the real WOW happens when the delight occurs. Don't presume all WOW requires seismic events. The right touch at the right time may be all it takes. For example, a stranger calls to announce a visit to your next meeting. Upon arrival, they find a guest badge with their name pre-printed on it. That's a simple WOW that conveys your club's attention to detail and hospitality.

Simply Speaking Toastmasters in Aurora, Colorado, sets up the WOW with technology to capitalize on a guest's immediate excitement and engagement with the club.

"We electronically on-board—from check-in to sign-up—new members within 24 hours, no exceptions," explains Will Robinson, Ph.D., DTM, club president. Often, the initial excitement of a first club visit is channeled into joining that night. Upon doing so, the newcomers "get their confirmation email quickly and discover Pathways, and we are able to see that enthusiasm of signing up continue," Robinson explains. Then other officers take the baton to schedule roles, identify goals and usher new members into a mentoring and accountability-partnership process.

"Sell your club strengths through dynamic images ... Share it. Tweet it. Pin it."

New Laws of Attraction

Never have so many generations worked side by side in the workplace. Your club's membership likely mirrors this reality. It's important to understand that each generation has different goals, motivations, preferences and approaches to joining

organizations. Yet this can make for a more vibrant and attractive club.

"If you create an experience—one that melds education with entertainment, learning with laughter—people want to repeat it. If you don't, there are too many options for today's young professionals," asserts Scott McKain, a sales and customer service expert and author of *All Business Is Show Business*.

McKain notes that, contrary to popular belief, "Younger generations often *are* joiners, though their approach may be to get in, learn and get out." He reminds leaders that millennials and subsequent generations are devoted to causes. If skills developed through Toastmasters can help them support these causes, that's attractive.

#GettingMoreSocial

Sell your club strengths through dynamic images, video clips of live action or testimonial success stories. Share it. Tweet it. Pin it. Upload or post vibrant collateral materials to sites frequented by your prospective club members, whether online or in local business incubators, cafés, libraries, business parks or co-working spaces.

For current generations who grew up in the digital age, it's said, "If you don't post it to social media it didn't happen!" Savvy clubs enable guests and members alike to post images and short videos from club meetings to share their excitement at attending, giving a speech and drawing applause.

Ron Kaufman of Singapore, author of *Uplifting Service* and 14 other books on customer service, knows the litmus test for younger generations, who are rapid joiners but leave just as quickly if their needs aren't met. "They'll stay as long as they find value, meaning, enjoyment, purpose, social engagement and identity in their Toastmasters experience," he says.

Kaufman suggests catering to the newest generation entering the professional ranks by recognizing their desire for an Instagram photo, fun Facebook video or Snapchat post about their Toastmasters experience. Today's twentysomethings are more prone to group activities, so encourage meeting guests to bring friends, which can lead to extensive sharing on social media. Make sure your club has a visual setup, such as a branded banner, lectern and backdrop. This makes it easy for guests to validate their stellar experiences on global platforms.

Tell Your Own Story

As members, we know the transformational power of the Toastmasters experience. Each of us has a success story that is more persuasive than any tagline or web banner. The credibility and sincerity of member sharing is an impressive selling point.

"Prospective members don't get it by osmosis," says McKain. "Leaders, mentors and all club members need to keep telling their

"Leaders,
mentors and
all club members
need to keep telling their
success stories about the
difference Toastmasters
has made in their
careers and lives!"

—SCOTT MCKAIN

success stories about the difference Toastmasters has made in their careers and lives!"

McKain continues, "Data is important. Evidence is essential. A compelling story can be a vehicle that links the data of how people improve their lives because of membership with Toastmasters!"

When members candidly describe the organization's transformational impact, prospects can't help but be impressed and inspired by what's possible for them. Hearing that you conquered your fears, found your voice and leveraged newfound confidence is music to their ears. Your track record substantiates your story: of how you broke into management, changed jobs or careers, were elected to public office or formed a new nonprofit with an assist from your Toastmasters training. Who wouldn't want a similar return on investment for themselves?

Service Benchmarking

Traditionally, organizations scouted their direct competitors to stay relevant and competitive. Yet we're seeing inspiration and innovation from service leaders worldwide that can be adapted to one's own field or industry. CX experts like McKain and Newell-Legner encourage Toastmasters to search broadly for CX best practices to entice and engage members who ultimately become passionate fans of the Toastmasters experience.

Learn from the fervent loyalty of Harley-Davidson and Apple customers. Learn from the local yoga studio how create a fun, healthy and nurturing culture. Your club doesn't have to operate like an amusement park to give devotees meaningful memories.

Are you ready to transform your club into an experiential learning lab that produces WOW moments as it transforms timid communicators and tentative leaders into confident professionals?

Design meetings and club culture in a customer-centric way and watch your members and guests flourish. **T**

Craig Harrison, DTM, is a past district governor and member of Silicon Valley ImprovMasters in San Jose, California. He is the principal of www.ExpressionsOfExcellence.com and author of *Stellar Service! Merge Now with Wow to Create Customers for Life*.



How to Design and Deliver *GREAT* Customer Experiences (CX)



CUSTOMER SERVICE IS DEAD! (RIP)

Delivering customer *service* isn't good enough.

In today's experience economy, your customers, clients and constituents crave memorable **CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES (CX)**!

Are you delivering memorable...or mundane experiences? Your competitors get it, and *give* it! If you aren't, you're just "renting" your customers.

Changing Expectations

Regardless of your industry, your customers' expectations are being raised by leaders in hospitality, travel, healthcare, entertainment and high-tech. They are already delivering great **CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES**. You know them by reputation: Disney, Zappos, IDEO, Harley-Davidson, Nordstrom, Starbucks, Square and Paypal, among others. Now your customers know them too and the great experiences they create for customers.

It's time you analyze your operation from your customers' point of view. What's their user experience? Is it instinctive? Efficient? Pleasing? Fun? Or is it frustrating, inefficient or unnecessarily complicated?

Success By Design

Your goal: to create great customer experiences... using Design Thinking as popularized by IDEO and Stanford's d.school institute of design. Once you understand *touch points*, create *journey maps* of your customers' experiences, employ empathy and walk a mile in your customers' shoes you can conceive of fresher, more powerful ways to create great customer experiences. That builds loyalty, leads to repeat business, referrals and great word of mouth marketing.



Learning Objectives

- ▶ Understand the customer experience revolution and how it applies to your enterprise
- ▶ Create powerful touch points that reinforce your organization's values, bringing smiles to your clients
- ▶ Audit your customer experience through creation of journey maps to identify new ways to WOW and NOW your customers.
- ▶ Listen with empathy to learn valuable insights from your customers to improve your alignment to their needs, creating customers for life.

How The Presentation Is Delivered

Videos, slides, stories and case studies from CX leaders will inspire you. Design thinking concepts help you conceive of new and natural ways to create and enhance CX for your clientele.

About Your Presenter

CRAIG HARRISON is past president of the INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMER SERVICE ASSOCIATION of San Francisco-Silicon Valley, and the NATIONAL SPEAKERS ASSOCIATION's northern Calif. chapter.

His clients include UNITED AIRLINES, HILTON HOTELS, US ARMY, PFIZER, HLC HOME LOANS CANADA (CIBC), CITY OF SAN JOSE, THE SALVATION ARMY, NOLO.COM, SF-CVB and HITACHI AMERICA. His articles have appeared in *Support World*, *Selling Power* and *Executive Excellence*, and his book *Stellar Service!* and popular tips booklets help front-line employees, supervisors and leaders serve with distinction.

Craig@7jbdw@aAXjUWWUom



(510)
547-
0664

