Unleashing the Impact of Customer Support in Delivering Brand Promise and Driving Customer Success

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#Opentowork

Our 10 min journey today

- Customer Support in the CX journey

- Standout industry example (eComm)

- Our approach in aligning the CS strategy

- What we did at athenahealth

- Thoughts on quantifying support business impacts

Customer Support within the CX and brand promise journey

Customer support should be an important and effective part of the CX mix that differentiates a product/service

It's a ready-made high-contact customer experience amplifier of the product/brand value proposition and brand promise, directly able to fortify retention, NPS, LTV

chewy

Search

24/7 help ⌄

Hi, Rob!
account ⌄

0
cart ⌄

shop ⌄   pharmacy ⌄   brands   chewy picks   give back ⌄   today's deals   Free 1-3 day delivery over $49

Case study- Chewy (eCommerce)

Brand promise: *to be the most trusted and convenient destination for pet parents, with happy customers as our first priority*

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Customer Service brand amplifiers

Top-down, foundational culture of customer service that engenders great customer relationships (***trust***) in every interaction (positive, friendly, fanatically helpful)

Support strategy: *Relationship-focused interactions.* High investment in Employee culture, training (*service and product*) and empowerment

CX driver: Each interaction (~2m/year) builds more customer loyalty with the brand *(*chewy: customers interacting w/support have higher LTV)*

Customer Service brand amplifiers

End-to-End (people, process, tools) orientation around *convenience*- ease of access, response and solution in a frictionless transaction

Support strategy: All support channels on home page, HIGH spend on service level (<4s wait time, no IVR); high frontline empowerment (no AHT metric), Tools as enablement - CRM/fulfillment tools and workflows to support low friction order/fulfillment service processes

CX driver: Customer support is integrated with the "Product" and mimics the shopping/ purchase experience of low friction/high convenience

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ROI

✓ Highest NPS in the category*, 84% customer loyalty
✓ #8 of 300 on Forbes's Customer Experience All-Stars, which ranks the 300 brands that actual consumers said they view most positively for the company's products, services and treatment of customers.
✓ 99% customer retention with 2x avg spend incr; revenues YoY+13.5% rev 2023; + 24.5% 2022

Ref https://ujet.cx/blog/chewy-built-billion-business-customer-experience ; https://www.retailtouchpoints.com/features/retail-success-stories/chewy-ceo-customer-care-is-the-right-mantra-to-focus-on

athenahealth

How we aligned support strategy

Identify/articulate your brand promise
Review it with product, marketing, sales, services leaders- is it current/relevant, how to they interpret it, how do they leverage it, what do they see as supports contribution and capabilities related to it?

Develop an intentional support vision
Socialize across product, marketing, sales, and success to mold a shared strategy

Assess people, process, tools (operational) needs and capabilities
Rigorous and 360-degree SWOT

Formulate a strategy
Map resource needs & requirements and costs to ROI and success measures, with inputs from team, stakeholders, leadership, Exec sponsors

Build organizational leadership support
Outline investments required against ROI

athenahealth

Athenahealth is a leader in practice management, mobile applications and EHR solutions for healthcare, with a suite of SaaS-based products and services and a current base of more than 100K providers servicing over 102M patients

Brand promise: *To deliver innovative healthcare technology and services with better outcomes*

Support vision

Rationalize the discordant structures that mergers and re-organizations had created. *Support not meeting core customer needs- hard to reach, wasn't responsive, and slow to resolve issues effectively.*

Re-think customer support around our brand and through the mix of offerings, channels, structure and capabilities

Build a robust product feedback ecosystem
Proactive outcomes are better than reactive; rapidly aggregate, prioritize, collaborate to fix root causes of support drivers

(SWOT): Assess people, process, tools (operational) capabilities

Cast a wide net
- Scan the environment to inventory all relevant customer and business needs and opportunities
- Leverage all listening systems- VOC, Sales, Success, Support, User groups, escalations
- Competitive analysis- what do customers love/hate about competing products

Rigorously share and solicit feedback
- Do a 360° internal analysis of the findings- team, stakeholder, leadership, Exec Sponsors…

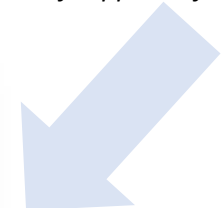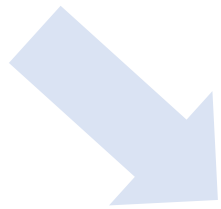|	Innovative Tech	Innovative Services	Better Outcomes
Support strategy alignment:			
Strengths	Online help integration w/high usage rates, and in-app support connection	Breadth of support capabilities (Rev cycle posting and process issues, DB and Document access/actioning)	High issue resolve/low re-open rates
Weaknesses	Online/phone channels are cumbersome to access, customers need easier access to support help No UI integration for dynamic support resources	Support hard to reach and not responsive (lots of issue thrash) Issue journey complexity, with inconsistent capabilities at each touchpoint	Resolves are good but take too long High customer effort for effective resolutions
Opportunities	Chat in channel mix to provide easier first click access- highly responsive to known/documented Q&A, or open call/case if needed Pendo/Fullstory integration with support analytics and dynamic content generation	Re-build training, KCS, agent assist to resolve higher % of issues on first contact Simplified case/issue journey	Align process/tools around **end to end SLA goals** Higher and faster **issue mitigation/fix rates**
Threats	Cost, ROI and timeline for tech stack investments	Resourcing- people, process and $	High dependency on cross-team and stakeholder capability/collaboration

Strategy

Brand promise: *To deliver innovative healthcare technology and services with better outcomes*

Investment in people, process, tools to create responsive and proactive support offerings, channels and capabilities

Support strategy: *Effective online, self help, in-product support capabilities, with high frontline support enablement and resolve rate*

Minimize issue lifecycles (and lower severity/breadth of customer impacts) with high RPM support data inputs into product
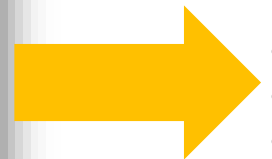
Support strategy: *Reduce the impacts of reactivity, build tight support>product collaboration to quickly mitigate/eliminate issues (surface, prioritize, fix); rapid push of support info to KCS, online, in-product channels*

Template in Appendix of this deck

Strategy- investments, ROI and leadership support

Brand alignment / Pillar	Resources / Reqt's	Costs	ROI	Measure
Innovative Tech Tools | KCS | Content Increase support content>online help w/ KB creation/ edit/ publish cycle incr of 100%	• KCS training – 120 contributors, 24 editors • Align Online Help team content capacity	960h contr training, 192h editor training (indirect $)	2x content inflow w/ high usage rates to existing online help framework, 15% deflects for top help content (est $14k/mo deflection)	• Online help topic view/use count • Help topic "useful" counts • Top KM issue contact rates
Innovative Tech Tools | KCS | Content Pendo/Fullstory integration with support analytics and dynamic content generation	• Pendo PM and integration dev • SF content plug-in dev	$8k Pendo licensing ext $6k IT analytics dev	35% support contact deflection for UI surfaced topics/content (est $24k/mo deflection)	• UI KM content hit/use rates • UI topic content support contact rates
Innovative Tech **Better Outcomes** Support channels Deploy Chat as frictionless contact integrated with content and live channels	• SF Chat dev, config • Chat queue creation • Chat WFM staffing model	$24k SF community component dev $12k SF IT integration	Resolve +20% of issues on first contact (est $78k/mo downstream cost avoidance) Simplified case/issue journey (lower customer effort), +8-10% Csat	• L1 resolve/escape rate • L1 re-open rate • Csat MoM trended by channel
Innovative Services **Better Outcomes** Service Delivery Streamline issue journey, align process/tools around end to end SLA goals	• Queue consolidation • SF case mapping, skills re-map • T1/T2 training • Reporting DB config	178h curriculum dev 1200h agent training (indirect $) SF IT $ shared w/Chat work	-18% AHT $150k/mo cost out Optimized case/issue journey (lower customer effort), +8-10% Csat (CES)	• AHT YoY comparative by month • Issue TTR trended • % SLA met trended • Csat YoY comparative by month
Better Outcomes Issue Management Increased L3 resources to drive higher and faster issue mitigation/fix rates w/Prod	• Shift left- SH/T1 resolve rate +40% • L3 >10% FTE capacity • Product HPCI onboarding	$ incl in issue journey and chat initiatives	+ 10 bugs/mo @ 120 avg case attach est -3% support contact volume, -15% cost out +5% Csat est for bug-attached cases	• L1 resolve/escape rate • L3 hours capacity MoM/fcst • HPCI issue fix count/mo by case attach volume • Csat YoY comparative by month

- ELT strategic planning
- FY planning & budgeting
- Org/team planning & goals

- It's not always easy to do
- Requires targeted and curated data
- Should align clearly to strategy ROI measures
- Every organization will develop unique approaches

Some thoughts…..

Contacts per Customer rate			

- Normalizes inflow data
- Support/Product collaboration can reduce this- in total, by component, by feature, etc
- $ cost applied behaves like COGS

	Apr	May	Jun
TAU total active users	110,283	110,801	111,424
Support inbound- all channels	4503	4421	4568
CpC rate	4.08%	3.99%	4.1%

Cost to serve			

- Quantifies service efficiency and CpC rate (both support and product levers)

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Support inbound- all channels	4503	4421	4568
$ cost/contact (# x AHT x $/min)	$23,640	$23,210	$23,982
CTS/customer	$0.21	$0.20	$0.21

Other			

- **Support as product differentiator**: Stevie, TSIA, market specific support rankings- support investments that move the needle on these can be tangle for sales, marketing, sell-through, etc
- **Churn analysis**, ex: Csat <> Churn correlation ($\uparrow\downarrow$ move in Csat = what change in churn?).

Appendix:
Strategy by resource, cost, ROI and measure

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