

CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT PROJECTS WITHIN THE ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT: A CASE OF B2B E-COMMERCE

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Purpose: The article investigates organizational customers response to the marketing stimulation in order to understand the moderating role of economy and emotional motives in business-to-business relationship.

Design/methodology/approach: The research was conducted in the form of case studies of experimental marketing projects facilitated in context of wholesale e-commerce B2B platform. Surveys and free text content has been analysed for statistics and conclusions formulation.

Findings: The study identifies the influence of different forms of emotional motivation on the engagement of B2B customers and points out the success factors for engagement in B2B. Customers, when stimulated, demonstrate willingness to value creation for themselves in form of emotional satisfaction and inside for company. They benchmark sales platform delivering inside from market. Finally, customers share their experience as the boosting factor for others. The study analyses customer engagement from the organizational and individual perspective.

Research limitations/implications: The limitations are typical for the experimental projects which entail the uncertainty of the exact results replication. However, the obtained results indicate extension to academic literature as well as the practical suggestion for business.

Originality/value: The research contributes to academia in the field of B2B customers behaviour when they are stimulated to creative activity on the e-commerce platform. Paper investigates reactions of individual responders to engagement projects while they are in strong organisational context.

Keywords: customer engagement; customer experience; experiential marketing; B2B.

Category of the paper: research paper.

1. Introduction

Relations exist between companies in its business environment. They are based on generating value, i.e., a certation certain advantages which should be reflected in offerings available on the market. The essence of modern management lies in value management, value exchange between companies and its delivery to the environment they are operating (Mazurek, 2014). Business-to-business cooperation model (B2B) creates a natural opportunity for business partners to strengthen their competitiveness by aligning their resources to act more efficiently for certain goals (Kohler, 2015; Howe, 2009). They can benefit from collaboration not only as profit capturers, as buyers and sellers do, but also as the organizations which are learning from each other and utilize their specific competences jointly (Goyal et al., 2020). This could create unique environment of sustainable development of their market position. Many organizational relationships such as strategic alliances and buyer–supplier transactions involve the simultaneous pursuit of competition and cooperation (Chen, 2008). Thus, the paradox occurs when firms engage their partners in collaboration with a close rival (Gnyawali et al., 2016), but when they cooperate in B2B wholesale relationship the effect of common environment of collaboration comes prominent (Eser, 2012). Most often, a wholesaler as a stronger and dominant player in the relationship to a large number of small partners is caring for a collaboration quality and realism (Lejeune and Yakova, 2005). Therefore, firms are usually aligning with supply chain functionalities in order to make it one of the main advantages of a business network of collaboration (Lambert and Cooper, 2000).

Recently, we can observe digitalisation development which moves the B2B cooperation paradigm from a relational approach to the digitization of all business processes into the platforms of transactional cooperation. Despite the fact that firms still narrate the importance of relations, personal interactions, partnership, and trust they are rapidly exchanging people-to-people business to e-business (Remane et al., 2017). This is clearly visible in numbers of publications in business and academic resources. Usually, authors are dealing with the transformation of the business model into digital one with a significant component of e-commerce trade (Morakanyane et al., 2017) or discuss the conversion of a product-centric strategy into a client-centric orientation with a large people-based engagement process (Pansari & Kumar, 2017; Gil-Gomez et al., 2020). Thus, it is worth consideration objects of engagement in technology-aided trade. Pöyry et al. (2020) are wondering how to create engagement to service, brand, and company in digital-centric configuration? Are customers engaged to the brand or just committed to the technology? Are digitalization and e-commerce reserve place for the interactions on humanistic way or interaction is only information exchange? Perhaps, we should respectfully utilize people's relational sentiments and emotional motivations, if they still exist, also in digital trade in parallel with technology development as a contemporary way of doing business. The goal of our study is to test engagement projects as antecedent of customer experience in e-commerce cooperation environment.

According to the Gallup report concerning B2B market (Galup, 2019), the only 29% of customers are fully engaged. It creates a risk of unexpected migration. Gallup analysts suggest that the key driver of engagement lies in understanding the impact of partnership on the company in certain aspects. They report example of companies that obtained the 72% increase in fully engaged customers through customer feedback acquisition and adoption to the company practices. Based on that we formulate research questions for this investigation:

1. What makes customers achieve meaningful brand engagement?
2. Can we tie the CE level to organizational effort, or do we need to involve people working together on both sides to build the most unforgettable satisfaction for all parties?
3. How can an organization relate the state of customer engagement to the level of willingness to share CX with others?

Building on this, the main objective of the study is to understand how B2B customers will respond to the engagement projects facilitated on the e-commerce platform supplemented with motivations based on economy and emotional benefits. We are going to extend our knowledge in B2B marketing, especially concerning customer behaviour, motivation, and engagement aspects, as well as sharing experience for business processes organizing for value creation and value sharing in engagement projects.

The paper is arranged as follows. The next section presents an overview of the literature consideration of CE, CX, and its interplay in organizational context. Then we present empirical study and the results. Finally, we present conclusion a limitation analyse. We also formulate some implication for business practitioners.

2. Customer Engagement

Vivek et al., (2012) define the concept of customer engagement as a “partner's voluntary contribution to the company's marketing activities, going beyond financial patronage”. Jaakkola and Alexander (2014) emphasize the aspect of the use of the customer's resources jointly to facilitate value creation. They draw attention to the role of emotions that accompanies business purchases and their influence on the decisions taken throughout all of the stages of the process. Despite, currently ongoing digital disruption, which is changing organizations and influence on business communication (Liu et al., 2019) people are still interacting with emotions originating from their human nature and independent thoughts (Chiu et al., 2014). Organizations are changing the way they operate what is modifying the decision-making patterns. It allows to win a new, digitally native consumers (Vassileva, 2017; Holmlund et al., 2020). Mazurek (2014) is emphasising that virtual environment, including Internet and cloud computing or semantic web liquidate all barriers of treating the client as a partner. It creates the opportunity for

organizations to include their customers as a part of the organization, as co-creator of value streams of great importance for the client, the company, and its stakeholders. This in turn appreciates the role of marketing as a concept that focuses the attention of the organization on the client from acquiring to involving fully in diverse of internal processes.

Customer engagement can also be analysed from the several other theoretical perspectives. One of them focuses on the engagement as a behavioural phenomenon based on the client's ability to value co-creation beyond direct economic benefits. Customer can manifest its engagement in the activity, such as providing feedback from the market, writing reviews, participating company's marketing projects, and influence other customers (Van Doorn et al., 2010). The other approach describes CE as the mental state or disposition to the company that occurs in the form of enthusiasm for interaction, co-creation, and willingness to promote the brand based on the engagement demonstrated in form of certain behaviour (Brodie et al., 2011). This approach utilises emotional interactions which are specific to cognitive benefits. The third approach covers the current state of digitization and the e-commerce dominant logic, where CE is considered to be the ability of the customer and company to interact as value co-creators in the network ecosystem (Mitrega et al., 2012). All these approaches situate CE in the area of client-company interaction, where the client can also be a person representing the company as it takes place in B2B relationship. The root of commitment is understood here as the main motive of the actions taken. If we consider CE as a phenomenon that occurs when individuals are interacting with each other in the context of organizational collaboration, then individual motives may positively or negatively affect to the business results of cooperating parties. Adapted from Gaubinger et al. (2015), we can categorize the themes that drive people into ten categories: curiosity, fun activities, skill development, information-seeking, appreciation, community support, friendships, personal satisfaction, self-efficacy, and reward. Based on management decisions, the company may exacerbate or suppress some of these behaviours. It can therefore be generalized that collaborating parties can be defined as a) reward-oriented, b) interested in the content of the project, c) curiosity-oriented, or d) satisfaction-oriented (Fuller, 2010). Then we can differentiate the business relationship actors into profiled groups: a) economy-oriented, who are looking for business skills and problem-solving skills, b) education and innovation oriented, motivated by curiosity, information seeking and emotions, and c) artists and creators who they fight for recognition and the opportunity to present their skills and originality to a wider audience. Therefore, if wholesaler company is able to streamline these topics, the company will benefit from CE, but it is going to happen only when firms are able to collaborate, co-design, and adopt their strategies and actions to meet common expectations in both the emotional and business areas (O'Hern & Rindfleischa, 2017). A graphic illustration of this division is presented in Figure 1.

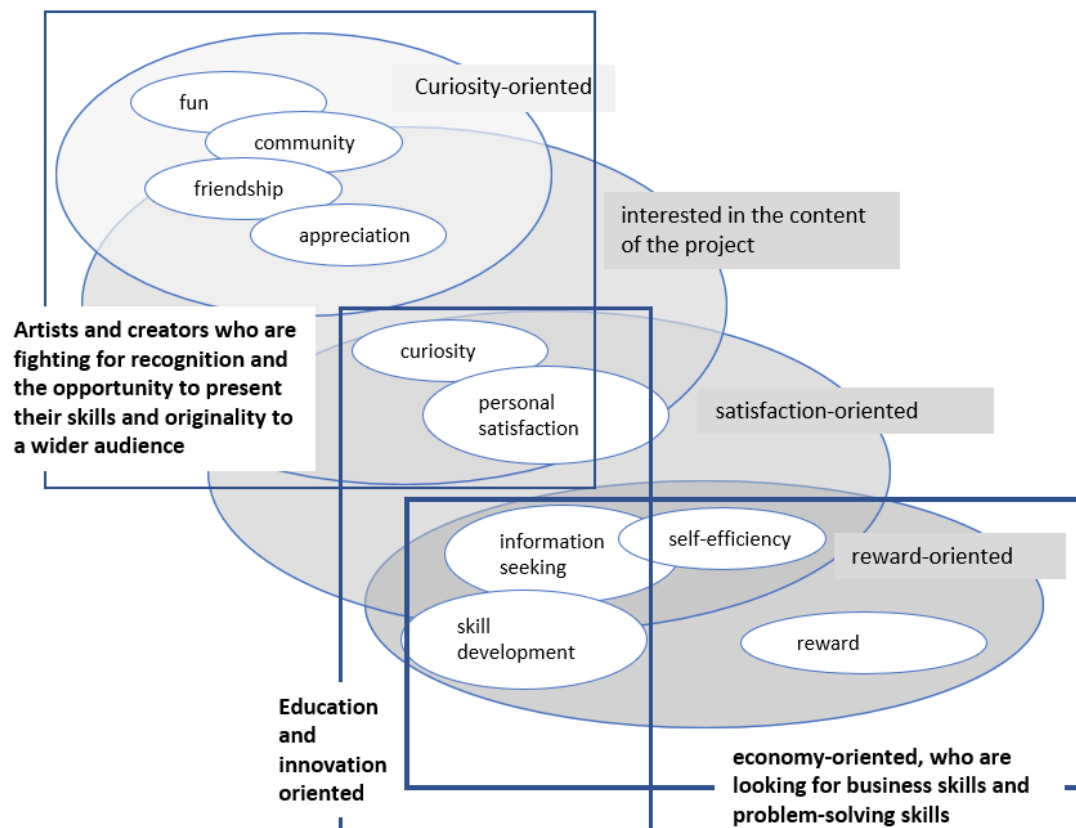


Figure 1. Customer groups according to themes that drive people for engagement.

3. Customer Experience

The customer experience (CX) term refers to the sensory, emotional, cognitive, social, and behavioural dimensions of people's activity that connect customer's satisfaction to the brand reputation over time (Berry et al., 2002; Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). This definition covers the mental results of customer activities related to the business as shopping satisfaction, commitment to the brand style, convenience, and other even non-purchasing value perception. In a B2B market, CX attributes should be applied to cooperating companies' representatives who are interacting as the sellers and buyers even if the e-commerce system is the interface. CX arises primarily as a result of satisfactory purchase in direct form. Direct CX includes contractual and functional conditions (B2B financial contract and the effort of use). CX is a natural extension of customer relationship management, but with a strong emphasis on its contextual nature and dynamics that need to be analysed over time. Hence, CX management emphasizes the role of situational factors that moderate the perception of value, ultimately affecting the overall CX (Becker & Jaakkola, 2020). There are aspects of CX that the company controls (e.g., price levels, service quality) and others that the company cannot control (e.g., the behaviour of competitors or other customers that it has an influence on). If a company

can control customer responses, it can adopt market standards and develop them for its own profit or use customer feedback to improve relationship benefits. The company may also expose customer activity in the store or on the website to indirectly influence CX in an active or passive way. This finally allows you to improve control of the most important CX drivers. Therefore, if a company provides excellent customer experiences, it can expect increased long-term business success (Bolton et al., 2021).

4. CE as the antecedent of CX

Clients can directly demonstrate their satisfaction by leveraging, recommending, or actively encouraging others to take action. This can be considered a direct effect on the CX of others. Customers can also be influenced indirectly by observing how others demonstrate the products they have purchased, the services they have ordered, and display the content on the websites they use, participate in events, webinars or trainings organized by the company. Clients can participate physically or online. Customers can take advantage of a range of self-service that are the native ways of doing business on the Internet and that is the nature of e-commerce. All this activity is a form of CE that actively or passively influences other customers and engages them in the value created by the brand (Hollebeek et al., 2014).

The relationship between CE and CX has been analysed by a number of authors including Lemon and Verhoef (2016) and Khan et al. (2019). It is still widely regarded, especially as an idea for collecting customer feedback useful for improving products or services (Pee, 2016; Zaborek and Mazur, 2019). Still the most innovative companies create an opportunity for continuous dialogue with stakeholders on the forum of advisory boards, focus groups or expert forums. This suggests that the products inspired by customer feedback may have a significant influence over the market performance of a company (Nishikawa et al., 2013). Companies encourage people to provide valuable feedback, which in turn improves the perception of brand-created value and ultimately strongly supports the overall CX (Babiak & Kihl, 2018). Engaged customers not only comment on satisfaction with the purchased products and services, but also recommend the overall brand value based on generalizations (Patrício et al., 2011). CE projects in B2B e-commerce creates the opportunity for people to interact for business purpose while having also a significant individual satisfaction. An example of this type of project are tailor-made IT solutions that are facilitated in order to provide software components tailored to the specific needs of the client. The value generated in this way can be called value-in-use, because it contains a number of subjectively determined functionalities, but strictly ensuring the implementation of the project's goals (Eggert et al., 2018). This kind collaboration significantly engages all partners increasing professional competence of co-working individuals and rump up competitive advantage all companies. Finally overall CX perceived for the brands is improved (Macdonald et al., 2016).

We can distinguish between a static and dynamic approach to CE as the predecessor of the CX. The static approach assumes that the firm uses a set of stimuli that are perceived in a similar way, while the dynamic approach identifies the influence of the network and subjective interactions with submissive (Zolkiewski et al., 2017; Kranzbühler et al., 2018). The static approach emphasizes the interactions with a focus on organizational relationships while dynamic approach refers to the networking capabilities (Mitrega et al., 2012). Networking capabilities enable engagement processes to occur if the company is able to initiate and persist with collective value co-creation (Kumar et al., 2010; Porter & Kramer, 2019). The dynamic approach is also applied when company link together a customer groups for short term projects, e.g.: for testing the application or utilize their feedback ideas in practice. This approach can result in significant increase of brand image and overall CX (Jarvis et al., 2017; Amit & Han, 2017; Zhang et al., 2018). Based on that, we can conclude that companies should engage customers because they can engage others not only for utilizing digital platforms for purchase but also indicating with their psychological state and disposal to act collectively for a certain set of benefits for all parties what makes CE antecedent to CX (Harmeling et al., 2017).

While CE can represent rational attachment with respect to the satisfaction that arises during interactions between the parties, the emotional (cognitive, hedonic, personal, and social) themes are paramount. The intensity of CE for individual clients may be due to their emotional and behavioural ability to accept a collective effort to create benefits for all parties. The utilitarian aspects of placing CE processes in a digital collaborative environment should also be viewed as the setting for the emotional game. Therefore, we can consider the e-commerce platform as an effective environment for observation an emotional interaction (Hein et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2020). The dynamics of CE in B2B relations is more significant than in the consumer market because business partners have closer access to each other and a real perspective of long-term cooperation. It leads them to consider their subjective goals and understand the value they can create for them all together (Merrilees et al., 2017), especially when they can take advantage of the knowledge gained from compound databases of clients. We can call this phenomenon as a "just-in-time-learning" or "learning by cases" (Lilien, 2016).

5. Empirical study design

The design of empirical study is demonstrated on Figure 2. The company offering is analysed as the strongest, native, and direct influencer on CX. It comes from the offer content and the way how company organizes customer journey. Direct CX covers customer satisfaction based on product's features and the convenience of the service use. Visibility of the sales process efficiency, expressed by customers in form of customer content, can actively but

indirectly engage others to (re)purchase through recommendations. By organizing forums for customers, where they are discussing the effectiveness of purchases, the shortcomings of the program and possible improvements, but despite that they are still buying as a loyal customer builds CX in an indirect and passive way. Individual satisfaction or customer's activity in projects running on the platform which influence others in both, active and passive way can be presented on the platform. In order to test customer's reaction on mentioned groups of motivations we have facilitated engagement projects and propose some actions to be taken by customers. We have observed willingness to participate and its dynamics as well as the influence on other customers and overall brand value perception.

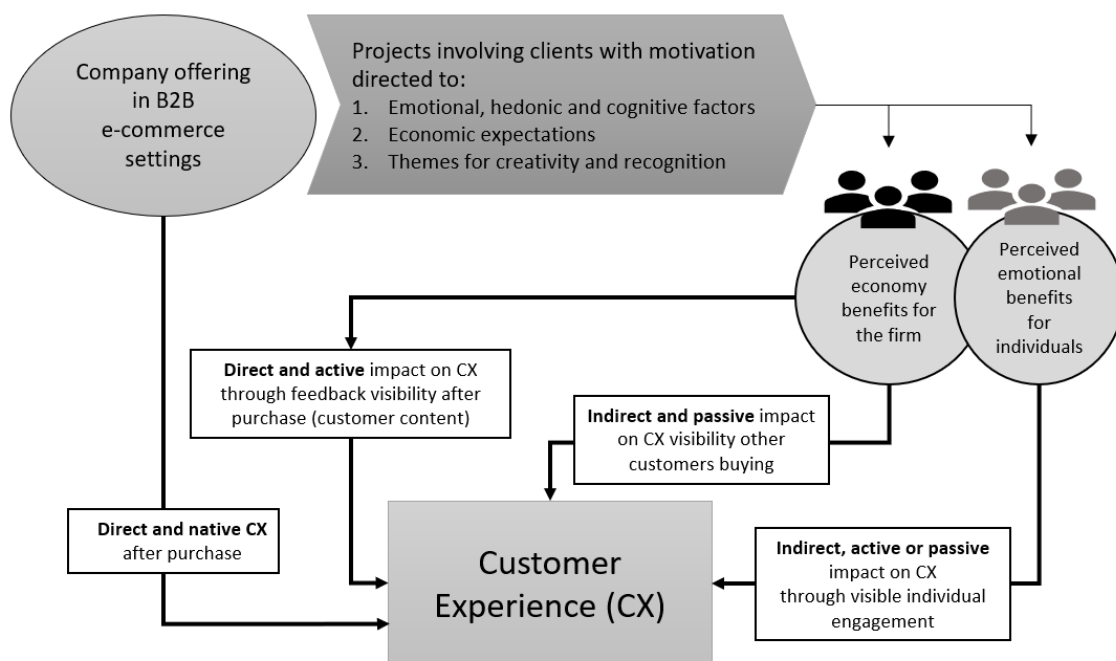


Figure 2. Research model.

The study has been facilitated in cooperation with the material supply wholesaler who run business on B2B e-commerce platform. The number of clients participating in engagement projects with division to dominant motivation is presented in Table 1.

Table 1.
Customer probe in CE projects

Project type	year of experiment	number of participants
Economic projects	2018	461
Emotional, creative	2018-2019	300
Social benefits project	2019	435

6. Results

Engagement projects with an economic motivation

The first group of engagement projects were linked with perspective of obtaining economy benefits. Customers have been invited to participate in the design of e-commerce platform (projects P1 and P2). They were also asked to evaluate platform features as the first-time users (project P3). And finally, they were asked to create advertisement in form of user content (project P4). Customers presented user's point of view and delivered valuable market inside. The number of customers participating in projects is presented in Table 2.

Table 2.

Participation in the platform project

No	sub-project	participants
P1	Assessment of the usefulness of platform functionalities	241
P2	Evaluation of the platform features answering open questions	121
P3	Judgment of the first-time impression when start using the platform	74
P4	The creation of advertisement stories related to the platform	25
	Total	461

In P1 and P2, customers played the role of creative experts, advisors, or designers while in projects P3 and P4, they just share their own CX to others. When playing the role of experts, customers attempted to consider not only their own needs, but also the broad context of the entire community of clients (Yi and Gong, 2013). In P1 we have collected 241 fulfilled questionnaires, which represents 15% of regular users, and 68 free text comments, consisting of 433 words in total. When customers judged the most relevant platform's features to be developed, we have noted a significant polarization in their opinions. While some features were judged as highly recommended or necessary by most users the other were scored as harmful. There was only small friction (14%) of neutral user's opinions. This shows that customers are engaged, and they have a clear opinion about what they do insist to develop and what could negatively influence effectiveness and need to be not developed or personalised according to individual characteristics. They try to prevent the harmful feature programming in the sales system which they use. Based on the probe review, we have detected two groups of customers which behave differently in the experiment. The first one includes contractor companies specialized in assembling technical installations for industry while the second was group of small retailers doing trade business for consumers. A certain feature could be assessed as harmful for the way of purchasing for contractors while retailers deem the functionality useful or even necessary because it makes the way they are buying effortless, e.g.: adding to the basket single product based on search versus adding a list of products from file as an import.

Customers, participating in projects also delivered some comments in the form of free text. They described functionalities not only as useful or harmful but also as required redesign or equip with missing elements. It was clearly visible that some features were preferred by users (e.g.: “downloading product carts in pdf”, 56%), while other were just signalled (e.g.: “exporting and importing product lists”, 14%). There were also functionalities which users clearly prioritized as unnecessary, sometimes surprisingly (e.g., “integration with external software” – 44%). It was also visible that customers spent time formulating their detailed opinions and cases. This suggest that projects P1 and P2 were engaging for customers and perceived as valuable.

In project P3, we asked customers to assess the first-time impression with platform. Most customers participating in this project was just recently acquired and they should remember their first impression. We obtained 74 answers in questionnaire divided to several parts according to system functionalities. We were also asked about free form opinions and advice for development. While customers answered for close questions rather schematic then the open question they use to deliver specific suggestions and solution proposals, such as: “It would be useful to be able to do this and that ...”, “If it could be possible to choose this type of delivery ... or scheduling date”, “It should be possible to collect goods from this and that locations together”, “The program should have this and that feature ... something like the competitor’s solution already has”, “The search engine should work this way ...“, “The platform has an error in this area... or unexpected behaviour or ineffectiveness”, “The search engine should be more intuitive in this or that area...”. They delivered not only their own expectation, but also provided information concerning the market context and benchmarking to competitors. This could be interpreted as strong contextuality of CE and CX where the value perceived depends on the ability to get the solution anywhere on the market. It provokes to expect the same or better solution from the supplier the customer is loyal to. This also shows an example of CE in the initial phase of cooperation where customer in engagement process is able to deliver market inside even not be fully engaged. Hence, B2B customers could be valuable source of knowledge for the company in any phase of cooperation but the only in situation when the company is able to utilize it as a just-in-time-learning. New knowledge could leverage the companies position on the market and adjusted sales system to customers’ needs. We have noticed that customers refer to the competitor’s systems, saying e.g.: “I also buy from company A, B, C ... they have a search engine works better in the case ...”. It shows how easily customers exchange benchmarking in the market, which can be a strength, but also a threat and erosion of value. When customer is engaged to wholesaler who is sensitive to that kind of inside, that the emergency development could be prioritized in order to catch up competitors. It could wark for wholesaler in appreciation expressed by customer what make the essence of building the society of engaged brand promoters. A summary of free-text feedback from projects P2 and P3 is presented as the cloud of words in Figure 3.

following favourite picture score by clicking them in several rounds of voting (for month pages, for season pages, etc.). The project created psychological satisfaction and built the client's commitment based on emotions. This kind of CE can indirectly influence CX. Indirect impact can be analysed not only as a positive impression that prompts people to think positively about the brand, but it is also a process of capturing negative emotions into outstanding action.

As we had been motivated by the results of the project, we have proposed similar activity next year. We asked customers about the preferred themes for the annual “common” calendar. Surprisingly, we have received only 47 answers. This might indicate that customers may not only required to be directed but also expected emotional novelty, more attractive to them. Despite that, the wholesaler decided to print the calendar which included the life mottos. After delivery to major group of customers purchasing on the platform, we issued a questionnaire concerning the project. We received 45 answers, of which, 35% was positive (“Good idea”, “Nice”, etc.), 18% negative (“Didn’t know about the project”, etc.), and 42% customers were complaining, that they have not received any shipment. This may indicate that customers are signalling the project was not attractive, but they still appreciate that activity in general. This may also indicate a low quality of project communication and not enough effort for engagement because customers fail to get know about the project when it is finished. They may also contest a lack of material reward. Finally, we may summarize that CE in the second edition of the project was low. The survey results also suggest a regret of lost chance for satisfaction. It could signal those customers were ready to participate in the project, but emotional satisfaction was insufficient. In similar way customers may signal a problem with the offer or attractiveness of the loyalty programs, or something else. They would ignore and contest. The phenomena accruing in this kind of customer behaviour remain relevant to future studies.

Cognitive benefits in CE educational project

Nine educational articles on management, negotiation and e-business topics were posted on the platform with visibility blocked, excluding students who registered for the sales academy project. In the middle and the end of the project, we conducted a survey to check the new knowledge acquired by clients and gather feedback on the project quality. The survey was combined with a scoring question and free-text answer. There is an obvious subjectivity in text content analysis, but it is a good tool for engaging customers when they are writing with openness, describe their ideas, doubts and complaints, which was the main goal of the project. We assumed that if a project participant is looking for knowledge and skills, he or she can add a comment in text form. Ultimately, we received 434 free text answers in the mid-test and 229 in the post-test. First, the project participants gave their opinion on the initiative: “the sales academy is a good idea that I appreciate”, “I am interested in participating next edition”, “This was expected project”. They commented content: “I appreciate the issues selection – they were relevant and explained well”. Customers show some innovativeness and applicability in the project’s content: “I have found an application for the presented knowledge in my

company”, “The sales academy converted my thoughts about sales process”, “It would be useful to discuss some more subjects in the academy”. Customers signalled that the project should be continued in regular editions. They used terms such as “great”, “cool”, “practical”, “new”, “new experience” and “hitting the bull's-eye”. It could indicate that participants reached some hedonic pleasure and mental point of CE detached from their current purchasing process. Customers responded not only playing passively the role of the student-listener, but also active role of constructive reviewer for the business idea (Tran et al., 2021).

The comments related to the project and its role in customer community are presented in the form of a word cloud in Figure 4. In order to keep words in phrases together we have applied an NLP filter (Honnibal et al., 2020).



Figure 4. Customer opinions about the summer sales academy.

We observed that customers activity was based on an emotional motivation to share their own CX with other customers on the platform. We noticed their readiness to participate in discussions and openness in forming opinions for the public. They also referred to their CX as being obvious to all. Therefore, based on these observations, we conclude that clients are willing to participate in CE projects even beyond their immediate business issues, when they are organized in relation to the business process and with the intention to achieve individual emotional satisfaction. In such circumstances, customers demonstrate a commitment to society associated with brand and providing inside information and sharing CX beyond direct business issues.

7. Conclusion and implications

Customers, especially B2B parties, can share their organizational solutions and individual ideas based on motivation obtained from leading partner (Markovic et al., 2021). They can recommend each other product and services based on combine B2B offering. They can also improve mutual benefit strategies as subcontractors (Kozinets et al., 2010). Through openness and dialogue, they can integrate partner's specific needs, ideas, and insights into common market strategy. Finally, all partners can work together for the success of all (Youssef et al., 2018). In this study, we presented customer engagement projects that were implemented on the B2B e-commerce platform in order to study how customers react to motivation to deeper engagement, to play the role of expert and advisor, to impact on other's experience and organizational ecosystem for cooperation. We studied organizational relationships between companies and relationships between people, as they play different roles apart from the obligation to purchase.

Customer experience belongs to the group of key factors for customer retention, but it does not occur itself and does not sell to others itself. The only company create the ecosystem of business interactions that is conducive to customer engagement for building society attached to the brand promoting retention. The environment of collaboration where particular groups of customers can build and test their engagement induce the willingness to share their positive or negative experience which in consequence is the propellant fuel of the whole business ecosystem development. CX is a subjective, dynamic, and contextual in nature, what makes sustainable development and strong attachment to the brand if managed correctly (Carù & Cova, 2003). The ability of a company to create a relationship network (NC-network capability) of partners is currently a very important factor that significantly affects economical results of all players. It also creates the position in the marketplace for all actors (Parida et al., 2017). The networking capacity concept refers to the complex of dynamic capabilities of the enterprise to optimize the entire portfolio of business relationships among net relations. As a result, the resources of all business partner, e.g., time, investment, technical expertise, talents, and knowledge are used jointly and most productively (Ngasri & Freeman, 2018).

The concept of CE changes a company's approach to the way how customer loyalty is built. If partners have access to each other resources and can use them jointly, then this creates the ecosystem that engage all actors for rapid development (Maslowska et al., 2016). Intrinsic value starts with sharing know-how for improvement purchase processes and evolve to collective agreements and joint negotiation for corporate contracts. Likewise, market improvements can start from common projects in selected areas then developed jointly to cost optimization, to joint offering, combine logistic operations, and utilize resource sharing on a large scale. The CE and CX concepts are important to consumers, but in B2B relationships, it become a factor of incredible development and hyper-optimization (Zolkiewski et al., 2017).

We also observed negative emotions and disappointment when clients missed an opportunity to participate in a project and then did not receive project results. This was complained as a lack of recognition, as a doubt to customer's loyalty in all other business aspects. CX encapsulate customer's opinion about entire purchasing journey, including pre-, inter-, and post-purchase stages. Despite the fact that CE is limited to the period when customer is actively interacting with the brand (Hollebeek et al., 2014), CX inherits a lot from CE (Khan et al., 2019). Especially, if company is able to convert all repeated interactions (passive or active) to CE and then to the sustainable CX and to the brand reputation (Islam et al., 2019). In digital world, company innovativeness regarding new technologies is positively associated with personal creativity of their representatives (Korzynski, et al., 2019) what can influence CE on e-commerce platforms and following CX.

Presented research broadens our understanding of CE on B2B e-commerce platform. Digitization and e-commerce are constantly pushing people to mechanical information exchange, causing interactions between people. The study of CE points ambitious companies to manage their organization with human venue for each party. In addition, their managers should consider the utilitarian aspects of this study as describing the opportunities to build a strong CX on the brand with the support of customer's resources (Loureiro et al., 2012), which makes the business concept more sustainable.

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