

Brands, Consumers Differ on What Makes a Poor Brand Experience

Interaction with store associates matters more than you may think

ARTICLE |

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What factors into a negative brand experience? It depends on who you ask.

Brands are more likely to say it's the inability to trial or test a product or service, while for consumers, a poor interaction with a store associate can contribute to a lackluster experience.

In fact, a survey from customer experience management firm **InMoment**, which polled 2,000 US internet users and 1,000 US brand professionals in December 2017, found that poor customer service can certainly impact a shopping experience—even more so than brands think.

Nearly three-quarters (74%) of internet users said that interaction with staff—whether it's a poor attitude or lack of knowledge—can lead to a negative experience. Meanwhile, brands "significantly underestimate the real damage employees can do to their CX," InMoment found. Just 29% of brand professionals said that interaction with staff can contribute to a lackluster experience.

Factors that Contribute to a Negative Brand Experience According to US Internet Users vs. Brand Professionals, Dec 2017

% of respondents

	Internet users	Brand professionals
Interaction with staff (poor attitude, lack of knowledge, slow)	74%	29%
The lack of understanding of my needs	46%	26%
The availability of staff to help when needed	41%	28%
The product or service was not what I expected	40%	27%
Experience impersonal and generic	22%	10%
The price	21%	27%
The environment	12%	12%
Unable to customize product or service	9%	12%
The mobile app or website	8%	6%
The technology in store/location	7%	7%
Unable to trial or test product or service	4%	14%
Self-service checkout (not easy to operate or unavailable)	4%	5%

Note: ages 18+

Source: InMoment, "2018 CX Trends Report: What Brands Should Know About Creating Memorable Experiences," Feb 21, 2018

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Similarly, a significant number of internet users cited the availability of staff to help when needed, the lack of understanding their needs and an impersonal and generic experience as key factors that likely lead to a negative brand experience. And again, fewer brand professionals saw it the same way.

In some instances, however, both brands and consumers were somewhat aligned with what can contribute to a poor brand experience. For example, 21% of internet users and 27% of brand professionals said price can be a factor. They were also in agreement when it comes to mobile apps or sites, in-store tech and self-service checkouts not being easy enough to operate—or in some cases unavailable.

By and large, brands acknowledge that improvements are necessary to deliver great customer experiences.

A [CMO Council](#) and [SAP Hybris](#) survey of marketers worldwide in August 2017 found only 12% of respondents say they're doing an "exceptional job" of meeting consumers' needs and expectations both online and offline. A large share of respondents (43%) said they're doing well, but there's certainly room for improvement.

Ability of Their Company to Deliver Great Customer Experiences* According to Marketers Worldwide, Aug 2017

% of respondents

Excellent—we do an exceptional job of delivering contextual experiences that meet customers' needs and expectations, online and offline, and across the entire company	12%
Very good—we do a great job in some areas but are still perfecting experiences across others	31%
Good but needs improvement—we are meeting basic expectations, but there is room for improvement	43%
Not very good—we can deliver limited experiences in limited channels but are struggling to connect them together	10%
Doing a bad job—especially looking across the organization as a whole	3%

*Note: numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding; *regardless of channel, across the organization*

Source: CMO Council and SAP Hybris, "Customer Experience Dynamics: Defining the Requirements for a Strong CX Ecosystem," Sep 14, 2017

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