

# Bring Brand To Life With Customer Journeys

Your Brand Promise Is Empty Unless Brand-Infused Customer Journeys Make It A Reality

by Joana van den Brink-Quintanilha

June 5, 2018

## Why Read This Report

To differentiate, companies must create resonance between brand and customer experience (CX) at every step of customers' journeys — but often don't. The result: brand promises that remain unfulfilled — and customer journeys that are less distinctive than they could be. This document explains the six essentials for overcoming this problem so that CX pros (and their colleagues responsible for the brand) can help steer their companies in the right direction.

## Key Takeaways

### **Brands Live (Or Die) Through Journeys**

7-Eleven, Metro Bank, and Virgin Atlantic design customer journeys to specifically fulfill their brand promise.

### **Journeys Often Miss The Brand's Promise**

Many companies fail to seize the opportunity to make the brand promise real through their customers' journeys.

### **To Align Journeys With The Brand, CX Pros Must Focus On Six Essentials**

CX pros can help ensure customer journeys make the brand real by designing them based on the right approach to: 1) story; 2) emotion; 3) tone; 4) memory; 5) technology; and 6) fluidity.

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## Brand-Infused Customer Journeys Drive Differentiation

Firms like 7-Eleven, Metro Bank, and Virgin Atlantic differentiate by ensuring that their customers' journeys — goal-oriented customer scenarios — are designed to deliver on the expectations set by the brand. How? They know their brand promise and weave it into the customers' journey as it unfolds. By cultivating this resonance between brand and CX, they:

- › **Make the brand promise real.** Focusing on customer journeys helps companies find customer-relevant ways they can surface the brand in the context of what people are doing, thinking, and feeling.

Convenience store chain 7-Eleven worked with T3 to identify what the agency calls “brand-defining utility — the most concrete representation of the brand promise in action.” For 7-Eleven, that promise is “giving the customers what they want, when and where they want it.” 7-Eleven designed its app — an important touchpoint in many of its customer journeys — so customers can, in less than a minute and while holding a cup of coffee, find stores and redeem points for food and drinks. Metro Bank, too, promises service and convenience in its domain. It makes that brand promise real by giving employees permission to look for ways to “kill all the stupid bank rules,” extending opening hours, and enabling customers to open an account — a key customer journey — in 15 minutes and walk out with a debit card in hand.

- › **Build trust through consistent interactions.** To build trust, smart companies reconfirm the brand promise time and again by delivering on it consistently across multiple journeys and interactions — some in parallel and some in sequence.

BMO verified the importance of reconfirming through consistency its brand promise of “helping people achieve their goals,” by tracking performance across macrojourneys like buying a home as well as microjourneys like paying a bill or resetting a password. BMO found that mortgage applicants who bump up against an underperforming or negative other journey at the same time are four times more likely to abandon that mortgage journey.<sup>1</sup> Patagonia builds its own promise of “building the best product, causing no unnecessary harm, using business to inspire and implement solutions to the environmental crisis” into journeys: Customers find the gear designed for durability in the first place, benefit from Patagonia's tips on how to make the gear last, and get to buy and sell used Patagonia garments through its Worn Wear program.<sup>2</sup>

- › **Create positive memories through peak moments.** To drive re-engagement, firms must keep their customers aware of their brands, which requires that experiences be memorable, and that means designing emotionally distinctive moments into customer journeys.

Virgin Atlantic, for example, turns seat-back entertainment into a proper movie experience, serving ice cream during the show to deliver on its promise to make flying fun.<sup>3</sup> IKEA's journeys counter the predictable friction that arises from navigating a massive parking lot or the tortuous path through the store with peak moments of satisfaction. For example, it gives certain especially widely desirable items what it calls a “gasp price” — so affordable that it takes customers' breath away.

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It builds immersive in-store experiences that help customers envision its products in their homes. It spares families the stress of shopping with bored kids in tow by offering the Småland creche for kids. It sells ice cream and hot dogs at the end of the journey right after checkout.<sup>4</sup> What's going on? IKEA is making the most of the behavioral economics research finding known as the peak-end rule: People's judgment of an experience is the average of how they felt at two moments: 1) the most intense (the peak) and 2) the last (the end).

- › **Elevate experiences from utilitarian to aspirational.** Customers are increasingly motivated not only by practical, short-term goals ("research my mortgage options") but also by loftier, long-term goals without immediate benefit to them ("find environmentally and socially responsible investment options").<sup>5</sup> Forrester calls these customers values-based consumers.<sup>6</sup>

Years into its CX transformation, utility company E.ON realized that fixing CX basics by doing smart things like cutting bills to a single page wasn't enough to keep driving up its Net Promoter Score (NPS).<sup>7</sup> So, the brand and CX teams revisited the customer journey to tackle larger experience drivers like reputation, which, in markets like Sweden, is closely tied to corporate social responsibility. This led the joint team to launch "Sweden's largest energy experiment." Ten thousand participants received an app that connected to their home to monitor power usage. The team prototyped ways for participants to visualize their energy use and then cocreated collateral based on customers' own energy-saving tips. By the end of the experiment, participants had lowered energy consumption by 12%, NPS was moving up again, and E.ON had fresh insight into a key driver of its brand value — sustainability.<sup>8</sup>

- › **Become even more differentiated when the whole ecosystem manifests the brand.** When CX pros take this approach beyond customer journey maps and also apply it to ecosystem maps, including employee journey maps, they enhance the way frontline and back-office employees and partners deliver on the brand promise.

Companies like Virgin Atlantic invest in the employee journey: The pre-check-in environment for its crew simulates the clubhouse lounge that its passengers experience, for example. This helps make sure the crew is in the right mood to deliver on the brand's promise of a human, fun, and uncommon journey.<sup>9</sup> Software company Adobe is weaving its creative design tool reputation into reimagining its office space to spark cross-functional working — with "create" spaces that foster ideation, "solve" spaces that help employees make prototypes, and "decide" spaces to select solutions that best fit goals, objectives, and values.<sup>10</sup>

### Firms Lack Discipline When It Comes To Aligning Brand And CX Along The Journey

Few companies keep brand and CX in harmony, and few examine each touchpoint in the customer journey with enough rigor to manifest the brand promise effectively. Because of this lack of discipline, many companies:

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- › **Fail to weave the brand promise into customer journeys at all.** Retail store Mango promises to “dress the modern, urban woman for her daily needs.” Part of that promise is offering free store returns to online shoppers. However, shoppers can only return products to stores that sell the collection they wish to exchange or return, leaving customers holding the bag for how to navigate a cross-touchpoint transaction. The unfortunate outcome? An anxious customer and a missed opportunity to make the brand promise of hassle-free returns real.<sup>11</sup> To live up to its brand promise of “making guests feel brilliant through a great night’s sleep,” Premier Inn had to spend millions of pounds on sound proofing and air conditioning for thousands of old rooms that didn’t measure up.<sup>12</sup>
- › **Don’t measure brand perception across customer journeys and the life cycle.** Many firms myopically rely on channel- or touchpoint-specific metrics — about website or call center operations, for example — to gauge performance. And even among those that take a more customer-centric view, marketing and CX often focus on different stages of the life cycle when it comes to measurement: Marketing teams focus on the prepurchase phases (discover, explore, and buy), while CX teams focus on what happens afterward (the use, ask, and engage phases).<sup>13</sup> Marketing and insights teams are often focused on short-term goals like conversion rather than how interactions shrink or grow customer lifetime value (CLV). This is a problem because multiple minor problems in multiple journeys add up to friction that can become major enough to cause abandonment.

One media company found that most of its departing customers weren’t fed up with any single unpleasant phone call, field visit, or other individual service interaction — what was driving them away was their cumulative experience across multiple touchpoints, multiple channels, and over time.<sup>14</sup> Those cumulative poor experiences weaken the brand’s energy.<sup>15</sup>

- › **Think journeys are static — and neglect to align them to evolving CX/brand drivers.** While journey mapping can shine a light on how customers’ needs and behaviors are evolving, many companies that forego this work end up hampered by a dated view of what drives value for customers and how to bring that to life. L.L.Bean wanted to ensure it was staying true to its promise that it “designs products that make it easier for families of all kinds to spend time outside together.” A fresh customer research and journey mapping effort confirmed that while the brand’s appeal was strong among its core customer, it was losing potential customers to competitors like Patagonia and North Face because they did not identify with the 100-year-old brand, which fell short of their expectations of ratings and reviews for products both online and in physical stores.<sup>16</sup>

## To Align With Brand, Journeys Must Get Six Essentials Right

CX pros must ensure alignment in six different areas: (see Figure 1):

1. **Story.** The journey must live up to the central brand narrative — which means it must be anchored in specific tangible and intangible benefits that differentiate the brand.

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2. **Emotion.** The journey should be designed based on the peak-end rule to craft the ideal emotional arc and evoke the most important target emotions the brand wishes to embody.
3. **Tone.** The journey must infuse the brand's personality into the language, visuals, and other ways it manifests across all interactions — whether digital or human.
4. **Memory.** The journey should balance table stakes moments, critical moments, and signature moments to create positive memories.
5. **Technology.** The journey must weave in new channels, data sources, and emerging technologies to adapt to changing customer expectations.
6. **Fluidity.** The journey should connect the dots in customers' lives and be adaptable to their evolving needs and expectations, to build long-term relationships.

**FIGURE 1** The Six Essentials Of Brand-Infused Journeys

Six essentials of brand-infused journeys	Description
<b>Story</b>	The journey must live up to the central brand narrative — which means it must be anchored in specific tangible and intangible benefits that differentiate the brand.
<b>Emotion</b>	The journey should be designed based on the peak-end rule to craft the ideal emotional arc and evoke the most important target emotions the brand wishes to embody.
<b>Tone</b>	The journey must infuse the brand's personality into the language, visuals, and other ways it manifests across all interactions — whether digital or human.
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**Story: Design The Journey To Live Up To The Central Brand Narrative**

The brand promise and narrative are foundational to the CX storytelling toolkit.<sup>17</sup> To ensure customer journeys live up to them, firms must:

- › **Analyze the company's values and the brand promise to surface an authentic story.** Don't try to be all things to all people. Brands that know what they stand for have an advantage over those that don't.

For instance, not every brand should strive for a luxury experience. Yes, customers expect a luxurious stay at The Ritz-Carlton Hotel — but not at the Hampton Inn, where they're happy with a clean room, friendly staff, and a hot breakfast.<sup>18</sup> CX professionals should start by developing a thorough understanding of the brand promise that they'll translate into a CX vision — and that promise should be rooted in company values.<sup>19</sup> The strongest expressions of authentic values come from brands whose origin stories are wrapped up in their purpose. Patagonia's sustainability ethos is inextricable from the values of its founder, prolific climber and environmentalist Yvon Chouinard. That said, the relationship between brand and CX is bidirectional: The brand is the experience, and the experience shapes the brand over time.

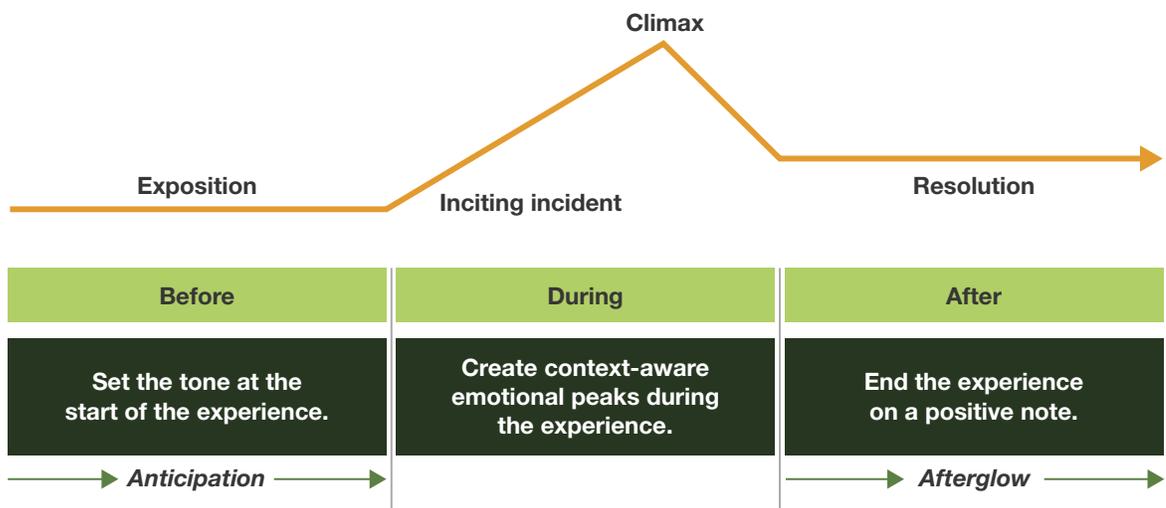
- › **Apply storytelling techniques to customer journeys.** Gather a cross-functional group from CX, brand, customer service, marketing, and human resources and brainstorm loglines for the brand or multiple brands.<sup>20</sup> Make sure the outcome of this effort clearly identifies your customer as the story's protagonist and lays out the overarching problem your company solves for them (see Figure 2).<sup>21</sup> The logline should flow from your brand promise and articulate a CX outcome as an "I feel" statement from the perspective of your key protagonist or a few protagonists. Articulate how your CX outcome affects "what you do" (products, services, information, or tools) and "how you do it" (pick words like *easy*, *responsive*, *personal*, *fast*, *flexible*, or *authentic* that describe how you do things as a result of your brand promise and desired CX outcome) (see Figure 3). Next, decide how the intended CX outcome and the words you selected should play out in the journey (see Figure 4).
- › **Ensure the brand is manifest in the ecosystem's entire cast of characters.** Southwest Airlines' brand narrative, for example, centers on making the flying experience friendly and informal. The company ensures this narrative goes beyond marketing by also centering its hiring practices on it — looking for employees who have a "warrior spirit," a "servant's heart," and a "fun-LUVing attitude." So, Southwest employees communicate the brand's story in interactions with customers. For example, a flight attendant may help calm a crying child by blowing bubbles or make safety announcements in the voice of Looney Tunes cartoon characters.<sup>22</sup>
- › **Break down the journey into scenes — and test for authenticity.** Data journalist David McCandless has created scene-by-scene timeline visualizations of Hollywood films that are based on true stories — they classify each scene in one of four categories: 1) true; 2) true in spirit; 3) includes some reasonable dramatic license; or 4) didn't happen.<sup>23</sup> CX pros can perform a similar analysis for key "scenes" in journeys that involve crucial face-to-face interactions. For

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each scene, ask yourself how accurately the characters (employees or partners) personified the brand story. Disney’s storyboarding of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* inspired Airbnb to identify and describe the emotional moments in an Airbnb stay — and Airbnb did so from different perspectives, including the host’s and the guest’s.<sup>24</sup> From customer service to the executive team, all new employees at Airbnb review the storyboard when they join the company. When prioritizing investments, employees ask which frames in the storyboard they will serve.

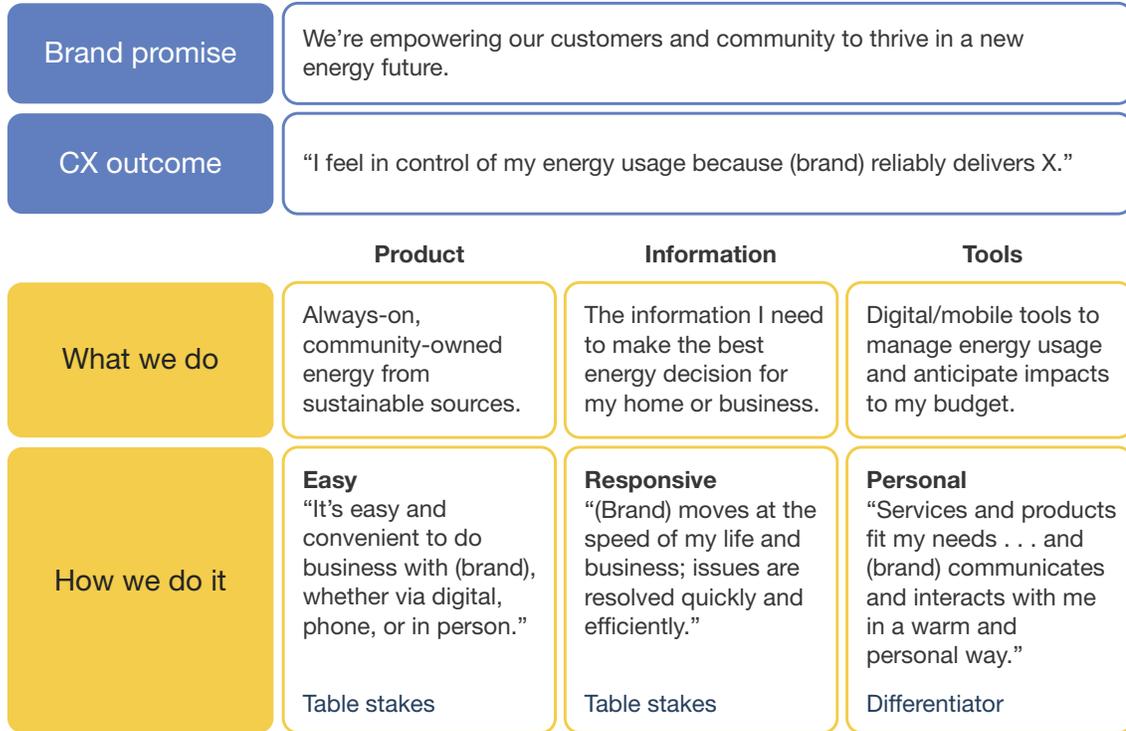
**FIGURE 2** With Your Customer As The Protagonist, Identify The Overarching Problem Your Brand Solves For Them



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**FIGURE 3** The Logline Should Flow From Your Brand Promise And Articulate An Overall CX Outcome



Source: Hypothetical energy company from Forrester workshop materials

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**FIGURE 4** “How Your Brand Does Things” Should Play Out Across The Journey

	<b>How I feel in control through the journey</b>	<b>Easy</b>	<b>Responsive</b>	<b>Personal</b>
<b>Discover</b>	I can easily find the information I need about “brand X” on my own.	To find information and understand products/services	Receiving answers to my questions	Relevant programs and information
<b>Initiate/enroll</b>	Brand X sets accurate expectations for its services/programs.	To initiate service	Receiving regular project status updates	Dedicated account managers
<b>Use</b>	Brand X provides energy I can rely on.	To receive alerts and to contact brand X on the channel I want	Receiving communications during outages	Communications and alerts
<b>Pay</b>	I have choices for paying my bill.	To pay in one click and to get rebates	Receiving proactive high bill alerts about unusually high bill	Ability to pay how I want
<b>Manage</b>	I have tools and services to manage my energy usage.	To use tools and products	Having tools that help me anticipate the future energy usage	Tools that help me based on my energy data
<b>Resolve</b>	Brand X resolves my issue quickly and updates me during the process.	To get online and mobile support	Getting first-call resolution and receiving proactive updates	Issue resolution through my preferred channel
<b>Change</b>	Brand X enables me to change my services easily.	To change my service	Getting changes made in a timely manner and receiving notice of any delays	Making changes via preferred channel
<b>Terminate</b>	I can terminate service myself without having to talk with someone.	To use self-service for termination or moving	Receiving notice of energy alternatives to make informed decisions	Alternative energy options for me

Source: Hypothetical energy company from Forrester workshop materials

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**Emotion: Craft The Journey Arc To Evoke The Emotions You Want Your Brand To Embody**

Customer emotions are where the accumulated value of a brand's messaging and CX becomes reality.<sup>25</sup> And emotion-rich relationships are increasingly the key to product and brand success because they shape how customers later recall their experiences (see Figure 5). This is why Forrester characterizes emotion as a kind of superfood for the brand.<sup>26</sup> To tap into the right emotions through customers' journeys, CX pros should:

- › **Measure brand perception using Forrester's brand energy framework.** Forrester's brand energy framework is an emotion-based model that analyzes the power of a brand and its ability to influence consumer decision making in its favor.<sup>27</sup> Brand energy is the power you are storing, battery-like, every time you send the right message, deliver the right information, or fulfill your customer's emotional expectations with the ideal experience. Firms use the brand energy framework to measure brand perception for prospects and customers. Forrester's [brand energy framework](#) unearths the emotional themes that are table stakes and differentiators for your brand relative to your industry and competitors. Firms can then use CX metrics — ideally measured in near real time across the journey — to find out if they are living up to their brand promise.<sup>28</sup>
- › **Ensure two key moments in the journey — peak and end — are positive and intense.** To deliver on its brand promise to improve people's lives through well-designed, affordable furniture, IKEA prioritizes emotions like surprise and gratitude. The brand's ideal emotional arc intersperses peak moments related to great prices and inspiring room displays amid predictable low points related to long checkout lines and tedious self-service — low points it's not worried about because "superior service" is not the IKEA story. To craft your own brand's ideal emotional arc based on the peak-end rule, take five steps: 1) prioritize the emotions that matter most to your customers; 2) identify moments of high value in the journey; 3) turn moments of high value into peak moments that evoke your brand's most important emotions; 4) intersperse what consultancy firm Solstice calls "naughty CX" (damaging interactions and missed opportunities) with "neutral and great CX" (moments of addressed needs, outpaced expectations, and surprise and delight); and 5) find ways to end the journey on a high (see Figure 6).
- › **Set high expectations you will meet — don't overpromise and underdeliver.** A customer's emotional reaction to an event depends on how a brand sets and manages expectations along the journey. Context elements — such as whether the customer is in a bad mood, there is a history of mediocre experiences with the brand, there is an urgent problem, or the customer is making a critical purchase — also have an impact on customer expectations.<sup>29</sup>

British Airways raises expectations when it hands out a card to its business-class passengers giving them three options: 1) "I would like to be woken up for breakfast"; 2) "I would like a beverage of my choice 50 minutes before landing"; and 3) "I want to sleep until a certain time." Failing to meet these expectations would trigger a plunge in a customer's emotional arc — lower than if not even given those options in the first place. Disney park visitors who buy their tickets in advance

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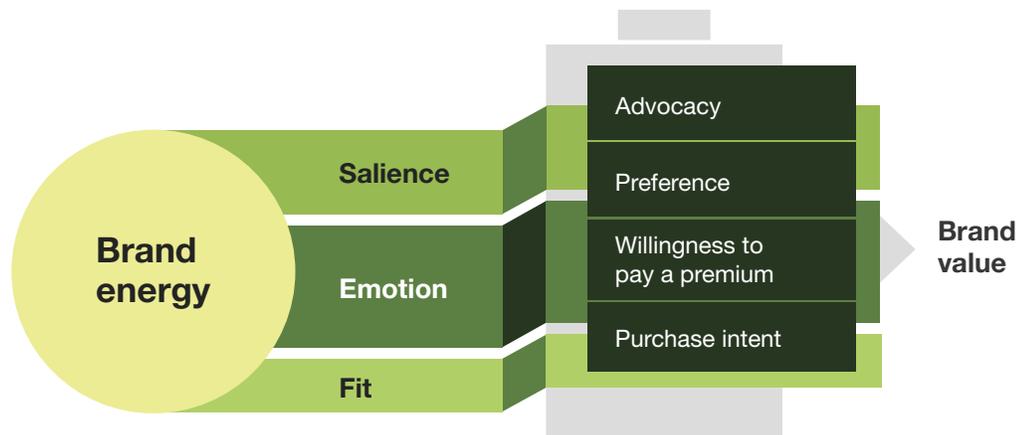
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get access to FastPass+ services online 30 days before their visit. This lets them reserve a spot in line at their favorite rides, building the anticipatory excitement before the ride — and setting an expectation that, if not met, will mutate into a value-destroying emotion.<sup>30</sup>

- › **Identify signaling metrics that enable you to detect failed peaks and ends.** Smart CX pros don't leave implementation of the ideal emotional arc to chance. They put in place early-warning signals (descriptive, perception, or outcome metrics) to detect when they have failed to deliver on a peak or to end a journey on a high.

Every Monday morning, Delta Air Lines sends an email to any diamond or platinum medallion members who got stuck sitting in a dreaded middle seat the week before. The email apologizes and credits 500 extra points to those customers' accounts to make up for the discomfort.<sup>31</sup> The email makes recipients feel valued as Delta customers and gives the memory of the entire trip a boost. London City Airport uses real-time passenger journey data to inform UK border control of queue buildups, so it can make more staff available and open more ePassport gates. This helps deliver on the airport's CX goal of a 20-minute check-in, door to gate, and a 15-minute arrival, tarmac to train.<sup>32</sup>

**FIGURE 5** A Brand Is Energized By Emotion, Salience, And Fit — Which Correlate To Four Key Outcomes

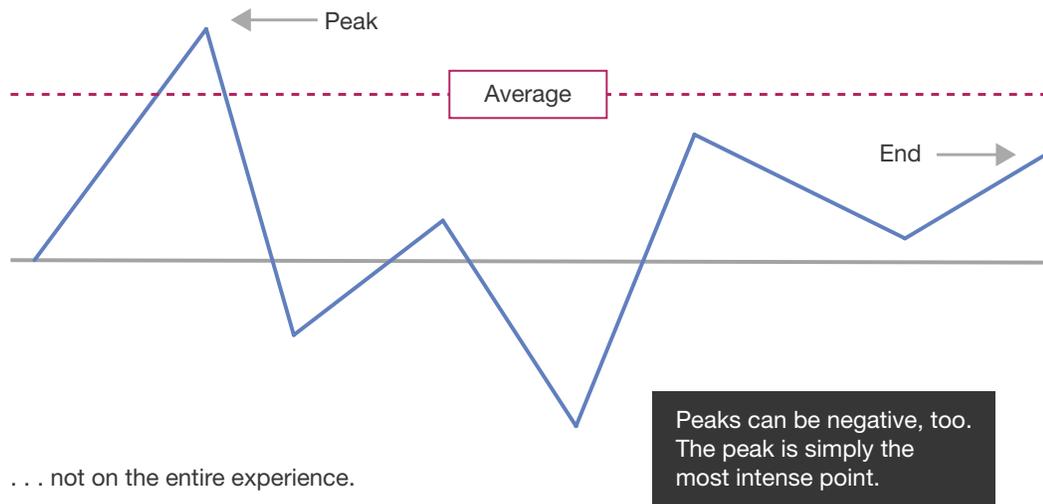


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**FIGURE 6** People Judge The Value Of An Experience Based On The Peak And The End

People judge the value of an experience based on two snapshots, averaged . . .

**Tone: Weave The Brand's Personality Into All Interactions**

A brand's logo, packaging, service announcements, and other manifestations across all interactions, digital or human, communicate the brand's personality to customers. If any of these are inconsistent, customers are likely to dismiss the brand as inauthentic. To strike the right tone, CX pros should:

- › **Select descriptors, language, and a voice that express the brand's identity.** The way the product is described plays a huge part in Falken Tyres' differentiation strategy. In 2016, it changed its strapline to "On The Pulse" to inject more energy and show "a more human side" of the world of tires.<sup>33</sup> The previous strapline, "Falken High Performance Tyres," focused on quality, reliability, and safety — just like all of its competitors. A global sports retailer worked with VoxGen to test different personas for its text-based chatbot, scoring the personas on key brand attributes such as feeling compassionate, competent, human, caring, and courteous.<sup>34</sup> To develop the right persona for LogistiCare Solutions — a provider of nonemergency medical transport programs for state governments and managed care organizations — VoxGen looked at brand, cultural factors, tasks, and caller mindset to test which persona embodied the company's brand promise of "serving with compassion."
- › **Apply precise design intent to the types of people your employees should be.** A luxury car maker defined employee journeys for the car jockey (responsible for car acceptance), service advisor (responsible for vehicle return), and service assistant (responsible for arranging courtesy cars) to ensure everyone is on point to deliver a premium, seamless, and individualized experience. And because not every customer is the same, the carmaker also created three distinct personas

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(based on type of car owned, key servicing needs, expectations, and communication style) that those employees must know how to respond to: the key thrower, the enthusiast, and the badge buyer.<sup>35</sup> These personas help customer-facing employees and behind-the-scenes engineers understand the rational and emotional needs of drivers and adapt their service style accordingly.

**Memory: Balance Three Kinds Of Moments To Instill Positive Memories**

Balancing table stakes moments, critical moments, and signature moments in a customer's journey helps brands build long-term relationships with customers and maximize CLV. To do this:

- › **Classify moments in the journey as table stakes, critical, and signature moments.** It's crucial to pinpoint which moments in the journey are: 1) table stakes moments, which align with basic expectations and impact overall satisfaction; 2) critical moments, which tend to drive loyalty; and 3) signature or high-impact moments, which create a deeper emotional connection.<sup>36</sup> Why classify them? To make sure you don't neglect even the table stakes moments — because failure to deliver on those will eclipse signature moments, no matter how good.

For example, Hagerty, a membership organization for people who love cars, worked with Andrew Reise and a cross-functional group of stakeholders to identify: table stakes moments, like getting a quote and confirming payment; critical moments, like settling a claim and receiving a tow; and signature moments, like receiving "Carcierge" services — a benefit allowing members to email Hagerty experts with virtually any collector car-related question — and outreach after an incident (see Figure 7).

- › **Diversify your signature moments.** Signature moments can take the form of uniquely designed elements; personalized interactions; new elements that elevate the experience beyond what is customary in the industry; experience souvenirs; or spontaneous gestures (see Figure 8).

Hagerty knows its customers want to feel cared for and assumed that means they want to participate in classic car forums and attend car shows. They do, but what makes the customers feel most cared for is the company facilitating care for their classic car or motorcycle. This led Hagerty to develop offerings like car parts finders; the Hagerty Valuation Tool (an online price guide for classic cars); and Hagerty Magazine, which is all about the car lover lifestyle. Disney is notorious for using an array of signature moments: MagicBands arrive in the mail decorated with the characters specified by the guests (personalized interactions); the My Disney Experience mobile app allows customers to find out how long the wait time is for any attraction in real time, make dining reservations, and access park maps, tips, and info (elevated delivery); and customers receive PhotoPass pictures after they leave the park (experience souvenirs).

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**FIGURE 7** A Brand Must Balance Table Stakes, Critical, And Signature Moments Along The Journey

Brand Promise		
Interaction Type	Description	Examples
<b>TS</b> <b>Table Stakes</b> <i>Brilliant at the basics</i>	Basic member expectations of any brand or product that impact overall member satisfaction when experience is overly complex or painful	Quote Process Application Process Payment Confirmation
<b>CM</b> <b>Critical Moment</b> <i>Moments that are most important to members</i>	The most critical interactions or products that are important to members and drive loyalty	Claim Settlement Receiving a Tow Finding Vehicle Value
<b>SE</b> <b>Signature Experience</b> <i>Differentiated experiences unique to brand</i>	Brand specific interactions or products that are unique, creating an emotional connection to brand and transforming the experience	Brand specific events Concierge Outreach after incident
Metrics and Measurement		

Source: Andrew Reise

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**FIGURE 8** Forrester's Five Types Of Signature Moments

Source: Forrester workshop

**Technology: Tap New Data And Technologies That Elevate Expectations And Experiences**

Emerging technologies and new data sources color customer perceptions of your brand. CX pros must stay on top of these technology innovations — for example, real-time journey analytics, internet-of-things devices, wearables, and conversational interfaces — and how they shape CX expectations across industries. To do this:

- › **Study how emerging technology and data alter customer expectations.** Allstate worked with T3 to modernize its brand promise — “being in good hands” — for the home insurance journey. The research they conducted showed that customers feel in good hands when they are proactively given ways to protect their property based on detailed information about their homes. Allstate redesigned the home insurance journey so that before it provides an insurance quote, it can detect

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a customer's address, use Google Street View to show them their front door, and pull together property specifications, crime data, weather data, and the most common claims for similar types of properties. To continue to deliver on its promise of "doing more and making it easy," Staples worked with T3 to create a solution that now enables office administrators to re-order products using voice-controlled intelligent agents, messaging via Slack, or snapping and sending a picture of the items required.

- › **Conceive new or future-state experiences through exploratory design.** A mindset of exploration and validated learning through hand sketches, interactive wireframes, prototypes, online testing, and direct observation of journeys spurs innovation.

Observing busy parents and analyzing omnichannel insights helped Danone's Nutricia Early Life Nutrition brand pilot an innovative approach to selling baby food directly to consumers through a personalized vending machine at a train station in the Netherlands.<sup>37</sup> To improve Vistakon's ordering process for its contact lenses, CI&T started by participating in a ride-along with a Vistakon sales rep to meet customers and experience the manual, spreadsheet-driven ordering process. This direct observation enabled CI&T to come up with an iPad app that exactly mimics a physician's stock drawer. It let sales reps tap on products in the virtual drawer, making the inventory process six times faster and reducing out-of-stock incidents by 85%.<sup>38</sup>

### Fluidity: Use Journeys To Keep The Brand In Tune With Customers' Evolving Needs

Customer-obsessed brands make sure they are always mining customer data for new opportunities and unmet needs, adapting to what is happening in the customers' unfolding journeys. These brands:

- › **Connect the dots in customers' lives to find opportunities to innovate.** Broadening the view of the customer journey to consider the impact of life events, changing circumstances, and new customer segments helps brands stay in touch (or get back in touch) and innovate to meet customers' evolving needs.

Gerber partnered with journey analytics provider Kitewheel to fuse data across CRM, online, physical, and social media channels to guide parents through the seven steps of early childhood. It identified 25 action triggers, 94 behavior rules, and more than 1,000 routes through the seven-stage journey from pregnancy to the toddler years. This subtler view of the journey has helped Gerber think more deeply about how to position its products and develop new tools (for menu planning, for example) and services (like its Dorothy text-based service that provides expert advice from midwives, lactation specialists, and nurses).<sup>39</sup> The result: living up to its brand promise of promoting good nutrition and healthy eating habits for children — and a 27% lift in sales for active users of the MyGerber online community and tools for parents.<sup>40</sup>

- › **Look for inspiration in journeys in adjacent industries and channels.** Smart CX pros benchmark their journeys against best-in-class brands in their own industry but also look for inspiration in adjacent industries. To build an interactive vehicle selector and spare parts configurator, Mercedes-

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Benz Canada conducted primary research with dealers and customers, benchmarked against competitors like Porsche and Audi, and sought inspiration from best-in-class online tools used in the airline industry to configure complex travel plans. To appeal to families who enjoy the outdoors and increase cross-sell in physical stores, L.L.Bean looked at what was working well in digital journeys that appealed to its target customer. This led it to include ratings and reviews — popular in online channels — next to some items in physical stores.

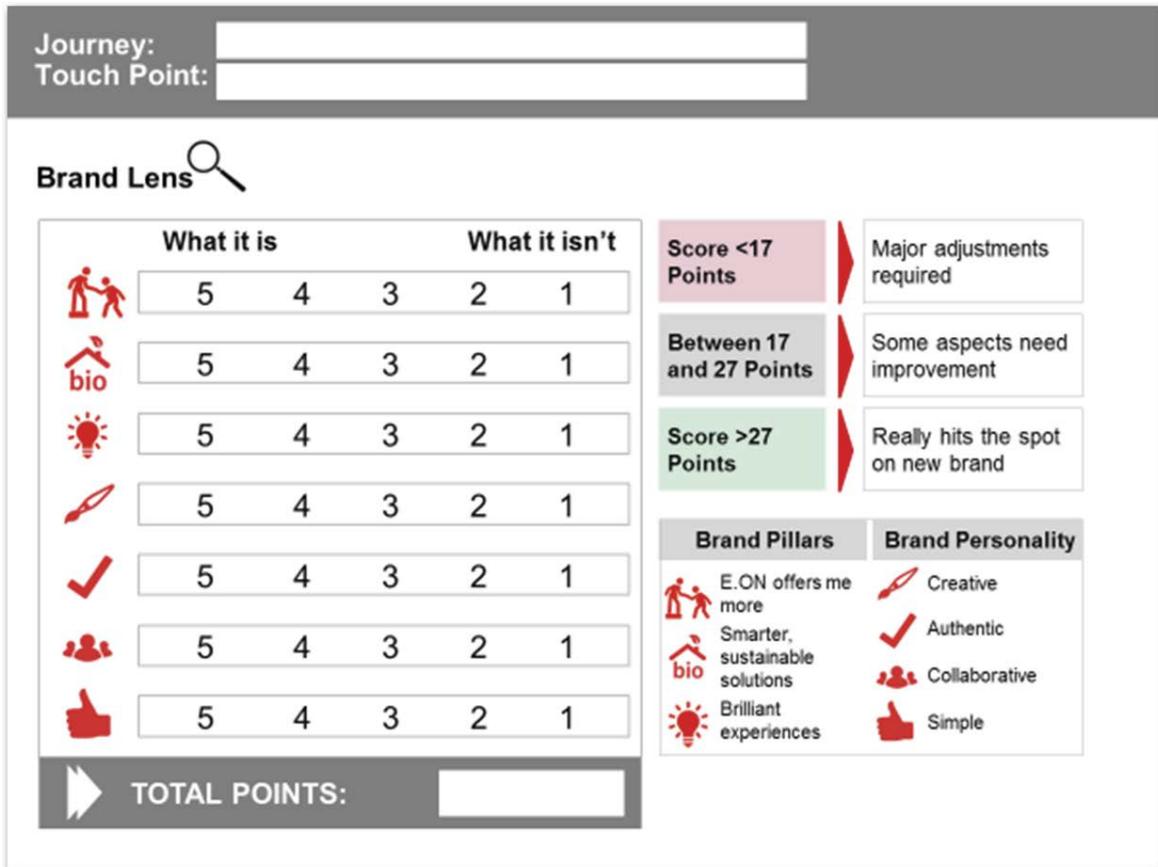
- › **Keep evaluating the impact new CX drivers have on journeys.** E.ON has been focused on transforming five key customer journeys — *I join, I pay, I renew, I move, and I leave* — since 2010, but it recently launched a series of new workshops to analyze all touchpoints from a more holistic brand perspective. The goal is to ensure that each journey is infused not only with longstanding brand attributes like “simple” but also newer ones like “authentic” and “sustainable.” E.ON has developed a touchpoint analysis scorecard as well as a brand lens template as part of its journey toolkit (see Figure 9).

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**FIGURE 9** Evaluate Your Journeys With A Brand Lens For Different Brand Pillars

First, E.ON's journey teams analyze touchpoints in the journey using the brand lens, which includes E.ON's brand pillars and personality, to determine if key touchpoints are living up to these brand attributes.



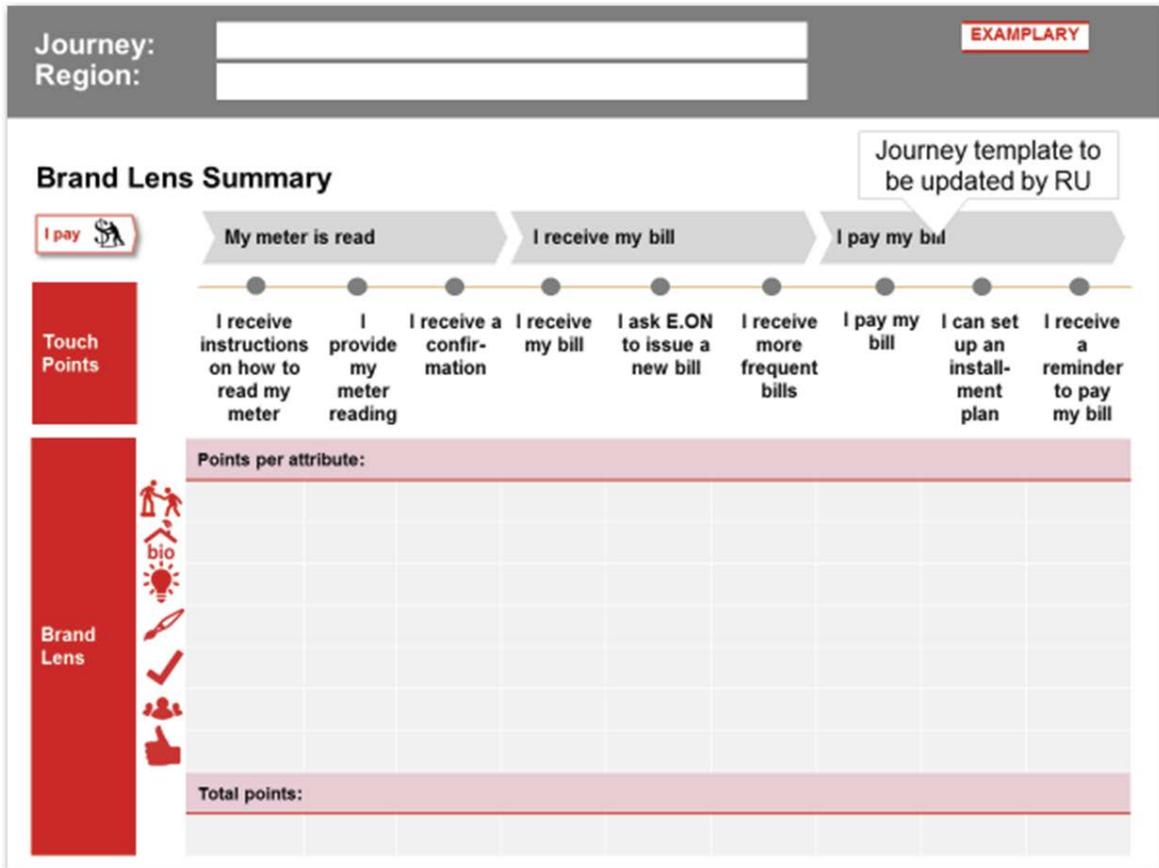
Source: E.ON

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**FIGURE 9** Evaluate Your Journeys With A Brand Lens For Different Brand Pillars (Cont.)

After analyzing touchpoints in the journey using the brand lens, the journey teams summarize the outcome by adding the score of each touchpoint to the brand lens summary template, which is used to identify those touchpoints that require major adjustments.



Source: E.ON

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**Recommendations**

## Start Infusing Your Journeys With Brand Now

Before diving headlong into the six essentials of brand-infused journeys, CX pros should identify which journeys are most critical to the brand. To get started with this:

- › **Benchmark journeys against competitors' to identify opportunities for differentiation.** To prioritize the right 10 customer journeys to deliver on its vision to become the best bank for customers, Lloyds Banking Group started with 30 and winnowed the list by evaluating each one in terms of its importance to customers and how it compared to competitors' journeys.<sup>41</sup> This led Lloyds to prioritize journeys like mortgages, where a fast turnaround and control over the experience are important for customers.
- › **Start with emotionally laden journeys that best align to the brand promise.** Most insurance customers, for example, only want to engage with the insurance provider in a time of need. Recognizing this, a multiline insurer focused its efforts on the claims journey.<sup>42</sup> The result was new, differentiated experiences that embody the brand, such as mobile vans that travel to communities experiencing disasters and a mobile app that customers can use when misfortune strikes.
- › **Focus on the journeys of customers most likely to benefit from improvements.** UK-based home and garden retailer B&Q focused on just three of its personas, selected for being the most likely to engage across touchpoints, and outlined one high-level "customer mission" for each persona.<sup>43</sup> For do-it-yourself enthusiasts seeking inspiration, B&Q created cross-channel transitions from its YouTube video tips to its website project pages and its in-store lesson reservation site. This focus on the key journeys of three personas helped the company prioritize its efforts.
- › **Focus on journeys that drive loyalty and retention.** Global brand and marketing consultancy Prophet uses quantitative research as one of the inputs to assess the health and importance of as many as 40 touchpoints in the end-to-end customer journey. By using a series of regression analyses on touchpoint ratings and business impact variables such as "likelihood to recommend" and "do more business," Prophet prioritizes the touchpoints and journeys that best drive share, loyalty, or retention.

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## Supplemental Material

### Companies Interviewed For This Report

We would like to thank the individuals from the following companies who generously gave their time during the research for this report.

Andrew Reise

IKEA

Bankwest

MRM//McCann

BMO

T3

E.ON

West Monroe

Gorilla Group

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## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Source: Interview with Lori Bieda, head, Analytics Centre of Excellence, Personal and Commercial Bank, Canada, at BMO Financial Group, May 30, 2017.
- <sup>2</sup> To learn more about Patagonia's Worn Wear program, visit the following website. Source: Patagonia (<https://wornwear.patagonia.com/>).
- <sup>3</sup> Virgin Atlantic has built a bank of signature moments for its premium passengers, including its lounges that feel like a private members club; complementary private chauffeur car transfer service; onboard bar experience that includes wine tastings; and airplane-shaped salt and pepper shakers, including a tongue-in-cheek message stamped into the base of the shakers: "Pinched from Virgin Atlantic." Source: "Our Premium cabin," Virgin Atlantic (<https://www.virginatlantic.com/gb/en/virgin-experience/cabins/premium-economy.html>).
- <sup>4</sup> See the Forrester report "[The Power Of Storytelling For Experience Design.](#)"
- <sup>5</sup> See the Forrester report "[Brief: Actions Speak Louder Than Words When It Comes To Customer Centricity.](#)"
- <sup>6</sup> See the Forrester report "[Align With Consumers' Values To Win Their Hearts And Wallets.](#)"
- <sup>7</sup> Net Promoter and NPS are registered service marks, and Net Promoter Score is a service mark, of Bain & Company, Inc., Satmetrix Systems, Inc., and Fred Reichheld.
- <sup>8</sup> See the Forrester report "[The Convergence Of Brand, Marketing, And Customer Experience.](#)"
- <sup>9</sup> Virgin Atlantic explicitly celebrates the skills and talents of its employees in its brand advertisements. A recent one plots the journey of children with extraordinary talents growing up to become Virgin Atlantic employees. One child is obsessed by flight, and he is seen going on to become a pilot. Another child is shown with incredible intuition, and she is seen becoming a glamorous cabin crew member. Source: "Virgin Atlantic 'fly in the face of ordinary' by RKCR/Y&R," Campaign, January 6, 2013 (<https://www.campaignlive.co.uk/article/virgin-atlantic-fly-face-ordinary-rkcr-y-r/1165630>) and "Virgin Atlantic - Flying in the face of ordinary," YouTube video, January 4, 2013 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UhEWMV0rlls>).
- <sup>10</sup> See the Forrester report "[Focus On Process, Technology, And Collaboration To Enhance Employee Enablement.](#)"
- <sup>11</sup> Source: "Behind The Brand," Mango ([https://www.mango.com/oi/servicios/company/it\\_in/empresa/detrasMarca.htm](https://www.mango.com/oi/servicios/company/it_in/empresa/detrasMarca.htm)).
- <sup>12</sup> Source: Shaun Smith and Andy Milligan, On Purpose: Delivering a Branded Customer Experience People Love, Kogan Page, 2015.
- <sup>13</sup> Marketing typically focuses on customer and revenue growth, brand awareness and consideration, performance against key brand attributes, and individual channel performance, while CX tracks metrics about the effectiveness, ease, and emotional resonance of the experience. See the Forrester report "[The Perspective Problem In The Customer Life Cycle.](#)"
- <sup>14</sup> See the Forrester report "[The Customer-Journey-Centric Firm.](#)"
- <sup>15</sup> Brand energy is a measure of how well-positioned a brand is to stimulate customer behaviors that matter to the company in the short run and lead to long-term brand success. See the Forrester report "[Emotions Fuel Your Brand Energy.](#)"
- <sup>16</sup> Source: Interview with Dan Arthur, VP customer research and analytics, Tim Carrigan, VP consulting, and Annelise Brancato, senior CX analyst from Andrew Reise, December 20, 2017.
- <sup>17</sup> See the Forrester report "[The Power Of Storytelling For Experience Design.](#)"
- <sup>18</sup> See the Forrester report "[Brief: Why You Must Sharpen Your CX Vision.](#)"
- <sup>19</sup> See the Forrester report "[Root Your CX Vision In Your Brand.](#)"

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- <sup>20</sup> The logline: a central idea with inherent tension, expressed as a short sentence with four parts. For each of its movie scripts, Pixar creates a logline by crafting a sentence that identifies: 1) a protagonist — the hero of the story; 2) a goal — what the protagonist wants to achieve; 3) an antagonist or conflict — the tension or problem the protagonist is trying to resolve or move past; and 4) additional context — the world around or what's at stake for the hero. See the Forrester report "[The Power Of Storytelling For Experience Design.](#)"
- <sup>21</sup> Narrow these down to a single logline or a couple of different ones; then, validate them using qualitative methods, capable of eliciting customers' goals and problems, to confirm that the customers' goals and antagonists you've chosen are right. See the Forrester report "[The Power Of Storytelling For Experience Design.](#)"
- <sup>22</sup> See the Forrester report "[The Power Of Storytelling For Experience Design.](#)"
- <sup>23</sup> Source: "Based on a True True Story?" Information is Beautiful, February 2017 (<https://informationisbeautiful.net/visualizations/based-on-a-true-true-story/>).
- <sup>24</sup> See the Forrester report "[The Convergence Of Brand, Marketing, And Customer Experience.](#)"
- <sup>25</sup> Emotions combine with perceptions of fit and salience to create the energy that powers the brand. Emotion reduces the perception of risk when interacting with the brand, which translates into a psychological readiness to pay extra for that low-risk/high-reward outcome. See the Forrester report "[Emotions Fuel Your Brand Energy.](#)"
- <sup>26</sup> See the Forrester report "[Emotions Fuel Your Brand Energy.](#)"
- <sup>27</sup> See the Forrester report "[Put Brand Energy To Work By Building A Five-Step Action Plan.](#)"
- <sup>28</sup> See the Forrester report "[Emotions Fuel Your Brand Energy.](#)"
- <sup>29</sup> See the Forrester report "[How To Measure Emotion In Customer Experience.](#)"
- <sup>30</sup> See the Forrester report "[The Dawn Of Anticipatory CX.](#)"
- <sup>31</sup> See the Forrester report "[Understanding The Impact Of Emotion On Customer Experience.](#)"
- <sup>32</sup> See the Forrester report "[Drive Customer Obsession With Journey Analytics.](#)"
- <sup>33</sup> Source: Mindi Chahal, "How to perfect your brand language," Marketing Week, January 24, 2017 (<https://www.marketingweek.com/2017/01/24/brand-language-change-perceptions/>).
- <sup>34</sup> Designing a personality for a bot helps in two ways. First, users will assign a personality to your bot anyway, and you're better off controlling this instead of leaving it to chance. Second, designing a personality for a bot provides a template to enable the bot's conversations to stay consistent. See the Forrester report "[Humanize Your Conversational Bot.](#)"
- <sup>35</sup> The key thrower wants convenience, speed, and succinct information. The enthusiast wants to feel connected to the brand, look under the hood, and build strong relationships with the technicians through detailed communication. The badge buyer wants to feel valued but is unlikely to understand jargon or be interested in technical details. Source: Interview with a global car manufacturer.
- <sup>36</sup> Forrester defines signature moments as "memorably crafted and branded microinteractions that deliver delight and value to customers in an often subtle yet definitively recognizable way." See the Forrester report "[Differentiate Your Customer Experience With Signature Moments.](#)"
- <sup>37</sup> See the Forrester report "[Drive Customer Obsession With Journey Analytics.](#)"
- <sup>38</sup> See the Forrester report "[The Five Top Questions About Agile CX.](#)"
- <sup>39</sup> Source: Interview with Mark Smith, president of Kitewheel, March 2018.
- <sup>40</sup> Source: Interview with Mark Smith, president at Kitewheel, March 2018.
- <sup>41</sup> See the Forrester report "[Case Study: Lloyds Banking Group's Journey-Focused Digital Transformation.](#)"

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<sup>42</sup> See the Forrester report "[How To Get Started With Customer Journey Mapping.](#)"

<sup>43</sup> See the Forrester report "[Drive Customer Obsession With Journey Analytics.](#)"

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