

# ICXI -POST newsbriefing

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## Introduction From The President

It's around this time of year when events like Thanksgiving, Firework Night, Diwali and Halloween are celebrated bringing reflection on times past, marking the passing of another year and the hope for positive times ahead.

It is also the time when the internet gurus from almost every sector lay out their predictions for the year ahead and the world of customer experience is no exception. 2024 has seen a mixed bag of results where the promises and potential of new technologies has raised a great deal of excitement on the supplier side of the CX equation have not been matched on the customer side of the equation where the excitement appears to have been more muted and delivery improvements unnoticed. In general terms the decline in performance in the customer experience has continue, in fact a report from the Wall Street Journal reporting on Forrester's measurements across 223 brands in 13 sectors showed the index in 2024 to be 69.3/100 the lowest since that statistic model was used in 2016 and has fallen year on year from a high of 72/100 in 2021.

In their 2024 CXM Magazine Review **"CX at The Crossroads"** they note that consumers are becoming increasingly sceptical about the service they are receiving from brands and to quote Sean Keane in that report *"The Forrester stats... that's only scratching the surface, because if you've had a really bad experience with a brand, then you don't bother with a review."* The inevitable effect of this being that organisations will not know what the don't know about customer sentiment and thereby not know how to fix what is broken.

The report goes on to explore the need for CX people to engage more with the opportunities that new technology makes available and highlights the need for its adoption to be more than a cost cutting exercise designed to meet the short-term needs of shareholders and take a longer-term view that builds the value of customer advocacy into the ROI mix.

The report also identifies the need for CX to have a stronger voice at the boardroom table. Qaalfa Dibeethi states *CX experience is always going to struggle to win adherents in the boardroom, particularly in organisations that are commercially and KPI driven. CX isn't about delivering next quarter's numbers, it's a longer term "strategic imperative or operating principle", said Dibeethi. Although firms will talk more readily about the importance of their client-base, it doesn't follow that they'll always act in their customer's interest.*

It still seems that while the customer is the only source of revenue for every organisation an appreciation of the importance of nurturing that vital source is still not a widely accepted key imperative. Which begs the question as to whether or not the dangers of investing in innovative technologies without consideration of the beneficial Impact on customers have been properly thought through.

***The consumer shouldn't be the guinea pig'***: Advertising industry cautions against hasty AI rollouts

by Jessica Heygate Campaign June 05, 2024

*Google is in hot water again over AI inaccuracies. With ads soon coming to its AI overviews search product, digital advertising executives urge the tech industry to slow down.*

*The advertising industry is bracing for a brand safety crisis to erupt as ads are introduced into experimental AI products. Google immediately faced consumer backlash after rolling out AI-powered summarized responses at the top of some search queries to U.S. users in mid-May, following a year of testing. In the subsequent weeks, social media users posted dozens of examples of the product surfacing conspiracy theories and recommending dangerous acts. The fallout prompted Google to block some results and implement "more than a dozen technical improvements to our systems," head of Google search Liz Read said in a blog post last week.*

*Technology and advertising experts blame the hastiness with which AI products are launching for their predisposition fo*

<https://www.campaignlive.com/article/the-consumer-shouldnt-guinea-pig-ad-industry-cautions-against-hasty-ai-rollouts/1875693>

So if it may be wise in 2025 to proceed on some fronts with a little caution what kinds of things should organisations be looking to add to the CX the agenda.



Looking through the various forecasts for CX 2025 does not uncover any key common themes beyond the perceived continuing competitive imperative of CX , the emerging importance of its relationship to the Employee Experience(EX) and somehow the underlying hope/belief/vision that AI will be the silver bullet that creates a whole new world of opportunity.

One forecast seems to sum up the scene quite well. In his LinkedIn paper

*The Evolution of Customer Experience: What's Next for CX in 2025 (Backed by Data)* 

C. Pete Connor MS, CCCM highlights his five insights for CX 2025

*Customer experience (CX) is no longer just a buzzword—it's the battleground for competitive advantage.*

*By 2025, CX will look drastically different, driven by technology, changing customer expectations, and new business models. But what exactly is changing, and what does the data tell us?*

**1 Personalization at Scale: Customers Expect Hyper-Personalized Interactions**

*Data Insight: According to Salesforce , 76% of customers expect companies to understand their needs and expectations. Yet, 59% of businesses struggle to deliver meaningful personalization. Source: Salesforce's State of the Connected Customer report.*

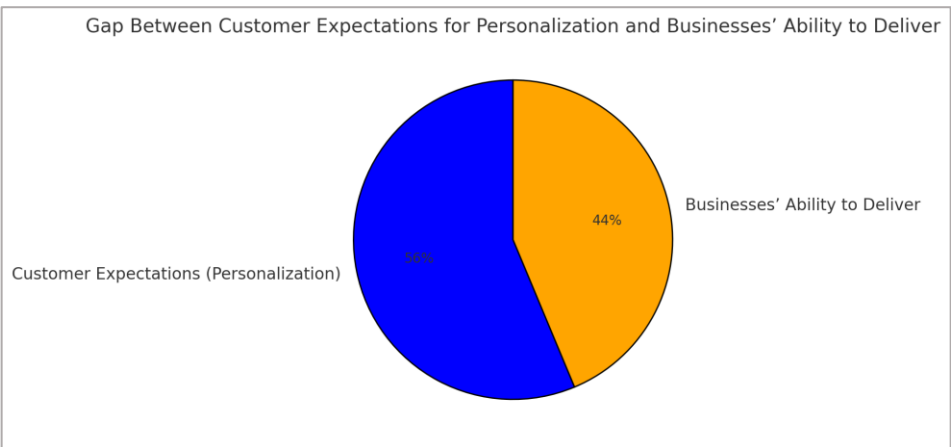
*By 2025, AI and machine learning will drive:*

*Effective Data Utilization: Essential for personalized marketing and product recommendations.*

*Customization: Tailored interactions improve customer experience.*

*Competitive Edge: Leverage data or risk falling behind competitors.*

**Takeaway:** *Customers are expecting personalized experiences at every touchpoint. Companies that fail to leverage data for personalization will struggle to keep up.*



## **Omnichannel Experience is Non-Negotiable: Customers Demand Seamless Transitions**

### **Data Insight:**

A **Forrester** report reveals that **57% of customers** have used multiple channels to interact with companies, and they expect seamless transitions between them. Yet, many companies are still siloed in their approach to customer service.

**Source:** [Forrester's Customer Experience Index and related research on omnichannel expectations.](#)

By 2025, omnichannel will be the norm, not the exception. Customers will expect to start a conversation on one platform and continue it on another without repeating themselves.

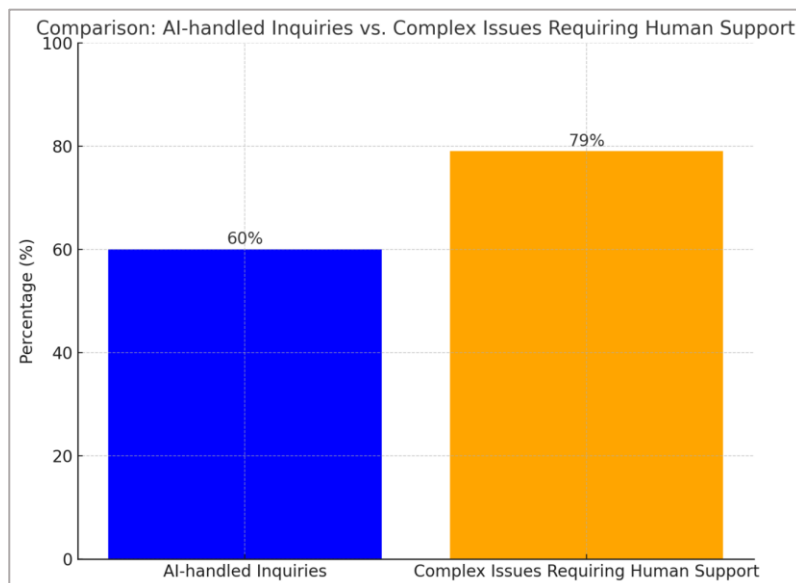
**Takeaway:** The future of CX is about consistency across all channels. Companies need to break down silos to ensure a seamless, unified experience for their customers.

## **3 AI and Automation Will Power Customer Support: AI is Here, But It's Not the Solution to Every Problem**

**Data Insight:** Gartner predicts that by 2025, 60% of customer service requests will be handled by AI. However, it's important to note that 79% of customers still prefer human interaction when resolving complex issues.

**Source:** Gartner's Top Strategic Predictions for 2025 and related research on AI in customer service. **AI for Routine:** AI will handle routine inquiries, boosting efficiency coupled with human support for nuanced customer needs.

**Takeaway:** Automation will evolve but won't fully replace the human touch in customer experience (CX).



The visual highlights the difference between tasks managed by AI and those that still need human intervention.

## 4 Self-Service Will Dominate: Do Customers Want to Solve Problems Themselves?

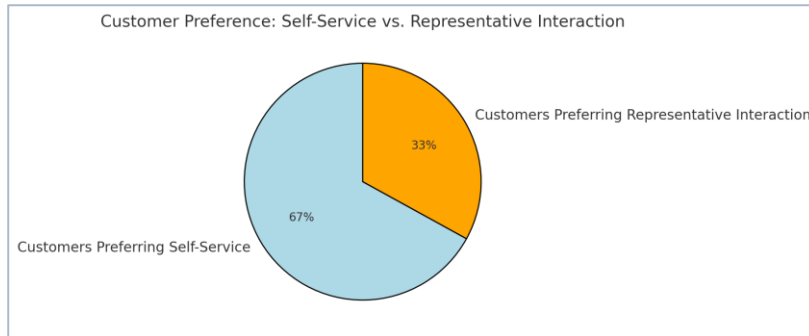
*This is a fiercely debated topic*

*Data Insight: Zendesk reports that 67% of customers prefer self-service options over speaking to a representative. By 2025, companies that don't offer robust self-service platforms will see a significant drop in customer satisfaction. Source: Zendesk's Customer Experience Trends Report.*

*Data Insight: However, Gartner indicates that currently only 1 in 7 CX queries are resolved through self service. This highlights the gap that needs to be closed.*

*Source: CX Today Companies need to improve their self-service channels to reduce reliance on live agents.*

**Takeaway:** *Self-service is no longer optional. Businesses must invest in intuitive self-service platforms to meet current and future customer expectations.*

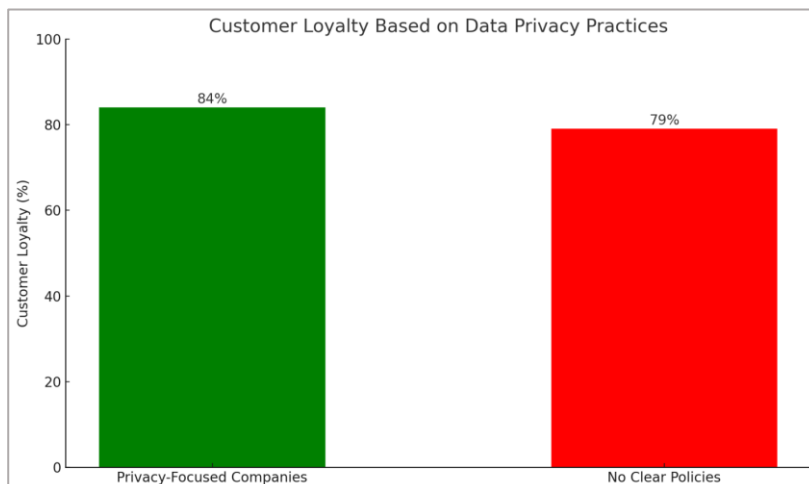


## 5 Data Privacy Will Shape CX: Trust Is a Key Currency

*Data Insight: According to PwC, 84% of customers say they're more loyal to companies that prioritize data privacy and transparency. In contrast, 79% are hesitant to engage with brands they don't trust with their data.*

*Source: PwC's Consumer Intelligence Series: Protect.me report on data privacy and trust.*

**Takeaway:** *Data privacy will directly impact customer loyalty. Companies need to prioritize transparency and data protection to build and maintain trust.*



## **The Bottom Line: CX in 2025 is About Balance**

**Tech-Human Balance:** *The future of CX will blend technology with human interaction.*

**Personalization vs Privacy:** *Striking a balance between personalized experiences and respecting privacy will be key.*

**Efficiency & Empathy:** *Combining speed with empathy in customer service is crucial for success.*

**Customer-Centric Strategy:** *Companies that prioritize customer needs and adapt to the changes will thrive.*

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/evolution-customer-experience-whats-next-cx-2025-backed-pete-connor-ardfc/>

## **So What Should CX Leaders Take Into Account When Setting 2025 Budget Priorities?**

According to Forester in their ***Budget Planning Guide 2025: Customer Experience*** these are the key considerations

*Customer experience (CX) leaders are cautiously optimistic about their resources as they try to reverse declines in CX quality: 40% plan to increase their overall CX investments above inflation in the next 12 months. To succeed, CX leaders must invest to overhaul core CX competencies — determining what customers need, designing and testing solutions, and delivering products and services — that help their organizations bring their expressions of customer obsession to life in the customer experience.*

### **1. Focus Spending On Long-Neglected CX Foundations**

*CX leaders face a confluence of challenges, including high employee burnout and pressure to make generative AI (genAI) magic amid persistent financial stress on customers and businesses. The cumulative impact of these factors has led to an unprecedented third consecutive year of global declines in CX quality. To turn this around, CX leaders must invest to overhaul core CX competencies that help their organizations bring their expressions of customer obsession to life in the customer experience.*

### **2. Increase Spending To Overhaul Core CX Capabilities**

CX leaders trying to improve CX quality must orchestrate cross-functional activities in all three pillars of CX transformation: determine what customers need, design and test solutions, and deliver products and services. Today, AI-powered tools that support these activities are a reality. However, they'll backfire and worsen CX blunders unless they're deployed in organizations with strong CX management capabilities.

### **3. Decrease Spending On Efforts That Lack Strategic Alignment**

*In this environment of economic and budgetary pressure, the link between CX activities and business and customer value must be explicit. Cut high-effort, low-impact activities*

### **4. Experiment With Emerging Tech And Future Capabilities**

*Effective experimentation can improve decision-making, increase ROI, and future-proof CX programs. To reap the benefits while avoiding change fatigue and distraction, CX leaders should align experiments to strategic objectives and create the conditions in which employees feel ready to adapt, stretch, and grow. Build a pipeline of future capabilities and experiences by experimenting.*

[Budget Planning Guide 2025: Customer Experience | 001a000001AEIBIAA1 | 54f3ee10](#)

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NICE ([www.nice.com](http://www.nice.com)) who describe themselves as “a worldwide leader in AI-powered self-service and agent-assisted CX software for the contact center – and beyond”. Have an AI focus on the CX world and have identified ten trends they see as having an impact on CX in 2025. In their ebook

**10 Trends to Guide Your CX Strategy** they state

*The customer experience (CX) landscape is undergoing a profound transformation. The convergence of cloud, digital, and AI technologies is not just enhancing CX—it’s redefining it entirely. This era of exponential change demands a fresh perspective*

on

*how businesses engage with customers and optimize their operations. Conventional wisdom often confines the potential of these technologies to their most obvious applications. However, by adopting a broader perspective—one that looks beyond the surface—we uncover deeper opportunities. This forward-thinking approach enables organizations to foresee changes in the market, fully leverage the capabilities of these transformative forces, and lead their industries with confidence.*

#### **Trend #1: CX is no longer just part of the business; it is the business**

*Customer experience has evolved from a departmental concern to a core business strategy. Recent NICE research<sup>1</sup> reveals a strong positive correlation between stock gains and customer sentiment, underscoring CX’s impact on business success.*

*Take Action: Elevate CX to a*

*C-suite priority and align all departments. By positioning CX at the forefront of business strategy and ensuring all departments are aligned, organizations can create a unified approach to customer-centricity. This shift enables more cohesive decision-making, fosters innovation, and drives operational efficiencies. Expect improved customer loyalty, increased market share, and enhanced financial performance as CX becomes the cornerstone of your business model.*

## **Trend #2: AI will enhance 100% of CX roles by 2026**

*AI is fundamentally changing how work gets done, empowering employees at all levels to perform more efficiently and effectively. From agents to supervisors and CX leaders, AI-powered copilots are enhancing capabilities across the entire customer experience ecosystem. This technological shift is setting a new standard where every CX professional gains enhanced abilities in communication, analysis, and problem-solving.*

**Take Action:** *Deploy AI copilots purpose-built for each CX role As customer interactions grow more complex and emotionally charged, real-time AI assistance becomes crucial. Invest in AI copilots purpose-built for CX, trained on industry-specific data rather than the open internet. Unlike generic DIY AI tools, these specialized copilots integrate seamlessly into your existing applications, providing contextual support tailored to CX roles. By adopting these solutions, you'll equip your team to handle intricate customer needs more effectively, leading to improved resolution times, higher customer satisfaction, and enhanced employee performance.*

## **Trend #3: Outbound will become the dominant CX strategy**

*As customer expectations evolve, the convergence of digital, AI, and customer insights is shifting the focus from reactive customer service to proactive customer engagement. Organizations are moving beyond traditional inbound strategies, recognizing the importance of reaching out to customers before issues arise.*

**Take Action:** *Unify inbound and outbound engagement on a single platform By consolidating both inbound and outbound interactions within a single platform, organizations can deliver a more cohesive and personalized customer experience. Expect improved customer satisfaction, higher conversion rates, and enhanced operational efficiency as you manage all customer interactions under one roof.*

## **Trend #4: The gap between CX leaders and laggards grows**

The concept of 'expectation transfer' is accelerating the divide between CX leaders and laggards. As consumers experience exceptional service from one brand, they set that as the new standard for the entire industry. This widening gap is driven by the ability of leading organizations to consistently meet and exceed these rising expectations, while others struggle to keep pace. The new CX battleground is no longer within industry segments, but against the best experiences consumers encounter anywhere.

**Take Action:** *Improve customer sentiment before, during, and after every interaction. Transform your CX strategy by prioritizing sentiment across the entire customer journey. Utilize AI-driven insights to predict and proactively address customer needs, empower agents with real-time assistance, and implement continuous feedback loops. This holistic approach ensures consistent, positive experiences that meet evolving customer expectations and drive loyalty*



## **Trend #5: Knowledge Management and AI Management Converge**

*Generative AI's potential is immense, but without proper guardrails, it can produce "hallucinations"—inaccurate or misleading information. According to Forrester Research<sup>1</sup>, organizations like the City of New York and Air Canada have faced significant issues due to erroneous answers from AI-powered chatbots, resulting in confusion and distrust. This growing skepticism is evident, with only 28% of US online adults reporting that they trust information provided by AI.*

**Take Action:** Increase interaction accuracy by using AI management strategies with your knowledge bases. Shift from traditional knowledge management to AI management by vectorizing your knowledge base, ensuring AI systems are restricted to verified, relevant content. Integrate RAG technology to enhance realtime accuracy, and establish strong governance to maintain trust. This approach will safeguard your brand reputation and improve customer satisfaction.

## **Trend #6 The Rise of AI Agents and Autonomous Work**

AI agents are evolving from simple task executors into fully autonomous entities capable of complex work. These agents combine large language models with tools, memory, and self-optimization capabilities, enabling them to perform tasks traditionally reserved for human knowledge workers. As they progress, AI agents will collaborate, distribute tasks, and reshape entire workflows, ushering in a new era of intelligent automation.

**Take Action:** Build a New 24/7 AI-Powered Workforce AI agents are redefining how work gets done by leveraging advanced capabilities like tool access, memory functions, and self-optimization. Integrating autonomous agents into your operations can extend your workforce's capacity, maintain continuous operations, and enhance efficiency without the need for human intervention.

## **Trend #7: Successful CX Strategies are Digital-First, but NOT Digital-only**

In today's rapidly evolving CX landscape, a digital-first approach is essential, but relying solely on digital channels can leave gaps in the customer experience. Customers value the convenience of digital interactions, but there are moments when a human touch, warm voice, or a blended approach is necessary to resolve complex issues or provide personalized care. As customers' expectations continue to rise, successful organizations are those that blend the efficiency of digital with the empathy and adaptability of human interaction, ensuring a seamless and comprehensive experience across all touchpoints.

**Take Action:** Manage every interaction across your organization on a single platform Adopt an interaction-centric platform that unifies voice, digital, human, and virtual agent channels, along with both synchronous and asynchronous forms of communication. By managing all touchpoints on a single platform, you ensure that every customer experience flows seamlessly, regardless of the channel or mode of interaction.

## **Trend #8: AI's value will be quantified in profits not promises, in 2025**

*As the AI hype cycle matures, forward-thinking organizations are realizing tangible returns on their CX AI investments. These innovators are reinvesting their gains into expanded AI initiatives, creating a virtuous cycle of improvement. The key accelerator is a unified platform that centralizes data and connects AI applications across the CX ecosystem. This integration allows for rapid iteration, crossfunctional insights, and exponential performance gains. The result is a powerful flywheel effect, where each AI success fuels the next, driving continuous CX enhancement and business growth.*

**Take Action:** *Start with highimpact, low-risk AI Initiatives to Fuel Continuous Investment Kick off your AI journey with a high-impact, low-risk project like Auto-Summarizing Agent Notes. It's easy to measure success and understand the benefits. While not customer-facing, this initiative enhances agent efficiency and generates structured data for personalizing future interactions. Leverage this initial success as a springboard for more ambitious AI projects, laying the groundwork for compounding benefits across your CX operations.*

## **Trend #9: SMBs Thrive with UCaaS and CCaaS Convergence**

*Small and mid-sized businesses (SMBs) are increasingly adopting the integration of UCaaS (Unified Communications as a Service) and CCaaS (Contact Center as a Service) to enhance their customer service capabilities. This convergence, years in the making, is now becoming mainstream and accessible to organizations of all sizes. The trend is driven by the ability to seamlessly connect customerfacing and internal communications, enabling better collaboration and faster issue resolution.*

**Take Action:** *Stop Overpaying for Collaboration Communication and collaboration should be efficient and cost-effective. With solutions like NICE's 1CX, organizations can access a fully integrated UCaaS and CCaaS platform for just \$5 per user per month. This affordable solution allows your business to enhance both customer service and internal collaboration without overspending. By adopting a cost-effective communication strategy, you can ensure high-quality interactions and seamless teamwork while staying within budget*

## **Trend #10: New AI-centric CX benchmarks will emerge in 2025**

*As AI becomes integral to customer experience (CX), traditional KPIs are evolving. Businesses are beginning to prioritize metrics that reflect the performance and impact of AI-driven interactions. These new KPIs go beyond simple efficiency measures, focusing on the quality of AI-human collaboration, customer satisfaction with AI responses, and the effectiveness of AI in resolving complex issues. The shift towards AI-centric metrics highlights the need for businesses to adapt their measurement strategies to capture the value AI brings to CX fully.*

**Take Action.** Embrace AI Observability to Measure the ROI of AI In the era of AI-driven CX, it's crucial to rethink how success is measured. Traditional metrics may no longer fully capture AI's impact on customer interactions. Implementing AI observability is key to tracking new KPIs that reflect AI effectiveness, such as AI assisted resolution rates, customer satisfaction with AI interactions, and the types of intents AI escalates to human agents. By focusing on these emerging metrics, you can better understand and optimize AI's role in enhancing the overall customer experience. • Track agent acceptance rates of AI-generat

<https://www.customercontactweekdigital.com/customer-experience/whitepapers/cx-2025-trends-planning-essentials-2025>



Given that AI is coming to dominate almost every forecast in the CX sector it should have its say on what would be different in 2025 compared to 2024. Chat GTP was asked that question . The response is below

Customer experience (CX) trends are always evolving, and while many trends are continuations or deepening of earlier movements, the year-over-year changes between 2024 and 2025 are expected to include significant shifts and nuances. Here are some key differences and advancements anticipated between CX trends in 2025 versus 2024:

### 1. Increased Integration of Generative AI:

- **2024:** Generative AI is being increasingly used for chatbots, content generation, and predictive analytics. Businesses are exploring its potential for personalized customer interactions and support.
- **2025:** The use of generative AI will be more advanced and widespread. Companies will rely on AI to create hyper-personalized experiences in real-time, enhancing conversational commerce and dynamic content creation that responds directly to customer behavior. AI will also move beyond simple customer interactions to playing a role in decision-making and strategic planning<sup>1</sup> based on predictive modelling.

## **2. Emotionally Intelligent Technology:**

- **2024:** The focus on empathy in CX technology is growing, with AI tools beginning to incorporate more human-like understanding through natural language processing.
- **2025:** CX tools will feature a higher level of emotional intelligence, capable of detecting customer sentiment and responding with the appropriate tone and style. This will allow brands to humanize automated interactions and build stronger emotional connections with customers.

## **3. Omnichannel Synchronization:**

- **2024:** Many companies are refining their omnichannel strategies, ensuring consistency across various touchpoints like physical stores, websites, and social media.
- **2025:** The concept of true omnichannel synchronization will take center stage. This means seamless integration where customer interactions transfer across channels without any loss of context, enhanced by real-time data flows. The focus will shift from just maintaining multiple channels to a genuinely interconnected customer journey.

## **4. Sustainability as a Core CX Value:**

- **2024:** Sustainability is an important brand differentiator, with consumers increasingly favoring businesses that practice environmental responsibility.
- **2025:** Environmental and social responsibility will become ingrained as core components of the customer experience, not just as added value. Customers will expect transparent practices, from ethical sourcing to carbon-neutral commitments, and brands will use sustainability as a loyalty driver.

## **5. Hyper-Personalization at Scale:**

- **2024:** Personalization efforts are often limited to segmented groups or automated recommendations based on past data.
- **2025:** The ability to provide hyper-personalized experiences will be scaled up, leveraging AI and real-time analytics to tailor every aspect of the customer journey to individual preferences. This will include adaptive interfaces and product/service modifications that cater to unique user profiles.

## **6. Enhanced Data Privacy and Trust:**

- **2024:** With increasing regulations and consumer concerns, businesses are focusing more on transparent data practices and customer trust-building measures.
- **2025:** Companies will have to go beyond compliance and actively demonstrate data stewardship. Zero-party data strategies, where customers voluntarily share their information for tailored experiences, will become more prominent. Trust-based CX strategies will evolve to **include blockchain technology for data security**.

## **7. Proactive Customer Engagement:**

- **2024:** Businesses are beginning to leverage AI and analytics to predict customer needs and engage proactively, but these efforts are still maturing.
- **2025:** Proactive engagement will become more sophisticated, anticipating customer issues and offering solutions before problems surface. AI-driven forecasting and continuous learning systems will be capable of preempting customer inquiries and suggesting personalized offerings without requiring explicit customer action.

## **8. Customer-Centric Culture Transformation:**

- **2024:** Many companies are transitioning to a customer-centric approach, but silos still hinder the full realization of this shift.
- **2025:** The shift toward a unified, customer-centric culture will accelerate. Organizations will restructure to place customer experience at the heart of their operations, dissolving internal silos and investing in comprehensive employee training focused on CX excellence.

## **9. Immersive Experience Technologies:**

- **2024:** Brands are exploring immersive technologies such as augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) for unique customer engagements.
- **2025:** The adoption of AR, VR, and even mixed reality (MR) will become more mainstream, creating immersive and interactive customer experiences in shopping, services, and support. Enhanced 3D product previews, virtual try-ons, and interactive experiences will bridge the gap between physical and digital CX.

## **10. Community-Driven Experiences:**

- **2024:** Customer communities and user-generated content are valuable but not fully integrated into most brands' CX strategies.
- **2025:** Community-driven experiences will play a more central role, with businesses fostering strong online and offline customer communities. Social proof, feedback loops, and customer collaboration will become embedded in product and service development.

## **Conclusion:**

While many of the core trends in 2024 will still be relevant in 2025, the difference lies in the degree of sophistication, integration, and customer expectations. The evolution from experimentation and pilot projects to seamless, automated, and personalized experiences will define the CX landscape in 2025. The emphasis will be on empathy, anticipation, and proactive engagement supported by advanced technology and a more comprehensive commitment to sustainability and trust.

## The Last Word

CX performance from the perspective of the customer does not appear to have moved forward from 2023. Against a background of increased sensitivity to and intolerance of a poor customer experience, customers have growing multi channel access to products and services, competitive pricing data and peer performance information not only at retail level but across all areas of B2B, B2C and G2C (Government to Consumer). So, the customer is in control.

As, seems inevitable, that the likelihood of organisations to invest in AI technology increases, so one of the fundamental questions to be answered is “*What will be the effect of this investment on the customer and employee experience and will it give the organisation the control it needs over the management of its customer’s experiences?*”

### Recommended Reading

#### 2025 Forecasts

[CXM Review 2024](#)

[Qualtrics unveils consumer trends for 2025: rising expectations, waning loyalty - Customer Experience Magazine](#)

<https://reprint.forrester.com/reports/budget-planning-guide-2025-customer-experience-54f3ee10/index.html>

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#### Other

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<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/three-pillars-cx-transformation-bradley-kelly-hyioc/>