


Chapter 7

Navigating Emotions Mapping Emotional Touchpoints to Enhance Customer Experience in the Digital Era

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ABSTRACT

In today's competitive marketplace, customer experience has emerged as a pivotal differentiator for businesses. Emotionally engaging customer interactions significantly influence satisfaction, loyalty, and long-term retention. This chapter delves deeply into the critical concept of emotional touchpoints, examining how businesses can strategically identify, map, and leverage emotional interactions throughout the customer journey. By integrating advancements in Emotion AI, sentiment analysis, and robotics AI into customer relationship management (CRM) systems, organizations can better interpret and respond to customer emotions. Through systematic identification and analysis of emotional touchpoints, businesses can effectively

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personalize customer experiences, anticipate emotional responses, and respond proactively to customer needs. Practical recommendations are presented for organizations aiming to enhance their emotional intelligence competencies in customer relationship management, ultimately driving superior competitive advantage and sustainable business growth.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In the digital era, customer experience has transcended traditional service parameters, becoming a deeply emotional journey where each interaction represents an opportunity to forge lasting relationships. Emotional touchpoints—moments in the customer journey where emotions are heightened—serve as critical determinants of customer satisfaction, loyalty, and advocacy (Pansari & Kumar, 2017). The integration of Emotion AI, sentiment analysis, and robotics AI into Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems has revolutionized businesses' capacity to recognize, interpret, and respond to these emotional cues (Picard, 2020). Understanding emotional touchpoints enables firms to move beyond transactional exchanges to create personalized, empathetic experiences that resonate on a human level (Huang & Rust, 2021). Emotion-sensitive technologies not only decode underlying customer sentiments but also empower proactive engagement strategies, facilitating real-time adjustments to meet emotional needs (Bagozzi et al., 2016). Furthermore, advancements in digital engagement tools have allowed organizations to map emotional trajectories across customer journeys, enabling predictive modeling of customer behavior and optimizing service touchpoints for greater emotional resonance (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). As emotional intelligence becomes a strategic asset in customer relationship management, businesses that skillfully navigate emotional touchpoints are better positioned to achieve sustainable competitive advantage and foster deep consumer loyalty in increasingly saturated markets (Davenport, Guha, Grewal, & Bressgott, 2020).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

In today's hyper-digital and competitive marketplace, organizations face increasing challenges in creating emotionally resonant customer experiences that go beyond functional service delivery (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). While digital transformation has enhanced operational efficiency, it often overlooks the nuanced emotional needs of customers, resulting in impersonal and transactional interactions (Davenport et al., 2020). Emotional touchpoints, defined as moments when customers' emotions

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