



## Solve for the Customer: Using Customer Science to Build Stronger Relationships and Improve Business Results

Denis Pombriant

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Solve for the Customer is about Customer Science, a social science that focuses on front office business and provides a blueprint for businesses to build stronger relationships and improve business performance by zeroing in on what's important to customers. Customer Science concentrates what we've learned from modern technologies like big data, analytics, social media, and advanced enterprise software platforms into a framework that enables businesses to identify moments of truth where they can reliably meet and satisfy their customers. Customer Science is a social science much like sociology. Like sociology, Customer Science uses data and analytics to develop and understand the social structures that embrace customers and satisfy their needs whether the needs arise in sales, marketing, or service. Prior to Customer Science, many vendors lacked a structured understanding of moments of truth, which caused missed opportunities and disappointed or frustrated customers. Customer Science operates on two levels. First, using big data and analytics, it helps vendors to identify their customers' moments of truth. Then Customer Science guides vendors to quickly and accurately devise and implement automated and semi-automated systems that identify customers' needs and help to satisfy them. Importantly, within Customer Science customer experience goes from a passive thing to an activity. As Denis Pombriant, who identified Customer Science, says, "We use Customer experience as a noun in CRM (i.e., the customer experience), and for a long time it has been a noun." But once we begin to think in terms of customer-facing processes situated around a moment of truth, experience becomes a verb, says Pombriant, "You experience a moment of truth. That's an important difference and one that significantly helps vendors and customers." A traditional customer experience is subjective and when you consider the multitude of customers and the totality of their experiences, you are dealing with a big number. Because all experiences are subjective they are also unique — there are billions and billions of them. With so many unique experiences you can see that dealing with them, and trying to build software to accommodate them, is impossible. But assessing customers' experiences of a moment-oftruth approach is a more manageable problem. True, the experience is still subjective and customers are still unique. But there's a limited number of moments of truth in any business, which your customers will be glad to verify, and these moments of truth are linked in cascades with each step setting up the next until you reach a desired conclusion. Without Customer Science, too often these cascades can end abruptly and leave customers frustrated. Succeeding in a moment of truth and successfully navigating a cascade is Boolean on or off, up or down, true or false, it worked or it didn't. If it all works you have a happy customer; if the moment of truth doesn't work and the cascade gets broken, you can pinpoint the problem and know exactly what to do to make it right. As a matter of fact, you can develop contingency plans in advance for all of the things that could go sideways. The modern software platform is the tool of Customer Scientists. Wellconstructed platforms offer the needed technologies used to capture and analyze customer data and the social tools to communicate with customers. Most importantly, the software platform also provides the journey mapping, workflow, and code generating facilities to turn customer insights into running apps that support moments of truth. For decades CRM vendors have delivered point solutions to support front office business. Now through Customer Science we can bring all of the components together in a strategy that supports the customer lifecycle while efficiently and cost effectively positioning customer-facing resources to address customer needs.

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