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# Customer Experience Vs. Customer Service Vs. Customer Care



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Customer experience is one of the hottest buzzwords in business these days. Companies are pouring more resources than ever before into building a strong customer experience, and many expect to soon compete on experience more than price or quality. Today increasingly we're seeing research that companies that invest in customer experience boast a higher stock price. In fact according to a portfolio of publicly traded companies drawn from the top 20% of brands in Forrester's Customer Experience Index – these companies

that invest in customer experience had higher stock price growth and higher total returns than a similar portfolio of companies drawn from the bottom 20% of brands.

That said, more companies are taking customer experience seriously. But what about customer service, and what is the difference between customer service and customer care?

The truth is there are a lot of ways to care for and interact with customers, but these three things don't mean the same thing and we have to stop talking about them as if they do.

**Customer service is the advice or assistance a company gives its customers.**

The goal of customer service is to increase customer satisfaction, and it usually comes by answering questions. Customer service could be helping a customer choose the right product before they make a purchase, but it most often comes after a purchase has been made. Customer service is giving assistance to customers on how to best use the product, trouble-shooting any issues, and ensuring they had a great buying experience.

**Customer care means how well customers are taken care of while they interact with the brand.**

A term used less often is customer care, which is how well customers are taken care of while they interact with the brand. Instead of just going through the motions and making a sale, customer care is actually caring for customers, listening to their needs, and finding the right solution. In many instances, customer care moves one step beyond basic customer service by building an emotional connection.

**Customer experience is the total journey of a customer's interactions with a brand.**

Customer experience is the sum of all contact, from first discovering and researching a product to shopping and purchasing to actually using the product and following up with the brand afterwards. Customer experience measures how customers feel about a company overall and includes the emotional, physical, psychological connection customers have with a brand. It isn't a one-off interaction, but rather includes the entire customer lifecycle and every touchpoint a customer has with a product or service.

If these three concepts all sound similar, it's because they all contribute to a company delivering on its promises and building loyal, satisfied customers. Customer experience is the overarching sum of all interactions, and customer service and customer care are pieces of that puzzle.

Customer service is a vital part of the entire experience—[nearly 75% of customers who leave](#) do so because they aren't satisfied with customer service. However, customer service and customer care often fall under

the responsibility of one department, while everyone in the organization should be invested in customer experience.

A major difference is customer service is reactive and often is only used when a customer isn't satisfied. If a customer has an issue with a product or service, that is typically the only time they would contact customer service. Conversely, customer experience is proactive and aims to reach every customer. The goal of customer experience in many cases is to avoid customers having to contact customer service. While customer service may only be a one-time interaction, customer experience is a holistic approach that aims to stay with the customer every time they think of the company.

Customer care is the most difficult of the three terms to define, but most people consider it a longer-term approach to taking care of a customer. It doesn't include the entire customer lifecycle like customer experience does, but it moves beyond just a single interaction to include perhaps a string of interactions.

Customer experience is measured by net promoter score (NPS), which tracks how likely a customer is to recommend the brand to a friend. Customer service is measured through the customer satisfaction score (CSAT), which measures how satisfied customers are with the experience. Customer care can be measured by a variety of other metrics.

This isn't to say that brands should ignore customer service or customer care in favor of customer experience. No matter how hard a brand tries, not every customer will be completely satisfied, so there is always a need for customer service and customer care. All three elements work together to build a satisfied customer base that is loyal to the brand and will return for more.

Customer experience is more than just a buzzword—it should be at the heart of everything a company does. By including customer service and customer care, brands can exceed expectations and delight customers.

*Blake Morgan is a customer experience futurist, keynote speaker and author of "More Is More." Sign up for her weekly newsletter [here](#).*