

## CUSTOMER EFFORT SCORE

This model argues that a firm should forget bells and whistles and just solve user problems quickly and efficiently. Doing this actually delights them and results in all those other good things – customer retention, customer loyalty, increased spend etc. Contrarily, the argument goes that if you don't solve problems quickly and efficiently then no number of bells and whistles will result in any of those good things.

The essence of the model is: make it easy to solve problems. For example, don't make them [customers / users] contact you repeatedly to get an issue resolved, don't make them have to repeat information, don't make them have to switch from one channel to another (be told over the phone to go to the website) etc.

CES has five dimensions:

### RESOLVE ISSUES DOWNSTREAM

Don't just solve the current issue, head off the next one (anticipate and address common downstream issues). By far the biggest cause of excessive customer effort is the need to call back. A good percentage of second calls relate to the issue raised in the first call, even if the first call issue was resolved.

### ADDRESS THE EMOTIONAL SIDE

A good percentage of calls stem from emotional disconnects between customer and service representative. Common strategies have been to divide callers into personality types (see personality models) and address each type in a specific manner.

### MINIMIZE CHANNEL SWITCHING. INCREASE CHANNEL STICKINESS.

Don't make customers have to switch from one channel to another (be told over the phone to go to the website etc). Make the problem easily resolvable within each channel. Make it easy for the customer to go to his or her preferred channel (some prefer to pick up the phone, others are happy to get the answer straight away in the FAQs section).

### USE FEEDBACK

This one is as old as the sun. Use customer feedback to anticipate customer processes and reduce their effort. Specifically call disgruntled users and ask them what went wrong and ensure the problem is corrected.

### EMPOWER FRONTLINE REPS

Incentive systems that reward speed will not empower reps to solve problems downstream, but to move onto the next call. Design reward systems that will reduce the overall call rate instead.

See Guerrilla MBA at [www.clickok.org](http://www.clickok.org)