

## What will the world be after COVID-19 and things you should do now to get there successfully

Companies in China, Singapore, South Korea and Hong Kong are just starting to come out of the crisis caused by COVID-19. We have interviewed CX experts and business leaders specialising in retail, insurance, banking, healthcare and technology on their B2B and B2C CX challenges, successes and future strategies, to offer their learnings to companies in the rest of the world. Read this article to regain control of your business and prepare yourself for success post-epidemic.

Similarly to you, companies in Asia have been facing financial instability, uncertainty, quality risk, long-term supply problems, staff and employment risks, compliance issues, customer communication challenges and operational constraints. For the first time in history, people across the globe fully appreciate that sharing and collaboration is the only way to succeed. The world will change, but it is up to you what exactly it will look like. Coping with the crisis is a priority now, such as planning for our successful future.

**Companies in Asia have taken critical steps to manage their CX during the epidemic peak. These are centred around Communication, Care and Compliance**

Communication - fast, effective and practical communication is key.



### Communication needs to convey:

- You are empathetic to their situation
- you are in control
- you have a plan
- you are accessible
- you are able to help

\* <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/marketing-and-sales/our-insights/survey-uk-consumer-sentiment-during-the-coronavirus-crisis>

\*\* <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/27/sharp-rise-in-number-of-calls-to-childline-over-coronavirus>

### How to do it:

- Communicate frequently
- Keep it brief and to the point
- Make sure it's practical, specific and relevant
- Use all channels your customers and employees are in. Keep in mind not all customers are comfortable with digital, some use phone and post
- Keep the message across channels consistent
- Be honest
- Offer a solution

Please see a template you can quickly adapt for your customer service requests in the appendix.

### Care

Customers and employees are extremely vulnerable at the moment. Mental health issues, money worries and domestic violence cases are increasing at an exponential rate. ChildLine, a UK helpline for children, has provided more than 900 counselling sessions for young people worried about virus.\*\* In the UK, every second person feels unsure about how the economy will be impacted and another third say they feel pessimistic; COVID-19 will have a long lasting impact on the economy.\* The situation in family homes is far from ideal or even stable and a **delayed, unnecessarily formal or unhelpful response for your company may lead to heightened anxiety and stress.**

**Allowing your employees to flex processes and be empathetic when needed may literally mean a difference between life and death to your customers.**

The workplace is not immune to the emotions experienced at home and in the society overall. Ensure your employees feel safe by clearly **demonstrating the measures taken to look after their physical surroundings and emotional wellbeing.** Remember, people working from home are just as prone to worrying as they would have been in the office and remote psychological support should be made available to them.

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With all these measures, **don't expect an immediate return** though. Productivity will be reduced as your people are learning to manage the remote workplace, their emotions and their families. To help you minimise the disruption **set clear and achievable goals**. It's a good idea to focus on the 'minimum', 'desirable' and 'exceeding' targets.



## Compliance

Knowing about recent relevant government policies and being able to react quickly is key. Think about the requirements for social distancing, isolation and treatment. How will you organise a physical environment to keep you critical employees safe? What will you do for virtual workforce in terms of equipment, processes, rules and KPIs?

*"We need to observe relevant government policies"*

**Don't let the small stuff slow you down and you will come out of the crisis successfully**

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Companies who are coming out of the crisis in Asia are universally measuring success by their customers' and employees' feedback. We have never seen such unity in the measurement systems - perhaps this crisis has shifted the perceived importance of the people for good!

If you have a Voice of the Customer (VOC) and Voice of the Employee (VOE) programmes in place, do keep them going and ensure you act on what your customers/employees are telling you, inform them of changes and go back for more ideas.

If you have not got a feedback process established yet, don't be afraid to reach out and ask for feedback, offer a helping hand, express empathy or discuss challenges. At this stage it does not have to be formal, expensive or ideally designed – a couple of calls or messages per day per employee would give you the wealth of ideas, and loyalty!

### What have we learnt as a result of COVID-19 pandemic and our priorities for the future

**People are important and emotions are real. Businesses will become more human, not just during the crisis.**

As a business community we realised how impactful social distancing and emotional instability may be. Showing support matters now like never before, but the winners in the long game will maintain this focus. Expect more Voice of the Customer measurements to include 'feelings' and 'emotions', more board meetings to be discussing how we make our customers and employees feel and more decisions to be taken because they are right for the customer.

*"Customer impact analysis - such as some customers may have financial challenges - what can we do to help customers during this difficult timing. E.g can we extend the payment deadline?"*

*"The customers who are unable to pay loan instalment will not have bad credit record."*

**Collaboration and communication is key. We will learn to work better across geographies, industries, businesses and our organisational silos.**

During the crisis we can only win if we are one – following the government guidelines, helping the vulnerable members of the community and supporting each other across countries, politics, religion and race. The benefits of openness and collaboration have now been fully realised across the globe and we expect to see a new trend developing. Specialist cross-business teams & communities will become more prominent and influential, community customer support will get a new boost and internal and external business communication will become more open, clear and helpful.

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*“Increased visibility of efforts to colleagues outside of China. Create a better awareness.”*

*“Understanding government actions and working together”*

*“External comm telling customers how we are doing as a company – re-engagement. “*

**Think forward and be prepared, for anything. Human-centred digitalisation offers an answer.**

If you work in the office or school environment it feels the whole world has gone digital, frantically zooming, looming, slacking and skyping. There is however an equally important realisation that not everything can and should be digitalised, especially for the non-office workers. Businesses will focus on developing the right balance between human and digital and building contingency plans for when the human / digital balance is disrupted. There will be a lot of emphasis on introducing great flexibility within supply chains, operating models, interaction habits and efficiency measurements.

*“Whether protective supplies are sufficient to respond to developments.”*

*“We need to be crystal clear about the priorities for our business.”*

*“Developing new deposit products for mobile banking and increasing deposit outstandings thanks to that.”*

*“Looking ahead for potential risks in the sub-supply chain”*

*“Review the whole operating model, we will aim to find a sustainable model that would work when we have such a global crisis”*

To provide feedback or request a consultation on customer experience management during and post-crisis please get in touch at [olga@eucustomerconsultancy.com](mailto:olga@eucustomerconsultancy.com)

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## Appendix – customer care response template (based on Lucidchart email response)

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for contacting insert your company name! I would be happy to help you with this.

I have state what you have done (e.g. cancelled your subscription and refunded the charge). Please tell what to expect and when (allow 3-5 business days for the refund to process). Reassure based on what would worry your customers the most in relation to this request type (e.g. you are now on a Free account, which you can use to access any documents that you created).

Offer how else you could help (e.g. since your daughter is student she is eligible for a free education account that lasts one year. If you would like me to activate this for her please provide me with her student email address).

Please let me know if there is anything else I can help you with!

Best regards,

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