



A case study in 'always-on' CX

A leader in the global business events industry, the Cape Town International Convention Centre has become the go-to destination for events, conferences, and trade exhibitions. Since becoming their client experience partner in 2018, we have borne first-hand witness to how they maintain their status as best in class, through differentiating with a robust and always-on CX strategy.

“We use the monthly client data we get from nlightencx to see what we are missing from a customer service point of view. We review the data thoroughly to see how we can make our service more streamlined, more efficient, and customer-centric. If you are marketing your brand promise as one of service excellence you have to follow through on that.”

- Robert Hatton-Jones (General Manager: Commercial – CTICC)

Arming the CTICC with in-depth verbatim customer feedback each month has enabled the team to course correct where necessary and to operate with flexibility. This process, while not always an easy one, has made the CTICC proficient in creating memorable customer experiences, which has contributed to its international award-winning status as a first-choice hospitality provider.

In a nutshell, their success can be attributed to their ongoing commitment to CX and a fundamental understanding of their customer. ***Let's take a look at how this approach has served them over the years.***

Why you can't paint your customers with one brush

Typically, service-orientated businesses require a customised offering instead of a one-size-fits-all solution, but you'd be surprised how many companies forget this. In having access to real-time client data and feedback provided by nlightencx, the CTICC has been able to pinpoint specific requirements across various client segments, and tailor-make solutions to meet these expectations.

“We have developed an ability to deal with different clients who have very specific needs. We are learning through the constant feedback that we need to curate our offerings according to our different clients. For instance, no two events, shows, or conferences are the same, and it can be just one verbatim comment from a client that can influence how we adjust our offering so that we can deliver a better customer experience. The customer experience doesn't start as the customer enters the building. It starts even before they get to the car park. It starts at the point of first contact.”

- Robert Hatton-Jones (General Manager: Commercial – CTICC)

Managing the moving parts

CTICC's large-scale operation depends on seamless communication between all departments. Whether it's the sales department, events, food & beverage, or commercial department, if there is a breakdown of flow between these divisions, the customer experience can suffer. To avoid this, CTICC uses the latest feedback from clients that have booked with them within that month to assess where there might have been gaps in communication. For instance, in the case of short-term and long-term bookings, the quotation is handled by the sales division as is the client-facing coordination of the event. However, there are other execution aspects of the booking that require input from other departments, but a lot of the client feedback will be directed at the sales team.

“ Instead of pointing fingers and placing blame when an error occurs, we use the client data we have to say okay, how can we communicate better amongst departments so that we can all be on the same page and avoid future errors? We also take responsibility where we need to, and it is this approach that helps us to improve our communication both internally and externally.”

- Lillian Hlabangane (Head of Sales – CTICC)

It's this constant drive for efficient communication between departments that have helped the CTICC team break down any silo mentality within the organisation and achieve monthly CSAT scores of up to 90%.

Customer Journey Mapping

For CTICC, customer journey mapping has been one of the most revealing for them in terms of refining ways to enhance their CX. We've taken the team through full-service journeys so that they can experience each and every touchpoint as their customer would. Not only has this instilled a deeper sense of empathy with the customer, but it's often prompted a unique redesign process that sets the organisation even further apart from its competitors. Companies tend to focus only on the customer that comes through the door, but CTICC is using journey mapping to gain a holistic picture of how all stakeholders and service providers experience their brand.

For example, there is a large pool of service providers that make use of the CTICC building. They have made sure there is a good customer journey in place for these suppliers because they understand that this experience has a direct impact on the overall delivery of an event for the end client.

“The process of arrival, sign-in, induction, and access to facilities can be different for each external contractor since they all have their own set of needs and requirements. We've looked at the customer journey to see how we can make the process smoother and more efficient for them. This has helped us to make ongoing improvements that ultimately result in successful events for our clients.”

- Chantal Croaster (Conference and Exhibition Services Manager – CTICC)

Flexibility, Agility, & Innovation

Covid-19 knocked the wind out of most businesses, especially those in eventing services. In pivoting to provide digital and hybrid virtual events, the CTICC used this opportunity to use their client feedback to build an offering that would meet their clients where they were at.

No one really understood digital events. In the beginning, it was all very expensive, and companies were competing just on price. CTICC's customers were telling them that it was just too much for them, so instead of compromising on quality, management listened very carefully to their client's specific digital event needs and adjusted their virtual offering to be one that is affordable, flexible, and technically impressive.

The CTICC has since launched its own digital hybrid event platform called CTICC ENGAGE.

“From smaller things like adapting our contracts to be less tedious, to re-designing the way we receive suppliers into the building, it all comes down to client feedback. Sometimes people just want to be heard! And nlightencx are an integral part of capturing the voice of our customers and keeping the wheels turning.”

- Robert Hatton-Jones (General Manager: Commercial – CTICC)