Experience is the Menu



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Section 1: Understanding the Customer

"We've been using our menus to show customers what we sell instead of using them to show customers what we want them to buy.“

- Dane Mathews, CDO, Taco Bell

Customer experience is not just about satisfaction. It is about decision-making.

Product placement
Featured offers
Promotions
Pricing

Menu architecture
Visual hierarchy
Recommendation engines
Loyalty offers
Ordering flows
Drive-thru interactions
Pickup experiences



Should I order?
What should I order?
Should I add something?
Should I customize?
Should I come back?

Customer experience
is a sales and growth lever,
not simply a service function.



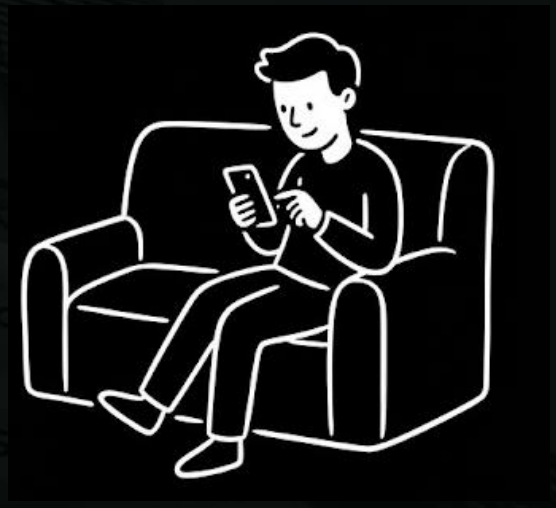
Drive Thru

Help me decide quickly
Help me feel confident
Keep things simple



Kiosk

Help me explore
Help me discover
Help me customize



Mobile

Help me reorder
Help me find rewards
Save me time

Context matters at every ordering point because different ordering environments create different decision needs.

Stop designing for metrics.

Start designing experiences around behaviors.

Speed
Ease
Satisfaction
Completion rates
NPS
(And my personal favorite)
Average Order Value



Increase trial
Increase attachment
Increase premium mix
Increase customization
Increase repeat visits
Increase order accuracy
Reduce abandonment
Reduce decision paralysis

What if speed isn't always the right objective?

What if…
Accuracy matters more?
Confidence matters more?
Better basket composition matters more?

BREAK FOR DISCUSSION:

CUSTOMER DECISIONS

1. What most influences what a customer ultimately chooses or purchases, and where might your assumptions differ from actual customer behavior?

2. When you think of yourself as a customer, are there things that your organization is doing to influence customer behavior that wouldn't influence your own behavior?

EXPERIENCE & CONTEXT

3. How do customer decision needs change across different ordering environments? Where is the biggest gap between what customers want or need and what your current experience delivers?

4. What customer behaviors are most important to your growth strategy today?

Section 2: Bringing the Experience to Life

Common Assumption:

Optimization = Personalization

Myth #1

Personalization is the only path to optimization.

Step 1: Enroll the customer in loyalty.
Step 2: Identify the customer consistently.
Step 3: Personalize everything.

Reality

Contextual optimization can be equally powerful, and can impact 100% of
your guests' ordering behavior!

Enabler

Decision engines aren't
just for recommendations.

Their most powerful use may be product merchandising and store specific /
channel specific menu execution.

Myth #2

If we don’t show everything on the menu, sales will drop. (I just know it!)

More choices = more sales
Every item deserves visibility
Removing items is inherently risky

Reality

Design for the customer problem.

Do customers need:

More options?

Better organization?

Better guidance?

Greater confidence?

Enabler

Data. Data. Data.

Are we protecting revenue,
or are we protecting complexity?

Everyone has an opinion,
data provides the facts.

Myth #3

Digital = Mobile + Kiosk + Delivery

And, we want 100% of sales to be digital…

Reality

Digital isn’t about customer identity.
“Digital” is fundamentally about using
digital tools to influence purchase behavior.

Enabler(s)

Digital menu board infrastructure
Integrated systems
Test and learn

Every ordering environment is
an opportunity for optimization.


IT TAKES A
VILLAGE
TO RAISE A
MENU.

The brands that win will be the brands that help customers make better decisions.

Every experience decision
influences a purchasing decision.

The question is not whether
you're shaping customer behavior.

The question is whether you’re
doing it intentionally.

BREAK FOR DISCUSSION:

CHALLENGING ASSUMPTIONS

5. Which of these common assumptions creates the biggest obstacle in your organization?
   - Personalization is the only path to optimization.
   - If we don't show everything on the menu, sales will drop.
   - Digital = Mobile + Kiosk + Delivery.

PEOPLE & TECHNOLOGY

6. Which stakeholder group has the greatest influence over your menu decisions today—and should they?

7. How could AI or emerging technology help customers make better decisions or create a better experience, rather than simply making transactions more efficient?

TEST & LEARN

8. What customer experience assumption would you most want to test, and what would you need to know to determine whether the change actually worked?