

# Take away tips from Customer Experience World London 2014

 By [Andrew Cook](#)

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A couple of weeks have passed since the Customer Experience World London 2014 conference. I've taken the time to reflect on lessons learned and the take away nuggets of knowledge that I picked up over the course of the two days at Senate House.

As CEO of one of the key sponsors of the event, I was also invited to present a talk on customer centricity and the importance of asking for, listening to and acting on customer feedback. It was a fantastic experience to mingle with other high profile speakers such as Andrew Clayton, Group Vice President at Allianz SE, Maria McCann, Customer Success Leader at JoHo Ventures, and Andrew Gallagher, Senior Director of Marketing at Papa Johns.

But the success of an event of this magnitude is not measured in the who's who of attendees, but rather in the extent to which we were able to walk away with insight drawn from case studies and experiences shared. This year's theme 'being good to customers is good business' opened up the floor to some great discussions. Here are my top take away tips from the event that will help you turn your business into a customer-centric success:

## 1. Don't make assumptions

Shift your focus to service improvement and invest in understanding your customers. Don't assume you know what customers want - they will most likely surprise you if you take the initiative to listen. Being open to customer feedback will allow you to significantly increase customer satisfaction, reduce the number of complaints and reduce overall expenditure.

## 2. Use feedback to drive change

While you don't want to survey your customers to death, remember that customer expectations are constantly changing. Companies need to keep improving and the best way to do this is to use customer feedback to identify what changes need to be made. The voice of the customer and the voice of the business must be aligned if you want to meet your customers' needs.

## 3. Make it easy to give feedback

Give your customers the option to provide feedback via the channel that is the most convenient for them. If a customer contacts you via your call centre, ask for feedback via telephone. If your customers walk into your store, offer a feedback kiosk or include a QR code or USSD code on the till slip so that they can use their mobile device.

## 4. Drive feedback immediately

Only ask for feedback if you are going to use and have processes in place to engage your customers as soon after they have interacted with your company as possible. These days, mobile is the perfect channel to enable you to take real-time action and deliver a seamless experience.

## 5. Take action

Empower your staff to take action when customers provide feedback. It is not enough to take note of feedback and implement it in your strategy. You need to let your customers know they have been heard and that you are responding to their needs.

## 6. Use feedback to grow your employees

Focus on bringing your staff into the customer experience journey. Share customer feedback with your employees, link your customer experience and employee experience programmes, the two are ultimately intertwined.

### ABOUT ANDREW COOK

Andrew is the CEO of Smoke Customer Care Solutions (South Africa) and part of the solutions team helping to take the company's voice of the customer technology - EYerys - to all corners of the globe. Great customer service is Andrew Cook's mission in life. In fact, it's more than a mission, it's an obsession.

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