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CMO Success is Predicated on Executive Team's Commitment to Change.



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A recent Heidrick & Struggles study found that 62 percent of CMOs view relationships with peers on the senior executive team as vital to their success. It should have been closer to 100 percent. Why? Because without philosophical and strategic alignment between the CMO and the executive team — a CMO will experience limited success.

Strategic alignment between the CMO and leadership is more critical than ever as the customer experience has become the battleground on which business is won or lost. Without holistic commitment from the entire executive team to change marketing's role in the customer experience — the CMO's ability to truly impact long-term business performance will be hindered. To win, the CMO and executive team must be fully committed to doing what is required for the company to deliver a clear, compelling and consistent customer experience. It's that simple.

It starts with ... strategic alignment.

Changes in the CMO's role and the customer experience are far reaching. Left unaddressed, these changes will continue to prevent CMOs and executive teams from achieving greater success and maximizing the customer experience opportunity. To capture the customer experience opportunity, CMOs and executives must be on the same page. They must buy into two simple facts:

1. Now, more than ever before, the corporate story your target audience consumes throughout their journey determines the degree of success your company will achieve.
2. The process by which your corporate story is developed, delivered and managed throughout the customer experience must fundamentally change to meet the needs of today's B2B buyer and the new customer experience.

This means CMOs and marketing must play a greater role in the customer experience. It means, until the entire executive team commits to developing a customer-centric culture and an intentional process that infuses clear, compelling and consistent corporate messaging throughout the customer experience — the business will fail to realize its true potential.

However, when the entire executive team gets behind these strategic initiatives — the customer experience opportunity can be fully realized. The opportunity to improve competitive differentiation, elevate audience engagement, increase customer acquisition, retention and loyalty — are all within reach.

It continues with ... visible and unwavering commitment.

Strategic alignment and messaging development / delivery process reengineering is where the journey starts, but visible and persistent commitment to stay the course — is the key to success. Maybe that's why Jonathan Copulsky, a partner at Deloitte Consulting said, "Great marketers know the best brands are built one brick at a time, over and over again."

To be successful, CMOs must have unwavering courage and commitment. They will have to remind themselves and the executive team that this is a journey, not a destination. It is transformational, not transactional in nature. That means the entire executive team must commit to pulling the rest of the organization forward. They must keep strategic priorities around the customer highly visible. They must consistently articulate a clear, compelling and consistent corporate message — inside and outside of the organization. Leaders across the company must remain committed to institutionalizing the process, culture, mindset and behavioral changes required to transform the way the company brings its story to life throughout the customer experience.

It ends with ... well, it never really ends.

Forrester recently published “CMO Predictions: How Smart CMOs Will Embrace The Rise Of Customer Experience,” and it states, “Few companies recognize that managing your brand is all about managing your customers’ experiences, but in 2016, smart CMOs will change that — reshaping their teams ... delivering connected experiences.”

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Forrester is speaking to the fundamental changes CMOs and executive teams must embrace if they are to be successful in the customer experience battle. They must understand this is not a “quick fix” — it is a business transformation initiative that must be executed one brick at a time. We are talking about transforming the way the company brings its story to life throughout the customer experience. And this requires commitment to executing a multi-year planning, process re-engineering, implementation and measurement process — specifically designed to extend the influence marketing has on the customer experience.

During this journey, CMOs will experience incremental progress and, at times, material success. The most important thing is not to quit — because the process of maintaining a customer-centric culture and superior customer experience is never really over. That’s why it’s critical, as CMOs travel down this road, they showcase wins along the way (acquisition, retention, loyalty, share of wallet, brand preference, etc.). This is how they will remind themselves and the entire leadership team, that marketing’s role in the customer experience is paying incremental dividends — each and every quarter.

More Information:

To learn more about creating a customer-centric culture and securing executive commitment to marketing’s role in the customer experience visit: www.itsonmessage.com/pov

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