



# Customer Experience

Uncover the experience your customers want,  
to create fans of what you do





STATE OF THE MARKET

## Customer experience is more essential for business success than ever before

In today's crowded and competitive markets, price and product are no longer the sole determinants driving differentiation, customer experience is now a critical component in enabling customers to build affinity with a company's brand.

“Companies rated as **CX leaders outperform** on both stock price and ROI, compared to other businesses on the US stock exchange S&P 500 list with a poorer CX.

*Forrester*

“Customers who had a great customer experience are **four times more likely** to buy from the same company again.

*Salesforce*



## The rise of the experience economy

Given the growing number of ways in which consumers now interact with a company, their experiences and the way it makes them feel for many organisations is more important than anything else. These experiences are made up of many touchpoints and interactions with a brand including its product, services, employees and market messages across multiple channels over the duration of a relationship.


The emergence of the experience economy is fundamentally changing how companies go to market, influence their buyers and engage individuals throughout the customer journey, with businesses doing more and more to improve their customer experience (CX). This is reflected by the upward trend in average CX performance across all sectors since 2017.

“81% of customers are likely to recommend a company to others after a positive customer experience.

*Adobe*





A high-angle photograph of a bakery or cafe. In the foreground, a woman with a yellow scarf is seen from behind, standing at a counter. The counter is filled with various pastries and breads. To the left, another woman in a white shirt is working behind the counter. In the background, there are shelves filled with long loaves of bread. A large window on the right side shows a customer outside. The lighting is warm, with several pendant lamps hanging from the ceiling.

“ 66% of respondents state that **personal experience** has a **major influence** on their decisions about which brands they choose to do business with.

IPSOS

## Why customer experience matters

Customer experience and brand image are more interrelated than ever. People remember great experiences, but they also remember the bad too and these days even the average customer can let hundreds of people know about their experience through social whether positive or negative in just a few taps! Subsequently the overall feeling that a customer gets from their numerous interactions with a company's brand is fundamental to future success.

If you take the example of a restaurant, it's no longer just about how good the food tastes, but how an individual's overall experiences of that brand, before, during and after their meal, made them feel. From their initial interaction with the restaurant's website and phone booking experience, to the quality of their interactions with waiting staff and any post dining marketing information they were sent following their visit. Frustration at any one of these touchpoints will result in a less than positive experience.

Subsequently it's important to be acutely aware about the consequences that any negative experience could bring. Being able to identify and fix negative interactions quickly can be the difference between maintaining or breaking brand loyalty.

## Trust is everything

We live in cynical times and with consumers becoming increasingly savvy about products, services and the organisations behind them, it's important for companies to be as open and truthful as they can in their communications. Examples of activities could range from a food retailer's commitment to the provenance of its produce, to a fashion retailer offering consumers greater visibility about its materials' supply chain.

“Customer experience is the **number one factor** in driving customer loyalty

*Oracle*







## Improving customer experience through feedback loops

From providing an enjoyable in-store experience, or knowledgeable and helpful assistance on a support call, to making it easy for a customer to quickly find the product they need on a company website. Having recognised the importance of providing a good customer experience across all touchpoints, the most successful companies are developing and improving their CX strategies to maintain and build satisfaction with their brand, and embedding customer feedback loops into each touchpoint is crucial to this process.



## Using data insights to improve your customer experience

If you're not already collecting your customers' feedback, now is the time to make this a priority, as without accurate data you're unable to know what your customers are thinking, to in turn develop your strategy and ultimately improve your CX.

From questions that measure happiness with your products or support services, to how much a customer enjoyed interacting with your sales teams or website, there's a wide range of experience, effort and satisfaction questions available to gather customer feedback. The responses provide essential insight, which you can share and evaluate right across your business to make the necessary improvements to enhance your CX.



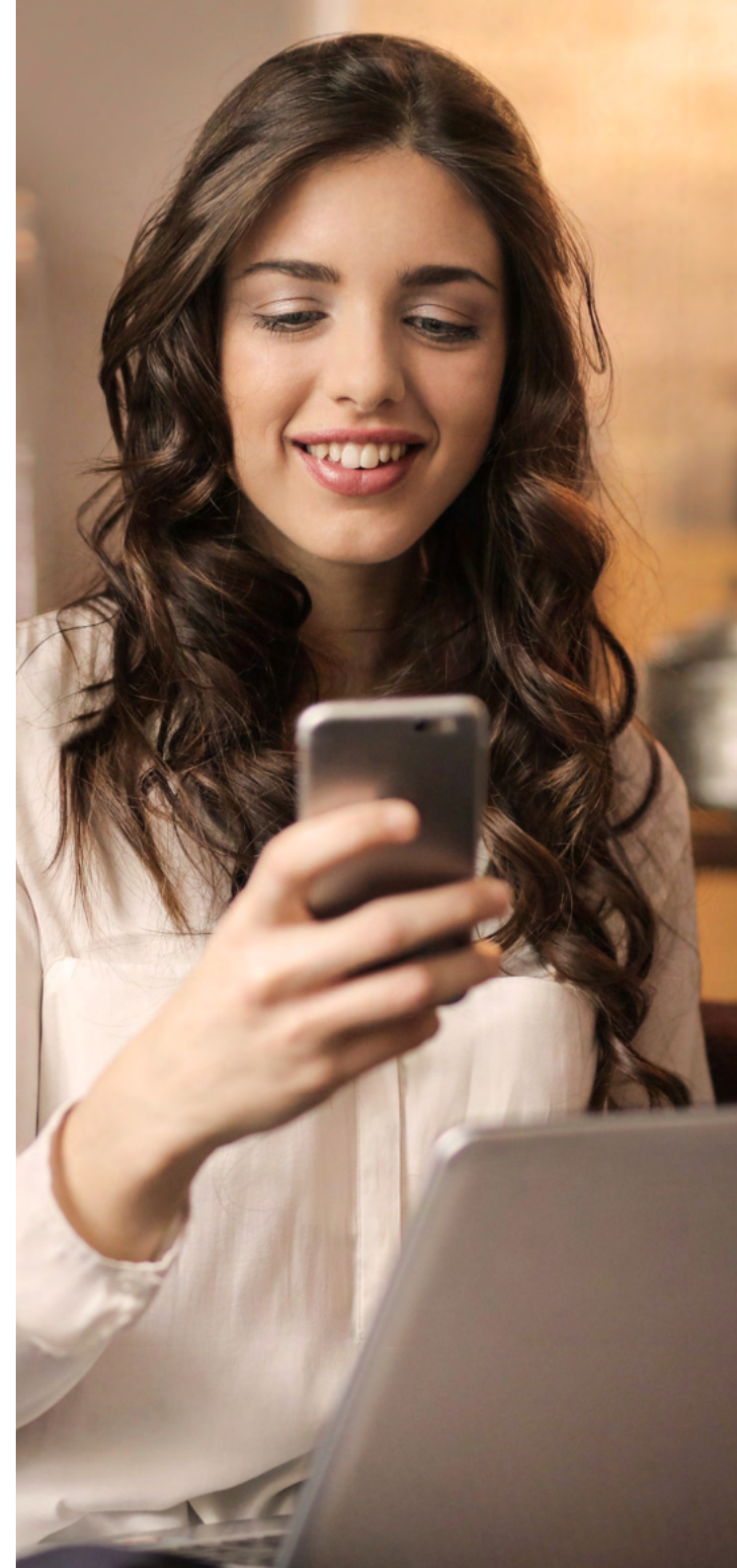


TRANSITION FROM TRADITIONAL TO DIGITAL EXPERIENCES

## The impact of digital transformation in driving CX

The growing influence of digital technology in driving CX cannot be overstated, it has radically changed the way in which customers interact with businesses and vice versa. While traditional channels such as in-store, face to face and telephone interaction are still important, the number of touch points has increased to include emails, websites, apps, chat bots, SMS, social media channels and more, all of which can be easily accessed by customers from their mobile device.

Today's consumers are no longer tied to a single channel and will use many different touchpoints during their interaction with a brand. For example, a consumer looking to buy a product may begin their journey by browsing in store, then check out review sites on their laptop, ask their social network for recommendations via their phone before finally purchasing through the website. Post purchase may be supported through any number of channels from phone, to chat app and ticket systems. Making it easy for customers to interact on these channels is essential. It's the sum of all the parts that deliver a great customer experience from that first interaction to post purchase and beyond. With so many touchpoints across a multitude of channels it's no surprise that it becomes hard to identify points of failure in the customer journey, unless there are automated feedback solutions gathering insight in real-time on behalf of the brand.







## The challenge of providing a consistent CX in today's ultra-connected world

While consumers in today's always on society expect to make contact and obtain swift answers from an organisation on any communication channel, companies themselves are under increasing pressure to provide a consistent CX from any of these touchpoints, at any time.

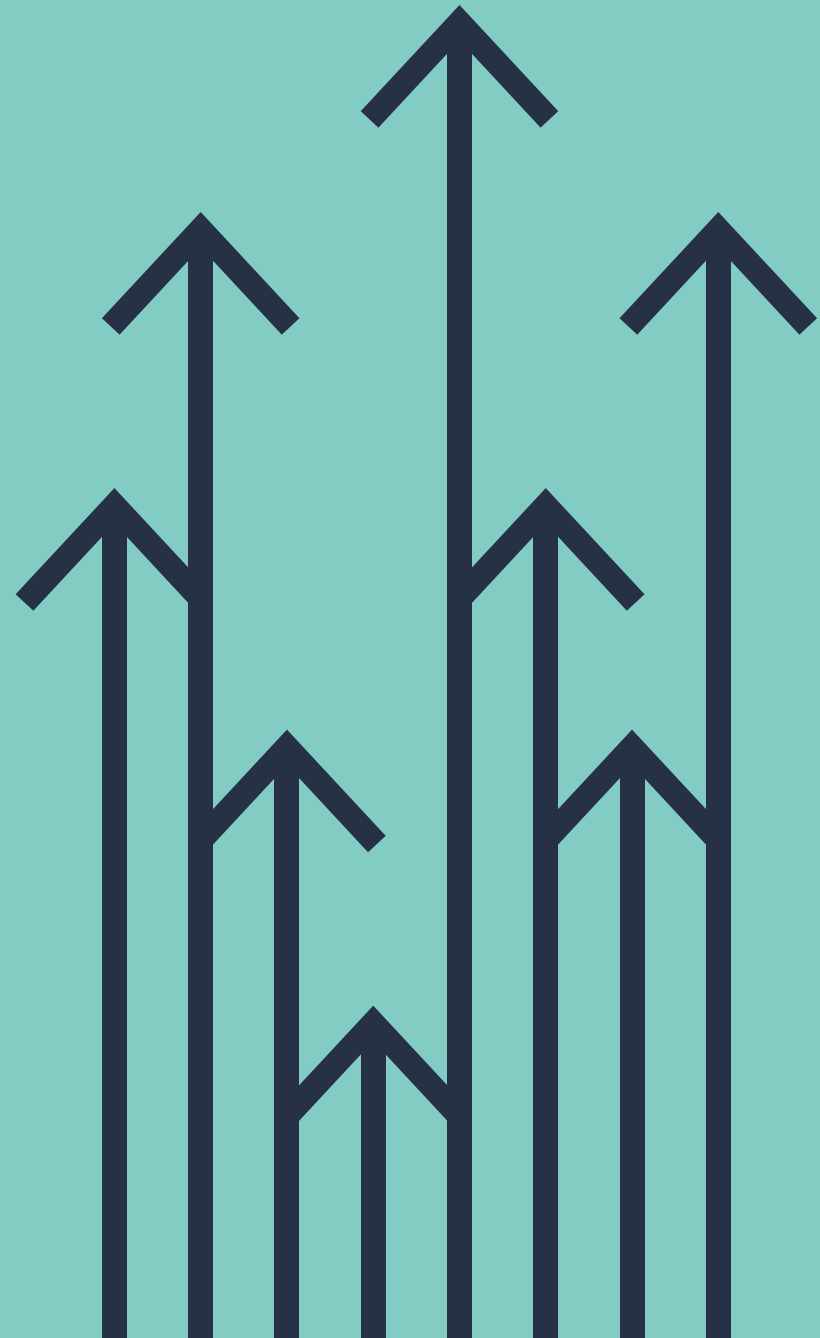
A good example of this is the customer experience standards individuals now expect of companies who use social media channels to answer service and support queries. According to a [Search Engine Watch study](#), more than half of all consumers now expect a customer service response within one hour when using a social media channel.

As digital continues to gather pace organisations are faced with an ever-growing number of channels to collect feedback from. Consequently, more touchpoints and declining levels of human interaction collecting customer feedback at the point of experience though digital methods is more important than ever before. In a digital first world, without feedback loops, organisations can be left in the dark as to whether customers are happy with their processes, products and service levels delivered.

## Are you using the right metrics to measure your customer experience?

While collecting as much feedback as you can is a good start for developing your strategy and improving your CX, the ability to contextualise what your customers' experience is and develop actions to help them based on this will resonate with them far more deeply. It will also have a beneficial impact on your longer-term brand loyalty. However, to achieve this, you will need to have the right metrics in place to measure the success of any customer improvements you implement.

The most commonly known CX metric in recent years is Net Promoter Score (NPS). NPS was heralded as the quintessential metric for gauging customer loyalty. This is based on the idea that those individuals most satisfied with your product or service would rate you with a high NPS score, meaning that they would be more likely to recommend your company to others. However, given the growing number of touchpoints in today's customer journey its value is no longer quite so clear cut.





# The metrics needed to measure today's more sophisticated customer experience

To survive in today's more crowded and competitive markets, businesses need more metrics to work with, that can allow them to better contextualise their customers' experience. With more detailed customer feedback around issues, businesses have much more information to drive positive actions.

More recently we have seen the emergence of the Forrester CX Pyramid, which can offer a more detailed measurement of how the customer feels, from baseline essentials to more advanced sentiments. This measurement model asks three key questions:

- 1. Basic level:** "Does my CX meet my customer's needs?"
- 2. Intermediary level:** "Is my CX easy, requiring only minimal effort?"
- 3. More advanced level:** "Is my CX enjoyable for my customers?"

Forrester argues that if measured and managed effectively, these three steps can help businesses to improve their NPS score and their overall customer loyalty.



## Three steps to improving your understanding of customer experience

**Meeting customer needs:** This first stage metric typically focuses on whether, or not your customer was able to reach their goal and is often referred to as a goal completion rate.

However, because there will often be different degrees to which your customer may or may not have accomplished their goal, this question needs to be structured in a way that allows you the flexibility to capture this such as: 'Did you reach your goal today? With options: Yes/ Partially/ No'.

For those that provided a partial or no answer, it would also be useful to provide an open text follow-up question, to better understand what your customers were looking for or expected, so you could further improve the customer experience in this area going forward.

**Making things simpler for your customers:** the intermediate stage, looks to measure how easy it was for your customers to reach their goal, whether that's going into a store to find and buy a specific product or completing a specific task on your website.

This stage is measured using the Customer Effort Score (CES), which is based on the idea that organisations create loyal customers when it's easy for those customers to

find what they're looking for or solve issues with minimal effort.

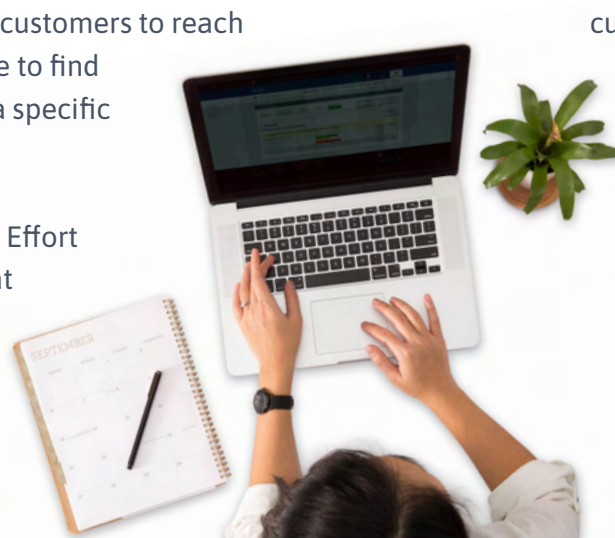
The CES metric is often related to a certain task or action. It is commonly used to measure a standard question such as: 'how easy was it to do X, Y, or Z?'

A 5-point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree with more neutral options in the middle is used to measure effort. For example, if you were an e-commerce store owner and you wanted to gauge how well your support staff were helping customers find and buy the products they needed, you might like to ask a question similar to the following:

'How much do you agree to the following statement: Through live-chat, the support team helped me resolve my issue easily.'? (1 is strongly agree and 5 is strongly disagree)



CES and Goal completion rate used in conjunction can be a powerful combination giving you insight into what your customer wanted to achieve, whether they achieved it, how much effort it took and what could be improved to make it easier next time. These two simple questions asked in the right way can uncover key insight that will enable you to consistently improve customer experience across a multitude of areas.





**Making your customer experience enjoyable:** during this final and most sophisticated stage, you are looking to measure how much customers enjoyed their interaction with your brand, which could be anything from an in-store visit to a shopping experience on your website or app.

This stage is typically measured using a Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) question, which focuses on how your users feel. CSAT, also known as an emotional score, is a multi-functional metric. It can give you a general view of customer emotion, or a magnified look at the mood around a specific topic, feature, or step in your customer journey. CSAT is typically based on a 5-point scale from very satisfied to very unsatisfied.

CSAT is calculated by dividing all the positive responses by the total number of responses and then multiplying by 100. This results in your CSAT percentage where scores closest to 100% indicate the highest levels of satisfaction and those at the other end of that spectrum the lowest satisfaction levels. For example, if you had 35 positive responses and a total of 50 responses, your CSAT would be 70%.

$$35/50 \times 100 = 70\%$$







## Know why customers feel and behave the way they do

When you collect different types of feedback data, you get a more all round, robust view of exactly what is going through your customer's mind. That's why it's important to incorporate GCR, CES and CSAT metrics into your CX strategy. Its these metrics that help to provide context to NPS giving you greater clarity over what could be the root cause of passive and detractor scores and where there is opportunity to make change to create more promoters. These metrics provide you with a more holistic perspective and provide you with the insight to able to deliver the value-add improvements needed to achieve a higher quality customer experience and stronger brand loyalty.




## Collecting customer feedback response rates across traditional and digital channels


Given the growing number of ways in which customers can now interact with your organisation it may leave you wondering how you collect all this feedback. The good news is that survey platforms have kept pace with technology and best in class solutions offer a wide range of distribution methods to enable you to capture feedback from your customer 'in the moment.'


From a product, client or customer service satisfaction, to support evaluation or buying experience, whatever area of your business you need to improve, there is a distribution method to best meet your scenario and touchpoint.

Outlined below are some of the most popular distribution methods to connect with your customers via surveys and some examples of scenarios where they are best suited:



 **Face-to-face** This more traditional method of surveying is still popular in certain situations. From remote locations to in-store, and on the high street, F2F surveys can offer you more in-depth data collection and a more comprehensive understanding with an interviewer able to see body language, facial expressions and probe for deeper explanations or responses. The downside of F2F is that it can be rather time consuming and costly.

 **Offline:** Whether you're conducting a countrywide research road show, a post-show survey of an agricultural event, or you're a regional sales exec with numerous face-to-face appointments. There could be many occasions where you find yourself in locations with little or no internet access. In such a scenario, the ability to conduct an offline survey, where you collect and store responses on your mobile device, ready for them to be uploaded to your account, as soon as you are re-connected to the internet is extremely valuable.

 **Email:** One of the most popular survey distribution channels for businesses, it's simple to setup and quick to deploy. The flexibility it provides to personalise your overall message, embed a survey link, or add individual questions into the body of an email such as 'How would our rate our service today?' - all help to maximise response rates and gather that all important feedback.



**SMS:** Modern consumers are literally attached to their mobile phones, and as people tend to check messages more regularly than they do their emails, you will want to consider collecting customer feedback via SMS survey invitations. Its immediacy and ease of reach, makes the SMS ideal for a range of scenarios, from a feedback survey sent to air travel passengers immediately after their aircraft has landed, to a survey distributed to a customer after they have had a product delivered or got off the phone to a customer support team.



**QR Codes:** can be very effective when you want to garner your customers' views about your product or experiences following an in-store visit. With their ability to be easily printed onto range of material from product packaging, catalogues, menus, posters and even at the bottom of sales receipts, they are quick and convenient way of connecting your customer with a relevant feedback survey.

For anyone not familiar with them, QR codes are very much like barcodes that contain coded information. A QR code is an image that stores a url, which can be scanned and opened by a QR scanner, or a directly via the camera app on most phones these days.



**Website pop up:** Whether it's new messaging, a new product, a fresh page layout, or overall views about your site, a pop-up is a great way to gather the experiences of visitors at different trigger points across your site.



**Social media:** With more and more people using social media channels as a way of communicating with an organisation, this can be another effective way to collect feedback from your customers.





## Using surveys and data collection mechanisms to measure experience through the complete customer journey

Having already explored the importance of maintaining a great customer experience across all touchpoints, we'll now examine the customer collection feedback processes you need to put in place to support a robust CX strategy and help deepen your understanding of what your customers are thinking.

It's vital to be able to collect feedback at every touchpoint along the customer journey. Whilst it may seem daunting to create a multi-layered, multi-touch program the reward is a fuller and deeper understanding of the overall customer experience your organisation delivers. With insight at every interaction you can pinpoint exactly where you need to make change to drive improvement.

However, there is real danger of '*jumping in at the deep end*' of the customer feedback pool! You need to balance obtaining feedback without overwhelming your customers. Presenting an in-depth survey at every touchpoint wouldn't be feasible, long surveys presented frequently will result in ever decreasing response rates.

You need to think about creating feedback loops use short surveys as close to the point of experience as possible, you will be more likely to get the responses you need without annoying customers.

The customer experience evaluation process can be further enhanced by mapping these customer touch points to more defined areas of the customer journey, from awareness right through to the purchase, support and repurchase and advocacy stages.

### Make feedback quick

“ Feedback collected immediately after an event is **40% more accurate** than feedback collected 24 hours later.

Gartner

### Keep it simple

“ Ask only one open-ended question (and capture a score alongside this) at relevant points of the customer journey and immediately after service delivery. This approach leads to **response rates of between 35-50%** (compared with 2-5% for traditional surveys) as well as much richer insight as we are getting the views of customers in their own words.

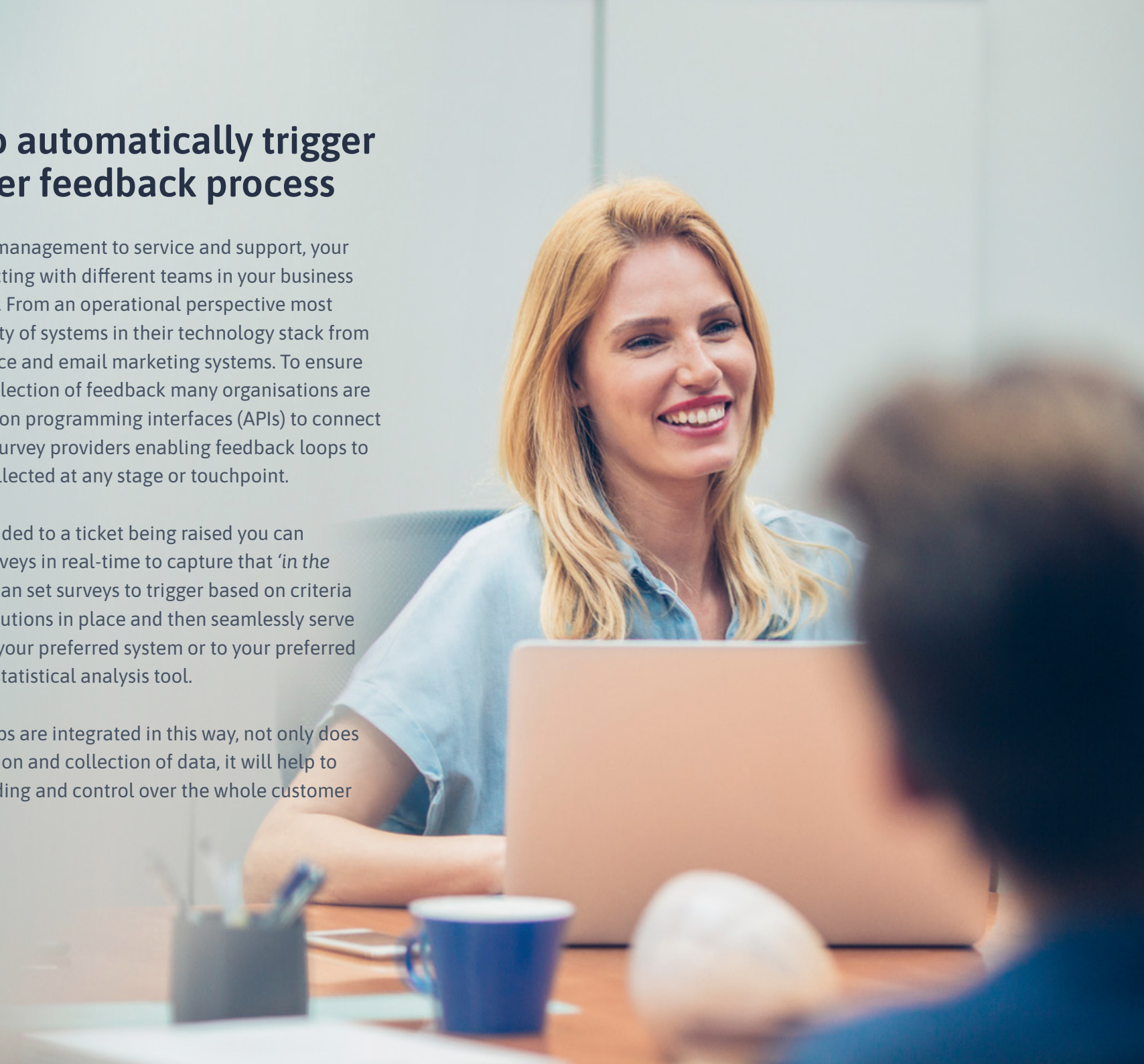
Salesforce

## Using APIs to automatically trigger your customer feedback process

From sales and account management to service and support, your customers will be interacting with different teams in your business throughout their journey. From an operational perspective most organisations use a variety of systems in their technology stack from CRM to ERP to field service and email marketing systems. To ensure consistent and timely collection of feedback many organisations are now leveraging application programming interfaces (APIs) to connect their systems with their survey providers enabling feedback loops to be triggered and data collected at any stage or touchpoint.

From a live chat being ended to a ticket being raised you can leverage APIs to send surveys in real-time to capture that *'in the moment feedback.'* You can set surveys to trigger based on criteria in any of the different solutions in place and then seamlessly serve response data back into your preferred system or to your preferred business intelligence or statistical analysis tool.

When your feedback loops are integrated in this way, not only does it enhance your distribution and collection of data, it will help to increase your understanding and control over the whole customer experience process.

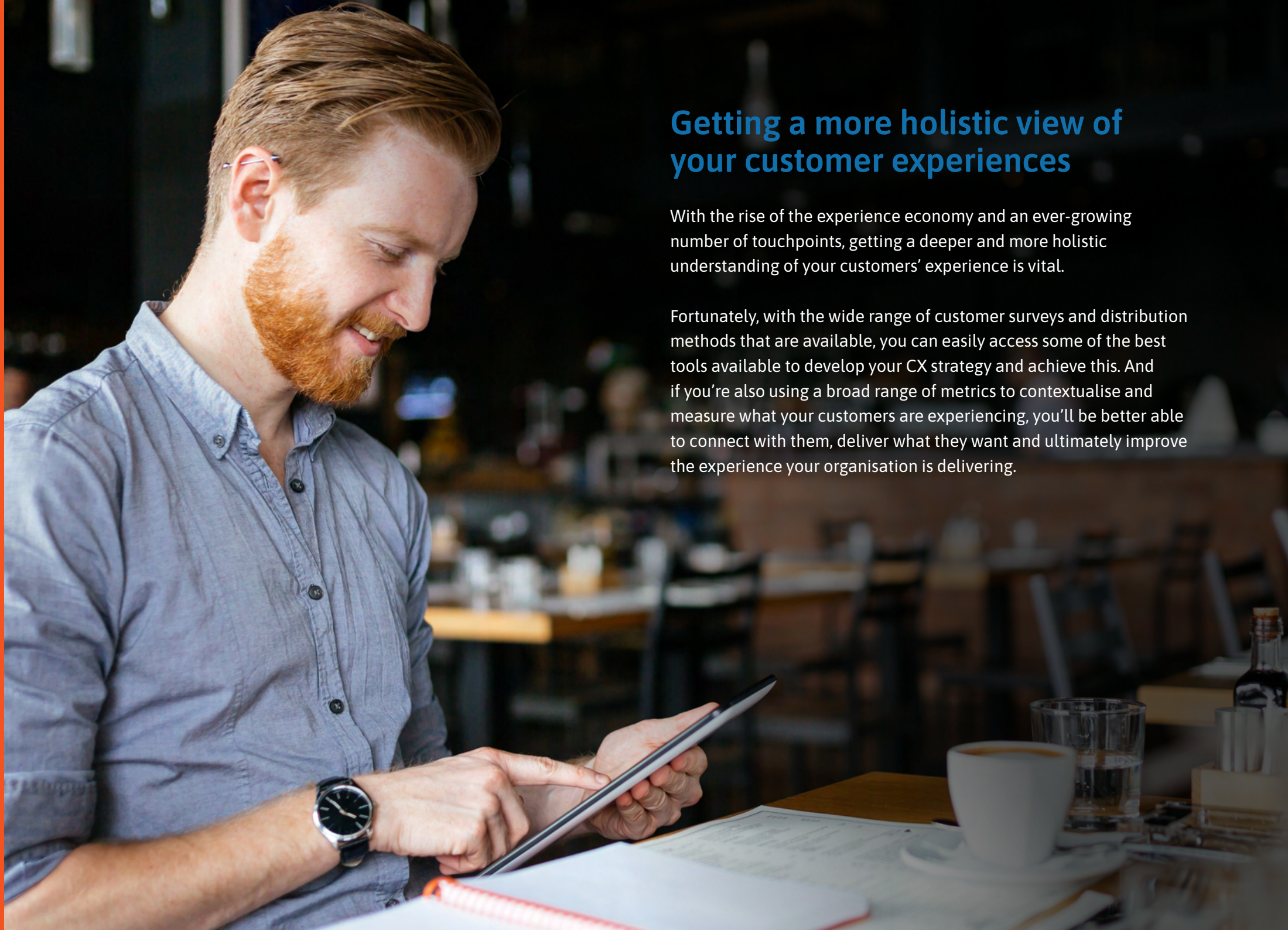




## Getting a more holistic view of your customer experiences

With the rise of the experience economy and an ever-growing number of touchpoints, getting a deeper and more holistic understanding of your customers' experience is vital.

Fortunately, with the wide range of customer surveys and distribution methods that are available, you can easily access some of the best tools available to develop your CX strategy and achieve this. And if you're also using a broad range of metrics to contextualise and measure what your customers are experiencing, you'll be better able to connect with them, deliver what they want and ultimately improve the experience your organisation is delivering.





Talk to our team about how we can help achieve your CX goals  
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