



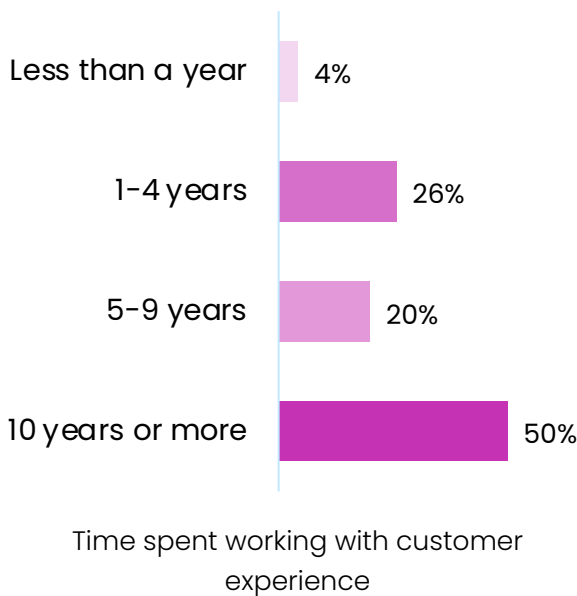
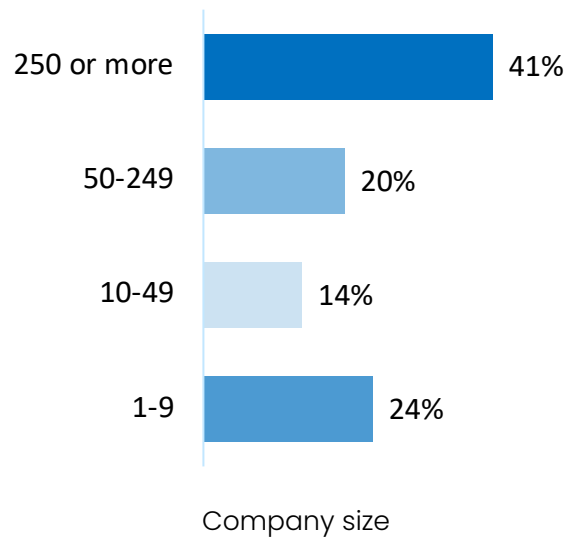
The future of CX



Between January 29th and February 4th 2021, Netigate conducted a survey asking 70 CX professionals about their approach to CX in 2021 and beyond. We asked them about the challenges they currently face and their plans for the future. The purpose of this report is to give CX professionals an insight into how other businesses are working with customer experience and what is in store for the future of CX. This report is also supported by insights from our recent webinar [The future of CX](#), featuring [Ian Golding](#), [Clare Muscutt](#) and [Matt Watkinson](#).

About the survey respondents

The survey respondents work in companies of varying sizes, with 41% coming from large enterprises. They also span a wide range of industries, from data and communications to banking and finance. 51% of respondents live and work in UK, followed by 7% in the USA, with the remainder spread across the globe.



50% of respondents have been working with CX for 10+ years.

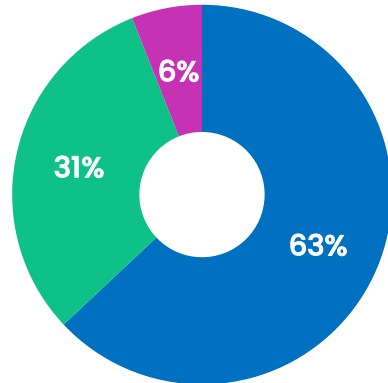
The respondents also come from differing professional backgrounds and departments, but are all actively working with CX in their current roles. The level of CX experience amongst our respondents also varies, though half of them have worked in the area for at least 10 years.

CX strategy today

63% of companies currently have a dedicated person or team focusing solely on customer experience.

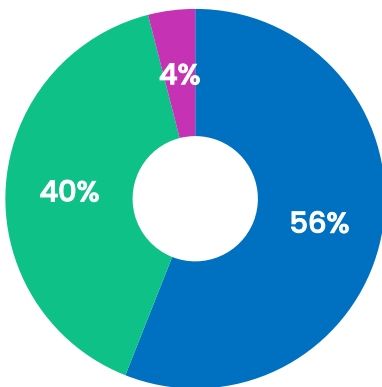
The majority of respondents say that there is at least one person at their company who is responsible for CX.

Your company has a dedicated person or team focusing only on CX



■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ I don't know

You are a customer-obsessed company



■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ I don't know

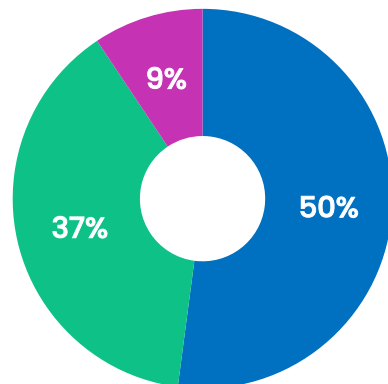
Over half of the respondents would define their companies as 'customer obsessed'.

56% of respondents agree that their company is 'customer obsessed' and feel that this attitude is reflected in the overall company culture.

Only 50% of respondents feel proud of their CX strategy.

As we see [later](#) in this report, reasons for this might include a lack of a clear strategy and/or a failure to integrate it across the whole business.

You feel proud of your company's CX strategy



■ Agree ■ Disagree ■ I don't know



Aligning the layers of customer experience management

Ian Golding, CEO and Founder, Customer Experience Consultancy Ltd.

“What customers need, want and expect changes continuously. It changes as a result of their personal circumstances, but it also changes as a result of economic, environmental and health factors. We have got to think about this is as a dynamic, living, breathing thing.

Customer experience management can be split into three organisational layers: 1) The customer journey; 2) Business processes; and 3) Technology.

The issue is that many organisations created and implemented their business processes without knowing there was a customer journey. Technology was then adopted and forced into these processes without proper consideration for the customer experience. Furthermore, there are processes crossing over each other causing gaps where nothing is achieved for the customer.

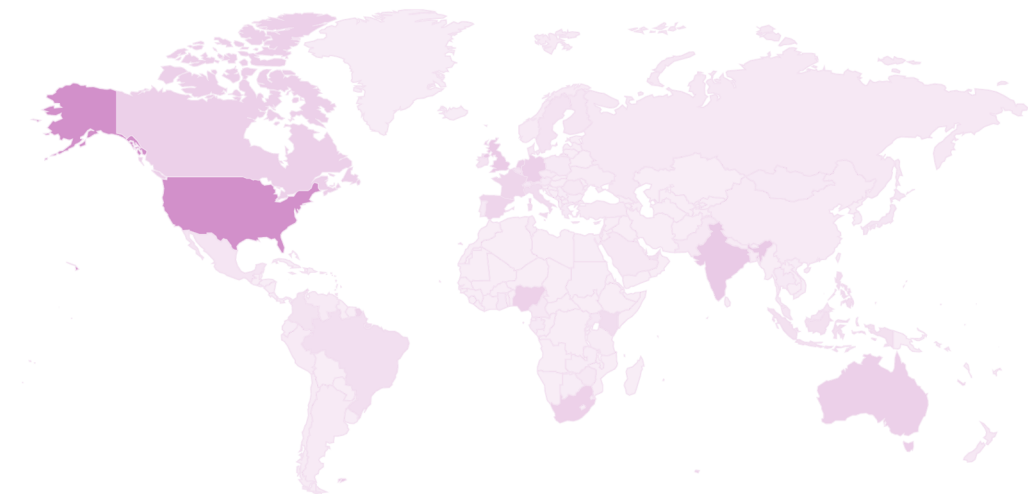
What we need to see is an increase in education. Organisations are obsessed with getting people to deliver their tasks and focusing on processes. As a result, there’s no time to think and act in the interests of the customer. We need to stop and think and simplify our organisations. We also need to become better at listening; not just to our customers, but to our own people as well. What we must not forget is that organisations exist to give people what they need— what they want.”

CX in the media

CX is talked about around the globe, with the USA top of the leader board.

The USA holds the record for the most mentions of 'customer experience' appearing in the media over the past year. In second place is the UK, followed by India and then Canada.

More generally, it's popular to talk about customer experience. In the last year, 'customer experience' has been mentioned 1,056,778 times across social media channels such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Most of these mentions are directed towards specific companies and are often related to consumers having a *bad* experience with a company.



Source: Meltwater Media Intelligence

A CX good news story from British retailer, Marks & Spencer

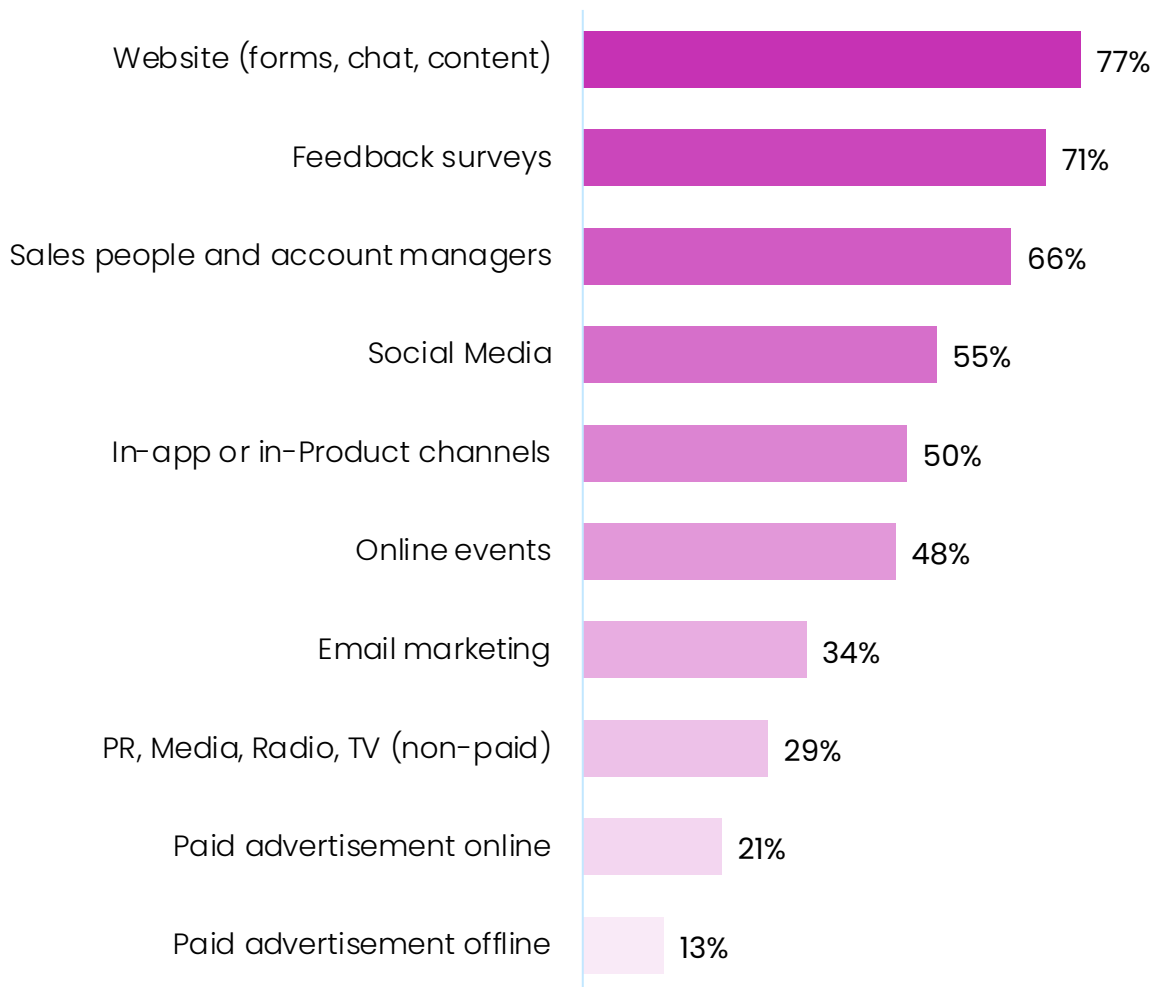
Marks & Spencer have seen a rise in sales after using actionable data to improve the customer experience in their stores. From tracking the difference in sales of the same item online versus instore, to investigating what designs appeal most to customers, the retailer has put customer insights to work. The company also [recorded improved Net Promoter Scores](#) in 2020 after investing in NPS programmes to measure their CX success.

Source: Forbes, Actionable Data From Customer Experience Analytics Helping Retailers To Get Better, Jan 13 2021

CX strategy: Channels

Websites and feedback surveys are cited as the most important channels in 2021 customer experience strategies.

77% of respondents cited their website as being most important to their CX strategy, with the runner up being feedback surveys with 71% agreeing on the importance of gathering insights. Customer-facing employees like sales teams and account managers are also seen as important assets in CX strategies.



% of who consider the channel important or very important in their 2021 CX strategy

CX strategy: Technology

Most of the CX professionals we surveyed are currently using at least one technology platform to in their customer experience strategy.

Below, we list a selection of platforms currently being used by businesses to support their customer experience strategies. The variety is huge, ranging from CRMs to customer service software, but all ultimately help companies to facilitate their CX goals.

- **Salesforce** – CRM to track customers and leads.
- **Pardot** – Marketing automation solution.
- **WebinarJam** – Webinar and online events platform.
- **Oracle** – Database management systems.
- **HubSpot** – Marketing, sales, customer service, and CRM software.
- **Netigate** – CX and EX feedback management. Collect and analyse data.
- **Zendesk** – Software designed to improve customer relationships.
- **SAP** – Manage business operations and customer relations.
- **Nimble** – CRM built for Office 365.
- **CloudTalk** – Call centre software.
- **Genesys Cloud** – Cloud contact centre solution.
- **Falcon.io** – Social media and customer experience management.
- **Microsoft Dynamics** – CRM for managing customer and prospect interactions.
- **Mailchimp** – Integrated marketing platform for small businesses.
- **Zoho** – Web-based business tools and information technology.
- **LinkedIn Sales Navigator** – Sales management tool designed for sales reps.
- **Zoom** – Video and audio conferencing services.
- **LiveChat** – Online customer service software.



The importance of integrating CX strategy with brand strategy

Matt Watkinson, CEO and Co-founder of Methodical and author of *The Grid: The Decision-making Tool for Every Business*

“The one thing that actually applies to everything that we do as a business is our brand and what that really means from the perspective of the customer.

We need to start our customer experience initiatives with a very clear understanding of our brand and what we want that experience to be like: What's going to make it distinctive? What's going to make it easy to recognize and remember? Then we need to make sure that we are consciously applying that when we execute on the ideas we're putting into practice to improve our customer experience.

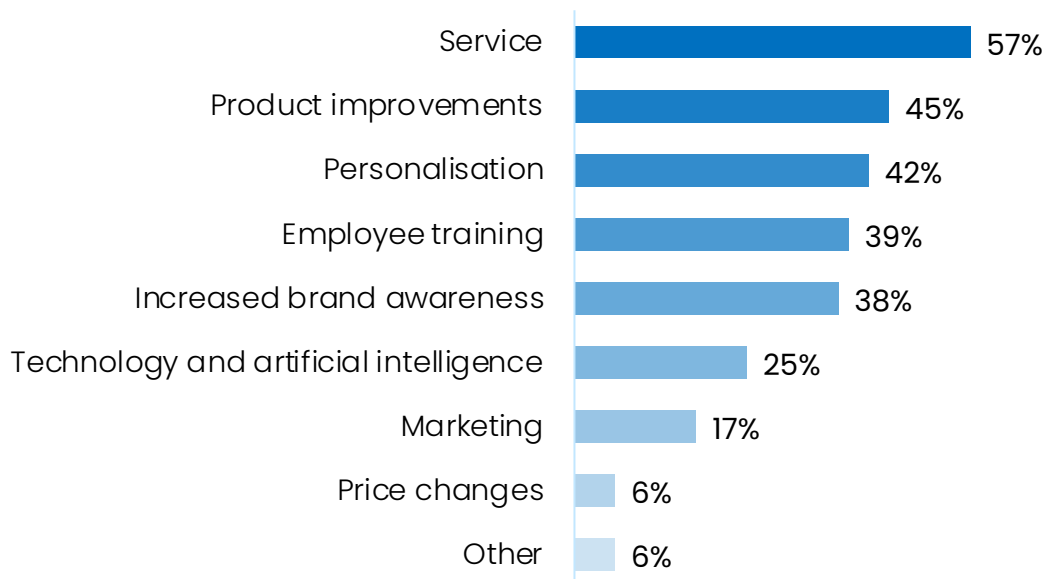
So it's very important to research and understand what our customers want, what they're struggling with and how we can create more value for them. But the way in which we execute on that has to be branded if it's going to become distinctive and memorable.”

The future of customer experience

Customer service is a key focus area in the CX strategies of many businesses.

57% of the CX professionals we surveyed highlighted improving customer service as a key focus in their 2021 CX plans. Product improvements, personalisation, employee training and increased brand awareness also proved to be relatively popular focus areas.

Top CX focus areas for 2021



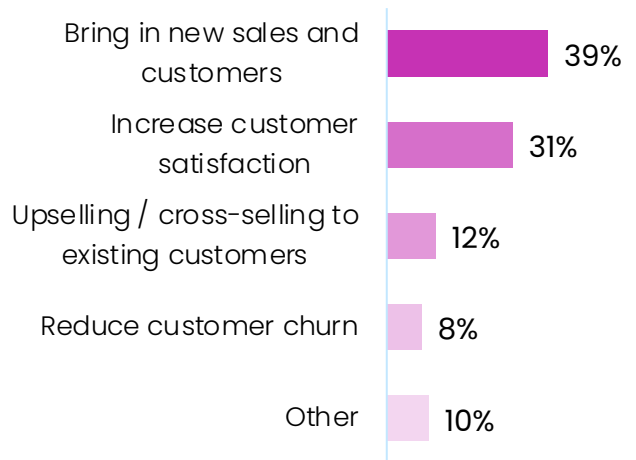
“The future of CX doesn't look that different for customers, but it's going to look radically different for the CX profession. If we actually want to make customer experiences better, the responsibility rests on us as a CX community.”

Clare Muscutt, Founder and Director of CMXperience and CEO of Women in CX

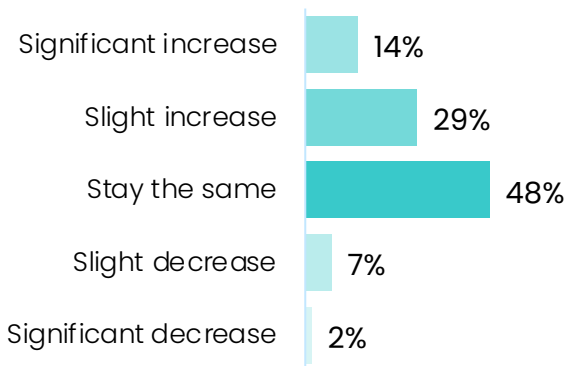
Bringing in new sales and customers is a key goal within many company's CX strategy

The top CX goal for 2021 for 39% of companies is to bring in new sales and customers, while 31% will focus on increasing customer satisfaction. Less popular goals are upselling and cross-selling to existing customers and reducing churn.

Top CX goals for 2021



What is set to happen with the CX budget at your business in the next two years?



43% of companies plan to increase their CX budget over the next two years

While just under half of the survey respondents say their CX budget will stay the same, another 43% state it will increase, suggesting that there is a growing importance being placed on CX in 2021 and beyond.

“We should treat customer experience as a means to achieve a clearly articulated business goal, not an end in itself.”

Matt Watkinson, CEO and Co-founder of Methodical and author of *The Grid: The Decision-making Tool for Every Business*





How to develop as a CX professional

Clare Muscutt, Founder and Director of CMXperience
and CEO of Women in CX

- Have conversations with people who disagree with you. The CX community needs to create spaces that embrace diversity of thought and allow for evidence-based thinking. We need to embrace the growth mindset that will lead us into the future of CX.
- Aim to become a T-shaped leader with a breath of knowledge across your organisation and within different fields. You can then use this expertise within the context of your business and not just the general CX framework within which it is prescribed.
- Develop design-based skills and acquire experience in brand marketing, UX, and product knowledge. Furthermore, seek to nurture emotional intelligence, self-awareness, and creativity.
- Be pragmatic, commercially attuned and invested in business priorities. Focus on value creation and supporting business growth.
- Broaden your horizons: Listen to podcasts; follow thought leaders in marketing and other spaces; take courses in new areas; and get work experience outside of your current field. Some of the best non-CX books that have influenced my thinking on CX over the past year include: [The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People](#), [Eat that Frog](#), [Atomic Habits](#), [Homo Deus](#), [Man's Search for Meaning](#), [The Compound Effect](#), [Gap selling](#), [The Pyramid Principle](#), and [Women & Power](#).

CX success over the next 5 years: What needs to change?

We asked respondents to identify what needs to change in businesses' handling of CX in order to ensure continued success over the next 5 years. Ultimately, two clear areas were highlighted by the professionals:

1. CX as part of the organisational culture and strategy

Integration of CX into overall **business strategy** is an important change that needs to be made, according to our respondents. One problem many businesses experience is embedding their CX strategy in the **company culture** and working as **one organisation** towards aligned CX goals. Many respondents also cited a lack of **streamlined processes and values** when it comes to CX.

2. Investment in better measurement tools and processes to deal with feedback

Many CX professionals see a need for investment in better **tools** for **measuring the customer experience**. Better **processes** for collecting customer **feedback** and **acting on data** was also highlighted as necessary for future success. **Understanding** what customers want and how well a company is fulfilling these needs are key to a successful CX strategy.

"Companies should focus on changing organizational culture so that CX is embedded in all areas of business. Only then CX can become self-sustaining or autonomous."

Andrei Calin, Customer Experience Insights Manager at Oracle



"Companies must understand the experience they want to give customers and use that to then understand if customers are actually experiencing what they intended. They then need to take action to really invest in the areas where they are not meeting stated goals."

Robert Kirubi, Head of Global Customer Programs at DHL Service Logistics

