


Transforming to a **customer-centric organization** for brand growth.

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A blurred background of a business meeting. In the center, a man in a dark blue suit holds a white tablet. To his left, a woman in a patterned skirt is partially visible. In the background, a whiteboard features a colorful pie chart and several sticky notes. A large laptop screen displays a line graph. The overall scene is brightly lit, suggesting a modern office environment.

“Why aren’t more people buying our new product?”

“Consumers aren’t connecting with our messages, and sales show it.”

“I need to increase online revenue by 25%. Where will I find those customers?”

ORGANIZATIONS STRUGGLE TO PUT CUSTOMER NEEDS AT THE CENTER OF THEIR GROWTH STRATEGIES.



One report by the CMO Council showed that **only 14% of marketers say that customer centricity is a hallmark of their companies.**¹



Organizations that fail to put customers at the center of all enterprise decision-making are more prone to **negative consequences:**

- customer defection
- decrease in loyalty
- higher dissatisfaction scores
- lost sales
- stagnant growth

¹ cmocouncil.org/thought-leadership/reports/mastering-adaptive-customer-engagements

DEEPLY UNDERSTANDING THE HUMAN EMOTIONS AND MOTIVATIONS OF YOUR CUSTOMERS IS WHAT IMPACTS YOUR BRAND'S GROWTH.



Organizations
that adopt customer-
centric business
strategies achieve revenue
growth of 10-15%.²


² mckinsey.com/business-functions/marketing-and-sales/our-insights/improving-the-business-to-business-customer-experience

MAKING THE CUSTOMER-CENTRIC TRANSFORMATION.

Growth-oriented organizations have shifted to an "outside-in" strategy to develop new ideas, more relevant positionings, and highly targeted offerings. Business-building innovations are born by seeing brand opportunities through the eyes of the customer, instead of starting with the internal product or R&D teams.

Successful customer-centric brands don't rely solely on the **what** customers are doing through the lens of sales reports and Big Data.

These organizations also seek to understand the **why** behind the attitudes, preferences, and motivations that influence purchase decisions.




Brands that recognize the importance of getting closer to customers commit to 2 things:

1

Deeply understanding the raw human truths of customers.

2

Activating these insights across all functions to enable enterprise-wide decisions to drive growth.



COMPLEX CUSTOMERS REQUIRE CREATIVE INSIGHTS APPROACHES.

Everything about your customers is complex—what their needs are, who influences their decisions, how they move between online and in-store, just to name a few. Gaining a deep understanding about them requires creatively integrating human insights approaches that will clarify the strategic directions to develop more innovative offerings and compelling communications.

The most revealing human insights work blends data science with behavioral-based research. That's because every brand has unique characteristics that require a custom approach to solve challenges in brand positioning, targeting, customer journey, product development, communication, and more. Choosing the right mix of advanced analytics and cutting-edge behavioral techniques is highly dependent on your brand's specific issues and the nuances of your target audience.

The most valuable insights come from synthesizing customer intelligence from multiple approaches to cover the complex and holistic path of your customers in their purchase decisions, and their ever-shifting motivations and behaviors.

“Catch me if you can.”

How brand marketers use integrated approaches to stay close to their customers.

▶ WATCH VIDEO

WHAT ISSUES KEEP YOUR BRAND FROM ACHIEVING OUTSTANDING GROWTH?

Today's marketplace is fiercely competitive. Customers are ever-changing. Even subtle shifts in competitive moves and customer attitudes can dramatically influence your success. Your brand is likely to face one or more of these issues as it seeks to grow:



RELEVANT BRAND POSITIONING

Do you understand your brand's true strengths and relevance with customers?

Do you know how to leverage brand characteristics for marketplace impact?

Where do your best brand extension opportunities lie?



TARGETING THE RIGHT SEGMENTS

Do you have the optimal targeting strategy?

Have you prioritized segments to maximize growth potential?

What are the most compelling communications for your targets?



UNDERSTANDING THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

How do your customers move through the phases of involvement?

Do you understand how customers act as researchers and evaluators?

What influences the final purchase decision?



DEVELOPING INNOVATIVE OFFERINGS

Have you clearly identified and isolated your open space?

Is your early stage concept work effective?

Are your innovations truly enhancing your portfolio?

HOW DO YOU THRIVE, AND NOT JUST SURVIVE, WITH ALL THIS COMPLEXITY?

Customer-centric organizations commit to deeply understanding human needs and behaviors.

The foundation of human insights work is developing empathy using behavioral-based learning to observe and engage customers in their environment. This foundational learning guides the development of custom approaches to identify your brand's opportunities in positioning, targeting, customer journey, and innovation.



Use empathy for deeper connections.

Empathy is the key to connecting with customers by identifying their emotional needs and gaining insights into the dynamics of their behaviors.

These insights help uncover customer pain points, and inform what additional data or behavioral research is needed to understand how your brand can meet these needs—a more relevant product, compelling messaging, responsive customer service, easier-to-use packaging, and more.

Successful brands put a priority on empathizing with their customers to develop deeper connections that result in loyalty and repeat purchase. And it shows in brand performance and growth.



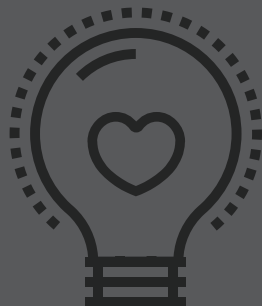
One of the most revealing ways to empathize with your customers is through in-context learning.

Listen as **Joanne Suh** explains why insights from this approach can be transformational.



New Ideas Are
Born of Empathy
Joanne Suh

▶ LISTEN



Putting yourself in the shoes of your customers takes practice. Empathy is not about identifying the experience; it's about **feeling the emotion** of the experience.



Your customer is the boss.



One of the most effective ways to develop a relevant brand positioning is through a co-creation session with customers and the brand team.

Brad Weiss-Holmes explains how this face-to-face collaboration yields a powerful foundation for brand positioning.



It's easy to agree with this statement. But organizations often run the risk of not paying close enough attention to how people really feel about a brand and integrating these observations into brand strategy. Whether you're launching a new brand or re-positioning an existing one, winning in the marketplace requires a deep exploration of your customers' hearts and minds—current ones and the new ones you seek to capture.

The most critical influence on the success of a brand is its perception among customers.

Brand perceptions are based on a multitude of factors, including how individuals feel about the brand's functional characteristics, emotions associated with the brand, interactions with the brand in their daily lives, and how others in the market affect attitudes towards your brand. Getting a truly holistic view of your customers' relationship with your brand allows you to communicate in a more human and meaningful way.

Co-Creation for More Powerful Positioning

Brad Weiss-Holmes

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Know whom to target. Or not.



If you commit to putting the customer at the center of your business, then it is imperative to understand how your brand provides a different "job" for different target segments.

With the rapid pace of competitive moves, disruptive technologies, and other changes in the marketplace, your current targeting strategy can quickly become out-of-date. This requires your brand to be diligent in bringing more precision to target audiences, understanding why you matter to them, what issues they are looking to solve, and how you can create messaging that speaks directly to their needs and desires.

Having a clear view of your target segments also guides you in your marketing spend and achieving the best ROI.

Who is my customer? How do my segments differ? Does that matter? These are some of the critical questions human insights work can answer.

Hear **Jamie Myers** talk about how targetable segmentation yields clear direction on influencing your most valuable customers.



Blending Customer Motivations and Data for Better Segmentation

Jamie Myers

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Follow the winding path to purchase.

There was a time when a brand could more easily predict a customer's purchase journey. New products didn't flood the aisles every day. There weren't a myriad of digital channels providing on-demand access to brand and purchase information.

Today, there's nothing linear about a customer's purchase journey. There are far more channels and spheres of influence and almost limitless ways that your customers form brand perceptions and considerations. Behaviors aren't siloed, but are overlapping and interchanging moments. How does a brand even begin to keep up?

It starts by taking a more holistic view of all the touchpoints, activities, sources consulted, motivations, barriers, and purchase behaviors that reveal the underlying patterns in decision-making.



Customers take on multiple personas as they move through the purchase journey—from Researchers to Consumers.

Paul Donagher explains more about these role shifts.



The Shifting Roles of Customers in Purchase Journeys

Paul Donagher

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Get clear on an innovation path.

Your challenge is to create new innovations for your brand. How do you determine where the real business-building opportunities lie? Should you invest in incremental improvements to current products? Or create truly transformational innovation by developing new products or markets?

These are complex questions for any brand, and the answers are not always immediately clear. It's a risk to both the brand portfolio and the bottom line to invest in an idea without fully exploring its customer relevance and in-market potential.

An innovation roadmap is a strategic approach to discovering the most promising brand opportunities. It develops clear direction on issues such as aligning innovations with corporate strategies, finding offerings with a strong competitive advantage, minimizing cannibalization, and streamlining the portfolio for maximum return.



Organizations looking for true innovation must empower their brand teams to think differently and be open to where new thinking can lead the company.

Shari Aaron discusses how human insights must be handled with the same bold thinking to drive business outcomes that have staying power.



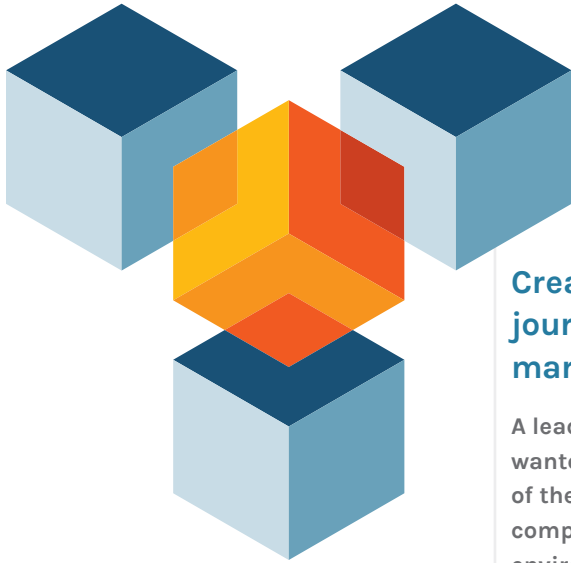
Smart, Agile Insights for True Innovation

Shari Aaron

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CREATIVE INSIGHTS INTEGRATION AT WORK



Creating a robust purchase journey for a brand marketing agency.

A leading brand marketing agency wanted a more 360-degree view of the customer journey in today's complicated omni-channel environment.

Four separate techniques were used:

- ① In-home ethnographies
- ② Mobile shopping experiences
- ③ Passive digital metering
- ④ Online decision pathways survey

By gaining a more holistic view of customers and their purchase journeys, the agency was able to help clients prioritize touchpoints and better identify strategies and tactics to connect with shoppers.

Identifying innovations for an iconic personal care brand.

A popular personal care brand wanted to ignite further growth through its innovation efforts.

Using a five-step approach with a mix of techniques resulted in an innovation roadmap and clear concepts for product development:

- ① In-the-moment research with consumers
- ② Client workshops to develop ideas for a Priority Scoring exercise
- ③ Quantitative Priority Scoring using choice-based exercises
- ④ Ideation session with key brand stakeholders and consumers
- ⑤ Concept evaluations to identify high-potential ideas

Defining target audiences for a leading insurance company.

A large insurance company wanted to strategically define their various target audiences and create more impactful communications for brand retention and growth.

A multi-phased approach included focus groups and in-depth interviews with all key constituents—agents, policy holders, and injured workers, to learn more about their needs, priorities, attitudes, etc.

Following this, a segmentation survey was designed, and then a targetable segmentation analysis was performed to categorize clients and prospects. All key divisions received target segment personas with action plans on how to interact and connect with each one to drive engagement.

ACTIVATING HUMAN INSIGHTS ACROSS YOUR ORGANIZATION.

To become truly customer-centric, your brand's human insights must be infused throughout your organization and serve as the core "North Star" for all strategic decision-making across functions. These deep insights answer the most pressing questions that lead to better brand performance.

COMMUNICATIONS

Are we targeting with the right message?

MARKETING

Do we have a compelling brand positioning?

SALES

Where do we have the most purchase influence?

CUSTOMER SERVICE

How can we improve the customer experience?

DEVELOPMENT

Where should we focus our innovations?

HUMAN
INSIGHTS

Create a Core Insights Team responsible for activation.



A Core Insights Team works best when supported by the C-Suite. This helps gain awareness for the importance of insights across all functions.

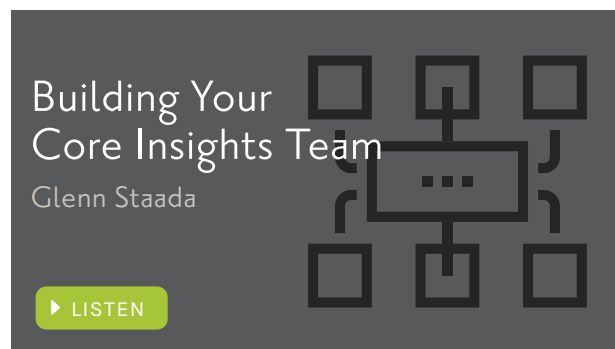
Glenn Staada talks about his experience developing insights-driven teams for leading organizations.



A best practice to share human insights and inspire their activation across the organization is to create a Core Insights Team. Ideally, your external insights partner would help guide this cross-functional team in shepherding the data and behavioral research implications throughout the organization—a "champion of insights" who has the ear of the CEO and other senior leaders on the team.

What to look for in potential members of your Core Insights Team:

- ② Highly knowledgeable about the division
- ② Seniority in the division and organization
- ② Respected by peers and superiors
- ② Excellent communication and persuasion skills
- ② Committed to follow through



Characteristics of Core Insights Team



CHECK IF YOUR ORGANIZATION IS ON A CUSTOMER-CENTRIC PATH:

1

Does your insights work explain why customers make decisions?

2

Do you know what attitudes customers currently hold about your brand?

3

Have you mapped holistic journeys for your customer segments?

4

Have you built an empathy process to get at customer emotions and motivations?

5

Are customer insights infused throughout the enterprise—from R&D to customer service?

“How can I grow
my business in
this fast-moving
and complex
marketplace?”

This is the question on the minds of senior leaders and marketers as they seek to keep their brands relevant with customers. We believe our ultimate goal is to bring the customer voice into the boardroom, and to the highest levels of the organization, where decisions are made on new innovations and communications strategies.

I like to think of our team as strategic growth advisors to our clients—experts in guiding organizations in the discovery and activation of the critical human insights that lead to better products, improved customer loyalty, more compelling messages, and an overall superior brand experience.

I know first-hand from working with global brand leaders that the one thing that keeps them leaders through boom times as well as recessions is staying close to their customers by committing to a deep understanding of their changing needs and desires.

Chip Lister

MANAGING DIRECTOR



Chip Lister leads our teams of marketing and research professionals who focus on creating customer-centric brands through human insights. Fortune 500s and other industry leaders consider these teams valuable advisors in developing growth strategies for branding, positioning, development, and communications success.

SEE YOUR BRAND AS CUSTOMERS DO

radius

Guiding your brand on its growth journey.

Our 60+ years of brand-building expertise has been acquired through our partnerships with Fortune 500 leaders as well as challenger, disruptor, and emerging brands.

These brands come to us for our business growth mindset that starts with one unwavering goal: **Putting your customer at the center of all strategic business and marketing decisions.**

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