

Customer-Centric Design

Customer-centric design is an approach to design and development that frames your products and services around meeting the wants, needs, and challenges of your customers. It keeps your customers front and center. It's about offering optimal experiences every time because you've considered every layer of a product or service interaction from the customer's perspective.

This deep understanding is critical at every stage of development: before you build, while you build, and after you build. Adhering to the principles of customer-centric design will help you become intentional about keeping your customers center stage.

Keep the principles of customer-centric design in mind as you move through this guide and design your next experience.

1. Take an outside-in approach

- Look at every facet of an experience from your customer's perspective.

2. Develop a deep understanding of your customer

- Ask questions like: who is my customer, what are they trying to achieve, how do we meet that need today, how does that solution make them feel and why is it working/not working?

3. Empower customer and employee satisfaction

- Give customers and support teams the authority and accountability to take action.

4. Build efficient and tailored business processes

- Increase speed and satisfaction by tailoring experiences based on a customer's expectations at each stage of their journey.

5. Create organizational consistency across the experience

- Identify and define front-end and back-end components for a smoother experience: people, processes, actions, time and results.

6. Be as transparent as possible

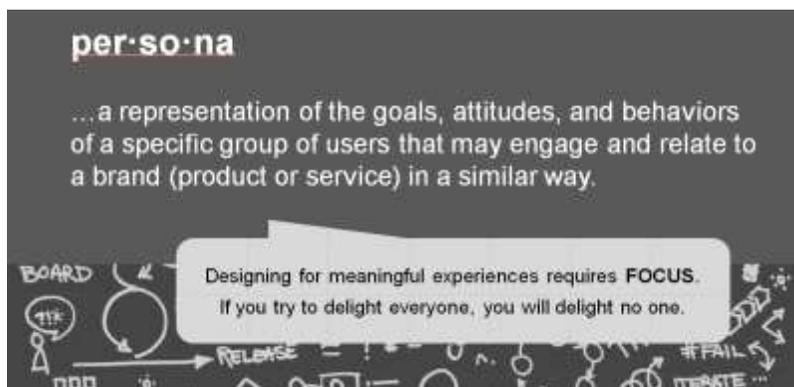
- Keep the customer's best interest in mind, ensuring they always know what to expect.

7. Make data-driven decisions

- Don't assume you know what your customers want or need. While you might be right, you will never know for sure unless you ask and listen.

Who is my customer?

Begin articulating an answer to this question by creating a persona(s). Personas will help you to understand your client needs, experiences, behaviors and goals. Personas are not market, industry or demographic segments rather they have a name, live in a city, have hobbies and families. Combine segmentation analyses with personas to compel teams to consider the people that will be using the technology, selling the product or following the procedure.



What are they saying?

Voice of the Customer (VOC) is a research process that captures and analyzes client feedback on their needs, wants, expectations, preferences and dislikes through direct and indirect questioning, ultimately driving positive change in a product, service or business. Rather than assuming we know what customers want, we must ask – and listen to what they say. Sources of VOC are wide ranging and include unstructured data such as call recordings, emails and social media posts. Don't assume you know what your customers want or need. While you might be right, you will never know for sure unless you ask and listen. Common VOC techniques include:

- Surveys
- Focus Groups
- 1:1 interviews
- Client emails and call recordings



What are they feeling?

Much of this can be deciphered from VOC efforts, as customers are rarely shy about sharing how they really feel. From this, the team begins to empathize and find better solutions. Empathy is at the heart of customer-centric design. Understanding client's pain points and challenges offers insight into what to create and how it will be used. Once you have developed and documented your personas, an empathy map will allow the team to articulate what they know about that persona. An empathy map illustrates client attitudes and behaviors. Once created, it can drive decisions and reduce the impact of bias or unfounded assumptions. The greater the degree of empathy that a team has for their customer, the more likely the team will be able to design a desirable solution.

