CustomerGauge

THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO B2B CX

Enterprise Grade Content

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INTRO-DUCTION

The Definitive Guide to B2B CX

The Wakeup Call

You've surveyed your accounts and the results are in! Your clients seem thrilled with the experiences your company provides and are thoroughly engaged with the brand.

You have:

- ✓ **An above average response rate at more than 30%**
- ✓ **Are closing the loop on about 80% of cases**
- ✓ **And have a Net Promoter Score® in the 60's**

All signs point to your CX program being a shining beacon of excellence and a true point of differentiation against the competition. But then…you lose an account.

And then another.

How is this possible when you had such a great Net Promoter® program? When your customers were so engaged?

For businesses, there's perhaps no better wake-up call that "things are not as they seem" than unexpected churn. At CustomerGauge, we would know. Those stats above? The enthusiasm around them? The crushing realization? That's CustomerGauge's story. We call it our "Happy Ears Problem." And boy, did it wake us up.

The loss of a high-value account or a few medium-sized accounts in a B2B setting has a reverberating impact on a company's bottom line.

Three years ago, in the wake of our unexpected churn, we took a step back and started to assess our B2B CX program strategy. Upon closer inspection, it turned out that our high score and response rate were a result of responses from our smallest, yet most engaged accounts.

We had been distracted with the flow of feedback, and ignored gathering responses from our high-value, more demanding, enterprise accounts. Looking at our entire client base, our total coverage was, honestly, quite poor. In fact, COVERAGE was a large contributor to our CX blind spot.

"The risk for churn from our enterprise accounts suddenly became very real...."

Our perception had been skewed by a high score that was not representative of the majority of our account revenue. The risk for churn from our enterprise accounts suddenly became very real. This was our wake up call.

So we changed our ways. And we transformed our tech and relationships along the way.

58% of the companies surveyed were B2B—ranging from SMBs to global enterprises with household names—were experiencing the exact same problems. Digging deeper, we found this research didn't exist in isolation. Similar findings identified clear gaps in the CX marketplace around B2B experiences.

Using the lessons we learned, we developed the Account Experience™ methodology and technologies, wrote the bible on it, and are now passing down these learnings to you.

In this definitive guide to B2B CX, you'll discover the quintessential playbook for implementing and sustaining a CX—or as we call it, an AX—program unique to your B2B business model.
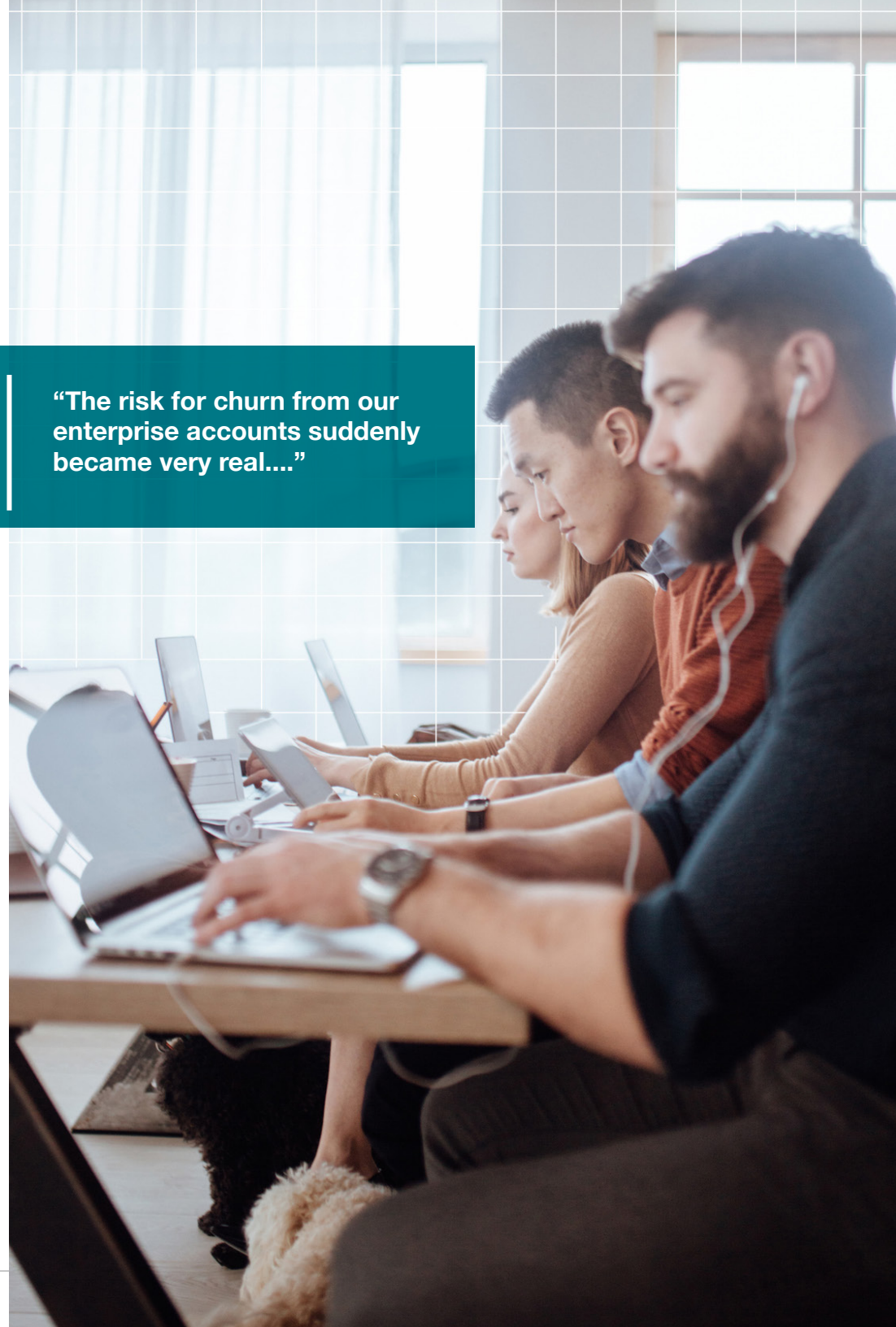
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The Definitive Guide to B2B CX

THE STATE OF B2B CX

As consumers become more accustomed to the personalization and convenience that B2C experiences offer at home, more has been demanded of B2B companies to match this in the workplace. The trouble? Understanding how to apply the B2C concepts to the multi-contact experiences of a B2B client base.

B2B CX leaders should look at defining personalization at both the account and contact level. At an account level, closing the loop with accounts may include having them participate in new service and product design improvements. For individual contacts, relationship managers should keep an open and engaged line of communication with key contacts. Emails and other digital assets should be on a "first name" basis.

At the same time, how B2B enterprises market, sell and service clients has transitioned as well. The rise of account-based marketing and account-based sales have turned these traditional growth funnels on their heads, simply by focusing on target accounts first. With a greater demand on modernizing CX practices and a focus on retention growth, B2B enterprises are also looking to apply the same account-based success model of their marketing and sales funnels to the emerging **"customer experience growth funnel."**

However, CX tech and best practices have struggled to keep pace with these emerging trends in B2B businesses. In our 2018 NPS & CX Benchmarks report, the average retention rate for B2B businesses was 80%. On average, this was an increase of only 3% at the start of their CX programs. Meaning, across industries, B2B companies are slow to make retention gains.

In this chapter, we'll look at the turning point in the B2B CX marketplace, why B2B CX programs fail and how the Account Experience methodology addresses the key pillars of a successful program.

THE B2B CX GAP

B2B customer expectations are shifting. Improvements in B2C customer experiences and advances in the technologies that streamline these experiences have heralded in a new wave of B2B customer priorities. While great service is always a cornerstone of any great experience, B2B customers are now looking for the same conveniences and personalization of B2C.

B2B leaders have always understood the importance a great customer experience has on their bottom line and competitive differentiation. In fact, according to a survey conducted by Accenture, 90% of B2B leaders "already believe that customer experience is crucial to their companies' business priorities."

However, despite this clear understanding of CX and its impact, 72% of these B2B leaders don't believe they have any influence on the direction of their organization's CX.

Think about that for a second.

Despite a unanimous agreement on the importance of a streamlined CX program to their bottom line, only 28% of B2B leaders today can say they have any real control over the direction of that critical business driver.

This is what we call the B2B CX Gap.

PRIORITY

90%

of B2B leaders believe that CX is a crucial business priority

REASONS FOR THE GAP

LACK OF INTERNAL ALIGNMENT → **STUNTED DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION** → **MISSING THE HUMAN ELEMENT** → **CAN'T TRACK BUSINESS OUTCOMES**

REALITY

ONLY
28%

of B2B leaders have influence on the direction of CX

Why B2B CX Programs Fail

Whereas a B2C organization manages the experiences of single contacts, B2B must grapple with the consideration of both individual and collective experiences. Therefore, despite understanding the vital contribution CX has on their bottom line, many B2B companies struggle to enact a streamlined approach across their customer journey.

Further, when it comes to tailored CX solutions, the B2B market has been grossly underserved. Many of the tools that have been developed for experience management focus largely on B2C consumer brands.

In fact, according to Accenture, more than 40% of B2B leaders are missing a clear view of their accounts. And while current CX tools can help serve basic functions within a Voice of the Customer (VoC) program, they miss the mark when it comes to managing multi-contact relationships, channel complexity, and monetization for retention growth.

In the previous section, we introduced the four elements that encompass the B2B CX gap. These four elements are also the main drivers behind why B2B CX programs fail at both an operational and technical level.

1 Lack of Internal Alignment

In a survey with over 500 CEOs and 400 CX professionals, Walker found that one of the largest points of friction in a B2B CX program was the disconnect between C-suite and CX professionals' expectations. Defining both the operational objectives and economic benefits within a B2B CX program is crucial for the buy-in of top decision-makers.

C-Suite Priorities
- 1 Competitive Advantage
- 2 Growth Profitability

CX Professionals Priorities
- 1 Identify Issues
- 2 Customer-Focused Culture
- 3 Bring CX Program Insight into Org.

2 Stunted Digital Transformation

The old cliché is true: Data is power. In a society where advertisers and acquisition folks know more about you than your closest friends and family, this statement may seem controversial. When it comes to retaining, satisfying and growing with your customers however, siloed CX data can stifle a B2B CX program.

As previously mentioned, few CX professionals feel they are leveraging CX data properly. This has both to do with internal alignment issues, but also the B2B CX tools at their disposal—or lack thereof.

> "Many B2B companies onboard a simple survey or B2C CX tool and end up in a massive data exercise to extract meaningful insights (if they're lucky)."

Many B2B companies implement a simple survey or B2C CX tool and end up in a massive data exercise to extract meaningful insights (if they're lucky). These Frankenstein-like, disparate solutions are costly to maintain, difficult to operate and nearly impossible to scale.

As we'll discuss in the remainder of this eBook, having the technology to support both an account-level and contact-level focus, with additional intelligence to streamline growth initiatives is imperative to the long-term sustainability and success of a B2B CX program.

③ Missing The Human Element

While digital transformation allows companies to streamline aspects of a CX program, the human element is just as vital. In a B2B CX program, the role of the relationship manager (in tech and non-tech industries) is to nurture and grow accounts post-sale. Relationship managers manage the customer lifecycle, including monitoring the health of accounts and identifying opportunities for growth. During this time, they also help clients:

- ✓ Scale and support business cases as they evolve
- ✓ Address technical or service issues
- ✓ Provide product or service expertise to help with self-service
- ✓ Onboard new users

④ Can't Track ROI or Measure Business Outcomes

Does your company understand the impact an increase in Net Promoter has on their bottom line? Do you know the portion of sales revenue generated from referrals? How about the cost savings and revenue generated from improving survey drivers?

Despite the great advancements that have been made in CX technologies, few tools can help B2B leaders answer these pivotal questions. To prove the ROI of a CX program, B2B leaders must have the tools to analyze this data. In the next section, we'll introduce a new methodology and tech offering that does just that.

TIP #01

Striking the Right Balance— Self-Service Vs. Human Intervention

Automation and self-services are vital in other aspects of B2B experiences. However, automation when it comes to relationship management doesn't help address the growing need in B2B for personalization.

So while KPMG found that 95% of UK B2B companies indicated that they preferred a real-human relationship manager, 86% of B2B companies in a survey conducted by McKinsey preferred to use self-service tools for reordering.

What does this tell us? **When it comes to winning at customer experience in a B2B world, the best strategy is striking the right balance between digital and non-digital transformation.**

"95% of UK B2B companies preferred a real-human relationship manager."
— KPMG
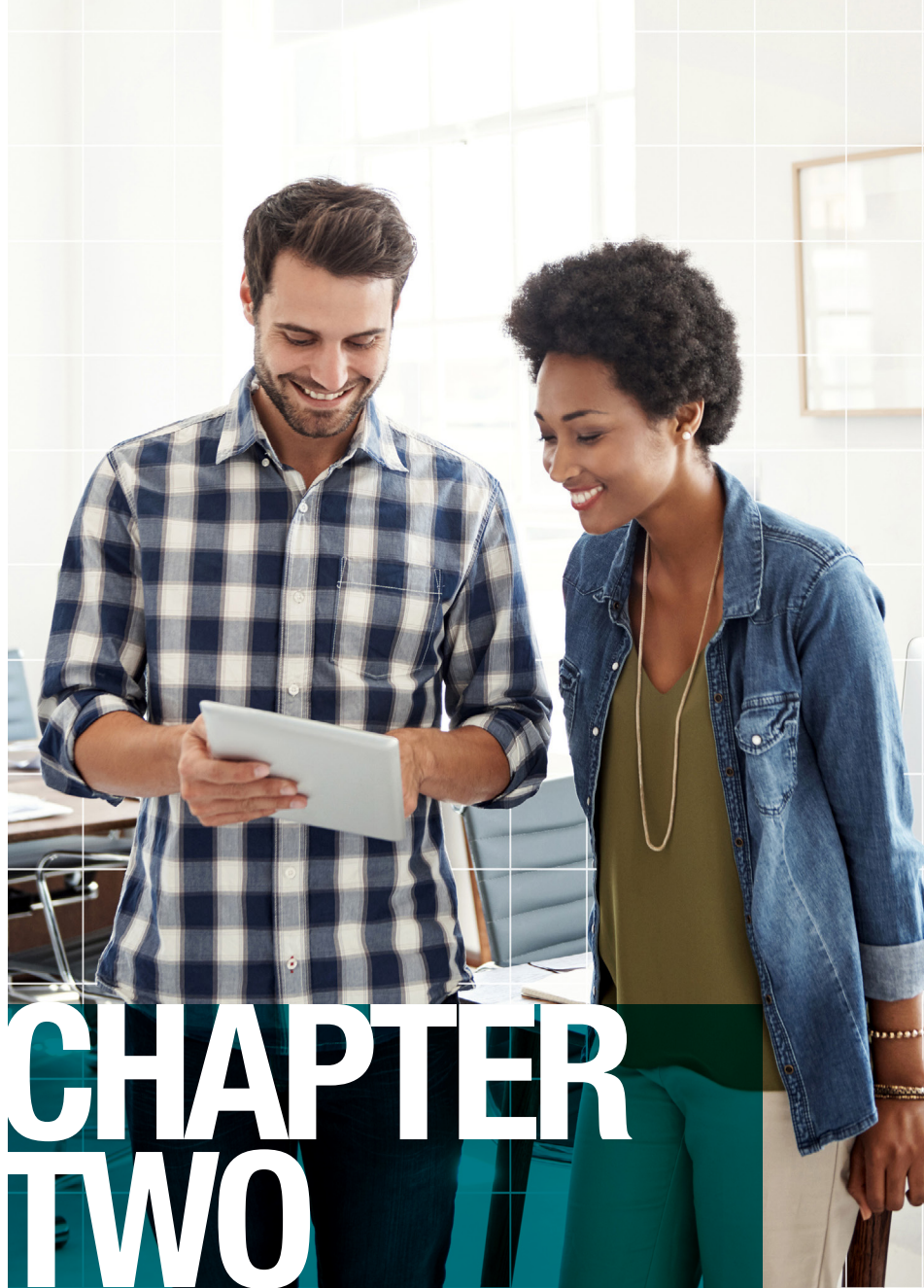
CHAPTER TWO

CHAPTER TWO
The Definitive Guide to B2B CX

INTRODUCING ACCOUNT EXPERIENCE FOR B2B CX

Account Experience™ (AX) is the intersection between experience feedback management, monetization and account-based methodologies in a B2B environment. AX technologies and best practices address not only the CX needs of B2B SaaS technology industries, but all B2B industries, making it a true cross-departmental solution.

The AX model and functionalities are grounded in two primary business management practices:

Account Sentiment: Based on Customer Lifecycle Management best practices, this area includes those activities after an initial purchase within the customer lifecycle, such as managing feedback for both respondents and accounts, as well as prioritizing follow-up and closed loop practices, prioritized in some cases by revenue.

Account Intelligence: Developed from Revenue Lifecycle Management best practices, account intelligence refers to processes used to strategically identify areas for growth within an existing customer base—i.e., up and cross-sells, referral marketing, reviews and predictive churn analytics.

In this chapter, we're diving into the Account Experience model and capabilities, a new best practice roadmap for B2B CX programs. First, we'll look at why Account Experience deserves its own category in the crowded CX marketplace.

Why Account Experience isn't CX or CS

So far, we've touched on a number of reasons why the current Customer Experience (CX) marketplace and available solutions underserve B2B companies, and the differences in the very nature of managing a B2B vs. a B2C CX program. And whereas Account Experience looks to divide the CX market in half between B2B and B2C, Customer Success (CS) takes a small market segment within the CX marketplace, focusing on SaaS, tech and the subscription-based economy.

On the surface, AX vs. CS may seem closer in relation feature-wise. Both look to incorporate ROI in a deeper level of a CX program, both promote account management best practices, and both understand the importance a relationship manager serves in retention gains and account growth. Where the two differ, they do so on a fundamental level, from the treatment of accounts via segmentation to industry capabilities.

> **"Account Experience looks to divide the CX market in half between B2B and B2C. CS takes a small market segment within the CX marketplace, focusing on SaaS, tech and the subscription-based economy. "**

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AX AND CX

The CX market stands at a branching milestone, where the need to differentiate contact-native vs. account-native experiences must be addressed.

ACCOUNT EXPERIENCE | CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

ACCOUNT EXPERIENCE	CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE
Account-centric	Contact-centric
ROI & monetization CX focus	Operational CX, lack financial focus
Multi-level hierarchy, location segmentation	Contact-level only, location segmentation
Actionable intelligence	Research-oriented

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AX AND CS

Having your experience management tool sit in one department creates natural silos. So, while customer success methodologies may call for permeation of best practices to be pushed to the whole organization… the reality is quite different.

ACCOUNT EXPERIENCE	CUSTOMER SUCCESS
Experience-based	Usage-based
Focused on B2B experiences, cross-industry	Focused on SMB, tech/SaaS only industries
Cross-departmental insights	Owned by a single department
Monetization throughout CX program	Monetization towards account growth

THE ACCOUNT EXPERIENCE MODEL

An Account Experience model provides value to enterprises across B2B organizations that are looking to do two things:

1 Manage the customer lifecycle to reduce churn and improve value for customers

2 Boost ROI to grow accounts and existing customer revenue streams

1

2

ACCOUNT SENTIMENT
(Customer Lifecycle Management)

- ✓ Smart Survey Programs
- ✓ Campaign Tracking
- ✓ Real-Time Analysis
- ✓ Streamlined Workflows
- ✓ Closed Loop Prioritization
- ✓ Employee Experience

AX

ACCOUNT INTELLINGENCE
(Revenue Lifecycle Management)

- ✓ Activity Monitoring
- ✓ Churn Prevention
- ✓ Opportunity Tracking
- ✓ Predictive Analytics
- ✓ Referral Marketing

MONETIZATION ONGOING

CHAPTER THREE
The Definitive Guide to B2B CX

ACCOUNT SENTIMENT— B2B CX EXPERIENCE MANAGEMENT

The rise of the traditional Voice of the Customer (VoC) program can trace its origins to simple pen and paper. As sketched out in the introduction to this book, companies have used VoC programs to better understand the consumer landscape for years.

While Net Promoter is credited with positioning the CX economy where it is today, it hasn't done so in isolation. Numerous metrics and methodologies are used to capture feedback, and even more to act on it.

In an Account Experience model, account sentiment plays the role of CLM within the B2B context after the initial sale. Just like CLM, account sentiment looks at those parts of an B2B CX program focused on measuring and managing the health of an account using feedback tools, root cause analysis and closed loop best practices.

Measuring and acting on feedback should look fairly similar to other tools you've seen in the CX marketplace before. So what's different within a B2B CX toolset?

B2B companies can use monetization when determining which accounts to survey, and juxtapose revenue next to touch points for prioritizing organizational improvements.

In addition, account sentiment also includes employee experience elements to ensure the longevity of the program and improve the sentiment of the workforce.

In this chapter, we'll quickly walk through the elements that fall under account sentiment activities, including managing feedback, prioritizing follow-up based on revenue, and closed loop best practices at various organization levels.

Voice of the Account (And Employee!), Demystified

Getting your AX program off the ground and running means implementing a survey and touch point analysis strategy. There are three important elements to consider here:

Holistic Survey Program

There are numerous metrics and methods for capturing feedback. How and when you ask your customers for feedback should be based on the goals you are trying to achieve. Remember: The Account Experience methodology is not a market research exercise. It is actionable. Keep your surveys short using drivers (as we'll discuss next) representative of touch points in the customer journey, and at a consistent pace.

TIP #02 — Numbers Don't Lie

Respondents of our 2018 Benchmarks report and white paper said:

+2.3% retention increase per year = 2-6 questions
+ 5.2% retention = Quarterly relationship surveys

Companies should also strive to achieve strong coverage across accounts AND responses. After all, an engaged holistic view of your accounts mitigates unforeseen churn.

So how many contacts should you survey in an account?

Annual Value	Number of Contacts
1,000,000	9
100,000	6
10,000	3
1,000	1

The answer depends on the account revenue. As a rule of thumb, in $1 million dollar accounts, there are often at least 9 people involved in new purchase decisions. In hundred thousand dollar accounts, that number is closer to 6.

A good AX platform should keep track of the number of engaged contacts in each account. Juxtaposing this kind of information next to revenue can also be useful for tackling revenue churn, as companies can prioritize survey campaigns around high-value accounts.

Coverage indicates how large a portion of your customer base your collected feedback covers. When coverage grows, so do the sales of existing customers and the share of sales generated by referrals.
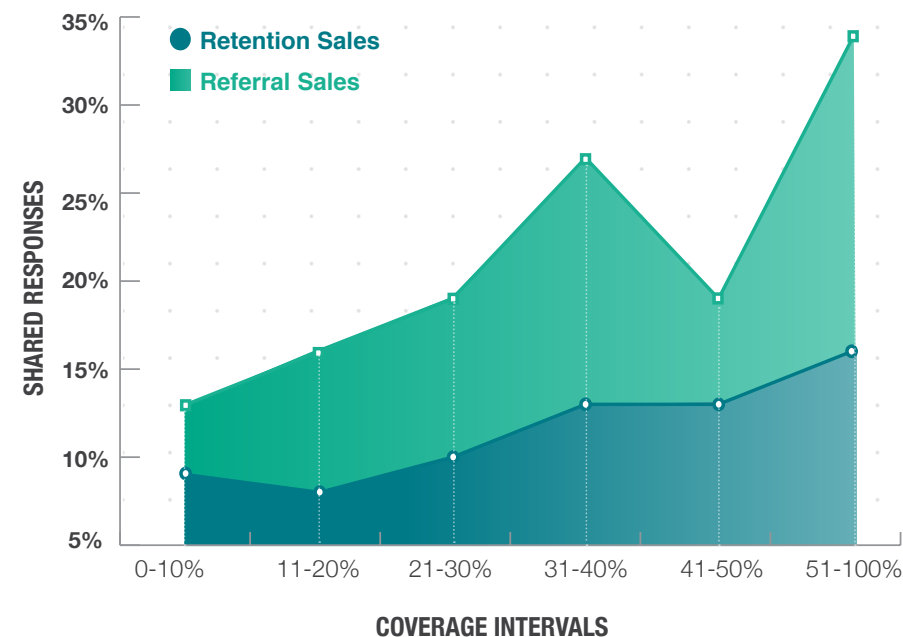
Why? Since higher response rates usually mean more engaged customers, and high coverage rates usually mean more promoters. The more promoters you have, the more sales to existing customers and referrals you are likely to have too.

Drivers Representative of Customer Journey

How a company designs their surveys should depend on the touch points within the customer journey. Customer journey mapping can help determine what those driver touch points should be, and also includes a number of other benefits for B2B companies, such as:

- ✓ Identifying personas, their goals and expectations
- ✓ Listing touch points and the channels in which they occur
- ✓ Creating empathy maps
- ✓ Visualizing the customer journey
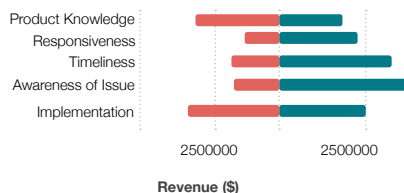- ✓ Connecting insights and attributing their revenue impact

Companies can juxtapose these drivers next to both customer satisfaction metrics and revenue to better understand the impact on sentiment and their bottom line.
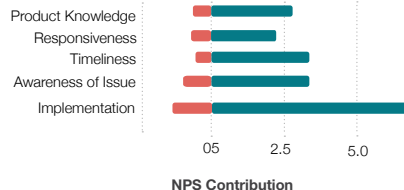
Tell Us How Your Service Was!

Thank you for your score. What would you particularly recommend about the experience?

- ◉ Customer Support
  - ◉ Awareness of Issue
  - ○ Timeliness
- ○ Account Mng.
- ○ Implementation
- ○ Other

Driver Impact- Revenue ($)

Product Knowledge
Responsiveness
Timeliness
Awareness of Issue
Implementation

2500000   2500000

Revenue ($)

Driver Impact- NPS Contribution

Product Knowledge
Responsiveness
Timeliness
Awareness of Issue
Implementation

05   2.5   5.0

NPS Contribution

See it in Action ▷

Make Employee Engagement Part of Your B2B CX Strategy

A poor employee experience can reverberate throughout a B2B CX program. MIT CISR found that companies labeled as employee experience leaders had 2x the NPS and 25% greater profitability than low performing EX companies.

Despite this benefit, Deloitte Insights found that nearly 80% of executives rated employee experience as very important. However, only 22% believed their company was building a differentiated employee experience.

So, why do so many B2B companies struggle to define and embrace EX? Generally there are three reasons:

Why B2B Employee Experience is Suffering:

1

Lack of C-level HR roles in current organizations

HR and their insights need a seat at the executive table.

2

Lack of resources and tools

The siloed nature of HR often puts their budget and needs in the backseat of an organization. Software like eNPS are often not given the light of day.

3

Lack of timely engagement and follow-up

Many companies fail to survey and engage with employees on a meaningful basis to impact attrition.

Closing the Loop in a B2B CX Program

In B2B CX programs, companies close the loop with both accounts AND respondents. In this section we'll look at best practices to improve retention and internal process for closing the loop.

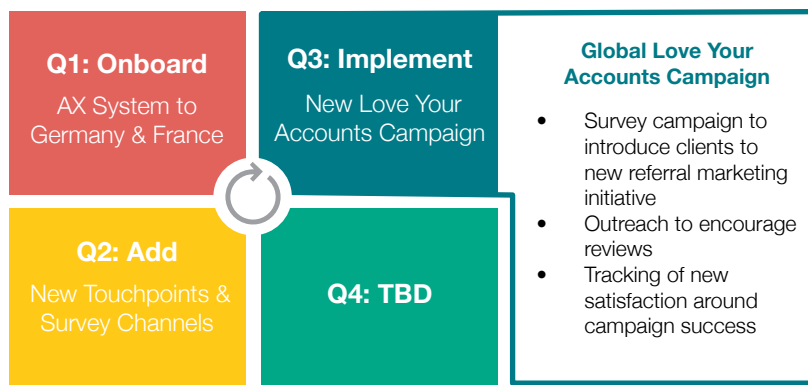### Quarterly Business Reviews—Not Just for Customer Success

QBRs are quarterly meetings with an account's Decision Making Unit. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss the customer's targets and how your company can support them. While QBRs are a traditional term found in the Customer Success space, we highly suggest applying the concept to your own industry, as many others have started to do.

There are a number of elements a QBR should cover:

- ✓ Satisfaction/Support review
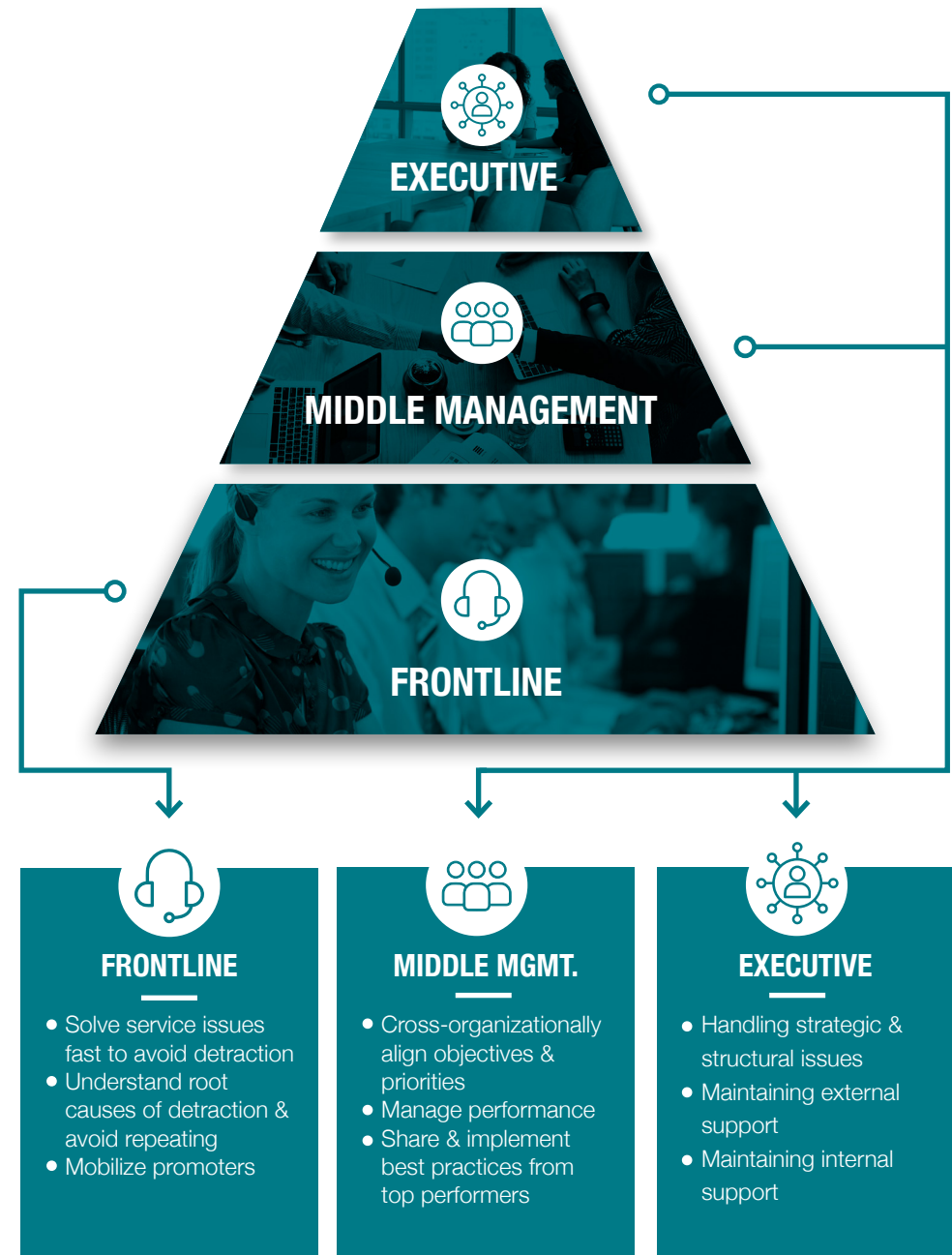- ✓ Maturity assessment/Benchmarking
- ✓ Next steps

Below, we see a Q3 business review where the client is looking to roll out a new referral marketing campaign. A relationship manager will see if these objects were met, and then discuss what initiatives the company is looking to do in Q4.

Q3 Quartely Business Review	Acme Inc./AX European Rollout

Q1: Onboard
AX System to Germany & France

Q2: Add
New Touchpoints & Survey Channels

Q3: Implement
New Love Your Accounts Campaign

Q4: TBD

Global Love Your Accounts Campaign
- Survey campaign to introduce clients to new referral marketing initiative
- Outreach to encourage reviews
- Tracking of new satisfaction around campaign success

Closing the Loop at Every Level

90% of companies reported closing the loop at some level, with additional % retention gains at each level.

EXECUTIVE

MIDDLE MANAGEMENT

FRONTLINE

FRONTLINE
- Solve service issues fast to avoid detraction
- Understand root causes of detraction & avoid repeating
- Mobilize promoters

MIDDLE MGMT.
- Cross-organizationally align objectives & priorities
- Manage performance
- Share & implement best practices from top performers

EXECUTIVE
- Handling strategic & structural issues
- Maintaining external support
- Maintaining internal support

ACCOUNT INTELLIGENCE— B2B CX GROWTH MANAGEMENT

In AX, we refer to Revenue Lifecycle Management activities as account intelligence. Within the account intelligence framework, there is an increased focus on customer lifetime value and how B2B organizations can improve value for customers through RLM activities while also increasing revenue growth. Account intelligence encompasses the following activities for managing customer growth and retention:

Activity Monitoring

Oppurtunity Tracking & Creation

Referral Marketing & Reviews Mng.

In this chapter, we'll walk through the different activities covered in account intelligence.

> "…opportunities present themselves at each touch point in the [customer] lifecycle—onboarding, adoption, up-sell/cross-sell, retention and renewals. Those enterprises that are ahead of the curve—that make data-driven decisions and partner continuously with their customers to help unleash the value inherent in insights derived from the RLM process—are poised to see substantial returns on investment."
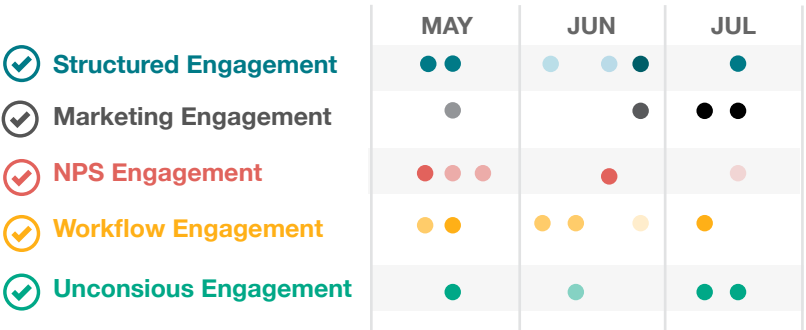>
> **-Forbes Insights**
> Mastering Revenue Lifecycle Management

CHAPTER FOUR

The Definitive Guide to B2B CX

Churn Management 2.0

Connecting relevant customer data into your B2B CX platform can provide greater clarity into the patterns and habits of your accounts. This is helpful for understanding and predicting if any of your accounts are at risk for churning. However, undertaking this kind of initiative requires the right data. In this section, we'll look at the factors that will turn your account management practices from reactionary to predictive.
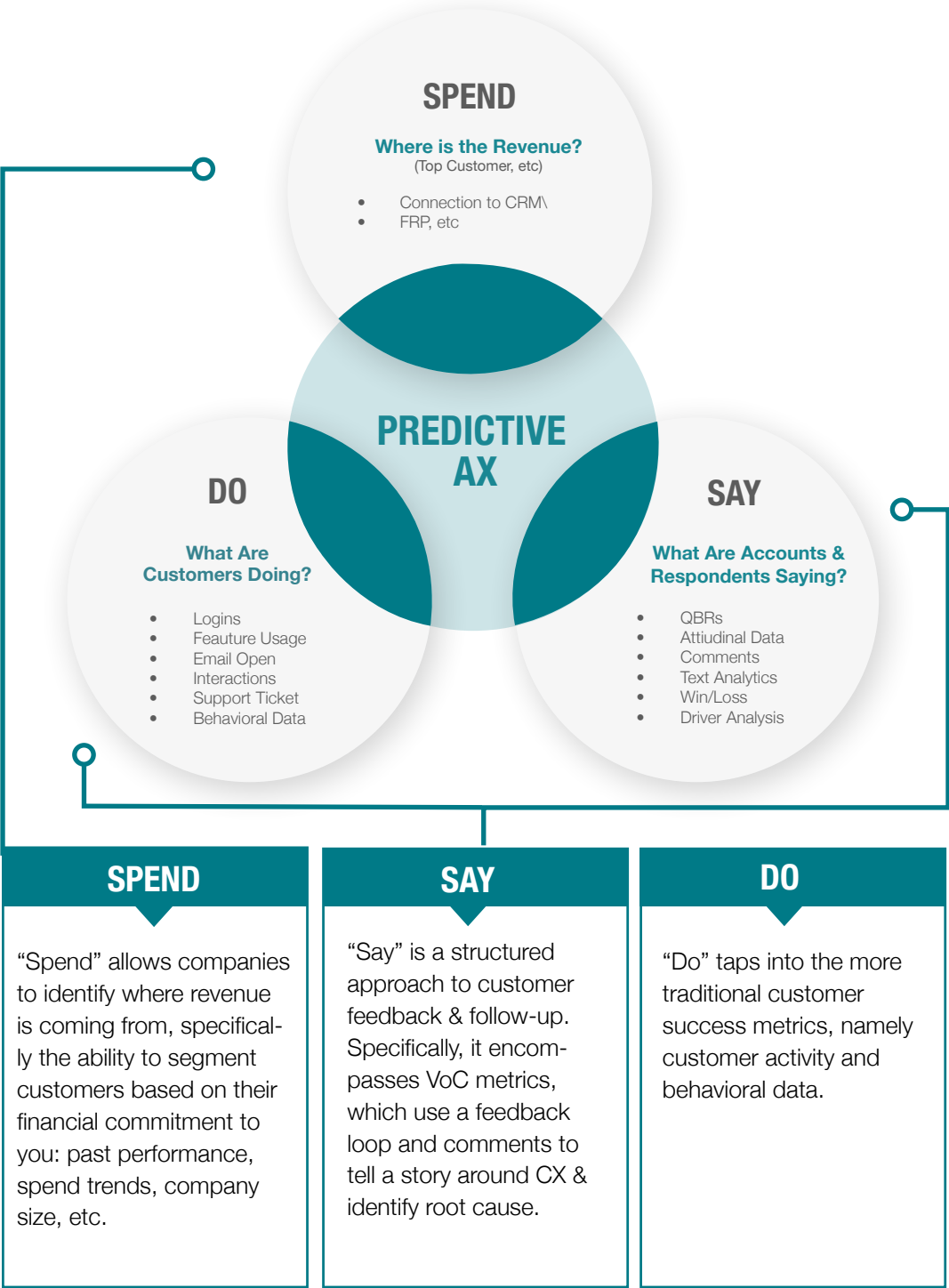
In the example illustration below, we see a number of metrics being measured on a monthly basis. This goes beyond a typical customer success mindset of usage data and into a multitude of interactions a brand has with an account.

	MAY	JUN	JUL
✓ Structured Engagement	● ●	● ● ●	●
✓ Marketing Engagement	●	●	● ●
✓ NPS Engagement	● ● ●	●	●
✓ Workflow Engagement	● ●	● ● ●	●
✓ Unconsious Engagement	●	●	● ●

See it in Action ▶

But what exactly are these types of engagement within an AX program? Those familiar with the Spend, Say, Do model might know. To become predictive in an AX program, B2B companies need to equip their teams with the tools to monitor every facet of an account relationship. The Spend, Say, Do model does just that.

The Account Experience methodology uses the Spend, Say, Do model to make B2B retention activities more predictive than reactionary. Specifically, these overlapping data points enable B2B companies to foresee any activities, or lack thereof, that may be a red flag for churn.

SPEND
Where is the Revenue?
(Top Customer, etc)
- Connection to CRM\
- FRP, etc

PREDICTIVE AX

DO
What Are Customers Doing?
- Logins
- Feauture Usage
- Email Open
- Interactions
- Support Ticket
- Behavioral Data

SAY
What Are Accounts & Respondents Saying?
- QBRs
- Attiudinal Data
- Comments
- Text Analytics
- Win/Loss
- Driver Analysis

SPEND	SAY	DO
"Spend" allows companies to identify where revenue is coming from, specifically the ability to segment customers based on their financial commitment to you: past performance, spend trends, company size, etc.	"Say" is a structured approach to customer feedback & follow-up. Specifically, it encompasses VoC metrics, which use a feedback loop and comments to tell a story around CX & identify root cause.	"Do" taps into the more traditional customer success metrics, namely customer activity and behavioral data.

Opportunity Tracking: Up-selling & Cross-selling

According to [Forrester](#), accounts that have a good experience with a brand are 3.6x more likely to buy other services and products. Amazon has perfected the art of up- and cross-sales in the B2C eCommerce market. In fact, over [35%](#) of Amazon's revenue is from its killer cross-sales strategy.

But what about B2B organizations? How can they look to incorporate a similar strategy in their own CX program?

TIP #03 — Calculating Customer Lifetime Value

You can't have a discussion about account intelligence without first addressing the customer lifetime value. And that's because the value of a loyal customer can't be understated. Loyal customers…

- Stay longer
- Buy more
- Refer your brand
- Are less price sensitive
- Are easier to serve
- Provide constructive feedback

The formula for calculating CLV is:

$$CLV = \sum_{n=0}^{N} \frac{M_n}{(1+r)^n}$$

As retention grows, so too does the lifetime value of a customer. Monetization involves activities that improve and expand CLV both to the benefit of the customer and the B2B enterprise.

However, according to [Gartner](#), despite a 2.3x increase in the size of the average sales teams' B2B portfolios, "only 28% of sales leaders believe existing account management channels meet cross-selling account growth targets."

28% of sales leaders believe existing account management channels meet cross-selling account growth targets

This indicates a growing issue within B2B enterprises around the role of the re-lationship manager. Many B2B companies need more tools for identifying these type of opportunities and to encourage their relationship managers to remember that good customer service includes providing greater value to accounts through products and services.

Below, we have a SWOT analysis report. CustomerGauge clients use this tool to identify opportunities within their customer base for up- and cross-sell. B2B tech like this is vital for positioning a CX program around growth.

Threat | Strength

Data Hosting
NPS 30 | $1.4M

Weakness | Opportunity

See it in Action ▷

Generating New Business: Referral Marketing and Reviews

Using a B2B CX program to improve referral marketing and initiate a review program can shorten the sales cycle, onboard more qualified accounts, and increase overall CLV.

So, why are so many B2B companies reluctant to incorporate these kinds of customer marketing activities into their B2B CX efforts? In this section, we'll look at best practices for doing both.

Referral Marketing: The B2B Sales Secret

Referral marketing is the intersection between the marketing and customer growth funnels, and demonstrates once again why a successful B2B CX program is cross-departmental.

Referral marketing is strategically smart from a monetization and retention perspective, as it leverages loyalty to promote growth and increase the overall CLV:

- Referred accounts are more loyal than non-referred account
- Get the right accounts from the start
- Referred accounts come with higher value

Within B2B, referrals are incredible drivers of revenue growth—more so than even B2C. In fact, according to Harvard Business Review, 84% of B2B sales begin with a referral.

> **"B2B companies that link referral marketing to their CX programs have higher revenue growth and returns on retention…"**

- Yes, but it's not linked to our customer satisfaction program — 22%
- No, but we plan on implementing one in the future — 16%
- Yes, and it is linked to our customer satisfaction program — 9%
- No, we don't have a referral marketing program — 54%
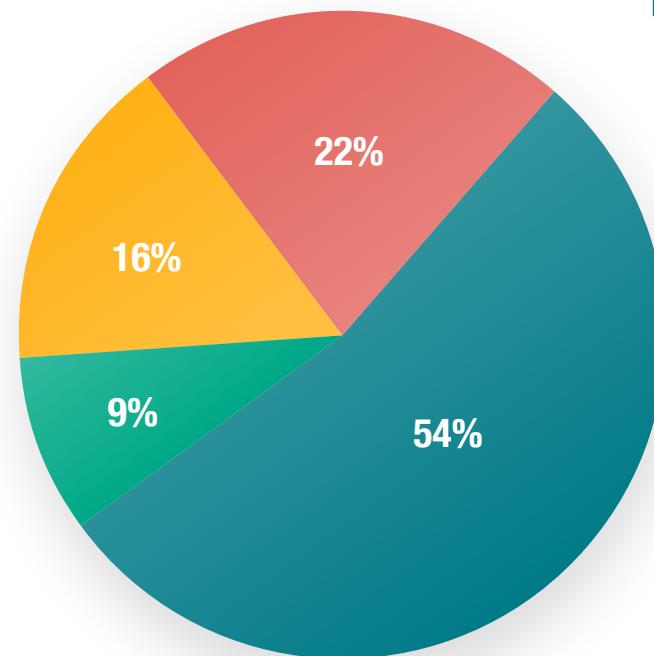
In 2018 CustomerGauge's NPS & CX Benchmarks report, 54% of B2B professionals indicated they didn't use a referral marketing program. However, the 9% that not only use a referral marketing, but link it to their CX program, experience the highest percentage of revenue growth (20%) and return on retention (82%).

Unfortunately, almost 49% of B2B professionals couldn't report on the sales generated from referrals. So, even if there was additional revenue, it isn't being measured or reported up to the C-Suite. Considering 84% of sales in B2B begin with a referral, this is quite shocking. By combining referral marketing with an AX program, B2B companies can begin to target new areas of growth, specifically:

- Target promoters and passives to refer new customers by incentivizing them and the referring customer.
- Use a combination of referral and CX data to determine which types of customers are most likely to refer new business.
- Make referral marketing a part of your closed loop process by training employees to ask if a customer will refer them at the end of a resolved issue.

Online Reviews: Get in Front of the Right B2B Buyers

Outside of referral marketing, in a more passive capacity, reviews are another area B2B companies can use to monetize their existing AX feedback to generate more business.

According to G2 Crowd, despite over 90% of B2B buyers indicating that reading a review is more likely to lead to a purchase, only 1 in 5 B2B companies use reviews for marketing efforts.

71% of buyers actively seek reviews.

B2B customers are making financially larger investments than those in a B2C customer journey. As such, the value of a review is invaluable during the consideration stage of a B2B buyer journey, where, according to G2 Crowd, 71% of buyers actively seek reviews.

TIP #04 — Be Active, Not Passive With Reviews

Some companies assume that simply having promoters is an indication of future referrals. However, this is far from the truth.

According to Northwestern University, 80% of reviews originate from follow-up emails by companies asking customers to refer or review their product/services.

As part of their account sentiment activities, companies can ask customers to publish their comments online, or encourage them to post on sites such as G2 Crowd.

Remember, companies can't just assume that promoters will automatically refer or review their brand. They must be asked. Companies can also use their own individual sites to promote reviews online. Not only do these help shorten the B2B buyer journey, but they also improve SEO standing amongst competitors.

The pay-off for implementing a review strategy as part of your AX program can be huge for companies. The previously mentioned Northwestern University study found that displaying five or more reviews for products/services increases purchase likelihood by 270% compared to products/services without reviews.

> **"Displaying five or more reviews for products/services increases purchase likelihood by 270% compared to products/services without reviews."**
>
> **-Northwestern University**

GETTING STARTED WITH A B2B CX PROGRAM

You understand the model and tools to get your B2B CX program to the next level. Now, how do you put those steps in motion to embed AX and a B2B CX program into your organization?

To compile the insights in this chapter, we looked to the experts over at Gartner on their best practice steps for building a business case to get approval for a CX technical investment. The illustration shown is a recreation of Gartner's parameters.

Using some of the guidance from Gartner's model, we developed a step-by-step guide to get a B2B CX program off the ground and running—as well as ensure the program's longevity and success.

We then end the book with an AX software checklist, and an invitation to see CustomerGauge's AX solution in action.

Source: Gartner

"Realizing the Benefits of Superior Customer Experience: A Gartner Trend Insight Report"

Build a Business Case to Gain Approval for a CX Technology Investment

1 — 8 (circular diagram)

1. Organize Stakeholders
2. Select the Metrics
3. Baseline Existing Performance
4. Describe the Capabilities of the Solution
5. Negotiate the Targeted Improvements
6. Convert Targeted Improvements to Financial Results
7. Develop the TCO
8. Calculate the ROI

Steps to B2B CX Success

The best way to initiate an AX program is to gather a coalition of champions looking to transform your B2B enterprise towards a profitable, customer-centric future—and support these champions with tools that allow them to carry out this mission.

As mentioned, how you introduce your B2B CX strategy into an organization is everything. Your rollout should include considerations to three key pillars:

- ✓ Personnel
- ✓ Digital Transformation
- ✓ Strategy/Processes

Grounded in Gartner's CX technology business case parameters, but tailored for the B2B business model, the following steps provide an outline to get you started.

> **"23% of companies said C-Suite buy-in was the primary factor behind the success of their program."**
>
> **-CustomerGauge NPS Benchmarks Report**

01 Identify a cross-departmental need for change that an AX program and toolset can solve

The best way to get your resources is to make a business case based on a particular pain point. Perhaps your B2B organization has struggled to support your CX program due to a lack of guidance or sufficient tools. Maybe this is the first time you've considered aligning an account-based approach to experience management.

Whatever the case, to begin the process of onboarding an AX program, you need to start building a strong case for its fruition prior to approaching or inviting others to participate.

02 Gather a coalition of champions and get sponsorship from the C-Suite

Understanding how a B2B CX program serves each area of your business is vital for not only long-term buy-in, but on-going improvement and growth. Once a need for change is identified, work should be done to gather a championing coalition around the account experience program.

During this time, the C-Suite should be engaged to connect higher level company initiatives with program outcomes. In fact, CustomerGauge's 2016 NPS Benchmarks Report found that 23% of companies said C-Suite buy-in was the primary factor behind the success of their program.

03 Build a program charter

With your coalition now in place, it's important to designate the goals and mission of your account experience program. Specifically, a program charter should define:

- The reason for undertaking the project
- The project details
- Stakeholders required to be involved
- Budget, timeline, and resources required
- The initial risk assessment

Create or designate the roles & responsibilities of a relationship manager within the organization

04

Every B2B CX program should have some personnel available similar to that of a relationship manager to provide the human face of your company to your multi-layered stakeholder clients. Relationship managers combine product expertise, business specialization and account growth tactics all rolled into one.

Implement an automated AX tool to manage the digital transformation of your AX program

05

The time for managing B2B experience programs via spreadsheets or disparate CX software tools is over. To support the success of your program and ensure that the relevant insights, workflows and action points are provided to the right people at the right time, you need to onboard the right tools.

Incorporate internal processes alongside AX digital transformation

06

Tools can do a lot. However, unless best practices and operational procedures follow, little in the way of change or growth will be seen. Creating a cultural buy-in campaign is one way to get your organization excited about the transition. Some companies use branded swag around kick-off sessions to raise awareness around the program. It's important to align all three levels of an organization around the new program, establish change agents within the organization to drive this new program and make change easier.

ACCOUNT EXPERIENCE

Software Checklist

Your Account Experience Software Checklist

Once you have the operational support and best practice guidelines in place to steer your account experience program, it's time to begin looking for technology that can aid the customer-centric transformation at a digital level. Below we have a best practice checklist for choosing your own AX software vendor. A B2B CX/AX vendor should enable you to:

Automate CX processes to support post-initial sales Customer Lifecycle Management (CLM)

Offer horizontal adoption and visibility in an enterprise setting, including multiple persona views that provide insights to relevant stakeholders

Align a customer-focused workforce around the customer

Offer all the capabilities necessary to measure account health across channels, for multiple stakeholders

Use revenue side-by-side with satisfaction data to help prioritize follow-up that reduces churn

Identify opportunities for growth, including referrals, up-sells, cross-sells, etc.

Integrate multiple streams of data including support tickets, sales activities, marketing touches and website visits/logins, to track activities and behavioral data from multiple IT systems.

Download This Checklist

CustomerGauge

About CustomerGauge

CustomerGauge is a software-as-a-service platform that helps clients improve and monetize the B2B customer experience. The system automatically measures and analyzes feedback, reduces churn through close-loop tools, and helps retain accounts. Results are published and analyzed in real-time, using a highly customizable reporting tool, making it ideal for global enterprises.

Stay Connected

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