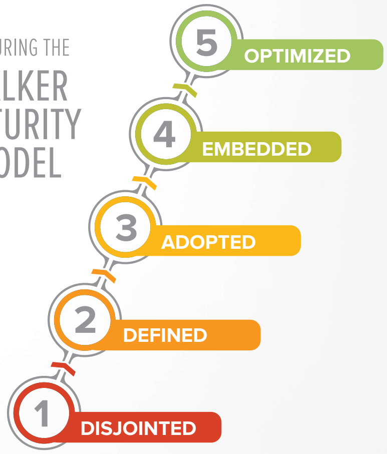
Accelerate **CX**™

A comprehensive program to assess, improve, and optimize your customer experience initiatives

FEATURING THE
WALKER
MATURITY
MODEL


5 OPTIMIZED
4 EMBEDDED
3 ADOPTED
2 DEFINED
1 DISJOINTED

WALKER

HOW EFFECTIVE ARE YOUR CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE INITIATIVES? DO YOU REALLY KNOW?

Sometimes it helps to see how you stack up. That's why we created the AccelerateCX program. Based on years of experience and exhaustive research, we've developed a simple way for companies to assess their CX maturity, identify the gaps, and make necessary improvements. Armed with this information, customer experience professionals can work more intelligently to optimize their efforts and maximize their impact.

The booklet provides an overview of the levels of CX maturity, detailed descriptions of the areas of CX competency, and three easy options for you to get started with AccelerateCX.

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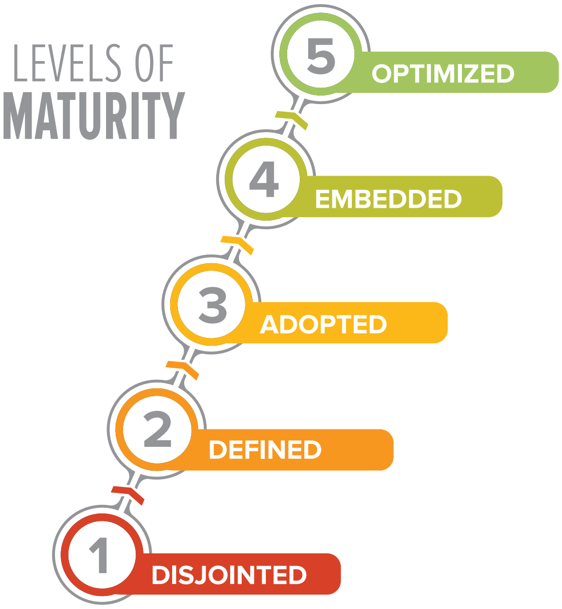


THE WALKER MATURITY MODEL

LEVELS OF MATURITY

A key element of the AccelerateCX program, Walker evaluates your current CX practices based on these five levels of maturity. Your level of competency is compared with hundreds of others to provide valuable perspective and direction on your most important areas of development.

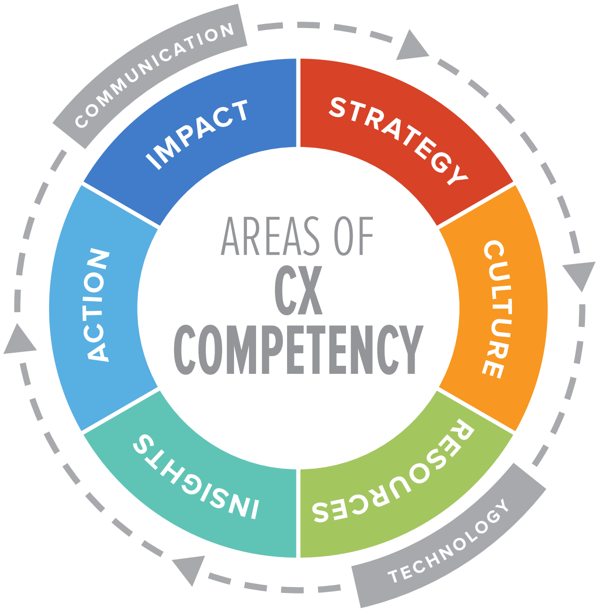
1 **DISJOINTED** – CX efforts are non-existent or, at best, sporadic and disorganized

2 **DEFINED** – CX is recognized as a discipline but not deployed in a coordinated fashion.

3 **ADOPTED** – CX is accepted as a worthwhile initiative but not universally leveraged.

4 **EMBEDDED** – CX is operational and embraced but not generating tangible results.

5 **OPTIMIZED** – CX has a strong impact, delivering a competitive advantage for the company.



AREAS OF CX COMPETENCY

We've closely studied the important areas for CX success. Based on years of experience and exhaustive research we have defined the following key areas of competency:

STRATEGY – Customer experience is intentional, designed to establish and maintain a sustainable competitive advantage.

CULTURE – A deliberate focus on the customer influences the way employees think and act.

RESOURCES – People and financial resources are in place to ensure CX is effectively implemented and governed.

INSIGHTS – An agile system is in place to efficiently gather insights needed to make short-term decisions and guide long-term strategies.

ACTION – Employee decisions are guided by customer insights and action is tracked to ensure follow-through takes place.

IMPACT – Systems are in place to monitor the impact on the experience of the customer and financial return to the company.

In addition, The Maturity Model incorporates two additional competencies – **communication** and **technology** – that boost the performance of the six key competencies. These serve to support, enhance and heighten the organization's CX initiatives.

These key areas are best practice not only for the administration of customer experience initiatives but also for driving sound business success.

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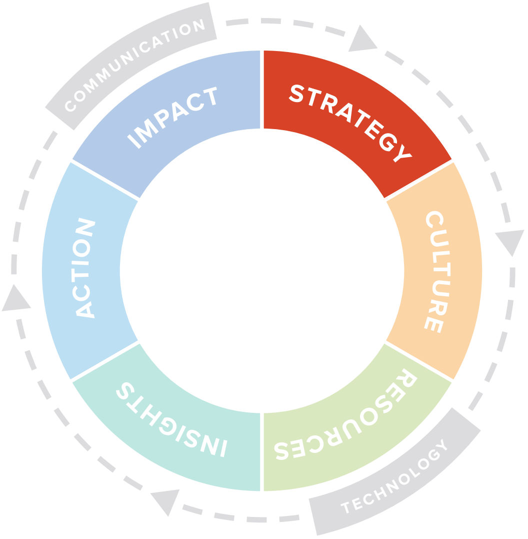


STRATEGY

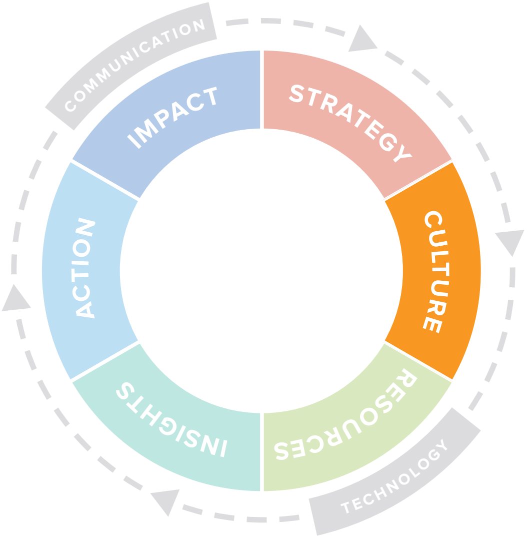
CX initiatives begin with a clear understanding of what the customer experience ultimately should be. Customer experience strategy is about developing an intentional customer experience with the goal of establishing and maintaining a sustainable competitive advantage.

The right CX strategy doesn't stand alone. Instead, it is tightly aligned with the company's overall strategy and is a key component of the company's brand. Executives include CX in the strategic planning process and recognize that products can be duplicated and prices can be matched, but an exceptional customer experience is highly difficult for competitors to copy.

An optimized CX strategy is laser focused on what customers want and need. Skilled CX teams take the time to map end-to-end interactions, designing the ideal customer experience while constantly evaluating necessary improvements. Various corporate functions understand their role and success measures are in place.

Characteristics of an optimized approach to CX strategy include:

- CX strategy clearly defines how the customer experience should be delivered.
- CX strategy is integrated with the overall corporate mission/vision/purpose.
- CX strategy is aligned with the company's brand promises.
- Leadership makes CX an important component in the strategic planning process.
- Success is measured for each business function via specific CX metrics/goals.
- Leadership's focus on the optimal end-to-end customer experience is reflected in organizational structure/policies/processes.



CULTURE

Without the right customer-focused culture, even the best strategy will fall flat. The right CX culture means that from top to bottom, employees care about the way customers do business with their company.

CX culture starts at the top with the tone set by C-level executives and it ripples through the organization to all areas regardless of whether they interact with customers regularly or are in functions where they rarely relate with customers. It starts with hiring practices that invite people into the organization who have a genuine interest seeing customers succeed. This is then constantly reinforced through onboarding, orientation and ongoing training.

A customer-focused culture also extends beyond the organization to influence work with suppliers, partners, distributors and others in the supply chain. Regardless of whether customer relationships are direct or indirect, programs are in place to ensure a consistent, positive experience for customers.

Characteristics of an optimized approach to CX culture include:

- Employees act and think in a customer-focused way because they believe in the benefit of being customer centric.
- The value of being customer centric is clearly understood throughout the value chain.
- Associates are hired for customer focus and cultural fit.
- Training is provided to help employees with the skills they need to understand and execute the CX strategy.
- Systems and metrics recognize and reward employees who demonstrate customer-focused behavior.
- Business units and functional areas across the organization seek insights about the customer.
- Being customer centric is reinforced as part of employee career development.
- Customer-centric rituals and routines are practiced in the organization (for example, a departmental review of how employees have positively impacted the customer).

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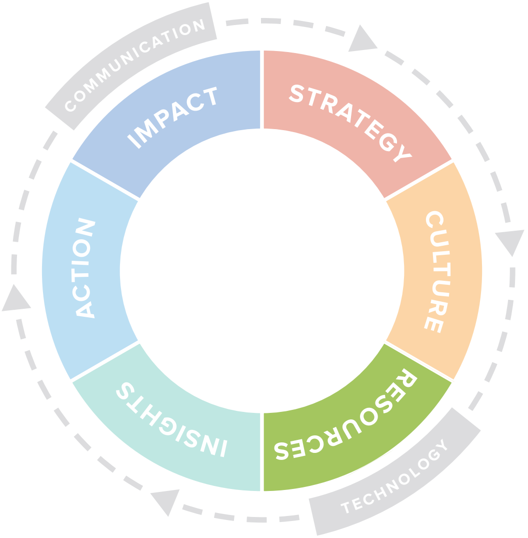


RESOURCES

Today’s most effective CX teams are resource wise. The most notable resource they leverage is people, which involves far more than just having a person or team to run a program.

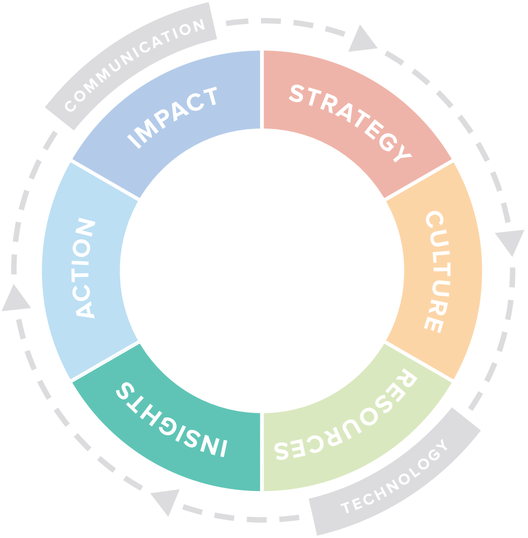
Instead, for CX to be effective company wide, the best initiatives have a C-level executive serving as the champion, supported by a steering team charged with carrying out the necessary plans. Effective steering teams establish a network of customer advocates who serve as ambassadors of CX initiatives to their respective departments, functions or regions. In this way, virtually every employee is engaged in CX.

Optimized CX also means the necessary investment is made to provide the right tools, training and access to consultants who provide specialized support, expertise and outside perspective.

Governance has emerged as a necessary component to ensure that processes are in place to coordinate customer data from across the company and govern what analysis says about the customer. Given the immense amount of data within today’s organizations, this coordinated approach has become a necessary element.

Characteristics of an optimized approach to CX resources include:

- An executive owns, manages and champions the CX strategy.
- CX steering team includes representatives from various functions, geographies, product lines, etc. who can mobilize resources and oversee all CX-related activities.
- A cross-functional network of customer experience advocates exists – and the advocates have customer experience responsibilities as part of their jobs.
- Funding is allocated to highest-priority customer experience areas.
- External experts are leveraged to enhance customer competency.
- A centralized CX analytics function coordinates the gathering and investigation of customer insights.
- A formal data governance team and process are used to identify and link customer data.



INSIGHTS

Conducting an annual survey as the heart of your CX initiative no longer cuts it. Customers today expect you to know their business and proactively manage their experience. This means CX teams must have an agile system to quickly and easily gather the customer insights needed to make short-term decisions and guide long-term strategies.

The right approach to customer insights must be both wide – embracing a broad range of listening approaches – and deep – using advanced analytics to anticipate customer issues and actions. CX teams skilled at taking action have effective ways of gathering the right customer intelligence and transforming it into useful insights that can effectively be put to use.

These CX teams also take advantage of customer intelligence that already exists. They know how to access and use behavioral data, financial information, operational metrics and other customer intelligence from across the company.

Characteristics of an optimized approach to CX insights include:

- The VoC system is agile in design, enabling collection of needed insights.
- Customers provide feedback to help the company better understand and meet customer needs.
- Predictive and prescriptive analytics are used to proactively manage the customer experience.
- Customer insight is provided at various levels of the organization, from individual account insights to broad, global insights.
- Customer insight is available across a breadth of key functions and business processes.
- Multiple sources of information are used to gain customer insight.

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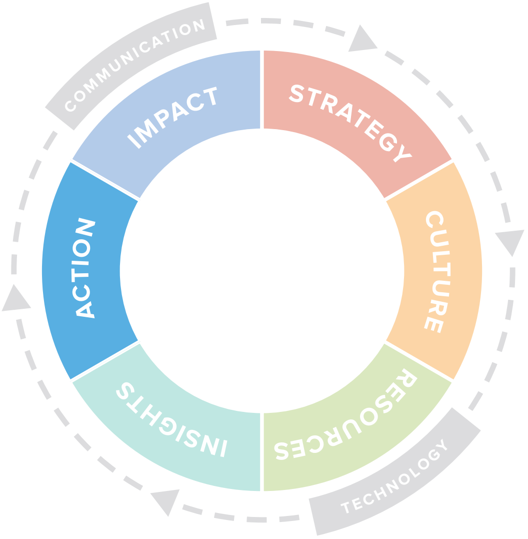


ACTION

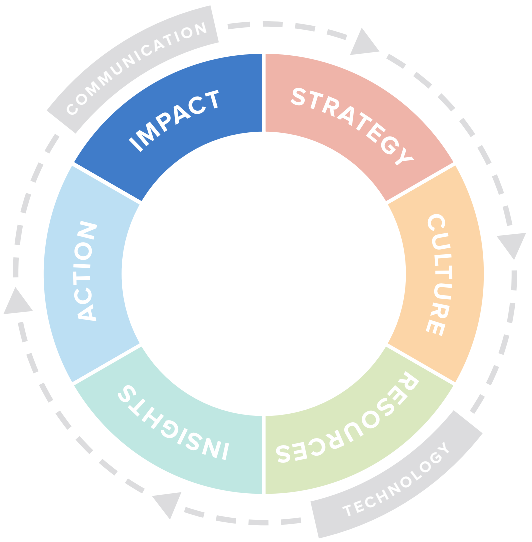
Turning customer insights into action and change is the most common challenge for customer experience professionals. It is more than gathering the right intelligence and delivering impressive reports. Instead, it requires that CX professionals get employees engaged in customer issues, provide easy access to relevant insights and track action plans to ensure follow-through takes place.

Companies with a strong orientation for action leverage customer insights with a focus on continuous improvement, and they make every effort to not only distribute customer insights, but also to embed them into the systems they use to guide day-to-day decisions.

What's more, these organizations often deploy a "test-and-learn" approach that encourages constant experimentation to facilitate rapid deployment of ideas. Once refined, these are entrenched in the way they do business to provide an improved customer experience and to gain an edge on the competition.

Characteristics of an optimized approach to CX action include:

- Actions intentionally support the delivery of an optimized customer experience.
- CX insights inform continuous improvement efforts.
- The company executes on the priorities identified by the CX steering team.
- Daily decision-making is facilitated by predictive/prescriptive customer insights.
- Experiments are used to enable quick movement from customer experience improvement ideation to application.



IMPACT

Impact involves demonstrating how CX initiatives deliver a financial return to the company. However, it's more than simply tracking dollars and cents. It begins with an intentional approach, evaluating CX undertakings on the potential impact they will ultimately have on the experience of customers.

Too often, impact is associated with metrics such as satisfaction and loyalty. While these metrics are important, they are not the end goal. Successful CX teams establish the connection between CX metrics and business impact – showing evidence of increased revenue or cost savings. They clearly define their targets for success metrics and monitor the impact an improved customer experience has on the business. Showing such evidence is expected of CX professionals and continues to be the most persuasive way to show the value of CX.

Impact also extends beyond the balance sheet to include the effect CX has on the company's reputation. Is the company known for delivering an exceptional experience? And, when a new CX initiative is put in place, do customers even notice?

Characteristics of an optimized approach to CX impact include:

- New initiatives are vetted relative to their impact on the CX strategy.
- CX improvement initiatives have clearly defined success metrics.
- The business impact of CX initiatives is monitored.
- Industry recognition is received for the customer experience delivered.
- Customers acknowledge that initiatives have positively improved their experience.

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BOOSTERS

The Walker Maturity Model incorporates two additional competencies that are important to boost the performance of the six key competencies. Communication and technology are essential capabilities that serve to support, enhance and heighten the organization's CX initiatives.

COMMUNICATION

More and more, CX professionals are required to be skilled communicators, ensuring that the customer's story resonates and prompts desired action and change. Effective communication programs serve to:

- Regularly reinforce the importance of being customer centric.
- Ensure customer intelligence is distributed broadly via a formalized system for sharing intelligence on demand across customer touchpoints.
- Go beyond the data and statistics to tell customer stories to promote empathy and understanding of what it is like to be a customer.
- Ensure customers receive corporate communication which highlight improvements made based on their input.
- Capture success stories that can be celebrated and replicated in other parts of the business.

Like any company initiative, it must be communicated effectively to ensure employees are aware, understand their role and believe in the strategy. Only then will the desired action and change occur.

TECHNOLOGY

One can't ignore the impact of technology in today's business environment – and CX is no exception. In fact, technology-savvy CX professionals often leverage these tools to accelerate the collection of customer insights, the analysis of data, the distribution of reports and much more.

Effective technology implementation ensures that:

- Input from customers is processed in real time, allowing for immediate action on critical customer issues.
- Models and algorithms are embedded in the right tools and processes stakeholders use to make day-to-day decisions impacting the customer.
- Data warehouses are set up to store and manage customer data, making it accessible to better serve customers.
- Customer intelligence is housed in a secure environment.

While technology does not serve as a substitute for critical CX competencies, today's CX professionals can benefit from embracing the use of technology tools to support, enhance and accelerate their efforts.

ACCELERATE YOUR CX

Putting the Walker Maturity Model to Work

AccelerateCX is the fastest and most effective way to make customer experience your company's biggest competitive advantage. Walker's experts work closely with you to assess key areas of competency and readiness for customer experience success. Then we build a practical roadmap to enable you to not only plan for a sustainable competitive advantage but also to identify quick wins to jump start your CX success.

The Walker Maturity Model serves as the foundation of AccelerateCX, Walker's program to help companies assess their current effectiveness and chart a path to optimize their CX approach.

GETTING STARTED - WE MAKE IT EASY

Walker provides three easy options to get started:

- **CX FAST TRIAL.** Want to get a taste of AccelerateCX? Take our free online assessment. Log in and answer questions about your company's current customer experience initiatives. Your input will trigger a comprehensive report of how you perform in key areas of CX competency and how you stack up against others.

  To begin your trial, visit www.walkerinfo.com/accelerateCX.

- **CX QUICK CHECK.** A more detailed approach, Walker engages with you to gather input from a broad and diverse group within your company. Each participant provides their input on your current CX programs and a Walker consultant performs a review that culminates in a one-hour consultative conference call providing valuable perspective, insights and recommendations.

- **CX ACCELERATION ROADMAP.** Our most comprehensive approach, Walker gathers insights from a broad range of employees and conducts in-depth interviews with key stakeholders involved in the design and implementation of your CX initiatives. Armed with this information, our experts deliver a full report of our findings as well as a comprehensive three-year roadmap for accelerating your customer experience success.

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ABOUT WALKER

Walker helps today's B-to-B companies build and maintain a competitive advantage by delivering an exceptional customer experience. Our senior customer experience consultants average more than 20 years of experience, and they deliver a wide range of services to help our clients succeed. And it works – Walker clients outperform the market by more than six to one!

Whether you are just beginning your CX journey or you are looking to enhance your existing programs, consider adding Walker to your team.

WALKER CX SOLUTIONS AND SERVICES

No two companies are alike, so we collaborate with each client to understand their objectives and deliver just the right services to help them achieve success. Our most common services include:

- Customer experience assessments resulting in a practical strategic CX roadmap.
- Journey mapping services to identify problem areas and design breakthrough customer experiences.
- Collection and advanced analysis of a wide range of customer intelligence.
- A full range of technology services to manage customer data and integrate with existing systems.
- Action planning services to engage employees and prompt change across the organization.
- Education and training services to engage employees and foster a customer-focused culture.

WALKER | Learn more about Walker at www.walkerinfo.com.

WALKER RESOURCES

WALKER B-TO-B CX SUMMIT

The industry’s only conference focused on the latest and best customer experience strategies for B-to-B companies. We feature powerful keynote presentations, engaging workshops and valuable networking all aimed at sharing best practices to improve the way companies drive business success. Learn more at www.walkercxsummit.com.

WALKER WEBCASTS

We produce a popular series of monthly 30-minute webcasts on a variety of customer experience topics. Each webcast is hosted by Walker’s thought leaders. Learn more at www.walkerinfo.com/knowledge-center/webcasts.asp.

KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS

Walker’s thought leaders deliver excellent keynote presentations on a wide range of customer experience topics. Consider bringing a Walker executive to your next big event.

CUSTOM WORKSHOPS

Walker conducts dozens of workshops for leading companies. Whether you’re considering a session of two hours or two days, consider hiring the experts at Walker to help plan and execute your next customer experience workshop.

WALKER KNOWLEDGE CENTER

Walker’s Knowledge Center is an outstanding resource for customer experience leaders. You have access to informative webcasts, thought-provoking white papers, powerful case studies, eBooks and more.

Learn more at www.walkerinfo.com/knowledge-center.

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