Synoptek

Customer Journey Mapping Boosts Engagement for a Regional Park System

Customer Overview

Customer

A regional park district

Profile

The county preserves and protects natural resources and provides outdoor recreation and education to enhance the quality of life for present and future generations.

Industry

Government Administration

Services

Customer Experience

Business Need

Over the years, the county park system found itself juggling a patchwork of on-premises, off-the-shelf software applications. Each system operated in isolation, unable to "talk" to the others. This lack of integration created many challenges — key data elements were missing, leaving decision-makers without the insights needed to drive strategic, informed actions. As a result, agility suffered, productivity slowed, and the potential to optimize operations remained out of reach.

The client recognized the need to embark on a digital transformation journey to modernize their systems and enhance their ability to serve and engage park guests effectively. They aimed to implement new CRM, CMS, and POS systems that seamlessly integrated to support customer insights and growth marketing objectives. Initially, considering this a typical IT-led, standard re-platforming project.

As the project progressed, it became clear that simply modernizing IT systems wasn't enough. The client recognized a larger opportunity: transforming how they managed customer experiences (CX). This shift expanded the project's focus, requiring a deeper dive into guest needs, involving more department leaders, and aligning efforts with long-term business goals. The emphasis moved beyond technical upgrades to a comprehensive organizational change management strategy, ensuring seamless platform adoption and empowering staff to deliver an enhanced, guest-focused experience.

Solution and Approach

Synoptek began the project with a simple upgrade of the county's legacy tools and systems to modern, cloud-based systems.

Technology Assessment

Extensive discovery sessions with CX consultants and business analysts jointly conducting stakeholder interviews helped to:

- Determine the current state assessment and business needs.

- Enable future-state customer journey mapping to gain deep insights into the needs of staff and park guests.

- Provide detailed, tailored tech and business recommendations aligned with immediate and long-term goals.

- Build a detailed, multi-year roadmap of tech and business recommendations for a modernized, integrated digital experience that supports staff needs, enhances customer insights and engagement, and improves operational efficiency.

- Craft a Change Management Communication Plan that lays the foundation for continuous innovation and a digital customer-centric mindset, and keeping all stakeholders informed on the broader impact this transition would have on the county's culture.

- Visualize future state experiences to leadership, and across the organization, to generate excitement amongst employees, community, and donors.

Customer Journey Mapping

During the planning for future-state journey map sessions, client leadership recognized the profound cultural impact this transition would have on the broader organization. This realization prompted a critical shift in mindset, resulting in a change in project plan that expanded scope to include journey mapping and the selection of advanced technologies designed to enhance customer engagement.

Managing the evolving scope and balancing the broad vision with budget constraints and across different business units was challenging. Aligning the customer experience insights into the technology requirements meant close collaboration across multiple teams and regular client engagements to maintain alignment.

That's when we realized that CX insights from the journey maps were critical to determining the tech requirement "elements" and "weights" to evaluate appropriate platforms. In this phase, we:

- Conducted future-state customer journey mapping sessions with cross-functional departments to understand visitor interactions across platforms and identify key pain points.

- Identified and prioritized business requirements for 2025, particularly around CRM, Digital Experience Platform (DXP), Point of Sale (POS) systems, and Web Analytics.

- Outlined and aligned which business process and technology changes are needed to implement and deliver on those future experiences.

- Involved multiple practices early in the process to align project goals across technical and experience-focused aspects.

- Engaged the executive leadership team in conversations and expanded scope and mindset on the value of understanding the importance of these platforms' capability to deliver true value.

- Reframed the project to focus on customer experience, rather than purely IT, leading to more meaningful, long-term recommendations that align with the client's strategic objectives.

Platform Selection

We selected several platforms to enable digital transformation and enhance the overall customer experience:

- Digital Experience Platform (DXP) (e.g., Kentico, Sitecore)

- Point of Sale (POS) (e.g., Square, Shopify, Lightspeed)

- Reservation & Ticketing Systems (e.g., Centaman, Parker)

- Customer Relationship Management (CRM) (e.g., Dynamics)

- Centralized Data & Insights Reporting (for actionable insights)

- Digital Marketing Tools (e.g., Campaign management, CDP)

- Web Behavior Analytics (e.g., Quantum Metric, FullStory)

Business Benefits

The cross-practice synergy demonstrated Synoptek's ability to leverage multiple perspectives and disciplines to deliver value beyond technical upgrades. With this larger project scope, the client can:

- One-third of the final evaluation criteria were derived from the future-state journey map sessions – that would not have otherwise been included.

- Leverage visual illustrations of all nine future experiences for the executive team as a roadmap for future planning and strategy.

- Have a modernized, integrated digital experience across its platforms.

- Better address staff requirements and enhance customer engagement.

- Identify operational efficiency and enable a foundation for continuous innovation.

About Synoptek

Synoptek delivers accelerated business results through advisory-led, transformative full-life-cycle systems integration and managed services. We partner with organizations worldwide to help them navigate the ever-changing business and technology landscape, build solid foundations for their business, and achieve their business goals.