



## **The *Accelerate ROI* Manifesto Customer Experience Management**

Customer Experience Management (CEM) is a relatively new approach to marketing, sales and business improvement in North America, Europe and UK. The idea is to look at all the ways in which a customer is exposed to (or "experiences") the business, and make sure that the customer has the best possible experience at each touch point and that each of those experiences deliver the quality and content of their product promise and mission.

**Accelerate ROI builds their Customer Experience Management (AR/CEM) program by modeling and providing experiences.**

Experiences are delivered by people to people. The AR/CEM is based on the preposition that there are only two types of problems in business; procedural and behavioral. And we focus on the behavioral first. We believe enhanced understanding and soft skill training is the key to delivering the best Customer Experience.

**The AR/CEM program is not the traditional consulting model and, if done right, is immediately interactive and engaging.**

The *Accelerate ROI* approach to CEM is driven by the business itself (our customer). While, we guide and facilitate the process, we don't deliver the CEM strategy to a company. We believe that the business team members need to discover the truths about their customer's experience and be engaged from day one with the plan to impact all parts of the business with CEM methods.

While conventional business consulting follows a model where the consultants observe, study and then reveal a solution that then has to be "sold" to the front line. Accelerate ROI believes that it is impossible to sell customer experience management, it has to be experienced by the front lines or they won't be driven to make the changes necessary for CEM to truly be a part of their business culture.

**The AR/CEM program, if done right, is difficult and not for the meek.**

The AR/CEM requires fundamental changes in the culture of the company. For this reason, AR/CEM is only for the brave.

Company leaders typically have to be in enough pain over their situation that they are willing to accept difficult revelations and work without hierarchy and outside of "silos" to develop solutions.

The holistic, silo-free vision of a truly advanced company is foreign to most business managers. It abhors the rigidity of traditional organization charts, values connectedness, knowledge and capability over status, and stimulates the rapid creation of specialized project teams. Every player is used according to his or her best capabilities, and every player has the tools and the authority to do what is right for the customer, every time.

Lower-level managers and other employees need to be willing to speak the truth, and be supported by upper-management and both groups need to accept some discomfort when acting within a new, untested, and not-yet-accepted culture. CEM requires everyone in the company to be a hero and traditional roles need to be “floated”.

The AR/CEM program, if done right, is highly successful, contagious and motivational. They offer solutions in addition to marketing and change management; they build trust and confidence.

The program process creates a new kind of trust between team members.

Think of it this way;

- What if your house was falling down and it's the beginning of winter. (Definite and understood need and crisis)
- Your contractor showed up, gave everyone tools and told them to repair the house. (Chaos/Innovator Consultant)
- Imagine the looks you would get from each other. “I don't know how to build a house, why are we doing this?” But then clumsily at first, they learn on the job, how to build the house. (Because they need a house!)
- The kinship and pride that is shared as they see what they have built results in generations of story telling about the time they had to build the house.

Trust is the cornerstone of CEM. Once given that trust will be returned by everyone, many times over. Employees who feel trusted by their employer will do more for them, moving mountains to help customers.

Customers who feel trusted by the companies they do business with will reward those companies with more business, and more trust. And the cycle continues.

The AR/CEM program, if done right, structures action steps and behaviors; organizing a company wide roll out that universally provides a Customer Experience.

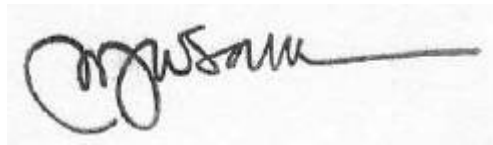
A successful AR/CEM project starts by putting the customer first. That is, unfortunately, such an overused phrase that it has nearly lost all meaning. But when a team of people are asked to understand who the customer is, what they need from them, what they expect from them and determine what the company wants to say to them; it is very clear that marketing and sales, operations, facility and technology will have to pay attention.

The AR/CEM program is not a one time event or workshop; it is the initiation of changed corporate behaviors with landmarks annually that require the Customer Experience Team to relook at their suppositions.

AR/CEM is not a project with a defined goal and endpoint. It is a process of choosing to change, and then living that change every day. What the company and its employees and managers learn in the process they must practice every day. If it's done right, the change will stick, and the new ways of acting will be part of the company's culture. That's the goal.

Recently a president of a large big box department store, when asked about customer experience management he replied, "It's baked in the cake," meaning it is part of all of their organization and integrated into the recipe.

The AR/CEM program, if done right, creates the spirit of innovation in your company which provides a culture of terrific Customer Experiences.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Johnson", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

July 3, 2009