

# 14 Changes Every CEO Must Contend with to Win in the Experience Economy.

If you're a CEO or C-suite executive, it has taken you awhile to get to where you are in the organization. So, it's probably safe to say that a significant amount of time has passed and a lot of changes have taken place in the business world since you were on the frontline.

Since then, some of the most significant changes have been in customer buying behavior, the sales process, marketing strategies, self-service technologies and communication channels. All of which have changed the way companies must go about engaging and converting prospects to customers.

As a C-suite executive, it's always a good idea to stop down and take a hard look at how these changes should be driving changes in your business. Changes in your go-to-market strategy, culture, sales efforts, marketing investments and what it takes to compete and win in the "experience economy" you operate in today.



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**Here are 14 changes that every C-suite executive must contend with to experience success in the future ...**

1

YESTERDAY: Marketing “controlled and pushed” the corporate message out into the marketplace through defined channels.

TODAY: Your message is actively consumed by prospects and customers 24 / 7 / 365 from any and all communication channels.

2

YESTERDAY: Sales reps were the primary way customers got to know your company.

TODAY: Customers experience your products, services and story without human intervention — when, where and how they wish.

3

YESTERDAY: Marketing’s biggest priority was acquiring leads.

TODAY: Marketing must not only focus on securing new business, but also play a significant role in how your company retains, grows and increases loyalty among customers.

4

YESTERDAY: Brands were built through controlled campaigns, channels and messages.

TODAY: Brands are defined by the words and actions customers experience across unlimited touchpoints throughout your business.

5

YESTERDAY: Employee communication and engagement with the customer was limited, contained and controlled.

TODAY: Customers communicate and connect with your employees through numerous channels and methods every day.

6

YESTERDAY: Product features and functionality were the basis of differentiation.

TODAY: Products are commodities — the end-to-end experience customers have with your company is now the battlefield of differentiation.





7

YESTERDAY: Sales reps controlled their pipeline and qualification process.

TODAY: The self-service buying process puts the customer in control — they can opt in or out before the sales cycle even begins.

8

YESTERDAY: Shifts and changes in your business strategy were not immediately visible to customers.

TODAY: Misalignment between leadership and the frontline is immediately recognized and damages customer acquisition, retention and loyalty.

9

YESTERDAY: Executives were the only thought leaders and voice behind the brand.

TODAY: Every employee has a voice on the web and impacts brand perception and loyalty — every day.

10

YESTERDAY: Corporate message consistency was controlled by marketing through traditional campaigns.

TODAY: Your message must be managed and delivered consistently across the entire employee population, sales and marketing partner ecosystem, as well as online and offline communication channels.

11

YESTERDAY: Employee engagement was a given — they worked for a paycheck.

TODAY: Employees want to work for a higher purpose and understand the role they play in your company's purpose and story.

12

YESTERDAY: Customer loyalty was achieved based on the strength of very few, trusted relationships.

TODAY: Customer loyalty is based on minute-by-minute, day-by-day experiences with every team member and technology platform that enables each step of the customer journey.

13

YESTERDAY: Poor customer experiences and stories about your business were contained.

TODAY: Negative messages and stories can be shared with the world anytime ... anywhere.

14

YESTERDAY: Alignment between your corporate story and strategy was critically important at the leadership level.

TODAY: Customers expect the words and actions of every employee to align with your corporate story and strategy.

**With all of these changes, CEOs and C-suite executives must recognize that customer engagement and communication strategies from the past are a recipe for disaster in the future. Forward-thinking executives will take time to reconnect themselves with the realities of the business world today. They will evaluate and ensure their company's go-to-market strategy, culture and business processes align with the "experience economy" — so they can compete and win for years to come**







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James F. O'Gara is the CEO and Founder of OnMessage a leading B2B Communications Consultancy. Mr. O'Gara has spent thousands of hours formulating winning go-to-market strategies and stories for dozens of Fortune 100 companies and hundreds of high-growth businesses. O'Gara's expertise in go-to-market strategy development, Voice of Customer research, messaging and positioning, as well as customer-centric culture development, has earned him the respect of executives around the world. His ability to breakdown strategy, sales, marketing and positioning challenges in complex industries has been invaluable to CEOs, CCOs and CMOs at a number of leading companies. James is also an active member of the Forbes Communications Council and his thought leadership often appears on Forbes.com.

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