

The Effortless Experience

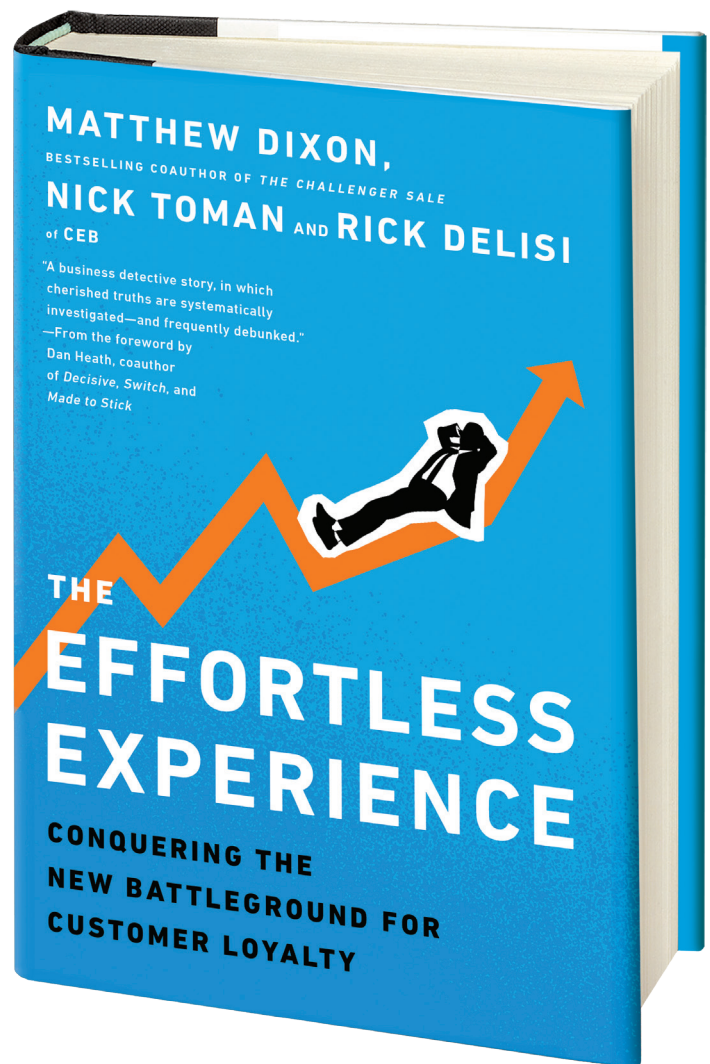
Conquering the New Battleground for Customer Loyalty

The New Book from CEB and the Authors of *The Challenger Sale*

To Build Loyalty, Companies Need to Stop Thinking, “Exceed Expectations” and Start Thinking, “Make It Easy”

In their acclaimed bestseller *The Challenger Sale*, Matthew Dixon and his colleagues at CEB busted many long-standing myths about sales. Now they’ve turned their research and analysis to another vital business subject—customer loyalty—with another book that turns the conventional wisdom on its head.

The idea that companies must delight customers by exceeding service expectations is so entrenched that managers rarely even question it. They devote untold time, energy, and resources to trying to dazzle people and inspire their undying loyalty. Yet CEB’s careful research over five years and tens of thousands of respondents proves that exceeding customer expectations in service interactions does not lead to more loyal customers. Most customers don’t want to be dazzled; they want an effortless experience. And they are far more likely to punish you for bad service than to reward you for good service. Mitigating disloyalty by reducing customer effort is the most significant contribution customer service can offer to create customer loyalty.



www.effortless-experience.com

Introduction to *The Effortless Experience*

Dan Heath, coauthor of *Made to Stick*

BLINDED BY DELIGHT

Have you ever heard the story of Joshie the giraffe?

Joshie is the property of a little boy who, during a family trip to a Ritz-Carlton in Amelia Island, Florida, accidentally left him behind in his room when the family was checking out. As you can imagine, Joshie's owner was borderline apoplectic when he realized he'd gone missing, and so his parents did what any sane parent would do. They told their son that Joshie wasn't "missing," per se; he was just taking an extended vacation. It was just a small ruse to get the boy to go to sleep.

As it turns out, they weren't exaggerating. Joshie, you see, was in very good hands.

Upon finding him, the housecleaning staff at the Ritz-Carlton brought him to the hotel's Loss Prevention Team, who called the family to tell them that they'd found Joshie in the hotel laundry and thought they might want him back. Needless to say, the little boy's parents were thrilled to find out that his beloved stuffed animal had been located.

But instead of doing what most companies would do and just mailing Joshie back to his family, the team at the Ritz-Carlton went the extra mile.

The loss prevention manager instructed his team to document Joshie's "extended stay" at the hotel. They created a photo album with pictures of the giraffe

lounging by the pool, getting a massage (with the requisite slices of cucumber over his eyes), relaxing on the beach, making new (stuffed animal) friends, and heading out in a golf cart to play eighteen holes. Not only that, but Joshie and his photo album were shipped to the family in a box full of free Ritz-Carlton swag.

It's a heartwarming story and really epitomizes what it means to receive extraordinary customer service—service that *delights*. But if you're a business person, you know what this really is: a story about building lifetime customer loyalty.

Business people know that the *truest* test of a company's ability to delight is when things go wrong—when a problem or issue arises and the customer needs the company's help to fix it. Customer service is the crucible of the customer experience—the place where all of the company's claims, its mission and its values, are tested. And it's been a long-held belief in business that when your customer is most in need of help and you deliver an "above and beyond" service experience, you are effectively building a moat around your customer relationship, one that keeps your customers close and your competitors at bay.

It's for this reason that managers celebrate these rare moments of customer delight when they happen. Companies plaster the thank-you notes and e-mails

from grateful customers on the walls of their service center (almost always called “The Wall of Fame”). They recognize employees at the annual company meeting for going the extra mile. These stories of selfless service—like the one about Joshie the giraffe—become the stuff of legend in company hallways, the new bar to which all employees are told to aspire. Not only that, but companies spend millions on training and consulting engagements to help their frontline staff more effectively and consistently deliver these “moments of wow” to customers.

Stories like the one about Joshie the giraffe force a kind of deep introspection for senior service leaders. There probably wasn’t a company executive anywhere in the world who, upon hearing the Joshie story for the first time, didn’t immediately furrow her brow and wonder aloud, “How can we deliver that kind of experience to our customers? How do I get *my* people to go above and beyond like that? Why can’t *our* company be known for that kind of delightful service?”

The questions we ask ourselves aren’t about *whether* we should delight our customers, but rather *how* it allies to delight them. We know that serving customers this way is right—we feel it deep in *our* bones.

There’s just one problem.

While delighting customers with above-and-beyond service feels right and seems to make a great deal of sense at an intuitive level, the reality is that for virtually every company out there, the Joshie story is, in fact, a perfect example of what *not* to base your service strategy on.

Where most companies have for decades been pouring time, energy, and resources into the singular pursuit of creating and replicating the delightful experience for their customers, they’ve ironically missed the very thing customers *are actually looking for*—a closer-in, more attainable, replicable, and affordable goal that’s been sitting right in front of them all this time: *the low-effort experience*. This book is the roadmap for building that experience.

Download the complete introduction, first chapter, and other bonus materials at
www.effortless-experience.com.

Additional Bonus Materials from CEB

Available for download at www.Effortless-Experience.com

Customer Effort Score™ Starter Kit

Measure customer-perceived effort and callback-based effort with the starter kit's key implementation tips and benchmarking data.

Issue-to-Channel Mapping Tool

Map customer issues to the best-fit channel for resolution, taking into account both customer effort and cost to the organization.

Effort Audit Tool

Identify the channel(s) where your customers are expending the greatest effort (e.g., web, IVR, phone) to help understand which channel offers the greatest opportunity to reduce customer effort.

Buy *The Effortless Experience*

Available for purchase at:

amazon.com

BARNES & NOBLE
BOOKSELLERS

FOYLES

W
Waterstone's