

EBOOK

3 WAYS YOUR USERS' FEEDBACK CAN BOOST YOUR BOTTOM LINE

APPLAUSE^o





With so many competing apps, websites offering comparable products and services, and ever-increasing digital channels, the battleground on which brands compete has shifted from **what** is provided to **how** it's provided.

Leveraging user feedback early and often across the entire software development lifecycle guarantees the user experience you are providing reflects the same high level of quality you've established with your products and services. It also can improve the internal efficiencies across all teams involved in your quality engineering process. When you differentiate your brand through your user experience, and improve your teams' efficiency, your bottom line reaps the benefits.

Here are three concrete ways that injecting user feedback into your SDLC will boost your bottom line.

80+%

Over 80% of consumers who increased their digital usage in a variety of channels during the pandemic expect to sustain these levels moving forward.¹

¹"The Business of Experience," Lisa De Bonis, Flaviano Faleiro, Baiju Shah, Nevine El-Warraky. Accenture, August 2020.

1. Increase conversion rates for first-time visitors by removing friction from their experience

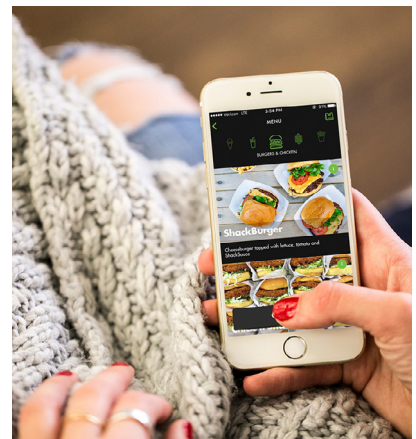
Designing a digital property that meets customer expectations shouldn't rely on guesswork.

When a new visitor reaches your website or opens your mobile app for the first time, there is a world of activity happening on both conscious and subconscious levels of thought. Within 50 milliseconds of opening your website, customers are already asking themselves these questions:²

- » Can I trust this?
- » Have I seen anything like this before?
- » How do I accomplish what I'm here to do?
- » Do I like this?

In addition to providing the right level of product information at the right time online, brands must approach the sensory experiences that products evoke in the offline world, and a one-size-fits-all design won't do the trick.³

Striking the right balance between the timing and level of detail you provide customers, and designing the most seamless checkout process can feel like a science. But it becomes a simple science when you bring the questions directly to your customers and let them tell you what they expect.



Shake Shack optimized its mobile ordering experience by sending customers to its restaurants with pre-release builds and collecting their feedback

[Learn more here.](#)

² "Attention web designers: You have 50 milliseconds to make a good first impression!" Gitte Lindgaard, Gary Fernandes, Cathy Dudek & J. Brown. Human-Oriented Technology Lab, Carleton University, March 2006

³ "How to Design Product Pages that Increase Online Sales." Colleen M. Harmeling, Alexander Bleier, and Robert W. Palmatier. *Harvard Business Review*, November 14, 2019

2. Drive revenue through a singular focus on attracting and retaining customers

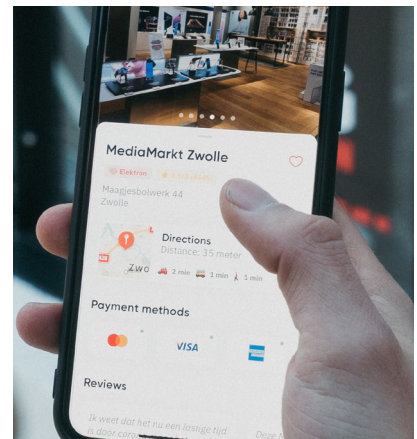
Companies and brands typically have just one chance to deliver a great initial customer experience; this is not news. However, the next five years hold significant challenges for organizations in increasing customer centricity, related strategy and the organizational structure that will enable customer attraction and retention.

Still, as more customers migrate from in-person to digital-first channels, some of the traditional barriers to achieving customer centricity - for example, time investment and resources and technology - will be lowered. Organizations will be able to shift customer acquisition and retention from in-person to online self-service tools, digital content, and human- or bot-assisted interactions.⁴

This digital customer engagement trend provides fertile ground to focus on design practices that remove additional friction to new and returning customers. Things like:

- » Expedited checkout with saved payment and shipping information
- » Smart presentation of recommended products or services
- » Option for biometric login after initial account activation

Listening to and amplifying your customers' individual voices as they navigate your digital real estate will not only give you insight on design adjustment and optimization, but will inform your customer-centric strategy. Applying this customer feedback paves the path to repeat customers and increased customer satisfaction.



Remembering previous checkout information makes future purchases as simple as tapping “Submit Payment.”

⁴ "Top Customer Service and Support Predictions for 2021 and Beyond." Gloria Omale, Gartner, January 29, 2021

3. Minimize time inefficiencies. Maximize collaboration.

"Seventy-eight percent of product managers who viewed improving collaboration internally as one of their top three roles, experienced low product failure rates. Technology and service provider (TSP) organizations that don't make collaboration a priority for their product managers may be jeopardizing product success"⁵ according to a Gartner report.

Collaboration is complex and critical.

Product launches, done right, incorporate all inputs - internal and external - as organizations march toward launch. An agile approach that constantly pulses emerging trends and customer sentiment is key to keep from launching a product or service that, at its start, misses the ever-skyrocketing expectation mark of today's customers.

Sending a product all the way through the software development lifecycle and coming up empty means months or even years of wasted time across all involved teams.

Dow Jones, the parent company of many financial publications including *The Wall Street Journal*, explains how it avoids this pitfall by continuously collecting feedback from the Applause community:

"The real focus for us in the way we work with Applause is to be able to get that rapid cadence and to be able to respond to market needs and get new features out to market quickly."⁶

Integrating user feedback continuously is critical to major product launches and updates.



Dow Jones ensures *The Wall Street Journal*, and all of its other media brands, consistently meet its readers' expectations by working feedback into its agile cadence.

[Learn more here.](#)

⁵"Gartner Survey Finds That 45% of Product Launches Are Delayed by at Least One Month." Gartner, September 9, 2019.

⁶"Dow Jones: Applause Case Study." Applause, August 30, 2017.

BEST PRACTICES

Collecting user feedback is essential to the process of designing and developing products, but it must be collected and implemented in a strategic and effective way to reap its benefits.

Collect from diverse perspectives

Ideally, the feedback you collect represents your customer base. This means you are reaching beyond your traditional community of beta testers, family and friends, and gaining the broadest, most objective perspective possible.

Establish a regular cadence for collecting feedback

Collecting feedback during and at the end of every sprint makes you most responsive and capable of staying ahead of new trends, changing customer sentiment and any form of external disruption.

Work with experts to maximize the value of your feedback

In some cases, implementing feedback from users is very straightforward. In others, usability industry experience is required to make sense of seemingly conflicting responses you may receive. Working with a usability professional will ensure that you glean every insight that can be found in your collected feedback.



About Applause

Applause is the worldwide leader in enabling digital quality. Customers are no longer satisfied with digital experiences that are good enough; they demand the exceptional. The Applause Product Excellence Platform provides the world's leading brands with the comprehensive approach to digital quality needed to deliver uncommonly great digital experiences across the globe – with highly vetted testers available on demand, a complete and enterprise-class technology infrastructure, multi-point digital quality solutions and SaaS products, and expertise across industries and use cases. This harmonized approach drastically improves testing coverage, reduces costs and speeds time-to-market for websites, mobile apps, IoT and in-store experiences. Thousands of leading companies – including Ford, Google, Western Union and Dow Jones – rely on Applause as a best practice to deliver the exceptional products and digital experiences their customers love.

Learn more at www.applause.com

NORTH AMERICA

100 Pennsylvania Avenue
Framingham, MA 01701
1.844.300.2777

EUROPE

Obentrautstr. 72
10963 Berlin, Germany
+49.30.57700400

ISRAEL

10 HaMenofim Street
Herzliya, Israel 4672561
+972.74.757.1300

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