

Editorial: Understanding Emotions... Quick and Easy, Emotions which Can Make All of Us Vulnerable. Emotion and Knowledge

On March 25 this year we find out thanks to Adweek that Stacy Martinet, VP of Marketing Strategy at Adobe, expressed the opinion that as U.S. consumers' online engagement (with digital content across various platforms, devices and channels) is rising within the explosion of emerging technologies, companies will need to adapt accordingly, by using adequate (utilitarian and entertaining) content marketing strategies. Martinet showed, among other aspects, how: key in delivering personalized and relevant content and experiences will be to understand emotion (engagement will be redefined by multi-surface screens, coupled with mobile; personalization will be taken to the next level by biometrics, retailers having the opportunity to measure how their customers feel in-flight or in-store), the Zero UI (the use of sensory experiences – such as gestures, movement, voice – in order to trigger a particular reaction from a device) devices' use for purchasing is rising etc. Three days later, we received an email from eMarketer Retail with regard to a January 2019 survey from iVend Retail in partnership with AYTM – and entitled “Global Shopper Trends Report”, Feb 19, 2019 – which revealed the main aspects of the retail shopping experience Internet users (age 18+) worldwide do value most: quick and easy check out (83% of respondents); earning rewards or loyalty points (58,7%); free or easy returns (56,7%); click and collect/buy online, pickup in-store (44,3%); personalized offers, experiences and communications (37,1%); technology like AR, voice-assisted shopping, virtual dressing rooms (17,7%).

The Future Stores Report 2019 of WBR Insights (they surveyed 100 Directors of Commerce from across Europe in Q1 of 2019) – “Destination: Shopping” – has a significant structure (Investing in technology; Mapping the customer journey; The future of in-store), which is speaking for itself, being highlighted from the Introduction (guest contributor Gary Bott, Managing Director, Gentle Monster) that the physical retail is challenged to integrate the best parts of the online experience into its stores, re-imagining the very foundation of the retail experience (both of the roles of staff and the use of space), taking into account the more convenient and personalized experience of eCommerce which made customer expectations to switch. Among other aspects, this report revealed: the biggest business advantages of leveraging mobile technology in-store (enhanced in-store shopping experience, helping to convert in-store sales, driving customer loyalty and retention, ability to provide personalized offers, brand promotion, closing the gap between online and in-store cx, enabling customers to self-serve in-store); that a “destination shopping” approach is preferred by 70% of Heads of Commerce surveyed (a sense of belonging, giving something back to the community etc.).

Within this framework we considered to be important to make reference to the discussion hosted on May 29 this year by JWT Intelligence with the futurist James Wallman, author of the new book “Time and How to Spend It”, about why time (the most valuable modern currency) is the new luxury, the importance of experiential intelligence and how brands can better engage

consumers (who are finding happiness and status in experiences) in today's experience economy (in the new era of experientialism, shifting from materialism), when what we do now matters. Wallman argued that there are three reasons for why people are mispending their time (weapons of mass distraction; the education system focused on the skills of production; being multitask at work, we are affecting our free time – the so-called by sociologists “contaminated time”, as discovered by Brigid Schulte in her book “Overwhelmed: Work, Love, And Play When No One Has The Time”), being continuously open to something else and needing to learn to live with technology and digital media, and never forgetting how a brand made them feel, beyond customer journey mapping and jobs-to-be-done theory.

In this environment of never forgetting how a brand make its customers feel our thoughts took us to the latest annual Shopper Experience Index released by Bazaarvoice, Inc. (which surveyed 2,000 consumers in the US, France, UK, and Germany), the provider of user-generated content (UGC) and shopper data solutions, on April 16, 2019, Bazaarvoice (founded in 2005) being known as “connecting brands and retailers to consumers, so that every shopping experience feels personal”. (Globe Newswire, 2019) This latest report of Bazaarvoice identified five key things: the shopping journey is fueled by the UGC (shoppers want to see easy what other consumers think about products, rewarding brands and retailers accordingly – in other words, retailers need to understand customers' feelings about ratings and reviews, questions and answers, and user photos); before a transaction, shoppers crave interaction (engagement with Q&A content is very important); everyone wins when brands and retailers collaborate (at the moment of truth it is necessary to deliver content and insights); an opportunity to stand out is represented by a great mobile experience (ensuring adequate interactions with UGC); a big payoff can be delivered by getting personal with shoppers (knowing how hungry are consumers for relevant shopping experiences; consumers becoming frustrated when retailers fail to provide relevant personalized experiences).

And it also shouldn't come as a surprise that just a year ago (Purcarea, 2018) we concluded that history shows to us that there is nothing new in approaching emotion, at least if we want to understand some wisdom quotes: “Human behavior flows from three main sources: desire, emotion, and knowledge” (Plato); “When dealing with people, remember you are not dealing with creatures of logic, but creatures of emotion” (Dale Carnegie). We based this conclusion on significant approaches with regard to the real need of: making deeper emotional connections; providing personalized, engaging, relevant Omni-channel experiences (considering the connectedness across the experience); implementing an emotional-connection-based strategy across the entire CX; not forgetting the important role played by emotions in both B2B and B2C marketing, because B2B marketing is also taking place between human beings; having seamless emotive conversations within a company's Omni-channel strategy (across email, chat, SMS, video, social etc.); having personalized conversations regardless of location, device or channel.

Two years ago, David Frenay, CTO and co-founder of GetSmily, commented for Smart Insights: *“By understanding the emotions that your customers share with you, you can give them*

what they really want. Remember that you can't change your customers' feelings on a dime. You can't force them to like you, but what you can do is to find out why they feel in a certain way and improve what and how you offer it. A satisfied customer is a loyal one; don't be deaf to their emotions, but learn from them instead". (Frenay, 2017) At the end of the last year Adobe President and CEO Shantanu Narayen was cited as follows: *"Feelings that create lasting memories build affinity and keep us chasing that experience".* (Adobe Experience Cloud, 2018)

In May this year Mark de Bruijn, Vice President of Marketing in Europe, Middle East, and Africa at SAP Customer Experience, argued that: *"If a transaction or process has been successfully completed, then it was a success, or so it is argued. But this method does not address the customer's feelings about the transaction. It would thus be good for companies to change their measuring method. It is not the final transaction that determines customer satisfaction, but the feeling that customers are left with. Only then can you expose the improvement areas in the customer experience".*

There is no doubt about "The Power Of Emotional Marketing", (Lofgren, 2019) behind customers' everyday decisions emotions being the key drivers, emotions which can make all of us vulnerable.

Theodor Valentin Purcărea

Editor-in-Chief

References

- de Bruijn, M. (2019). Customer experience is about emotion, not technology, The Next Web, May 8. Retrieved from <https://thenextweb.com/podium/2019/05/08/customer-experience-is-about-emotion-not-technology/>
- Frenay, D. (2017). Improve your customer experience by leveraging the power of emotions, Smart Insights, 30 Mar. Retrieved from <https://www.smartinsights.com/customer-engagement/customer-engagement-strategy/improve-your-customer-experience-by-leveraging-the-power-of-emotions/>
- Lofgren, L. (2019). The Power Of Emotional Marketing, Quick Sprout — Make Better Content, April 18. Retrieved from <https://www.quicksprout.com/emotional-marketing/>
- Koch, L. (2-19). Consumers Agree: In-Store Checkout Needs to Be Quick and Easy, eMarketer Retail Sent: Thursday, March 28, 2019, 13:10
- Martinet, S. (2019). 4 Ways Emerging Tech Will Redefine Content Marketing, Adweek, March 25. Retrieved from <https://www.adweek.com/digital/4-ways-emerging-tech-will-redefine-content-marketing/>
- Purcărea, T. (2018). Brands and Emotionally Connected Customers in an Omni Channel World, Romanian Distribution Committee Magazine, Romanian Distribution Committee, Volume 9, Issue 2, pp.12-14, June
- *** Future Stores Report 2019, Destination: Shopping, WBR Insights 2019, connectedstores.wbresearch.com
- *** James Wallman, author, Time and How to Spend It - 05-29-2019 by JWT Intelligence - JWT Intelligence - <https://www.jwtintelligence.com/2019/05/james-wallman-author-time-and-how-to-spend-it/>
- *** <http://www.brigidschulte.com/books/overwhelmed/>
- *** Bazaarvoice Report: Shoppers Crave Connection and Conversation with Brands and Retailers, Globe Newswire, April 16, 2019. Retrieved from <https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2019/04/16/1804664/0/en/Bazaarvoice-Report-Shoppers-Crave-Connection-and-Conversation-with-Brands-and-Retailers.html>
- *** Shopper Experience Index, Bazaarvoice Report, <https://www.bazaarvoice.com/shopper-experience-index/>
- *** The Missing Ingredient for a Knockout Customer Experience? Emotional Data, Adobe Experience Cloud, December 13, 2018. Retrieved from <https://theblog.adobe.com/why-measuring-emotion-is-the-key-to-a-better-experience/>