

THE FUTURE OF MARKETING IS CUSTOMER-CENTRIC

# 5 CUSTOMER EXCELLENCE VALUE LEAPS *for* MARKETERS

THE  
Customer  
Excellence  
ENTERPRISE

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**THE FUTURE OF MARKETING IS CUSTOMER-CENTRIC.  
THIS IS A PLAYBOOK TO START YOUR JOURNEY.**

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CONNECTED OR COINCIDENCE?

HOME

BLOG

NEW

SHOP

CONTACT

**5%** | DESPITE THE BILLIONS SPENT ANNUALLY ON ADVERTISING, CUSTOMERS PERCEIVE ONLY 5% OF BRANDS AS UNIQUE

Lippincott

+

**65%** | 65% OF CUSTOMERS SAY THAT A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE IS MORE INFLUENTIAL THAN GREAT ADVERTISING

PWC

+

**-9%** | THE AVG CMO TENURE OF 4.2 YEARS IS THE LOWEST OF THE C-SUITE, 9% BELOW AVG, CEO TENURE IS 7 YEARS

Spencer Stuart



26%

**TWENTY-SIX PERCENT OF MARKETING LEADERS PLAN TO REDUCE STAFF DUE TO GENERATIVE AI (GEN AI)**

Gartner



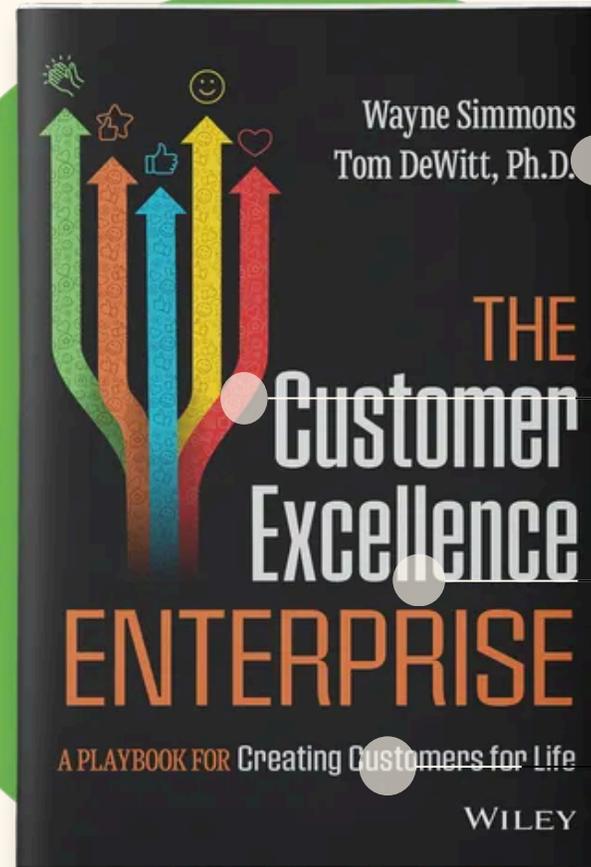
**DIGITAL MARKETING TOOLS LIKE GOOGLE ADS, FACEBOOK ADS, SALESFORCE, AND HUBSPOT ARE INCREASINGLY BEING COMMODITIZED, ERODING THEIR DIFFERENTIATION FOR COMPANIES AND MARKETING SKILL SETS.**



WHY ARE WE HERE?

# 5 CUSTOMER EXCELLENCE VALUE LEAPS *for* MARKETERS

Fit for the era of Gen AI and Experiential Commerce, The authors of “*The Customer Excellence Enterprise: A Playbook for Creating Customers for Life*” present a five-point agenda to renew the value proposition of CMOs and Marketers, equipping them to **help their companies win** by repositioning customer experience as an equal partner to product and brand, making unique selling propositions truly unique, accelerating revenue performance, and future-proofing their career paths along the way.



**Faculty @Michigan State University**  
Eli Broad College of Business, Department of Marketing  
+ Global Customer Excellence Lead @ Pfizer

**39 Bold Moves**  
71 Takeaway  
Cross-Industry

**An Elevated Standard of Business**

**A Shared Goal**  
for C-Suite, Marketing, CX and Product

**THE FUTURE OF MARKETING IS CUSTOMER-CENTRIC**

**IT'S TIME FOR A MORE CUSTOMER-CENTRIC RUBRIC FOR MODERN MARKETERS.**

**IT'S TIME FOR MARKETERS TO COUNTER THE AI "REPLACEMENT" NARRATIVE.**

**IT'S TIME FOR MARKETERS TO GET INTO THE CUSTOMER EXCELLENCE GAME.**

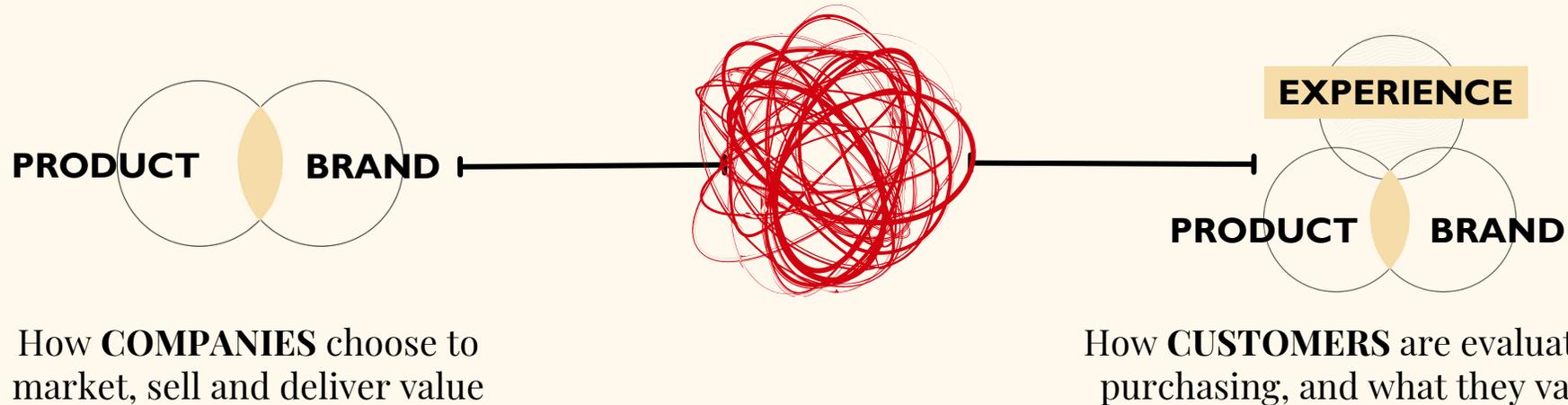
## WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

**AI Homogenization is here.**  
**Experiential Commerce is here.**  
**Digital Democratization is here.**

The marketing landscape is undergoing seismic shifts, and CMOs and marketers must adapt—or risk irrelevance. **AI is poised** to automate portions of the marketing value chain, homogenizing messaging and value propositions. With **Experiential Commerce**, customers are making purchasing decisions based not just on product and brand factors alone but increasingly on experiential factors. With **Digital Democratization**, once-exclusive digital marketing tools have become universally accessible, **eroding competitive moats** for companies and skillset differentiation for marketers. **Differentiation has never been more important.**

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

The advent of Experiential Commerce **illuminates the mismatch** between: 1) how companies are marketing and selling relative to how customers are evaluating and purchasing; and 2) what companies promote and what customers value.



In an ocean of choice, CMOs and Marketers can differentiate their companies deeply, align with customer preferences and influence their lifecycle decisions by **leading and facilitating their companies through a customer-centric “rebellion”**.

# Leading a Customer-Centric “Rebellion”

A Game-Changing Opportunity for CMOs, Marketers, Companies and Customers.

These dynamics create a unique opportunity for CMOs, marketers, and CX practitioners to combine forces and initiate a “rebellion”. With the aim of **closing the persistent gap between how companies speak about customers and how they actually view, value and treat them**, this rebellion is about getting past the lip service where C-suite leaders, boards of directors, and entire organizations simply talk about customer-centricity to where they start living it. CMOs and marketers, are uniquely positioned to move beyond the normal marketing remit to lead this tangible, meaningful, and necessary change across every facet of their organizations. These enterprise transformations create futures where **customer-centricity is no longer an abstract concept and customer experience is not just an add-on**, but the very core of the business model, value exchange and how brands show up in the world.

WHY DOES THIS MATTERS NOW?

UNFORTUNATELY, MANY CMOS & MARKETERS ARE “STUCK” IN THE CAMPAIGN-PRODUCT-BRAND PARADIGM, PUTTING THEIR VALUE IN QUESTION AND POTENTIALLY THEIR CAREER PATHS AT RISK.



AI is poised to AUTOMATE many elements of the digital marketing value chain



WEAPONIZED digital product and brand messaging campaigns get lost in the noise



Previously career differentiators, many digital marketing tools are now COMMODITIZED

FORTUNATELY, THROUGH 5 CUSTOMER EXCELLENCE VALUE LEAPS IN 2025, CMOS & MARKETERS CAN BEGIN TO RENEW THEIR IMPACT AND VALUE PROPOSITIONS, FORTIFY THEIR SKILLSETS AND FUTURE-PROOF THEIR CAREER PATHS.

# FIVE VALUE LEAPS

Strategic power moves that deliver significant value to customers, future-proofs marketing career paths, and unlocks new competitive advantages:

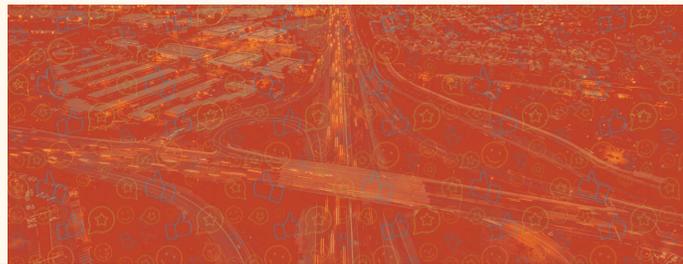
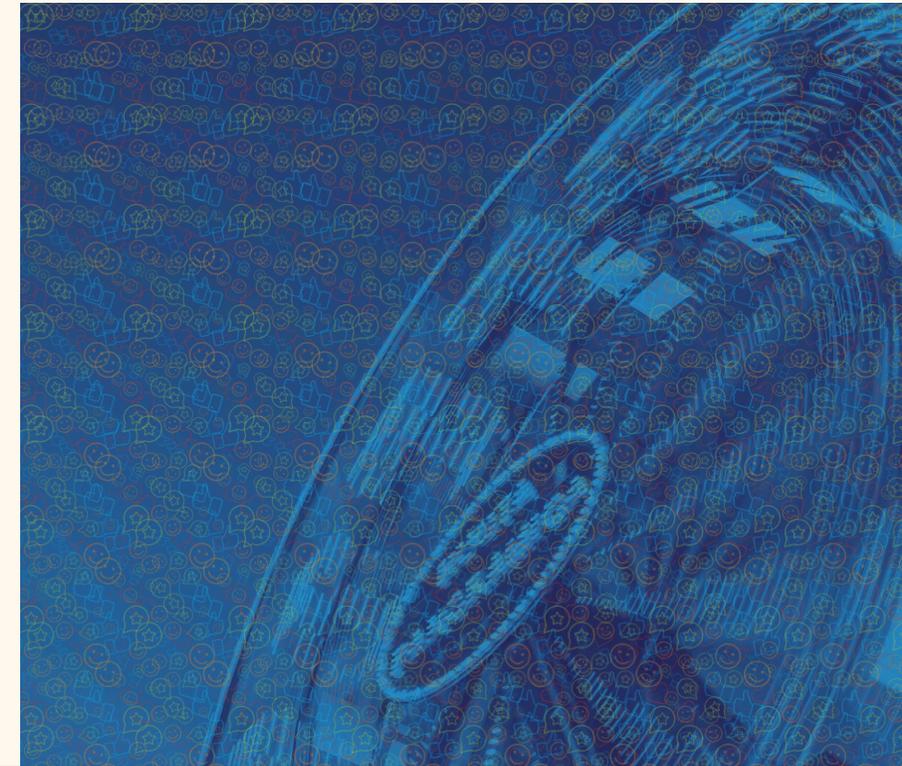
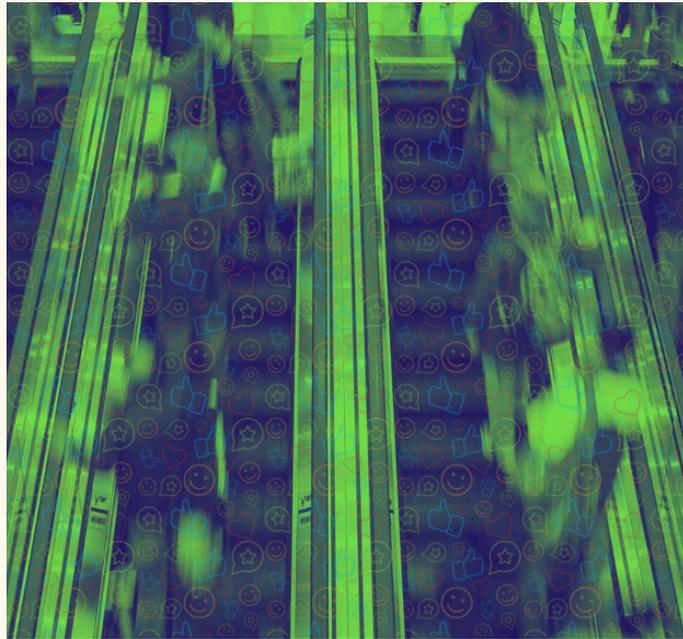
VALUE LEAP #1  
**FROM PLATITUDES  
TO CONVICTION**

VALUE LEAP #2  
**FROM FUNCTIONAL  
TO STRUCTURAL**

VALUE LEAP #3  
**FROM FUNNEL  
TO FLYWHEEL**

VALUE LEAP #4  
**FROM ISOLATED  
TO INTEGRATED**

VALUE LEAP #5  
**FROM DISSONANCE  
TO DIFFERENTIATION**



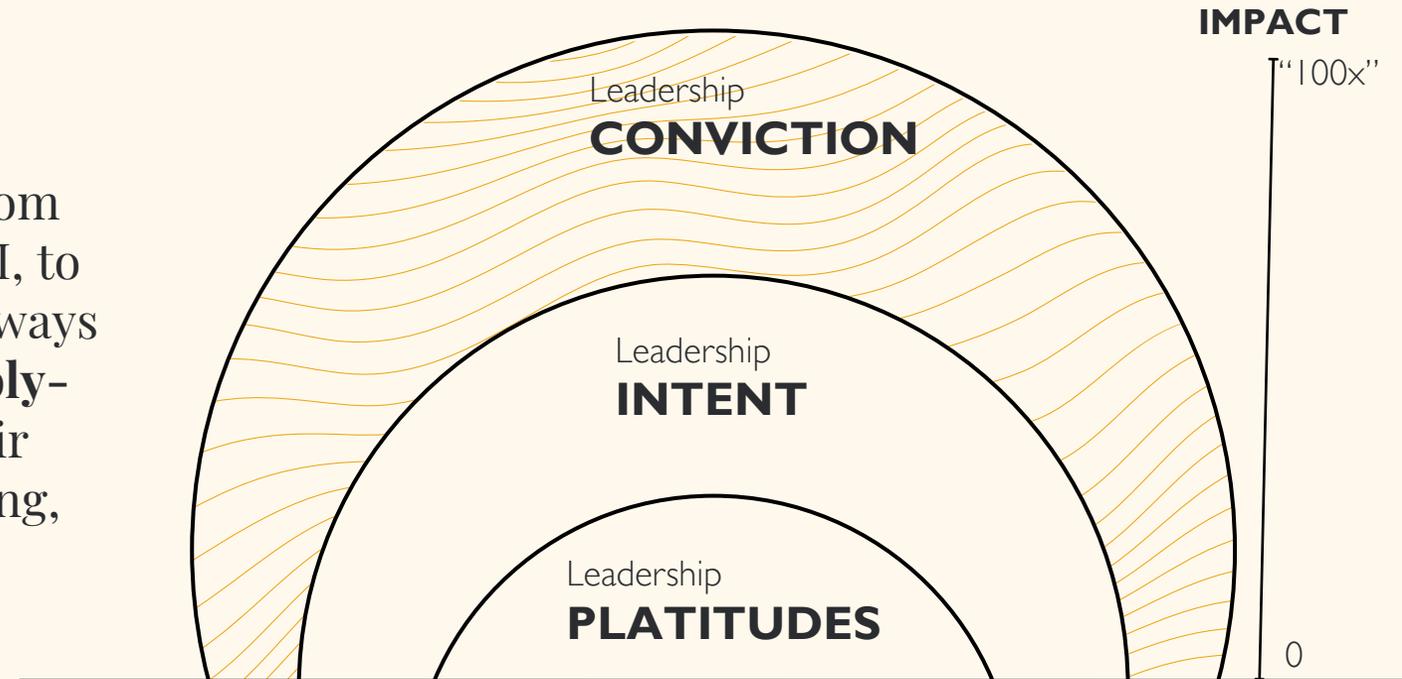
VALUE LEAP #1

# FROM PLATITUDES TO CONVICTION

# FROM PLATITUDES TO CONVICTION

CMOs must lead the evolution of the C-Suite from platitudes about customers, experiences, and AI, to clearly stated intent to drive customer-centric ways of working, to modeling the behaviors of a **deeply-held conviction** that puts the customer and their lived experience at the center of decision-making, resource allocation, and behaviors at all levels.

As a common attribute, **Customer Excellence Enterprises** have leadership conviction deep in their origin story and DNA



THE RITZ-CARLTON

Horst Schulze's "Ladies and Gentlemen Serving Ladies and Gentlemen" defined employees as the engine for the brand experience



Herb Kelleher's belief that if you treat staff well, they will treat customers well, empowering them to prioritize core principles over rigid rules



Jeff Bezos's empty chair in meetings represented the customer, bringing a tangible element to the claim of being Earth's most customer-centric company



Truett Cathy emphasized hospitality over speed in every customer interaction, famously training employees to respond with "my pleasure"



**References:**

[PRACTICE NOTE]: *"The CMO's New Customer-Centric Imperative"*

[BOOK]: "The Customer Excellence Enterprise, Page 110"

VALUE LEAP #2

# FROM FUNCTIONAL TO STRUCTURAL

# FROM FUNCTIONAL TO STRUCTURAL

In an era where digital marketing tools like Google and Facebook Ads, Adobe, Salesforce, and HubSpot have become commoditized, and AI is poised to automate much of the marketing value chain, focusing solely on the functional elements of customer-centric marketing only delivers surface-level impact. CMOs and Modern Marketers in CXEs go further by remaking their approach to marketing and facilitating their companies through **5 essential DNA level structural and systemic changes**.

**References:**



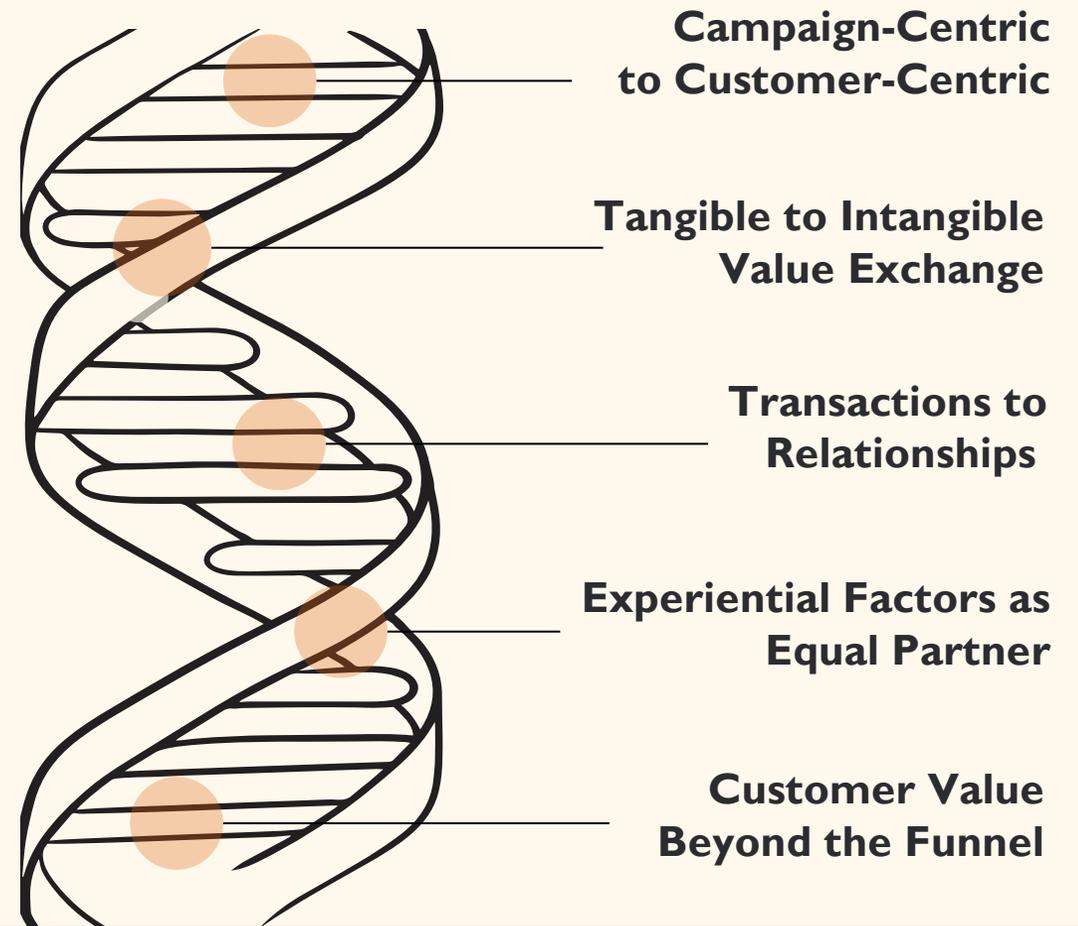
[PRACTICE NOTE] [Super-charge the Journey to Customer-Centric Culture](#)

[BOOK]: [“The Customer Excellence Enterprise, Page 105](#)



TOYOTA

Instructive to embed customer-centric behaviors, The Toyota Production System has embedded quality into the leadership, organizational, operational, and commercial DNA of the company, creating a durable unique selling proposition and enduring competitive advantage



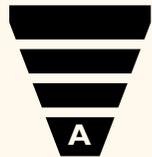
2025 VALUE LEAP #3

# FROM FUNNEL TO FLYWHEEL

# FROM FUNNEL TO FLYWHEEL

Emphasizing the interconnectedness of customer acquisition, retention, and expansion, CMOs and Modern Marketers must evolve **beyond the funnel** to the inherently customer-centric “flywheel” commercial model. The model acknowledges that customers have different needs, are in different states of mind, and respond to **different triggers at each stage** of the lifecycle, creating the **need for a throughline** between initial sales, ongoing engagement, value realization, and customer success, and support, ultimately creating positive context for maximum revenue performance and lifetime value.

COMPANY-CENTRIC



“THE FUNNEL”

This “spiritual anchor for marketing is super-optimized for customer acquisition, but can reinforce transactional vs. relationship behaviors

CUSTOMER-CENTRIC



“THE BOWTIE”

The bow-tie integrates acquisition and retention, eliminating gaps between marketing, sales, and post-sales through an end-to-end experience



“THE FLYWHEEL”

The flywheel extends beyond acquisition and retention to account for the upselling that is critical to maximizing lifetime value



**Reference:**

**[PRACTICE NOTE] Reimagining Marketing and Sales for Experiential Commerce**

**[BOOK]: “The Customer Excellence Enterprise, Page 206**



From personalized recommendations on its digital platforms to immersive in-store experiences, Nike connects with customers at every stage. Through the Nike Membership program and commitment to sustainability, the company is intentional about connecting to customers beyond transactions.

VALUE LEAP #4

# FROM ISOLATED TO INTEGRATED

# FROM ISOLATED TO INTEGRATED

CMOs and Modern Marketers must seamlessly integrate customer excellence, marketing excellence, and sales excellence to create a **sustainable model for commercial excellence**, ensuring that the customer is at the heart of decisions and priorities. This means embedding customer-centric principles (via the new brand pyramid) into the organization's ways of working, ensuring that **customer preferences and feedback** drive both strategic and tactical commercial decisions. Transcending the entire customer lifecycle, this integration breaks silos and supports consistent, meaningful, win- and personalized experiences at every touchpoint.

**Reference:**

**i** [\[PRACTICE NOTE\] The Future of Marketing is Customer-Centric: Experiential Commerce is Here](#)



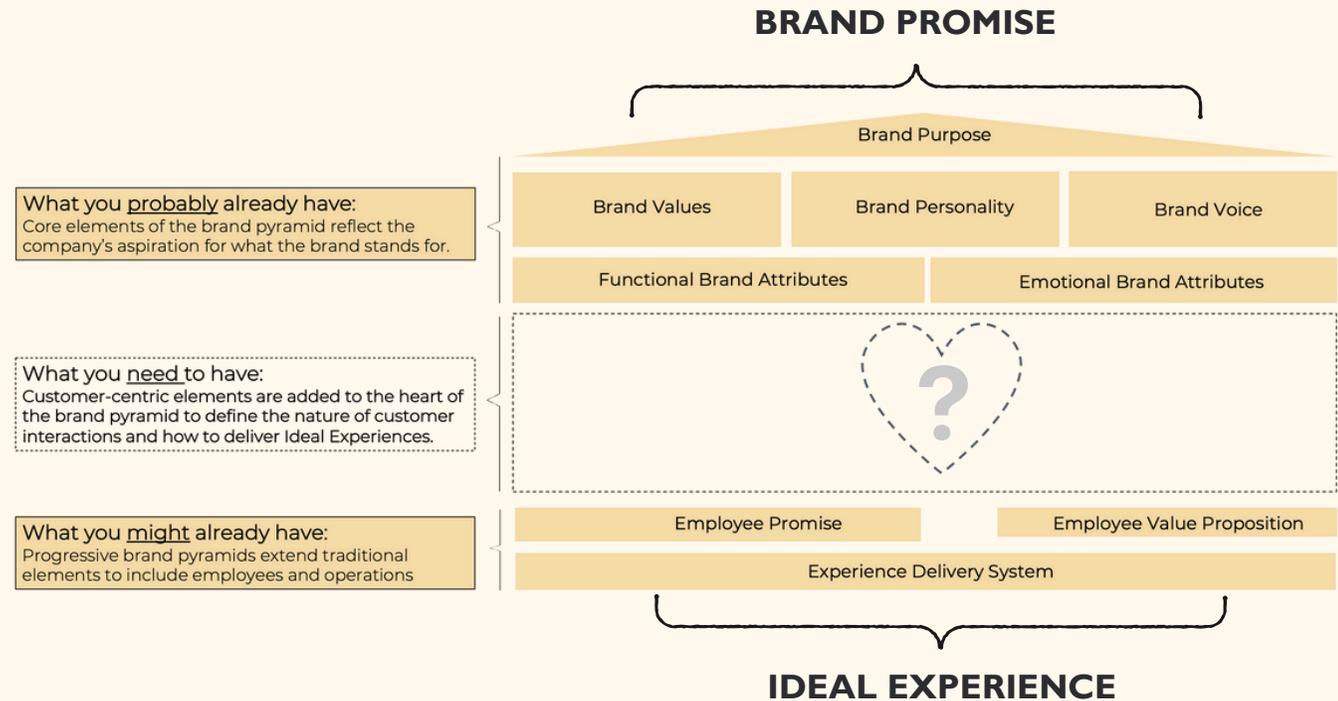
P&G leverages deep customer insights to craft highly targeted marketing campaigns that resonate emotionally and practically with its audience and collaborates closely with retail partners to ensure tailored promotions and packaging that meet consumer needs. P&G's integrated approach, ensures that customers are not just buyers but advocates.

VALUE LEAP #5

# FROM DISSONANCE TO DIFFERENTIATION

# FROM DISSONANCE TO DIFFERENTIATION

A brand pyramid is a structured framework for articulating the dimensions of a brand. However, traditional pyramids tend to focus on company-centric expressions of themselves. With the audacity needed to build brands for Experiential Commerce, the traditional pyramid can fall short. **CMOs and marketers must fill the void at the heart of their brands**, reconstructing their brand pyramids by defining the missing elements that encompass the ethos of customer centricity, attributes of interaction, and the principles needed for the consistent delivery of exceptional brand-aligned “Ideal Experiences”.



**Reference:**



[PRACTICE NOTE] [Reimagining Marketing and Sales for Experiential Commerce](#)  
 [BOOK]: [“The Customer Excellence Enterprise, Page 224.](#)



T-Mobile reconstructed its brand identity around experience through its “Un-carrier” strategy. The company integrated “Team of Expert” empowerment and the removal of pain points such as lengthy contracts, hidden fees, and poor service into its core identity, driving record growth, loyalty, and advocacy.



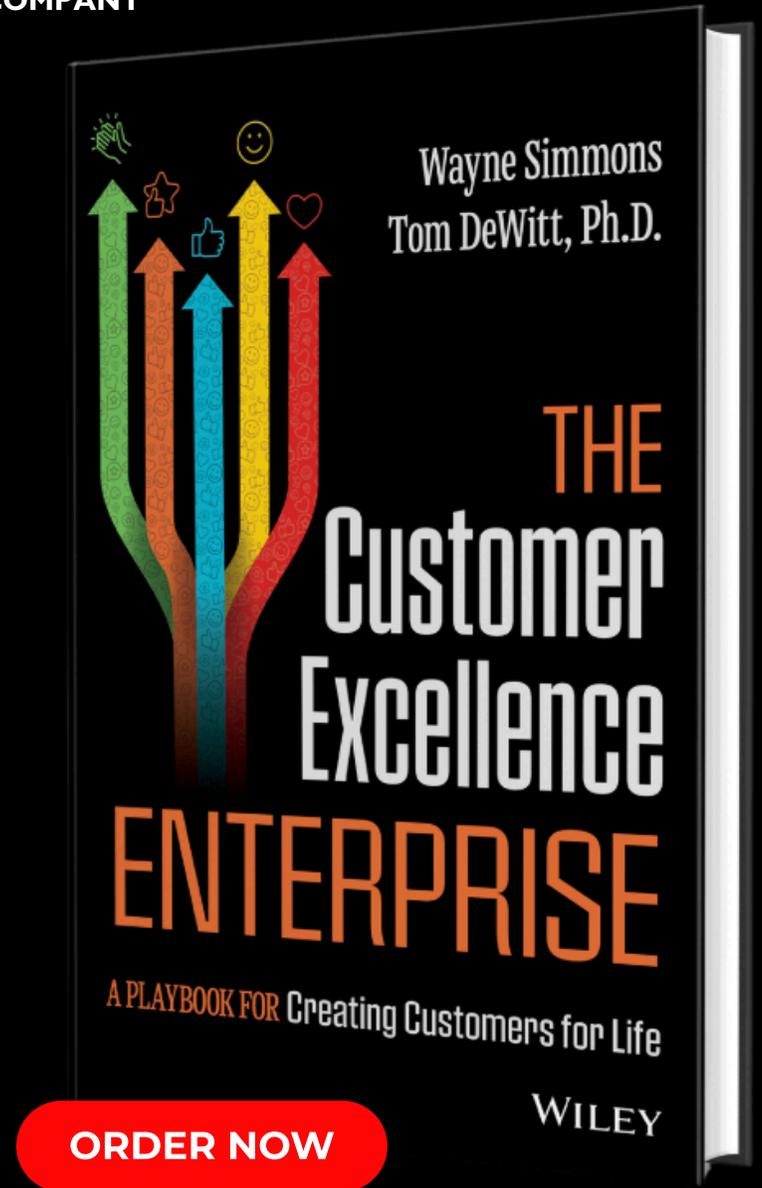
## THE FUTURE OF MARKETING IS CUSTOMER-CENTRIC

Customer-centric CMOs and marketers have the **unique opportunity** to create a very different brand of marketing and spearhead the creation of a very different type of company --A Customer Excellence Enterprise (CXE).

**IT'S TIME TO RENEW THE MARKETING VALUE PROPOSITION**  
+  
**FUTURE-PROOF THE CAREER PATHS FOR CMOs AND MODERN MARKETERS**  
+  
**BUILD A VERY DIFFERENT BRAND OF MARKETING IN A VERY DIFFERENT TYPE OF COMPANY**

**Ready to turn customer-centricity and customer experience into deeply differentiating commercial assets? Ready to make experiential factors an organic element to the value prop? Ready to future-proof your marketing career path?**

It's time for the "Customer Excellence Enterprise: A Playbook for Creating Customers for Life"  
(Wiley 2024)



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THANK YOU!

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