

Technology's impact on customer service

Audience Member:

In our free-standing stores, our beauty advisors are expected to have a consultation with our guests, and do scalp to soul. So, "what products can I recommend from head to toe." What was taking a long time was for each advisor to actually write down all the recommendations when they should have been able to, very quickly, use some digital tool. And we finally had gotten the iPad, and turned that prescription pad, which was writing, into an iPad experience, so that our guests could actually understand and know, "Hey, I want to buy Stress Fix body cream today, its 50 dollar. I can't afford to buy the two other styling products that I want, so I want to be able to come back and make a purchase again."

So, it freed up our advisor time, a lot, and as well they could spend that time actually giving the guests like a stress relieving hand relief massage with our product. Or, giving them an opportunity to smell our aromas. Really guiding the experience rather than spend so much time writing. That was a huge eye opener. We had our executive sit down to do what it would be for a long experience, 20 minutes, or express guest which we needed to get down to 3-5 minutes. It was a big impact.

Brandon Carson's Response:

Wow, that's a significant difference. That's a really great example. We worried about that with the app, of putting a device in front of the associate and customer. Like what would the impact be? Would that diminish the customer experience or would that make it better? I benchmarked with my colleague at Walmart, and their mobile learning initiative failed pretty miserably.

Because they didn't do the work to figure out how to integrate it into the workflow, right, and not diminish the customer experience. It's also a little bit of a different model.

There's more consultation at a Home Depot. I mean, we literally had people carry in their sinks with broken stuff on it. If you sell something to someone it could burn their house down, so it's a little bit more of a different type of consultation. But we found that folks are okay, customers, are okay with technology being a part of that experience, but there's kind of a cut off, if it takes too long or it looks like this person doesn't know the answer. It's a little bit of a challenge when you have an associate who has no idea. It's okay from the customer's perspective if they are using technology to help them, but if it takes a few minutes then they are looking for someone [else], you know what I mean? So there's a bit of that customer journey you have to figure out. That's a significant reduction in time, right? To let the customer get what they need first then move on to the next one. Good case study.