

Experience This! Show Podcast  
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ExperienceThisShow.com

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**Episode 84**  
**Empower Your Customers to Have the Best Experience Possible**

Dan Gingiss: Welcome to Experience This!

Joey Coleman: Where you'll find inspiring examples of customer experience, great stories of customer service, and tips on how to make your customers love you even more.

Dan Gingiss: Always upbeat and definitely entertaining, customer retention expert, Joey Coleman.

Joey Coleman: And social media expert, Dan Gingiss, serve as your hosts for a weekly dose of positive customer experience.

Dan Gingiss: So hold onto your headphones. It's time to experience this. Get ready for another episode of the Experience This! show.

Joey Coleman: Join us as we discuss a new hotspot in Vegas, serving an unusual target market, creative ways to build the relationship with your desired audience and thoughtless messages to long-term customers.

Dan Gingiss: Cleansing, nursing, and wasting. Oh, my.

**[CX Press] Wellness Hotel Las Vegas**

Joey Coleman: There are so many great customer experience articles to read, but who has the time we summarize them and offer clear takeaways you can implement starting tomorrow. Enjoy this segment of CXPRESS, where we read the articles so you don't need to. When I say Las Vegas, what three words come to mind for you, Dan?

Dan Gingiss: Eating, gambling, and shows in that order.

Joey Coleman: Eating, gambling, and shows. Great, well, what if I told you that wellness was a word that is increasingly going to be associated with Las Vegas?

Dan Gingiss: I would say that maybe you've been out in the desert heat too long, joey. Get out of the sun and cool off because wellness in Vegas...

Joey Coleman: Fair enough, fair enough. I can understand the skepticism and I was surprised myself, Dan. But after reading this week's CX PRESS, I've become more of a believer. The article is called Forget Blackjack. This new \$850 million Las Vegas lux resort is going all in on wellness. And it was written by Rachel Cormack for the magazine, Robb Report. The article details plans for Majestic Las Vegas, a new high-rise hotel in the center of Sin City. Now, at first glance, this new resort seems like most Vegas resorts, 720 suites, 6 standalone restaurants with world-class chefs, a pool area with 50 cabanas, and a large space for live entertainment. Where this resort is not like most is that there will be absolutely no gambling.

Dan Gingiss: That's it. I'm out, Joey.

Joey Coleman: Yeah, that's not your thing.

Dan Gingiss: If I can't play blackjack or shoot some craps, I don't know what I'm doing in Las Vegas.

Joey Coleman: Fair enough, fair enough. And again, I get it that many people go to Vegas for the gambling, and they go for the eating. But there's a percentage of people that go to Vegas who, that's not their lifestyle. They have to be in Vegas for work, or maybe they're going with some friends, but the whole debauchery, what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas, isn't really their speed. And so this new hotel, the Majestic Las Vegas, actually is going to have a four-level state of the art, fitness, nutrition and spa center. So instead of being like Dan and playing blackjack or rolling craps, guess we'll be able to get spa treatments and take yoga classes. As the resort developer Lorenzo Doumani notes, it is time for Las Vegas to provide a luxury option for those who visit our city, who wants something that is non-gaming.

Dan Gingiss: So I understand this even though it's not a place that I would probably choose to stay at because more and more people have their different niche audiences that require sort of niche products to fill in the niche, if you will. And in this particular case, I get that there are people that go to Las Vegas who don't want to drink, don't want to gamble, don't want to go to shows, and just want to relax. And if those things are not available in other hotels, and I'm not sure if they are, because again, the spa's generally not a place that I spend a whole lot of time in, then I think...

Joey Coleman: We got to get damn getting more massages folks. We had a little conversation about this off air. I'm going to call you out. We got to get you a more massages, buddy.

Dan Gingiss: No, that's really not my thing.

Joey Coleman: They're so great. I know, but they're so great. If folks message us, if you think Dan should spend more time in the spa, tweet at him on Twitter or DM him or whatever you do on Twitter and say, "Joey wanted me to share with you that I agree you should spend more time in the spa."

Dan Gingiss: Or tweet at me and tell me if you think I should spend more time in the casino instead.

Joey Coleman: Yeah, fair enough, fair enough. So I think I agree with you, Dan, that there are obviously people that are going to Vegas for very specific reasons. But what surprised me or caught my attention about this article and why I wanted to talk about it is this hotel is kind of zigging when everyone else is zagging. I mean, they call it Sin City for a reason. And the fact that you would go to Sin City to get a cold-pressed juice and a massage and a cucumber rap is not really the story that usually gets told on social media or when you get back home.

Dan Gingiss: It sounds like Sinless City.

Joey Coleman: Sinless City. Yeah, that's a good point. That should be part of their branding. But what I do think is important to acknowledge is that often people go to a city not because they choose to go, but because they have to go. And Vegas is definitely one of those cities. There are tons of conventions and conferences there, where you may be... I was actually just talking to someone the other day that had been to Vegas once, and they were completely turned off because it's just not their vibe, but they had to go there for work. They were a meeting planner, hosting an event. Their company decided they were going to Vegas. And this I think gives the opportunity for businesses to have more flexibility, not only on where they hold their events, but if they have employees going to Vegas who are not kind of of the typical Vegas ilk, they can have them stay at the Majestic.

Dan Gingiss: Yeah, I mean, again, I'm all for offering different options for people. And I think for a certain part of the population, this is probably going to be a very appealing and something that they will choose over going to Vegas for gaming. And I think you're right that Vegas in particular happens to be a place that people end up at sometimes despite themselves. They're not because they want to be, but because they have to be. I'm one of those guys that gets excited when I get to go to Vegas. You're probably one of those guys that you're like, "Ah, Vegas again."

Joey Coleman: No, I love Vegas. Vegas is one of my most favorite cities on the planet. But here's the thing, I don't drink, I don't gamble, but I love the shows, I love the restaurants, and I love the spectacle of humanity, not to mention all the amazing customer experiences.

Dan Gingiss: Exactly.

Joey Coleman: Yeah, I totally agree. But let's take this out of Vegas briefly for a context. I went to the movie theater last week with my wife. And I'm in the process of trying to get healthier when it comes to my diet. And we go to the theater because we want to see a movie and the only thing I can get at the theater from the concession stand that even remotely comes close to the diet I'm trying to maintain is a bottle of water. Literally, the only thing is the water. And I found myself thinking, "How many people go to the movies, especially in a place like Colorado, that is a general rule, the population is pretty healthy and would love it if there was a banana or an apple or something that they could get that wasn't a box of candy?"

Dan Gingiss: Well, Joey, I think you're missing something really important.

Joey Coleman: What's that?

Dan Gingiss: Raisinets candy is fruit.

Joey Coleman: Oh, yeah I'll get that next time folks. Next time Raisinets. Well, the moral of the story is if you're going to Vegas, the good news is this hotel is scheduled to open in 2023. And it's going to be located directly opposite the new Las Vegas Convention Center, which is opening two years earlier and it's right in the heart of the city. So if the wellness trend we're on now in the US continues, it likely is going to open to a line of prospective guests waiting to book stays. Who knows? Maybe some of those might be our listeners because by then let's be candid, what happens in Vegas can be cleansed in Vegas.

### **[This Just Happened] Zappos Breastfeeding Pod**

We love telling stories and sharing key insights you can implement or avoid based on our experiences. Can you believe that this just happened?

I saw something in the Atlanta Airport last week and I was reminded that I've been meaning to bring this up on the show for some time. Dan, have you seen the Zappos branded lactation pod?

Dan Gingiss: I'm sorry, the what now?

Joey Coleman: You heard me correct, the Zappos branded lactation pod. So this is really cool. In the Atlanta Airport, and did a bunch of other airports around the country in public spaces, zappos has partnered with a company, Mamava, I think I'm pronouncing that right, to provide privacy pods for pumping or breastfeeding women. Now, what's interesting about this is there's such an amazing opportunity, I think, for brands to align their corporate values with societal values. So a growing number of women are rightfully so, in my

opinion, frustrated by the different laws from state to state, the societal norms and the places where they're being told or being told they can't breastfeed in public.

This is a natural thing and the moral of this story is we have folks who are trying to take care of their child who can't because of either the rules or the regulations. And Zappos has realized that by co-branding with Mamava, this company that makes these little pods that can just be dropped into a building. And think of it basically as like a three times the normal size phone booth with no windows. So you can just go in, it's this quiet, serene place. I just thought it was a really interesting way for Zappos to become part of a solution for a target market I think they're really trying to reach.

Dan Gingiss: Yeah, it's interesting. I actually have seen... all joking aside, I saw one at Union Station in Chicago, which is the main train station. And it is interesting because it doesn't take up a ton of space. It's definitely visually appealing in the sense that will you pass it by? You're like, "Whoa, what's that?" It looks almost like it's from outer space, or it was designed by somebody with some design skills. And I do think it's interesting. On first glance, I'm thinking, "Well, Zappos is about shoes, and this is about breastfeeding, and I don't really see the connection. But then the marketer in me kind of chimes in and says, "Well, women and mothers are probably big customers of Zappos. And this is a really interesting way for Zappos to get emotionally connected to them in a way that has nothing to do with shoes or feet."

Joey Coleman: I agree. I've spent a little bit of time looking at the numbers behind this. The average American family spends \$6,100 on their baby in the first year.

Dan Gingiss: I believe it.

Joey Coleman: Right now, let's be clear, Zappos isn't selling diapers, they're not selling pacifiers and bibs. But that baby is eventually going to need shoes. And so I think this idea of partnering with someone who is providing a great service in your target audience's marketplace that they need, so these pods to create the interaction and the brand awareness, if you will, is a really interesting way to do it. Now, to be very clear, when you go in these pods or when you're walking around them, they're not advertising shoes. It says Zappos, it has the Zappos logo. And we'll include some photos of the one in the Atlanta Airport in the show notes at [experiencethisshow.com](http://experiencethisshow.com). It has a giant picture of a baby. So it's very clear what it's for. And then it has a bunch of statistics on the benefits of breastfeeding on the side.

But what's also interesting is it's not necessarily just something that could be done for breastfeeding moms. I can envision these type of pods being

dropped as a place for folks who maybe have some sensory challenges to be able to go into a place that's a little quieter, that doesn't have the hustle and bustle. And so if a brand was trying to associate with that target market, I think you could partner up and do a similar type thing. At the end of the day, it really gets us thinking, "What are the ways that we could create a better experience for our target audience even if it's not directly aligned with the services or the products we're selling?"

Dan Gingiss: Yeah, and I think we should also say that kudos to Mamava for finding Zappos. If you look at the transaction the other around.

Joey Coleman: Totally, totally.

Dan Gingiss: Because Mamava's clearly not as well known of a brand and to pair with someone like Zappos, who people see the Zappos logo and they recognize it instantly, probably brings a lot more positive attention to the Mamava brand, which I think is great for them.

Joey Coleman: Well, I also think this speaks to your acknowledgement that the Mamava brand has a very clean design aesthetic and it's clear that they pay attention to design. Zappos is well known in all circles for having amazing customer experience and clean design. And so it really is a great partnership between two brands. And I'm like you, Dan, I presume that Mamava's going to get a nice lift in their brand recognition and kind of the opinion about their brand because of the association with Zappos. So what do we do? How do we apply what we've seen with Zappos partnership with Mamava to your business? Well, I think there's an opportunity to create better experiences for the audiences you're trying to reach.

First, we would identify challenges or pain points that they're feeling as a group that have no direct correlation to our business offerings. So I'm not saying, "Oh, you sell shoes, go where all the people who need shoes are." It's like no, get a connection that has nothing to do with your offering because it feels a lot less sale-sy that way. Second, figure out creative ways to solve the challenges that your target market is facing, either on your own or in partnership with providers. And third, don't try to rush it. Don't try to maximize the profitability of each interaction. One of the things that is the fastest way to eliminate any positive goodwill or feelings of positive customer satisfaction is to try to make the interaction into a sellable moment. Sit back, relax. Let your reputation for serving your target audience build. Don't worry, they'll remember you later when it's relevant to both of you.

**[Start the Conversation] Avtex: Empowering Customers**

Joey Coleman: Sometimes all it takes is a single question to get your company thinking about an improved customer experience. Here's an idea for how you can start the conversation

This week's start the conversation topic is empowering customers. The moderate customer expects the ability to seek resolutions to issues, or answers to questions through a variety of channels. While some issues require the assistance of an agent, others can be resolved by the customer without agent involvement if the customer is empowered to do so. Providing self-service tools and content is the first step in empowering customers.

Dan Gingiss: There are many ways to empower customers, including, one, developing a robust self-help knowledge base on your website or mobile application, two, creating an intuitive IVR menu or interactive voice response menu to allow customers to direct themselves to the proper support channels, three, offering self-service portals to enable customers to complete specific tasks such as updating account information or accessing key information securely, four, maintaining a chatbot on your website or app to guide customers to the resolutions they seek, and five, the ability to easily escalate to assisted service at any point.

Joey Coleman: There's a giant percentage of your customers that actually would like to solve the problem themselves. One of the things we talk about in customer experience all the time is, "Oh, you need to be responsive to the customer. You need to take into consideration their wants and needs. You have to have your call center agents ready to talk to them." And it's like, yeah, but if we actually rewind to the beginning of that, where we say we need to be responsive to their wants, often their want is not to talk to a human being, to be able to solve it themselves, to be able to read the documentation, to be able to have a self-healing device, to be able to sort it out on their own by navigating through a series of prompts or fix it tools. So don't just presume that in order for it to be a great customer experience, there has to be a human involved. Often empowering the customer to solve this problem themselves or find the answer themselves is the way to actually make them feel the best.

Dan Gingiss: Couldn't agree more, my buddy. And now, for this week's question about empowering customers, do we offer customers the tools and access they need to confidently resolve issues themselves? We encourage you to start the conversation within your own organization and then continue it with AV techs at [experienceconversations.com](http://experienceconversations.com), that's [experienceconversations.com](http://experienceconversations.com)

**[Dissecting the Experience] Communicate Internally to Provide a Better Experience**

Joey Coleman: It's shocking how often people use 38 words to describe something when two would do the trick. We're looking at you lawyers and accountants, words matter. And there is no excuse for trying to hide what you mean. We explore words and messaging in this next iteration of say what! Dan, does your bank send you any promotional offers in the mail?

Dan Gingiss: Sometimes I think the only thing I get in the mail are credit card offers.

Joey Coleman: I hear you, but do they come from your bank specifically? So there's the difference of the credit card offers you get from like all their credit card companies, but then there's the ones you specifically get from your bank. Do you get any of those?

Dan Gingiss: Not really, no. They already know me, and I have a lot of accounts with them and so they leave me alone.

Joey Coleman: Wow, interesting how that works. I'll note what Dan said. They already know me. I already have accounts with them. I ask because my bank, which for context I've been with since 2003 that 16 years for those of you scoring along at home...

Dan Gingiss: Hold on, carry the one. Yep, he's right guys, 16 years.

Joey Coleman: 16 years. My bank has been sending me two personal credit card solicitations and two business card solicitations every month for at least the last 10 years. Now, I never opened them. Well, I think I did maybe the first month. I never opened them, I never reply, I'm never going to get a credit card with my bank. And for the life of me, I can't figure out why no one at the bank has figured this out.

Dan Gingiss: Well, this is actually an issue that I have some familiarity with because as our listeners know, I worked at a credit card company for almost 10 years. And while I agree with you that this is a pretty weird situation in the sense that you've clearly made the statement with your inaction...

Joey Coleman: That would be once a month for a decade. For those of you again scoring at home, I know we don't usually have math on the Experience This! show. That's 128 rejections per offer. Mind you, I'm getting four offers per month. So 120 times 4, carry the 1, that's 480 times that they have sent me an offer that I haven't replied to.

Dan Gingiss: That's many, many times. And the best that I can guess without defending them is that you are part of the larger group of people being mailed this offer. And at the end of every campaign, they take a look at the campaign as a whole, and they say, "Well, was it worth it for us to mail this out 10,000 times? Well, we got X hundred people to respond, and so our costs per

account or CPA is at a level that is okay. And so great, this was a successful campaign. Let's try it again next month."

Now, that's not great marketing because of course if we were doing better, we would dig into the data a little bit, and we would see, "Wow, there's this guy, Joey, that we've mailed 480 times and he hasn't said yes yet. So the chances of the investment being worth it to mail him the 481st time is not really high. He probably knows we're here if he ever needs us and wants to be proactive about it." So if I were there, I would be digging into the data a little bit harder to eliminate what I'm guessing is a sizeable pocket of that campaign that is never going to respond. And what they'll find is by mailing fewer people and getting the same responses, the response rate goes up and their costs per account goes down.

Joey Coleman: Yeah. I just I can't fathom this. Something you said, Dan, really resonated with me when you said the bank they would be thinking, "Well, he knows we're here." Here's the crazy thing. I have the bank's mobile app, I receive a statement in the mail every month, I occasionally go into my branch to do something weird like send a wire or whatever it may be. There have been dozens, if not hundreds of opportunities for them to ask me, "Do you think you're ever going to get a credit card from us?" Like I would actually appreciate that. I would appreciate the straightforwardness, the honesty, the just kind of directness of, "Look, we've been sending you a lot of mail. Do you even open that mail? Because it seems like you might not even open it and maybe you'd be excited to help save some trees by have us not sending you that mail." If they actually said that, I would happily opt out of any of the offers.

Now, before anybody who's listening says, "Well, Joey, I imagine you could go in and opt out of their marketing and promotional messages." You're right, I could. And I know this is the wrong answer, and I know environmentalists everywhere are infuriated by this type of answer, and I'm irritated at myself for giving this answer. But if you're not going to make it easy for me, I'm probably not going to take time out of my day to figure it out. And I would actually love it if my bank would make it easy for me because not only would I take them up on the offer and feel better about myself and be able to contribute to a better environment, but I would say, "Huh, they know me, I know them, but they know me and they're okay with the fact that I'm not going to get a credit card."

Dan Gingiss: Well, first, I want to give you a suggestion. This is a free pro tip you.

Joey Coleman: Oh, pro tip from a man who used to work in the biz.

Dan Gingiss: I want you to take for the next year or so, I want you to take all the mailings and just throw them in a shoebox, just collect them. And then I want you to take one of the mailings with the self-addressed stamped envelope that comes... when it comes through them, you're supposed to mail it back. And I want you to paste that on top of the shoebox, and I want you to ship all of their unopened letters back to them at their postal expense. And I think that will probably get their attention and my guess is they'll stop mailing you.

Joey Coleman: Ooh, I like it, I like it.

Dan Gingiss: But in lieu of that, I do want to explain I think why you're not getting the experience that you want when you walk into the branch or when you engage with them in other ways, and it's unfortunately because companies of the size of your bank... and by the way, we are intentionally not naming the bank because we tend to tell positive stories on this show and applaud brands that are doing things well, and the ones that aren't, we don't really need to pile on to negativity. But instead, we try to use our show to explain how we might do it differently and help companies learn from it. So the name of the bank doesn't really matter. But what I will tell you is the size of your bank is one that is internally an incredibly siloed organization.

And so the reality is the manager of your bank branch has absolutely nothing to do with the credit card department, nothing at all. In fact, he or she probably cannot access anything related to your credit card and certainly not related to the marketing of your credit card offers. So it's just a different part of the company. Now, as consumers, we say, "But it's my bank, and I look at it as a single company." Unfortunately, many banks and many large companies are so siloed, which of course creates siloed experiences, which you're talking about today.

Joey Coleman: Yeah, so here's the thing. Let me say a few words about silos. And I appreciate that observation, Dan. And I think you're absolutely right. It's also why you and I and all of the amazing customer experience professionals listening to the show will never go hungry because so many businesses are siloed and completely disjointed. And even though we all know that is consumers, we see it's the bank. That's who I'm doing business with. I don't care that you have 738 departments that all have independent relationships with me. When I talked to you, I want all of you to know that I'm talking to you. So that makes perfect sense. But let me say a word about silos. So I grew up in Iowa. Iowa is known for those of you that are not from the United States, or maybe you haven't had the pleasure of visiting the Heartland, it is known for farms. And one of the things you will find on pretty much every grain farm in Iowa...

Dan Gingiss: Can I guess?

Joey Coleman: Yes.

Dan Gingiss: A silo?

Joey Coleman: It's a silo, and silos are absolutely incredible on the farm. They are very useful. They keep the grain ready until it's time to take it to market. You know where silos aren't useful? In your organization. It's not a good choice to have silos, and yet we use this as an excuse, as a justification for why we can't make the experience better. Please, please consider sending this segment to your boss's boss and saying, "We have silos in our organization that are costing our business money, not relationship, not reputation, money." Because, Dan, as somebody who was in this business, what do you think ballpark, they've spent sending me over the last 10 years credit card offers? Like just spitball a number. You know how much these things cost.

Dan Gingiss: I would say Just you alone, it's probably now north of \$1,000.

Joey Coleman: \$1,000 in marketing.

Dan Gingiss: And your lifetime value to them if you were to become a card member tomorrow is probably not \$1,000.

Joey Coleman: There you go. So, folks, this isn't a do-right because it's the right thing to do conversation. It is, but it doesn't have to be just that. This can be a conversation about, do the right thing for the bottom line, do the right thing for the environment, do the right thing and break down the silos. So what can we learn from the credit card mailer debacle that has been happening with my bank? It's pretty straight forward. Pay attention to your customers. I both understand and appreciate that your marketing department wants to continue to upsell new products and new services, especially to your long-term customers. But after 10 years of me not responding, enough is enough. Take stock of your promotional messages. And to paraphrase the 2009 drama, recognize that your customer's just not into you and that new credit card offer.

Dan Gingiss: Wow, thanks for joining us for another episode of Experience this! We know there are tons of podcasts to listen to, magazines and books to read, reality TV to watch. We don't take for granted that you've decided to spend some quality time listening to the two of us.

Joey Coleman: We hope you enjoyed our discussions. And if you do, we'd love to hear about it. Come on over to [experiencethisshow.com](http://experiencethisshow.com) and let us know what segments you enjoyed, what new segments you'd like to hear. This show is all about experience. And we want you to be part of the experience this show.

Dan Gingiss: Thanks again for your time, and we'll see you next week for more...

Joey Coleman: Experience.

Dan Gingiss: This!