



From product focus to customer focus: What does customer-centric marketing really mean?

Thursday, April 17, 2025 06:00 AM EDT

By [Deborah Daily](#), Co-founder & President, Buckaroo Marketing | New Media

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Customer centricity has become a buzzword that every business throws around—“*We put the customer first.*” But what does that really mean, and how is your organization applying it?

Are you just saying it, or do you have true commitment behind your words?

Imagine you’re the IT manager for a fast-growing company. Your infrastructure is bursting at the seams. You need a cloud solution to handle everything, from data storage to scalability. You’re looking for a solution that can grow with your company, is easy to manage, and doesn’t break the budget. After some research, you narrow your options down to two providers and schedule a call with their sales teams.

The first provider’s sales rep dives right into the details: “*Our cloud service offers 99.99% uptime. We prioritize high-speed data migration and built-in cybersecurity measures. It includes multi-region redundancy and integrates seamlessly with leading CRMs.*” Impressive, right? They know their product. But it’s technical, impersonal, and feels like they’re just reading off a features list.

For the second provider, the representative takes a different approach by starting with a question: “*What challenges are you facing with your current infrastructure?*” They inquire about your growth rate, your team’s capacity to manage new systems, and your core pain points. Rather than listing features, they focus on understanding your needs. Only after gaining this insight, do they explain how their solution can simplify and enhance the work of your IT department.

Now, imagine both solutions have similar features and prices. Which company are you more likely to choose? Company A knows its product inside out. *Company B knows you and your unique needs.* That’s customer-centric marketing: understanding the client before pushing a product. It’s a personal touch that makes all the difference.

Here are other related terms that are often misunderstood:

Customer satisfaction is a one-time measure of how happy a customer is with a product or service. Imagine you choose the cloud solution, and it meets your expectations—**that’s satisfaction.**

Customer experience is the entire journey a customer has with your brand—from visiting your website, talking to your sales rep, to product purchasing and follow-up. It’s how each interaction makes you feel.

Customer loyalty means that the customer keeps coming back because of positive experiences.

Customer centricity is an overarching philosophy that influences every business decision. It transcends individual transactions or isolated marketing efforts. It’s about putting the customer at the center of everything you do—from product development to customer service and internal policies. You make every decision with the customer in mind.

Back to the cloud service. To truly achieve customer-centricity, you need to consider customer pain points and desires at every stage—starting with product development. When designing the cloud solution, think about the IT manager at that fast-growing company. You don’t just add technical features; you prioritize how those features solve real pain points. These include reducing manual maintenance to freeing up their team or ensuring easy scalability to handle rapid growth.

But it doesn’t stop there. Your website copy and marketing materials must also reflect this “customer-first” approach. Instead of boasting about “multi-region redundancy,” focus on how your solution helps prevent downtime and facilitate smooth growth for busy IT departments. Use language that speaks directly to their challenges and explains why your solution is exactly what they’ve been looking for.

Even your sales team should embody this approach. The first conversation isn’t about closing a sale; it’s about listening. It’s about asking, “*What’s your biggest pain point right now, and how can we help?*” When every aspect of your business—from design to marketing and sales—prioritizes the customers’ needs, you’re not just selling a product. You’re offering a solution that fits seamlessly into their lives and makes their work easier.

Customer centricity means integrating empathy at every level of your business. It’s making sure your development team listens to customer feedback, your marketing speaks directly to real concerns, and your sales team genuinely connects with each person. When you do that, you build relationships that aren’t just about products—they’re about making a real difference in someone’s professional life.

Shifting from product-focused to customer centricity can be demanding for even the most resourceful companies. It requires a fundamental shift in mindset, a deep understanding of customer needs, and a willingness to adapt your business model and processes accordingly.

By integrating a customer-centric approach into your strategy, we empower your brand to build lasting relationships, driving customer loyalty through care, connection, and consistency. Let Buckaroo guide you on the path toward sustainable growth and help you connect more deeply with your customers.

Deborah Daily is the co-founder and president of Buckaroo Marketing | New Media, a Fishers-based strategic multi-media, marketing, communications, and advertising agency established in 1999. She can be reached at DLDaily@gobuckaroo.com. To learn more visit www.gobuckaroo.com.



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Inside Indiana Business
A division of IBJ Media

1 Monument Circle, Suite 300
Indianapolis, IN 46204

PHONE: (317) 634-6200

FAX: (317) 263-5060

NEWSLETTER@IBNEWS.COM

