

**the best brands
come in threes.**

**Five critical things to know about
improving business performance
through Bx, Ex and Cx alignment**

Principal Forrester Analysts Dipanjan Chatterjee,
Pete Jacques and David Brodeur-Johnson explain

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Aligning brand, employee and customer experience is the key to stronger business performance, relative to companies that keep Bx, Ex and Cx siloed.

As a result, organizations should prioritize dismantling the boundaries between brand, employee and customer experience to take advantage of the inherent interconnectedness of all three.


Understanding how customers experience your brand by way of its employees, and how to link the strategies that govern all three, is key to driving increased brand relationship, employee engagement and customer retention.

Forrester principal analysts Dipanjan Chatterjee, Pete Jacques and David Brodeur-Johnson joined Liquid Agency's chief strategy officer, Dennis Hahn, in a recent webinar co-hosted with Qualtrics chief product officer of research Michel Feaster: "The best brands come in threes." In the webinar, the experts discussed just how important it is to align Bx, Ex and Cx. Doing so accounts for 27% of the variance between stronger- and weaker-performing companies. However, 78% of businesses are not currently prioritizing the alignment.

To watch the original webinar, go [here](#).

In this Q&A, the experts dig deeper into some of the dynamics at play. They answer five of the most pressing questions on this topic:

- The benefits of this convergence
- How it works in practice
- Strategies for overcoming obstacles to alignment
- Metrics shared across Bx, Ex and Cx
- Structural considerations for aligning the three



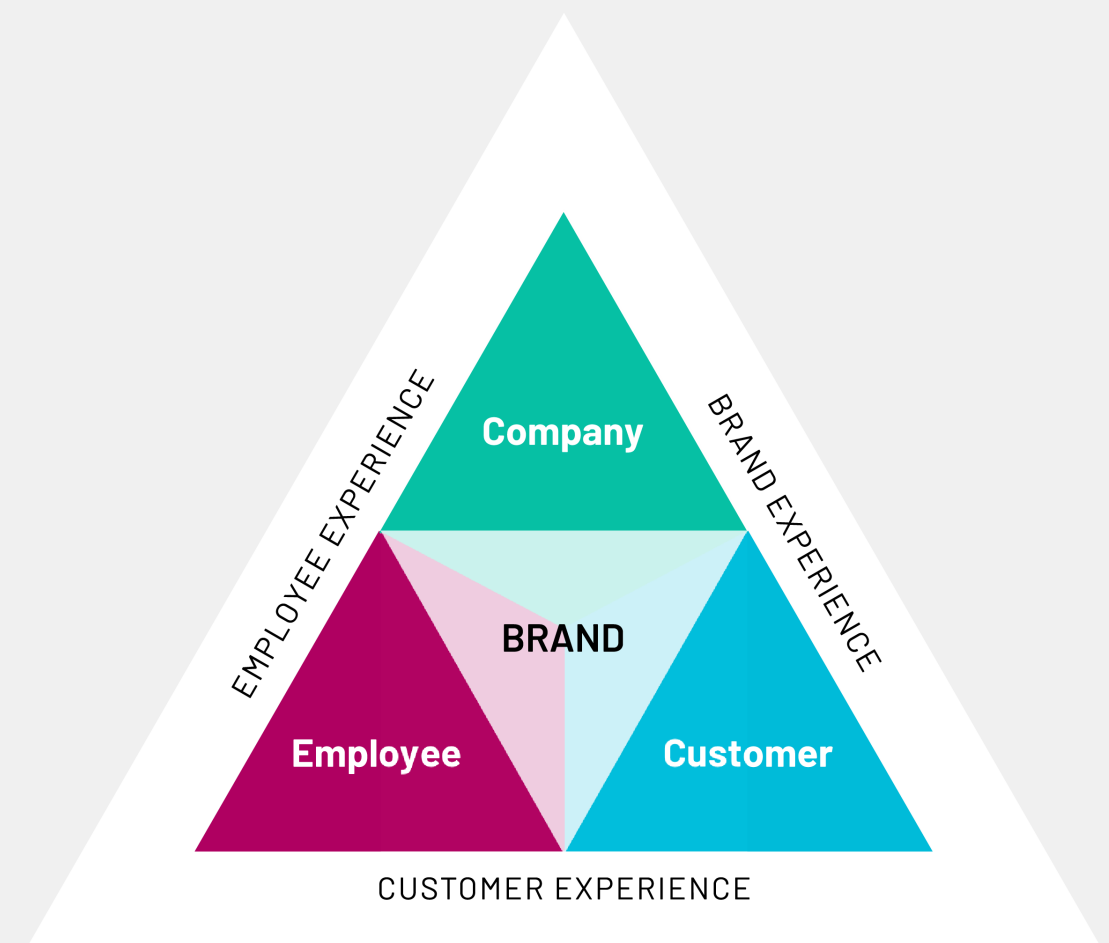
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A: In our analysis of the self-reported performance of 156 companies along the dimensions of growth, profit, brand equity and employee empowerment, we found that 27% of the variance between those with strong performance and those with weak performance can be attributed to how well these companies have aligned their brand, customer and employee experience.

What this means is that while by themselves a strong Bx, Ex and Cx can influence business benefits, there is an additional and significant lift from their alignment.



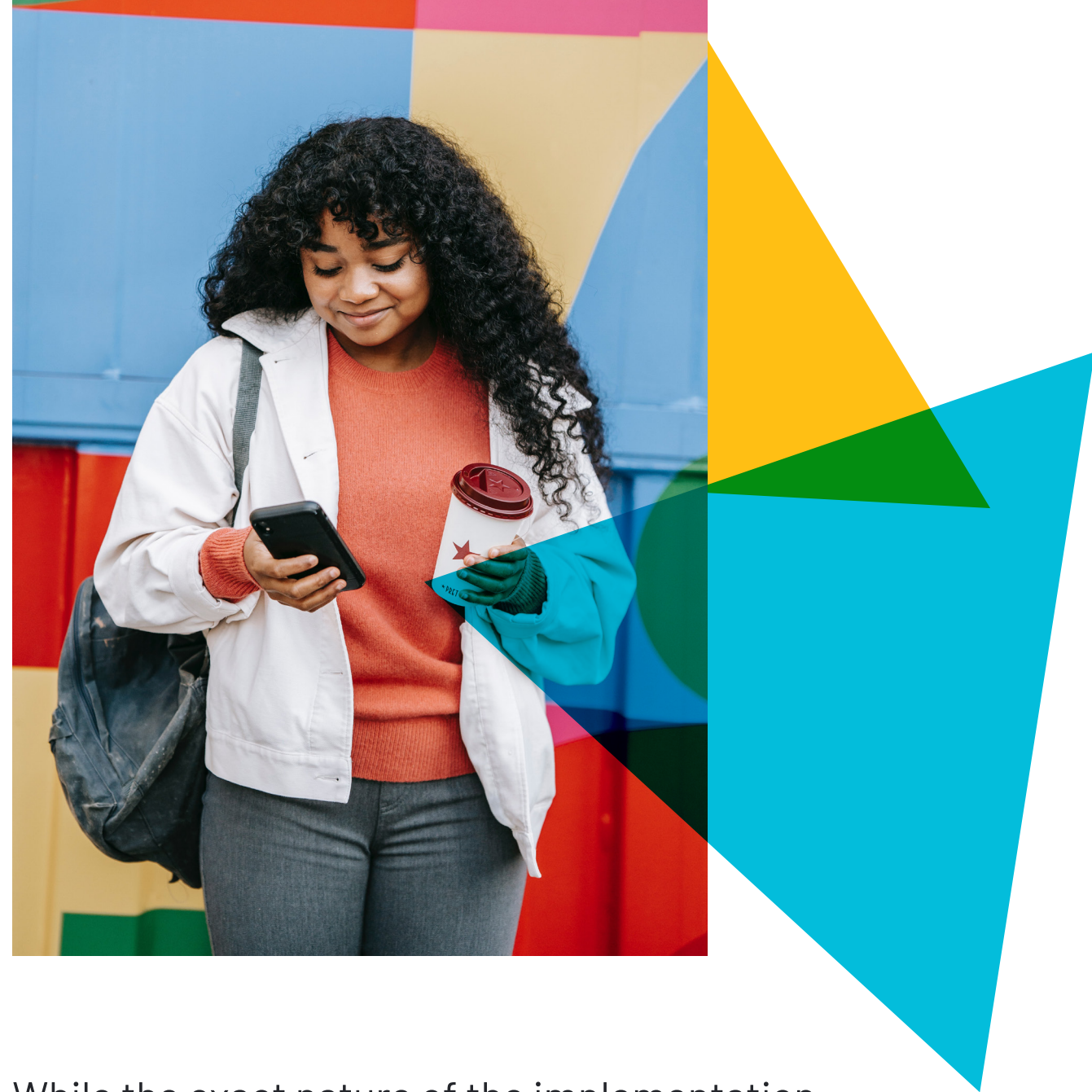


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A: The best brands that align and deliver harmonized experiences have a holistic view of the enterprises and how it serves its customers. This holistic view is achieved through a robust measurement program that captures customer and employee assessments of the brand (i.e., are you delivering on the brand promise and value proposition), perceptions of their experiences, including emotional engagement, and a method for segmenting to compare those whose experiences resonate with the brand promise to those whose experiences do not resonate.



While the exact nature of the implementation will vary by category, every touchpoint and those that are responsible for them—salespeople, cashiers, store personnel, user interface designers and others—must understand the purpose of the brand and how to best translate it into Cx. That's the convergence of the brand, employee and customer experience being lived in the customer's reality.



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A: Leaders must ensure that they themselves, as well as their teams, have a cross-functional mentality tethered to customer obsession, not functional dominion. The right mindset, collaborative processes and reward mechanism—or at least the beginnings of these since few companies are mature in this respect—is a must. Then, a thorough analysis is required of the key experiences and how to deliberately plan for convergence around the experiences.

A good technique is to focus on experiences that matter most in that they have the most emotional heft in influencing behavior. These tend to be those that are anticipatory, geared toward high points and low points, and manage the end points of each experience. This map of prioritized experiences will help navigate to a clear agenda for the alignment of brand, employee and customer experience.

Leaders can drive toward this cross-functional mentality by sharing the linkages between these different components of experience. The fruit of the rigorous analysis described above is a set of measures that describe what is actually happening during an experience (interaction metrics), how the consumer or employee perceives that experience (perception metrics), and the impact of those perceptions (outcome metrics).

Leaders can share those linkages (through data visualization and graphical techniques) to help partners across the organization understand how their piece impacts the larger picture.



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A: Much, but it requires having more context than just the raw Cx measurement data. The data can tell you that you have a problem but seldom much more than that.


For example, when Starbucks rolled out its mobile ordering capabilities in several of their stores, they initially started seeing lower customer satisfaction scores while also seeing higher employee turnover in those same stores. The Cx data was only one symptom of the problem, and the employee turnover data was another.

They used those two metrics to understand that they had a significant problem, but still didn't have enough information to determine what it was. They had to send people to the stores to observe what was actually happening on the ground to get a handle on it.



They learned that they had effectively broken their finely tuned human/machine workflow in the stores by introducing the mobile ordering aspect, and fixing it required thoughtful re-engineering of the workflow, changes in staffing and equipment placement, etc. All of this was outside the control of the store employees to fix on their own.

Incorporating interaction metrics, which provide objective data on touchpoints (e.g., number of web pages visited, average hold time), can provide some additional insight to help narrow down where a problem exists, but often still requires more depth to get to root causes, as the Starbucks example illustrates.



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A: I haven't met an executive yet who wants less insight into how their business is operating. More reliable insights are what they want. What they don't want is either misleading or erroneous/irrelevant information.

So, integrating Bx/Ex/Cx metrics into decision-making and prioritization starts with proven methodologies and reliable sources that will convince experienced executives that the insights are worth paying attention to.

For example, Cx metrics such as CX Index™ score, Ex metrics such as engagement and Bx data such as how customers and employers perceive the organization can be powerful when thoughtfully combined to highlight multiple facets of a situation.

For example, let's say that your organization's Cx scores have started trending downward along with employee engagement and brand perception. By asking additional questions in each area and doing the data science work to figure out how the various factors relate to each other, you can gain more insight into what's going on. You can use the analysis to help other executives understand it as well and get them signed on to help solve it. Integration is achieved, then, by demonstrating the linkage (through correlations, regression and, in some cases, causal analyses) between these different metrics and stated business goals.

About Dipanjan Chatterjee

Vice president and principal analyst at Forrester

Dipanjan is a vice president and principal analyst at Forrester Research, where he leads the brand experience (Bx) and strategy practice. He has appeared on CNN and NPR; been quoted in media like The New York Times, Guardian and Vogue; written for publications like the MIT Sloan Management Review and AdAge; and spoken at events like SXSW and Mobile World Congress. Before Forrester, Dipanjan held senior management positions at VMLY&R, FedEx Office/Kinko's and a Berkshire Hathaway portfolio company. He started out as an investment banker at Morgan Stanley and a strategy consultant at Booz. Dipanjan received his BA, magna cum laude, in economics from Amherst College, where he was elected Phi Beta Kappa, and his MBA from the University of Chicago.

About David Brodeur-Johnson

Principal Analyst at Forrester

David serves leaders responsible for employee experience (Ex) and workforce productivity and is the lead author of Forrester's EX Index research. His passion is helping companies create workplaces that engage people and enable them to do their best work. He is an expert in the way technology affects motivation and performance as well as how it shapes organizations' employee experience. David also speaks publicly about how organizations can use psychological and organizational behavior research to guide their technology strategy and set better priorities.

About Pete Jacques

Principal analyst, customer experience at Forrester

Pete is a principal analyst serving customer experience (Cx) professionals. He advises clients on Cx measurement including KPI selection, measurement frameworks and survey design. His research interests also include consumer sentiments, emotions and decision-making. Pete also works extensively with Forrester's Customer Experience Index (CX Index™) data. In this role, Pete helps clients build stronger customer loyalty and trust through higher-quality customer experiences.

About Liquid Agency

We build brands people believe in.

For companies that rely on their brands to give them a competitive advantage, Liquid Agency is a full-service brand, employee and customer experience agency that fuels growth, creates value and captures ROI.

We leverage the power of brand to solve today's most difficult business challenges by designing experiences for brands and their customers and employees—experiences that all connect with the heart of an organization's real meaning and purpose.

We make it fast, and we make it real, through a powerful and agile approach called Silicon Valley Thinking™, providing speed to market in a time of rapid change. The result is measurable business growth and brands people believe in.



SILICON VALLEY
THINKING™



LIQUID AGENCY

We create experiences for brands and their customers and employees, all aligned with the organization's true meaning and purpose. When your experiences line up, people do the same, and real business value is the result.



Dennis Hahn
Chief Strategy Officer, Bx Practice Lead
dennis@liquidagency.com
liquidagency.com