Template: CX Project Evaluation Inventory

Qualtrics XM institute™

Original Resource: *How to Build a CX Program Roadmap*

SUMMARY

Every customer experience (CX) program inevitably has a universe of potential projects the CX team could tackle. Without a systematic way of documenting and assessing these possible activities, teams are liable to take a haphazard approach to customer experience improvements that is unlikely to lead to wider, systemic change. A CX Project Evaluation Inventory is a standardized template CX teams can use to capture a high-level overview of potential customer experience projects, along with some light details around how each project would be implemented. Teams can then use this overview to make decisions about which CX activities to focus on and when. Use this worksheet to build out a CX Project Evaluation Inventory. We've included tips for each step and an example completed template to help guide you through this process.

8 STEPS TO BUILD A CX PROJECT EVALUATION INVENTORY

A CX Project Evaluation Inventory provides an overview of the customer experience projects you could tackle to achieve your program's overarching vision and business objectives. The goal of this activity is not to commit to projects you will absolutely undertake; rather, its purpose is to capture and lightly detail *potential* projects, which will allow you to prioritize, plan, socialize, and validate your program's CX efforts. To complete a CX Project Evaluation Inventory:

+ **Step 1. Pinpoint CX challenges and opportunities**. The first step is to identify where there are existing CX challenges and opportunities that your CX program could address. These could come from a variety of different sources but should always be linked to your CX program's goals and broader business objectives (see tips on page 4).
+ **Step 2. Brainstorm CX projects to address challenges and opportunities**. Next, write down ideas for specific CX projects that could tackle the challenges and opportunities you identified. These projects — which are the heart of this tool — could focus on closing experience gaps, building CX capabilities, or improving internal processes and operations (see tips on page 4).
+ **Step 3. Define expected business outcomes**. For each potential CX project, identify the financial or strategic benefit your organization could expect if you enact that project. These are often framed as operational or financial success metrics, such as increased customer renewals, reduced cost-to-serve, or lower agent turnover (see tips on page 5).
+ **Step 4. Establish key metrics for success**. Once you know the business outcomes you're looking to achieve, determine which experience and operational metrics you would need to have in place to track your progress towards achieving that outcome. This could be new measurements or ones you already have in place (see tips on page 5).
+ **Step 5. Identify new or existing listening posts**. Then describe how you would capture those key metrics. Which listening posts would you need to either establish or tap into to produce those measurements (see tips on page 6)?
+ **Step 6. Determine which individuals and roles would be involved**. Define which teams or individuals would likely own each project as well as which groups would need to be included in the design and implementation of that project (see tips on page 6).
+ **Step 7. Estimate likely timelines and resource requirements**. Provide estimates around likely length of each project as well as the likely human and financial resources required to complete it. The goal here is not perfect accuracy (that should come later if and when you do choose to implement the project) but to give you a rough estimate you can use when making prioritization and planning decisions (see tips on page 7).
+ **Step 8. Fill in Project Inventory template**. Finally, transfer the information from Steps 1 to 7 into the template on page 2. That template should provide you with a high-level framework, which you can use to prioritize projects for your CX program roadmap, socialize and validate CX plans with other teams, and scope budget and resource requests.

HOW TO USE

You can use this tool to:

+ **Identify inputs to CX program roadmap.** Use the CX projects you capture here as an input into your [CX program roadmap](). We recommend running a [prioritization exercise]() on the list of projects to rank them in order of importance.
+ **Conduct a CX strategy workshop.** Complete this exercise as part of a CX strategy workshop, where participants can work together to build out a CX Project Evaluation Inventory as a foundational step in your CX strategy development.
+ **Create transparent communications.** Leverage this Inventory to illustrate the link between CX efforts and business outcomes and communicate your plans and priorities to key stakeholders.
+ **Build organizational agility.** When business strategy and priorities shift, having a considered and comprehensive project inventory that you can draw on for ideas and inspiration will help you quickly adapt the direction of your program.

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Use this template to fill in your CX Project Evaluation Inventory. You made need multiple copies of this page to capture them all. Use tips on pages 4 through 7 for guidance.

	PROJECT #1	PROJECT #2	PROJECT #3	PROJECT #4
CX OPPORTUNITY OR CHALLENGE				
CX PROJECT IDEAS				
EXPECTED BUSINESS OUTCOMES				
KEY METRICS				
LISTENING POSTS				
PROJECT OWNERS				
PROJECT COLLABORATORS				
TIMELINE				
RESOURCES				

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EXAMPLE: Completed CX Project Evaluation Inventory template for a hospitality company:

	PROJECT #1	PROJECT #2	PROJECT #3	PROJECT #4
CX OPPORTUNITY OR CHALLENGE	Long check-in lines causing customer frustration	Low satisfaction with hotel staff	High abandonment rates in website booking process	High volume of complaints about dirty room on arrival
CX PROJECT IDEAS	**Add in-app check-in functionality**	**Create mandatory CX workshops for frontline employees**	**Reduce number of steps in online booking engine**	**Find opportunities to improve cleaning process**
EXPECTED BUSINESS OUTCOMES	Increase Revenue Per Occupied Room, Decrease Front Desk Labor	Increase Revenue Per Occupied Room	Increase Booking Revenue, Decrease Support Volume	Increase Revenue Per Occupied Room
KEY METRICS	Utilization rate, Check-in OSAT, Customer Effort Score (CES)	Staff friendliness, # problems reported, support OSAT, service score on 3rd party rating sites	Booking OSAT, revenue per room, occupancy rate, contact center volume, CES	Room OSAT, ancillary revenue, cleanliness score on 3rd party rating sites
LISTENING POSTS	In-app notification (new); post-stay email survey (updated)	Questionnaire cards in room (new); post-stay email survey (updated), 3rd party rating reviews (updated)	Embedded feedback on purchase page (new); exit intent pop-up (new); post-stay email survey (updated)	In-moment SMS (new); post-stay email survey (updated), 3rd party rating reviews (updated)
PROJECT OWNERS	CX team	CX Team, HR, Dept Heads	Digital team, revenue management	CX Team, Hotel Ops, Housekeeping
PROJECT COLLABORATORS	Engineers, UX designers	Frontline employees across departments	CX Team	Engineering, Facilities
TIMELINE	9 months (6 months building, 3 months piloting)	2 months	1-3 months	3 months (1 month diagnosing, 2 months piloting)
RESOURCES	Dedicated digital team resource	Dedicated training resource	Dedicated digital team resource	Frontline employees for diagnostic

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To help you fill out the CX Project Evaluation Inventory template on page 2, we have provided some tips to guide you through the process:

STEP 1

Pinpoint CX Opportunities and Challenges

TIPS

+ Ideally, the CX opportunities and challenges you identify should flow from your CX program's overarching vision. This vision, in turn, should link to your organization's business strategy and act as a North Star for your CX program.
+ These opportunities and challenges can include existing customer pain points, areas of potential differentiation, customer-centric skills and capabilities you need to build within your organization, or internal process/operational issues.
+ Keep in mind that these opportunities and challenges could also arise from external environmental factors that may be shifting customer expectations or altering your competitive landscape (e.g., market disruption, new regulations, technological opportunities, economic downturn).

Potential sources: survey results, journey maps, maturity assessments, stakeholder interviews, scenario reviews, usability reviews, qualitative research studies, frontline feedback, social media posts.

STEP 2

Brainstorm CX projects to address challenges and opportunities

TIPS

+ The scope of CX projects tend to be operational and contained. They should be high-level enough that you can break them down into smaller tasks to, say, include in a program roadmap, but not so broad that they require a significant transformational effort to implement.
+ Ideally, these projects should support your program's broader CX initiatives and overarching vision. For instance, if your vision is to be the easiest company to buy from, and, consequently, you have a major initiative around increasing digital self-service, potential CX projects might include updating content in the online help center, improving in-app navigation, and building a chatbot.
+ It's okay to get creative or aspirational here! The goal of this tool is to document many different CX projects, so don't get too hung up on only including the efforts most likely to get enacted. You can prioritize which projects to take up – and in what order – at a later date.

Potential sources: inspiration from any source in Step 1, XM Institute's [Prioritizing Improvements Across CX Skills and Actions] worksheet, the CX Actions in each stage of the [CX Maturity Assessment]

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STEP 3

Define expected business outcomes

TIPS

+ These expected business outcomes should be strategic or financial impacts your organization can anticipate seeing from this project. They should not be customer sentiments or attitudes, but they can be customer behaviors.
+ Often these business outcomes are either financial or operational metrics. While these outcomes can vary between companies and industries, common examples include Increased Customer Renewal or Retention, Increased New Customer Acquisition, Increased Product Upgrades, Decreased Contact Center Volume, Lower Cost-to-Serve, Improved Agent Effectiveness, or Increased Utilization Rate
+ Where there's alignment, we recommend using the exact same language as the rest of your organization to describe these business outcomes. This will help cement the link between your CX efforts and your organization's top-level priorities and initiatives.

Potential sources: stated organizational priorities, executive interviews, minutes from company meetings, quarterly or annual company reports, industry norms.

STEP 4

Establish key metrics for success

TIPS

+ These metrics should track your progress towards the expected business outcome. For example, if your business outcome is "reduce support costs," key metrics might include diverted call volume, support page visits, self-service adoption %, agent utilization rate, help page effectiveness, chat agent knowledge, wait times, and CSAT with support journey.
+ These metrics can include customer experience metrics (e.g., satisfaction, Net Promoter Score (NPS), Customer Effort Score (CES), Ease of Doing Business, Agent Friendliness, etc.) or operational metrics (engineering tickets during upgrade, channel adoption growth, total order value, abandonment rate).
+ There are inevitably a multitude of metrics you could identify here, and they will likely vary across the teams responsible for the project (e.g., for "reduce support calls," agents may be measured on friendliness, knowledge, and average handle time, whereas the digital team may be measured on support page visits, help page effectiveness, and self-service adoption %). To limit yourself for this exercise, ask project collaborators which ones they think would make the most sense for their team.

Potential sources: quantitative modeling (e.g., correlation analysis, regression analysis, linkage analysis) on relational CX metrics and customer behaviors, stakeholder interviews with project collaborators, existing team measurements and KPIs

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STEP 5

Identify new or existing listening posts

TIPS

- A "listening post" refers to *a single listening event*, such as a survey.
- Listening posts can be date-based (e.g., annual NPS), event-based (e.g., post-service interaction, post-implementation, site intercept), or always-on (e.g., passive listening, social media).
- You may also want to consider including light details around the method of collecting feedback (e.g., email, SMS, website/in-app, telephone, kiosk, QR-code, receipt-based) and whether the listening post would be new, revamped, or existing.

Potential sources: Voice of the Customer platform, CRM reporting, journey maps, stakeholder interviews with teams who own a particular experience

STEP 6

Determine which individuals and roles would be involved

TIPS

- To be successful, a CX project will need a specific team or individual who is responsible for managing and coordinating the effort and is ultimately accountable for its success.
- CX projects can be owned by a core CX team or can be managed by business owners within the relevant line of business.
- It is unlikely that a single team or individual would own the end-to-end process of a given project, so it's important to also identify "project collaborators" – individuals or teams who will need to be involved in the creation and design of the project (e.g., UX team, product team, HR, IT, operations, etc.).
- We recommend sharing the overview of a particular CX Project with its likely collaborators and asking them for input. It's particularly useful to get their insights into things like their bandwidth, necessary resources, potential competing priorities, etc.

Potential sources: org charts, stakeholder interviews with teams who own that element of the customer journey, stakeholder maps

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STEP 7

Estimate likely timelines and resource requirements

TIPS

+ Remember, these are only for potential CX projects, so don't spend too much time trying to define the most accurate timeline or resource requirements – general estimates are okay. Common buckets are 0-3 months, 4-6 months, 6-9 months, and 10+ months.
+ Take these estimates to relevant Project Collaborators to validate that this matches their availability, budget, and timing constraints.
+ Keep in mind that depending on factors such as changing business priorities, market shifts, personnel changes, competing priorities, etc., timelines can vary over time, so you may want to revisit this step before running a prioritization exercise or enacting a particular project.

Potential sources: stakeholder interviews with project collaborators, CX program's executive sponsor, CX program annual budget

STEP 8

Fill in the CX Project Evaluation Inventory template

TIPS

+ To make it easy to scan and share, only include necessary information in the template. However, you may want to maintain detailed supporting documentation for each potential CX project so if it does get implemented, you can hit the ground running.
+ This inventory is a great starting point to use to populate a prioritization exercise and/or a CX program roadmap.
+ You can fill in this template yourself, with a small team, or as part of a workshop where you brainstorm ideas with a wider group of stakeholders.
+ Plan to revisit this list on a regular basis (quarterly, bi-annually, etc.) to ensure it continues to reflect the most pressing CX challenges and opportunities facing your organization.

Potential sources: CX Project Evaluation Inventory template on page 2, example completed template on page 3