

Editorial: Setting up the Right Organizational Support so as to Offer Consumers the Right Time,
the Right content, and the Right Experience

A year ago, in December 2015, we spoke about the magic of growth, the new business models offered by the “crowdsourcing economy” and building trusted innovation, taking finally the usual look at the (that time) 15th annual Edelman Trust Barometer. Allow us to start this time by having a short look at the 16th annual Edelman Trust Barometer, and to underline just three aspects revealed at the beginning of this year within this framework: the increasingly reliance of respondents on a “person like yourself”; technology remains the most trusted industry (for the sixteenth consecutive year); the support of companies’ employees and passionate customers is essential as business can be a big part of the solution (as shown by the global practice chair of Edelman’s Corporate practice).

Approaching the end of this year, within the context of the current general business challenges, allow us to highlight that according to McKinsey’s representatives, in setting up the right organizational support to act on the findings (after aggregating and analyzing data) companies need IT expertise, domain expertise, advanced analytics, and change management, then necessary consistency and maximum impact being ensured by progressing methodically process by process, opportunity by opportunity. (Feldmann, Hammer, Somers, and Van Niel, 2016) Because businesses are transformed step by step, including at the level of consumer-facing industries, we all being witnesses of the continuous dialogue around IoT, industry 4.0, advanced analytics, digital technologies, and big data.

One of the processes considered highly useful in developing in the workplace is the so-called “360-feedback”, which allows employees to openly communicate feedback with each other, being necessary, of course, to be implemented properly as an ongoing process. (Maier, 2016) Which involves communicating properly with staff on the purpose (making sure this purpose is clear) and any changes occurring in the workplace (ongoing conversation), making it a daily practice (people being properly trained to use this tool), having a distinguished line between what is anonymous and what isn’t, not forgetting in the same time to use feedback tools alongside continuous face-to-face conversations to further engage people in this process, and ensuring follow-up, the reviews being acted on accordingly.

We all agree that today’s children are tomorrow’s consumers. Three years ago, in 2013, a survey (believed to be the first to involve both children and parents, and commented in Telegraph, UK) by parenting site Netmums.com (whose co-founder questioned 825 children aged seven to 16 and 1,127 parents) revealed that one in seven under-16s spend four hours or more glued to the screen. (Ward, 2013) According to Global Kids Online Research Synthesis 2015-2016 (Byrne, Kardefelt-Winther, Livingstone, Stoilova, 2016) children represent a substantial percentage of internet users, and play an important part in shaping the internet (which is an important part in shaping children’s lives, culture and identities). A year ago, the futurist,

demographer, and TEDx speaker Mark McCrindle (McCrindle, 2015) - who coined in 2005 “Generation Alpha”, anyone born after 2010 being part of this Generation having the ability to transfer a thought online in seconds - showed that 2.5 million Alphas are born around the globe every week. (Sterbenz, 2015) In December this year, a Forbes contributor argued that this generation is both more likely to grow up overindulged, and the most materially endowed and technologically literate generation to date. (Carter, 2016)

But no matter of what generation consumers are, they need the right time, the right content, and the right experience. That is why, in looking at the consumers decision journey companies need:

- (paraphrasing a Customer Service Speaker and Expert) to take a look at how Amazon competes by broking out of the low price and big selection game with convenience, saving time and making life easier for their customers (Amazon Prime program, distribution centers and so on), proving speed and simplicity (Hyken, 2016);
- (paraphrasing a Head Content Marketer) to know (from a viewpoint of contextual marketing) their consumers to be able to connect on their level; to find the right message (the “what” of the equation) and the right time (the “when” of the equation), considering contextual touch points; to find the right technology (the ever-important “how” part of the equation); (Bogdan, 2016)
- (paraphrasing a Director of Customer Experience at a leading CX firm) to start with a close understanding of consumers’ well-being, then to start to emotionally engage them, putting emotion back into CX. (Walden, 2016)

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