

The value of CX in emerging markets

 By Leigh Andrews

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In the age of the customer, retailers and marketers need to pay attention to customers and CX like never before. Here's how to get it right.

The first keynote presentation of the Customer Experience Management (CEM) Africa 2016 was my favourite of the day, led by author Qaalfa Dibeehi who is also VP of customer experience at Forrester. As a former research neuroscientist, he predicts we'll see much more mention of the implications of customer motivation and why they choose to associate with certain brands over others in future, particularly as customer experience gets more attention as the customer's power continues to grow.

Dibeehi then narrowed focus by defining 'emerging markets' as ones that are simply trying to improve, or as markets or sectors that are moving towards maturity. He said Africa ties in nicely to that definition.

Dibeehi said while many know about customer experience or CX, most actually hold onto misconceptions, especially regarding CX in emerging markets like Africa.

Three CX emerging market myths to debunk

1. First: It's a **luxury** to be implemented at a certain level or once the basics are in place. We need to ask ourselves whether CX is in fact a luxury or a necessity.
2. Second: **Price is king** and with the high level of price sensitivity and constantly looking to our competitors, many businesses fall for the trap of offering lowest price rather than focusing on the customer experience. Price is definitely important, but is it the most important aspect of CX?
3. Third, CX is a **technology** issue. Don't simply 'buy the kit' then try implement it. Rather design your company's specific CX strategy, then decide what technology you need to implement it.

Dibeehi added that there are five market imperatives needed to succeed in the age of the customer:

1. **CX**: How customers perceive their interactions with your organisation, all in customers' heads and strongly based on emotion.
2. Accelerating **digital business**, but not at the expense of humanness.



3. **Mobile mind shift – it's not just about handsets or the technology behind it, rather the idea that customers can get what they want whenever they want it.**
4. **Turning data into action.**
5. **Driving business growth with privacy to build trust.**

Dibeehi concluded that it costs five times as much to attract a new customer than it does to keep an existing one – CX drives that loyalty, so pay attention to it. Whether your business is B2B or B2C, at the end of the day it is person-to-person, so don't lose that focus.

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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