

# 7 Questions with Bright Horse

Do you want to learn more about Experience and Experience Management from the experts? In these monthly volumes we will be speaking with exciting people who want to share their journey to XLAs . We will learn about their personal journey to experience management, the real-time business insights and advantages of measuring experience and hints and tips about how to succeed in this revolutionary movement. So, sit back and enjoy !

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## *June's Guest: Andrew Busby*

Retail writer, global retail influencer, former Forbes contributor and Amazon best-selling author with his book 'Harry Was Right All Along', Andrew is the Global Industry Senior Director for retail at Software AG and the founder of Retail Reflections. One of the most high-profile figures in retail – regularly featuring in the top 20 lists of global retail influencers, Andrew is constantly in demand for both writing and speaking and is regularly quoted in the media - on TV, radio and in the national press.

In a retail career spanning over 23 years, Andrew held senior positions at Kingfisher and Superdrug. In addition to writing his own retail blog, Andrew is a member of the IORMA Advisory Board, a member of REAN, Advisory Board member at Retail Week, Founder of the Retail Advisory Board and is also editor at large for Retail Technology magazine.

# Let's talk!

## Tell us about your journey to implementing improved Experience Management and XLAs. How? When? Why?

Speaking as we are now in June 2022, the context of it is even more important than it ever has been. We could talk at length about the cost-of-living crisis, and how in October all of us in the UK are going to face another £900 a year increase. It's huge. And so, what that means for SLAs and customer experiences is that they'll be very important for the consumer, but in the B2B situation, it will be even more important because their customers who's procuring the service are going to be even more demanding and expect more because of the rising pressures and challenges. Pressure is going to mount in every single area. So, the ability to measure that and to report against, will be more critical than it ever has been.

## In your opinion what has caused organisations to focus on Experience Management?

Back in the day when I was delivering services, constructing Service Level Agreements, and reviewing them with the customer, kind of always realized that they were fundamentally flawed. I mean, does an airline ever report its SLA's? Well, no, of course it doesn't. Because if it reported there would be 1% of a chance that you're going to drop out of the sky. And of course, that doesn't cover the whole customer experience. They will pretty much guarantee to fly you from A to B, and you're gone get there alive, but there is bunch off other things which go into overall experience. And of course, the old traditional way of capturing that service as it was being delivered, as I said earlier, was flawed.

I've personally been in situations where you proudly present a monthly SLA service report which says 100% and the customer is still dissatisfied.

So, for that reason measuring customer experience is a huge leap forward because it demonstrates trust and empathy, amongst other things.

## How has the implementation of Experience Management improved your business?

The impact of that was that there was, I mentioned, trust and it became more of an open dialogue as opposed to: "Here's the report, haven't we done well?". And it then gathers dust.

I guess a case in point could be something that I saw the other day from a good friend of mine, customer service expert based in New York. He produced a statistic that said something like 64% of Americans would prefer to clean the toilets rather than phone up a customer help line. It's amusing in a sense, but it's also very true and it reflects the reality.

So, to generalise my answer it has enabled a far more open and transparent dialogue with your customers and employees.

## How would you define Experience/Digital Experience Management?

We all use social media to greater or lesser extent, I mean whether it be TikTok, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram etc. Now I would say for me personally, if somebody could capture my social media output over the last two or three years and analyse it to create a better experience for me, they would pretty much know everything there is to know about my life or at least that I'm willing to share publicly. They know my preferences for example - that I'm into cars. They know that I travel quite a bit. They know that I'm very much into retail and talk and write and so on. I'm waiting for that to happen to then deliver value back to me in terms of better experiences.

I'm expecting a delivery from a very well-known online retailer later today from South America.

They have sent the confirmation to my email starting: "Hi. A." Now, that particular company knows my name. It's Andrew. They know my address. They know all my credit card details. They know my buying habits. They know everything there is, but they can't actually use my name. You could say well, does that really matter? Well to me, yes it does because that particular organization reports to be able to use data and AI and machine learning and all sorts of things. So, they're supposed to be the leaders in that. That's just an example of digital experience. It is all about quality personalisation, experience measurement and empathy.



## **What advice would you give companies who are starting out on their Experience Management Journey?**

Absolutely drive that, absolutely expect and demand that your service provider provides that.

As you know, it's a tender process and only by measuring experience you can know what to change, where to improve and what to expect next. The most important thing is to know how my customer or client is feeling about what I do. While shopping with retailers it's not about basket size, it is about sales per square foot or cells per employee or whether there's great availability. Measuring experience is essential for business growth, so my advice is - just do it.

## **Share with us a time in your life where experience affected your decision**

I was speaking at a conference in London a few weeks ago at Olympia, and I needed to get the train. All the ticket machines were down, so I couldn't purchase a ticket. So, they said to purchase one on the train. Still couldn't because their machines were down as well and so they said purchase one after. I got there and because it was two different train lines, the guy at Olympia said: "Oh, you've travelled without a ticket. I'm going to give an on the spot fine."

That's an example of a terrible customer service customer experience. I will be reluctant to take their services next time. It's always the bad experiences that people remember, not the good ones.

## **And finally, what is something that recently made you smile?**

I'm smiling all the time.

The most recent reason- positive feedback that I have received for my speaking at a conference. And yeah, even at the time when I was there in person, it was making me smile. And it doesn't matter how long you've been doing that particular thing, speaking at conferences, it's always great to hear that people have appreciated what you've done.

