

GLOBAL MARKET RESEARCH

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:

**Maintaining an Holistic View  
of the Customer Experience**

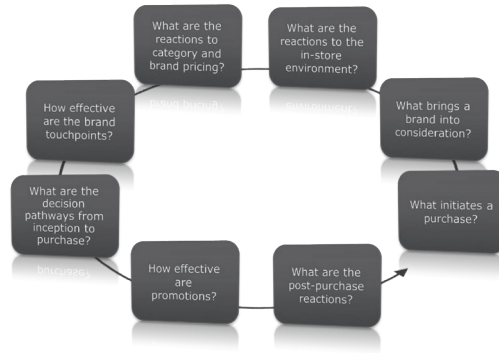
Maximizing the Value of Your  
Shopper Insights Research

## Maintaining an Holistic View of the Customer Experience

Maximizing the Value of Your Shopper Insights Research

It's becoming more and more common for businesses to structure their research teams around specific issues, with different teams working on areas like branding/brand communications, satisfaction, and the shopping experience. With these functions inherently linked in terms of the customer experience, it is more critical than ever to take all aspects into account when implementing and applying research.

As the following chart depicts, the customer experience is multi-faceted, with all aspects building on one another to create a favorable outcome and an ongoing relationship with your brand. While you may look at these areas discretely within your organization, it's the interplay that will truly drive your business forward.



Due to the nature of this process we often ask our clients, regardless of the business issue we're researching, to help us identify what is known or unknown about the various aspects of the customer experience and determine how they relate to the issue at hand. To ensure the research we implement has maximum value on the business, we've found this stage to be vital to crafting a powerful and thoughtful design.

If there is a significant disconnect between any of these stages, conducting research that leads to an improvement or change to one area may be undermined by a poor experience in a subsequent step in the purchasing cycle. Confronting this possibility early on allows us to think about how to design the research to account for these interactions and assess how it may impact the results we will obtain.

For example, a big box retailer of consumer electronics that builds its brand promise on having the largest selection at the lowest prices may be hard pressed to eliminate brands or product lines. Although the merchandising team may conduct research that shows actual in-store close rates will be optimized by rationalizing product lines and price points, the research should also take into account what brought the consumer into the store in the first place.

Was the shopping trip initiated by the brand promise of being able to compare lots of different options in a single shopping trip? And, what is the potential impact on the shopper's likelihood to return to this store after an experience where the number of brands and product options appears to be similar to those found in another retailer with a more convenient location? Adding this context can offer additional insights about the potential longer term impact of rationalizing product lines.

While we may not always be able to address all aspects of the experience in our work, by at least thinking it through in the early stages we ensure that how we implement and use the research is informed by a holistic view of the customer. The end result is a more powerful set of insights, grounded in an understanding of how they fit into the bigger context of your business.

→ **Want to learn more?**

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