

Editorial: *Innovative Organization, Design Thinking, and the Customer's End-to-End Experience*

Welcoming Readers to Volume 1, Issue 1 of the “Romanian Distribution Committee Magazine” we were witnessing „questioning” times, underlining the real need in these critical times to become more demand-driven, and to make fundamental changes in the way of thinking about the supply networks, by treating supply chain thinking as a philosophy that pervades the entire company. We noted later, in other editorials, that: the customer becomes more and more competent, wishing real-time solutions; it's the right time to assume the management style of integrative thinking recommended by the visionary Roger Martin, and to prove a better understanding of education and communications within the Circular Economy, the Internet of Things, and the Third Industrial Revolution; we need to be really informed, smart, interested, engaged, and consulted, reducing together the discontinuity between our past and future, further improving our techniques and understanding of how to take much more active responsibility with respect to properly manage in addressing the complexity and in creating a communications climate that drives motivation through openness.

At the beginning of 2015, we noted the view expressed by an expert in brand strategy, CSR/cause marketing and public affairs, (Bemporad, 2015) who argued that CMOs will be challenged to think more creatively, purposefully and holistically to thrive, delivering on the unique combination of brand relevance and resilience. This expert pledged for creating brands that prize authenticity, build deeper relationships, empower seamless experiences, connect people to trusted networks and treat all like humans. A month ago, in February 2016, a well-known Google Analytics expert, and author of the books “Marketing Blue Belt” and “Leading Innovation: Build a Scalable, Innovative Organization”, pointed out that you will not have innovation without willing to expend real resources (time, energy, money) on failure, willing to break your own market, by considering the four steps to the framework of innovation: learn, experiment, adjust, and distribute. (O'Shea Gorgone, 2016)

At the end of February 2016, the Director for Digital Transformation in Syntel (a leading IT Outsourcing, IT Consulting and BPO firm offering managed IT services, Enterprise Business Solutions and Collaborative client partnerships) pledged for “design thinking” (as a process applicable to all walks of life of creating new and innovative ideas and solving problems), considering that it is an essential tool for the Customer Experience Manager because it places you in your customers' shoes (asking you to *see the world from customers' perspective*). In his opinion, *a typically design thinking process presupposes seven stages* (define, research, ideation, prototype, choose, implement, learn), *and presents five characteristics* (finding simplicity in complexity, beauty as well as functionality, improving quality of customer experience, creating elegant solutions, serving the needs of people).

To see the world from customers' perspective is truly a great challenge, and this was confirmed more recently, in March, by McKinsey's representatives who clearly stated that: *"Only by looking at the customer's experience through his or her own eyes - along the entire journey taken - can you really begin to understand how to meaningfully improve performance."* (Maechler, Neher, and Park, 2016) They called our attention to the real need of not missing the bigger and more important picture of *the customer's end-to-end experience*, because of the siloed focus on traditional individual touchpoints (long emphasized by companies in order to maximize customer satisfaction). What presupposes an operational and cultural shift that engages the organization across functions and from top to bottom, opening the way for three great achievements: *higher customer and employee satisfaction, revenue and cost improvements, and an enduring competitive advantage.*

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