

# 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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*October's Guest:*

*Dave D'Agostino*



"In IT for more than 40 years. My last position was ITSM Practice Lead at Nextthink for three and a half years, where I focussed on how the art and science of Digital Experience Management can improve the quality of IT services and the experience of end users. Before that, I was EMEA ITSM solution consulting practice lead at ServiceNow, and worked in other roles with customers, partners and MSPs. Before ServiceNow, I was in the product marketing team for HP's Service Manager, following the acquisition of Peregrine Systems, where I worked in presales and product management. I started in operations and systems programming roles at Glaxo and Marathon Oil before moving to the software industry "

# Let's talk!

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

Joining the Experience Management movement is, in some ways, like a coming of age story - there is a host of issues and opportunities for improving the quality of IT services that has been ignored for decades, despite being on full view to everybody.

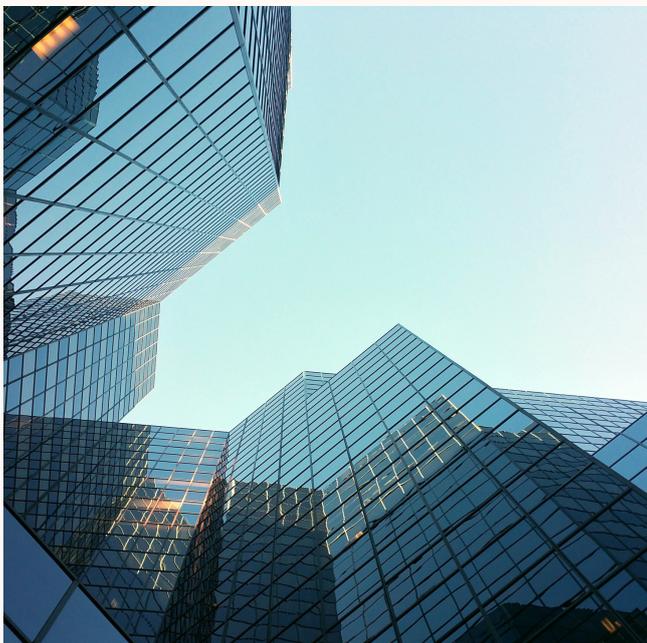
I am sure that my story isn't wildly different to many other in the industry. I have been working with ITSM software and processes for the past 30 years - starting at Peregrine Systems when it was a startup in the UK in 1991 and moving to HP during the acquisition, before joining ServiceNow in 2009.

In all of that time, the technology and the processes - not to mention the culture around it all - has been focused very much on the view from IT, resulting in success metrics etc that are focused on a limited subset of what the consumers of IT services (and the people that pay for it) actually experience.

When I joined Nextthink in 2017, I started to get a glimpse of the missing parts of the puzzle; that the 'outside-in' view - the view from the end-user's perspective - was a really important part of the mix. Without it, we don't really have an accurate, complete and fact-based idea of exactly how well or badly business users are able to do their job, or even whether the services that IT are delivering are fit for purpose.

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

Despite the huge investment that businesses have made in IT over the past several decades, there is still an almost embarrassing lack of agreement about the quality of the service that the business receives from IT - often leading to an erosion of trust and an 'us and them', adversarial relationship. This is the case both for insourced and outsourced services.



There are many indications / symptoms / factors

- mismatch between the issues that users experience and IT's visibility of them - in many cases, less than half of issues are reported to the Service Desk
- lack of clarity of the performance, behaviour and compliance of end user technology
- Often woeful lack of accuracy of survey initiatives (customers I have spoken to report that less than 10% of survey invitations are responded to)
- Service Level Agreements that are geared towards IT focused metrics - 'hard' metrics that can be measured using the instrumentation that is available to IT - e.g. server up time
- 'Us vs Them' culture

Organisations of all sizes are starting to take note of this, leading to a growing adoption of experience management initiatives. To be clear, this goes far beyond simple tooling projects and involves significant cultural and organisational change. Instrumenting end user devices and collecting 'hard' data about their behaviour and performance doesn't provide us with everything we need.

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

Speaking as an observer rather than as a practitioner, I have seen a lot of organisations improve both the quality of IT services and the relationship between IT and the business. Some examples:

- A global professional services firm where IT was able to pre-emptively address potential issues before they caused disruption for end users, preventing the loss of many billable hours and improving what had been a sometimes challenging relationship between IT and the business partners
- Several large organisations have been able to define a road-map for improvements that is much more closely aligned with the business' requirements and most pressing issues - experience management doing far more than simple incident reduction, and providing critical input to high value management activities such as Demand and Portfolio Management
- Significant improvement to Governance, Risk and Compliance initiatives
- From a more strategic perspective - a large global manufacturing organisation that was faced with challenges in recruiting new generations of graduates due to a perception of an 'old-school' working environment. The new workplace environment, encompassing far more than just IT, included experience factors as a part of its core requirements

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

For years, IT management has been focused on a specific set of metrics - the performance of the enterprise's digital investments. SLAs have historically been based upon 'hard' factors such as server up-time, and a highly limited input from business users - typically, less than half of the issues experienced by users are reported to the service desk.

SLAs focused on this single dimension make it almost impossible to know whether the consumers of IT services are engaged and productive - in the 'sweet spot' for productivity.

By contrast, XLAs allow us to ask - and answer - questions about experience and sentiment that are the critical missing pieces of the total service delivery puzzle.

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

Although you can certainly make progress in improving Experience Management by implementing tools to measure the performance and behaviour of end user devices, and they are a critical part of the big picture of EM, the bigger prize comes from dedicating organisation resources to the program - both in terms of day to day EM activities, but also in shifting the mindset of IT practitioners to include an 'outside-in' view of the services that they are delivering. This can encompass the setting up of a dedicated structure - often called the XMO or eXperience Management Office - dedicated to coordinating activities, defining the right questions to ask and interpreting the answers to those questions

Don't reinvent the wheel - there are some great enablement and support resources that can help in setting an experience management strategy and setting up the underpinning organisation. The Essence of Experience and related enablement sessions are worth considering to getting started

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

Positive - Not long after moving house, we started to get some worrying signs that the boiler was starting to give out - even to my untrained eye, water dripping of of the bottom didn't seem like a good sign.

We found a local plumber who not only showed up at very short notice to make the thing safe, but he did such a great job of surveying the rest of our heating system and - without any incomprehensible jargon or comments like "this is going to cost you..." - making suggestions to improve other aspects of it that we extended the work from a simple boiler replacement to an overhaul of the whole lot.

Negative - I managed to lose my cellphone (don't ask...) at a relatively high-end US conference hotel a few years ago. Thinking that it might be hidden under something in my room, or that someone might pick answer it and return it, I phoned my cellphone from my hotel room a few times.

Admittedly, I should have checked the hotel's charging policy first - just a few unanswered calls to my phone resulted in a charge of several hundred dollars.

That, in addition to an unsympathetic and inflexible hotel staff response, made me resolve to try and avoid that chain from then on...



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

My grandson!

*"People may not remember exactly what you did, or what you said, but they will always remember how you made them feel."*