

## The Stakeholder Game: Finding Allies & Advocates



## Summary

Amber Collins and Scott Shurson discuss stakeholder strategies with Michelle Brigman, focusing on customer insights and loyalty programs to enhance experiences.

### Questions Answered

- How can businesses effectively engage stakeholders to enhance customer loyalty programs?
- What strategies can be used to humanize customer data and improve stakeholder understanding?
- How does focusing on individual stakeholder needs contribute to successful customer experience initiatives?

### HIGHLIGHTS

**On Delivering Value to Stakeholders:** "If I had to sum it up, I would say it is about finding your ally and delivering a single for them. And when I say ally, I mean stakeholder. One key stakeholder delivers something that is really valuable to them." — Michelle Brigman [00:01:50 → 00:02:57]

**On Championing Customer Experience:** "We that lead CX, we choose to be in the space because we just are very passionate about customers. Right? We care, and we want to be the champion for them." — Michelle Brigman [00:03:15 → 00:05:08]

**On Elevating Customer Voice:** "We have a tendency to speak about customers as if they're data points... One is not using percentages. So look at it as if you've got a pain point that you're trying to fight." — Michelle Brigman [00:06:58 → 00:08:16]

**On Creating Relatable Customer Stories:** "Call the customer by name. Because when you can really create that relatable story that you're telling, people begin to understand and get to know their customer." — Michelle Brigman [00:08:47 → 00:09:18]

**On Experiential Storytelling:** "I remember we were bringing in some executives and we were just sharing voice of the customer in a different, just a different way. Turn the lights off in a conference room." — Michelle Brigman [00:09:18 → 00:10:20]

**On Addressing Customer Pain Points:** "I was working for a large global bank, and there was an issue that had occurred where customers were complaining because they couldn't find the pay my bill button." — Michelle Brigman [00:13:23 → 00:13:54]

## TRANSCRIPT

**Amber Collins**  
**[0:05 - 1:19]:**

Welcome to CX Anonymous, the series where we provide tactical advice on successfully executing customer experiences. We don't care who you work for, just how it got done. On this episode of CX Anonymous, we're continuing the discussion on the stakeholder game, the one that we all have to play to get our initiatives out the door. I'm your host, Amber Collins, product marketing manager at Annex Cloud, with my co-host Scott Shurson, product solutions director and a host of guests discussing the pitfalls, opportunities and the overall experience of playing the stakeholder game. Last episode we examined the fallacy of the Elephant and the Six Blind men. And if you haven't seen that episode, I encourage you to go watch it. Today we are joined by Michelle Brigman. Michelle is a transformational client experience leader focused on innovating strategies to drive revenue, mobilize cohesive teams, and deliver elevated customer experiences. Michelle is the co-host of the Hard Won Wisdom podcast and consultant for Advantage CX, where she partners with companies to craft unforgettable experiences that keep customers coming back. Welcome, Michelle. So happy to have you.

**Michelle**  
**Brigman [1:19 -**  
**1:20]:**

Oh, I'm thrilled to be here.

**Amber Collins**  
**[1:21 - 1:22]:**

Welcome back, Scott.

**Scott Shurson**  
**[1:23 - 1:40]:**

Hi. Thanks for having us back. Yeah, looking forward to it today. Right. Looking forward to it today. You know, hitting a single, getting to yes. As a baseball fan, you know, that always resonates with me. So I appreciate a good metaphor here and there.

**Amber Collins**  
**[1:41 - 1:49]:**

Absolutely. And Michelle, in your own words, tell us what hitting a single and getting that "yes" means when delivering loyalty and customer experiences.

**Michelle**  
**Brigman [1:50 -**  
**2:57]:**

If I had to sum it up, I would say it is about finding your ally and delivering a single for them. And when I say ally, I mean stakeholder. One key stakeholder delivers something that is really valuable to them. Because once you hit that single, it opens the door to your next yes and then that. And I'll tell you why it opens that door to the next jest. One, you actually have a proof point, you have a data point. And two, you have someone that is trusted and respected being an advocate for the work that you and your team are doing. Because let's face it, leaders are going to trust their peers more than they're

going to trust you as the leader of the department that's delivering the service. So grab that stakeholder, turn them into a champion, hit that single for them, and then that's just turns in, that turns into the next single and the next single and the next yes. And then you get to do whatever it is that is on your agenda that may have to be set aside for a little while so you can help them be successful?

**Amber Collins**  
**[2:57 - 3:15]:**

Absolutely. With Mark Mickelson and the six blind men and the elephant situation, that was definitely a overarching sort of theme of understanding what's in it for them and making those things happen for them so that you can get what you would like to get through the door.

**Michelle**  
**Brigman [3:15 -**  
**5:08]:**

I mean, because the reality is just on the same theme. We that lead CX, we choose to be in the space because we just are very passionate about customers. Right? We care, and we want to be the champion for champion for them. And we do that sometimes by going in and saying, you know, I'm going to fight the good fight. I'm going to have the megaphone on behalf of customers. I'm going to challenge the way that the company is doing the things they're doing, whether it's the process, the product, the service, whatever it is. And although we're well intentioned, and although the company is well intentioned, often we find ourselves getting the no. And we hear, you know, no, I don't have budget. No, I don't have the resources to tackle that customer pain point. And as that leader and that champion, you get really frustrated because you're then like, well, then how the heck, why am I here? Like, how the heck am I supposed to get anything done? I've spent many moments where I wanted to jump on my desk and stomp my feet and scream really loud and like, what is wrong? Don't y'all care? Don't you care about the customer? Why do I care more than the company? And what I found is it had a lot to do with that approach of where I was leading. Again, well intentioned, but leading with my agenda. And that is what got me to the point where I said, help them hit the single, and then you get your yes. So it's a matter of hard, that hard won wisdom where, you know, you've got to get your bumps and bruises and then really learn. All right, I need to try a different approach because I went from being the person that when I entered the room, right, everybody scattered and ran the other direction. So it was like, you know, you turn the light on and the rats run out of the, you know, that's how everybody was acting toward me in the early days, and that was my own situation.

**Scott Shurson**  
**[5:08 - 6:10]:**

I think what you said is really important there. It's not about you hitting the single, it's about them hitting the single. Right. I'm helping you hit that single. So it's also that, like that old adage, how do you become a billionaire? You make a thousand people, millionaires. Right? Like, how do you win a deal? It's by making everybody else look good. We were talking about last time is the pain chain, and

everybody's got their own unique perspective and their own pain that they're trying to solve. So helping each individual person in that organization, you know, one at a time, again, like you were saying, being very focused on, I am helping you hit that single. I'm helping you get on base. Maybe it's to improve your batting average. Maybe it's because you're going to shine when you're going to steal a base or something like that. But I'm helping you hit that, hit that single so that I can then use that success and build on it and keep building on it to help your organization. Because, again, Michelle's single looks a lot different than Scott's single.

**Amber Collins**  
**[6:10 - 6:57]:**

Yeah, absolutely. So you mentioned there bringing in the customer voice and feeling like people may not care about that or they don't have the resources to address what the customer voice is asking for. Let's talk about elevating that customer voice and putting it in a language rather than saying that can be felt and understood by those stakeholders that you are trying to impart the importance, and really most importantly to them, the results that it would be to address this customer pain point to address this customer voice. So how are you bringing in the customer voice in these different rooms where they care about different things and making sure that it's always coming back to that, but obviously, different parts of that voice may be important to different people.

**Michelle**  
**Brigman [6:58 -**  
**7:41]:**

Yes, yes, and yes. So I'll give a couple of specific tactics, and then I'll give an example just to help solidify it. So a couple of tactics that I've learned is we have a tendency to speak about customers as if they're data points. And when you really look at what that conversation may look like around CX as an example, if you're talking about customers that experienced a problem, most customer service organizations are taking, like, 1% failure rate. Really, in the overall experience, it's low. So if you look at it on a percentage basis, you're gonna go 1%.

**Amber Collins**  
**[7:42 - 7:46]:**

We're doing all right business like it's okay.

**Michelle**  
**Brigman [7:46 -**  
**11:28]:**

So there's a couple of ways that you kind of work around that. One is not using percentages. So look at it as if you've got a pain point that you're trying to fight. You know, you're trying to get corrected and improved. Do a cumulative number. Wow. In the last three months, we've had 75,000 customers experience this. That is a very different way to raise awareness of the impact of something in the organization, because there's always a number. There is a number that becomes the number that we're not really going to tolerate anymore. So maybe it's not, in all honesty, maybe it's not 25,000 customers, but maybe it's 50,000 customers. And you are kind of having to figure out what is that number that people go that one doesn't have feels so good. The other thing that works really well is speak by name, call the customer by name. Because when you can

really create that relatable story that you're telling, people begin to understand and get to know their customer, right? It's like, oh, it's no longer the 50,000 customers. While I'm hearing the story about Joe and Joe Smith, I can start relating to them. In fact, one, I have so many examples of this, but just the one that's popping in my head right now is I remember we were bringing in some executives and we were just sharing voice of the customer in a different, just a different way. Turn the lights off in a conference room. And while the lights were off, we had some posters of customer, just pictures of people. They weren't necessarily the actual customer, but it would be the poster and we'd shine a light on it. And overall, we had recordings reading the true customers feedback, reading it out loud, the light comes on, you see the face of the customer, you hear what they're saying. Customers can say really powerful words. I've sat in rooms with executives walking out with tears in their eyes because that touched them. That is why things like video feedback, now that you see a lot of our CX companies using, oh, my goodness, so incredibly powerful. Because historically, when you're asking customers for feedback, you're asking them a question that you, as the company, want to know. But whenever you give them the video and you say, hit play, they tell you what they believe you need to know as the brand. And so being able to just unleash them and give them the microphone, if you will, that is so powerful. But using their names, not talking about it as data points, talking about it in cumulative numbers of how many customers have been negatively impacted. Also the inverse of that, how many customers have been positively impacted. Because typically, like I said earlier, your company is doing a pretty good job with whatever they're delivering or they wouldn't still be in business. So make sure that you're not spending so much energy only on the bad stuff and really highlight and elevate the good stuff because people love it when you can go to them and you can tell them, oh, my gosh, I have to share with you the best feedback we had about your product that makes you so proud. I mean, I can keep going on this topic, but I'm.

**Amber Collins**  
[11:28 - 11:30]:

No, absolutely.

**Amber Collins**  
[11:33 - 11:57]:

That's why I love being in loyalty. Because not only are they eager to interact with the brand and give feedback in ways that they can be rewarded, it's your biggest advocates. It's in. Loyalty is about engagement and surprise and delight. And I just feel like we're sort of like we're enabling happiness. Not to get corny, but that's what I like about loyalty.

**Scott Shurson**  
[11:58 - 12:52]:

We hope so. Absolutely. What I wanted to ask, Michelle, is when you're creating these groups, you're talking about something beyond

just like, profile building and archetype building. Like, I am Joe, I am the average of 24 years old. I am the average of, you know, vegetarian. You know, you're talking about, like, true customer journeys, right? But breaking outside of the Persona. You know, you're talking about, because a lot of people tend to personify this, like, so that they can, you know, focus on, you know, a particular journey. But you're saying what I'm, what I'm hearing, and I guess maybe what I'm taking away is go beyond that. So it's beyond just like I am Joe. And these are like six quotes that tend to fit under Joe, but really, I am Amber and I did this. And here is my experience and my voice. That's what I'm hearing. Right?

**Michelle  
Brigman [12:53 -  
16:07]:**

Yes. And in fact, what I gave you before was an example of what you just shared. But I'm going to share another example, a real life example that, again, not Personas, but it was a matter of taking a lot of customer feedback, the same issue, and elevating it to make it where it felt like it was coming from. The one I was working for, a large global bank, and there was an issue that had occurred where customers were complaining because they couldn't find the pay my bill button. So they were calling into the customer service and having to pay their bill that way instead of being able to pay it online. They were. Our surveys were declining. It was just driving up volume, but I couldn't get it fixed. What the deal was is it wasn't every customer having the problem. It was customers who were using a certain device size. So it wasn't heavy, it was just smaller numbers. And it was just ridiculous because you were listening to these same customers calling you over every month, like, I'm just, I'm trying to give you money. Like, I'm trying to give you money, and you're making it hard. Like, you're really making it hard for yourself. Well, the CEO of the credit card business was coming in, and I believe in creating these experiential stories. Like, that's kind of my shtick. So I was like, all right, I can tell him about this. I've been talking about it. I've escalated. I've kind of done all the things, but I want him to feel it. So he comes in, and at that time, I worked in the command center, which is 100 person with the big screens, and, you know, this cool vibe. So he comes in and I set him down at this desk, and I invite him to pay his bill. And I, on the conference table, I literally had a credit card statement with his name on it. I had a post it with the grocery list from his wife, as if he does the grocery list. But it was just to make it fun. I had a little picture frame with his picture and, like, the work picture on it and his bill and a computer. And I had one of my guys create a UI to simulate bill pay. And I'm like, oh, I would like for you to pay your bill now. I knew he wasn't going to be able to figure it out, and it looked exactly like what was happening with customers. Well, after about 20 seconds, you know, he's like, all fun and games. This is fun. Remember, we're in finance bankers, so these aren't, these are kind of stiff folks, right? But he sits down, and within about 20 seconds, he can't figure it out. And you see him getting physically flustered. Well, that's the time to call it. And I'm like, hey, that

problem you just experienced, we're having x thousands of customers or experience that every single month, and we can't get it fixed. As you can tell, like, this is problem. Phone call went out. It got fixed, right? So it was a matter of how do I find a different way to tell this story to result in change? So, like I say, I have a history of doing those things like that, that get them emotionally invested in helping. But be bold, like, try some of this, because I'm telling you, it really works.

**Scott Shurson**  
**[16:08 - 16:56]:**

Well, let me ask a question to challenge, just to challenge sake, right? Because again, this is about a greater audience, and we're all agreeing with you, right? We are in loyalty, and we agree with you. The challenge that I've read in like other manuals and books and articles and stuff is about the everybody knows 80 20, you know. So focus on the 20% of your customers bringing in 80% of your revenue. What you're talking about or what I'm hearing is we, there are problems that the 80% are experiencing that are keeping them from being in that 20. So how do you respond to those who are representing that challenge, saying, care less about the experience of the 80, focus on the 20 who are driving the 80% of your revenue.

**Michelle**  
**Brigman [16:56 -**  
**18:01]:**

Well, so 100% understand. And that is, like you said, that is a real life challenge. Here's what was going on. The other things that were happening in the environment is the contact center is being stretched with, you've got to reduce your cost, you've got to reduce volume, and you've got to hit your service level, wait times, et cetera, et cetera. So those things that were happening made up for a significant increase in what the contact center was being held accountable for. And they needed those calls to come down. And so it was a back to our earlier comment, it was a single for them. And that's why I say understanding your various allies and stakeholders, because if you looked at it from the macro view of all the customers and all the things to go after, yeah, it probably wouldn't have passed the threshold. However, when you looked at it within the context of the contact center, oh, it was a really big deal.

**Amber Collins**  
**[18:01 - 18:02]:**

Yeah, absolutely.

**Michelle**  
**Brigman [18:02 -**  
**19:23]:**

Therefore, it was the win for that stakeholder. And then what do you think happens with that stakeholder is you've just helped them get over the finish line, something that they've been vocal and frustrated with over and over and over. And now you've been able to help them solve it. But you also, let's go back to your other stakeholder and the digital team, who in theory, right. Can feel very offended of, okay, I don't have time to fix that. But what happened with that story and those stories is you could say, all right, here's why. It's good for you. It's good for you because you are really trying to protect usage of the app, right, or online. You have digital client. So this is helping you by

this much with your metrics. And, oh, by the way, the cost. And if they said, look, I don't have time for it because all of our, you know, scrum teams are busy doing new development and not break fix. What we could say is to say, well, for the amount of money we just saved in that contact center, we can actually self-fund a dedicated team to actually handle some of these break fix things that would not. Historically, they can't compete with new development.

**Amber Collins**  
[19:23 - 19:24]:

Yeah.

**Michelle**  
**Brigman** [19:24 -  
19:25]:

Does that make sense?

**Scott Shurson**  
[19:26 - 19:43]:

It absolutely does. From a technical standpoint, it really does make, it's one of our key drivers in loyalty as well. Like, how do you fund loyalty? Do it by solving a problem. So. Absolutely makes a ton of sense.

**Amber Collins**  
[19:43 - 20:55]:

I want to go back to Scott, your challenge, and this is not exactly where I want to take it, but I do want to say, of course, that that 80 absolutely influences other people from being the 20 as well if they're having a poor experience with your brand. And so I think that that's definitely, you know, like, we've been told that 80 20 rule, but it's like what happens when the 20 starts to become the 80 because they're also experiencing problems. But really what I wanted to take it back to is, Michelle, you, you used, you used all these sort of, you elevated the customer voice to get these things done and by turning it into what was in it for each one of those stakeholders that you required in order to go back and deliver to your stakeholders, a customer. Talk to me a little bit about how that could have been avoided. And to use your words as we were talking earlier, how to not piss your customers off from the beginning because it seems like part of that could have been avoided in the first place. And not having to get those customer facing teams into that position and keeping that consistent experience that those customers that then had the problem after the update were having. Talk to me a little bit about that.

**Michelle**  
**Brigman** [20:57 -  
23:59]:

Customer service has a tendency to be a necessary evil. They are looked at is, again, I've said it before, cost of doing business. However, they are sitting on a goldmine of insights and information because they are dealing with all the things that go wrong on the back end. So one of the things that's critically important is to, I say to customer service teams is you got to start playing offense and not defense because things are coming your way. You're defending the company, you're working for the customer and you're defending position. But when you become offense, you take your insights and



all of this wonderful information you have and you present it back upstream to the folks that are making the front end decisions in a way that's not confrontational, but in a way that helps them understand, hey, we can make this by working together, we can make this product even better, this mobile app even better, this loyalty program even better, this marketing campaign even better by X. And then it's a matter of it's not these teams who never work together operating in silos. There's a tremendous amount of value by them coming together. So again, I'm gonna go back to. Let me bring it to life, right? Whenever I was running for convenience store, and so I had responsibility for customer service across Canada and the US and the team, we had some offshore teams, and then we had a team there locally in the building that sat within the marketing organization, sat in a room, nobody interacted with them, and they would get so frustrated because they had all of this information, but nobody was paying attention. And I said, okay, what. How do you want to be known? Like, how do you think you can help the organization? And going through this exercise with the team, what they realized is they were. They were hoarding insights. They were busy resolving the issues and hoarding insights that they weren't taking the initiative to go out and have those conversations. That's where I say, move from a place of defense and play offense. So anyway, so it's like, okay, start taking it. Well, once they started compiling it, because I say, I called it like, you go on a curiosity quest. Go on a curiosity quest with your stakeholders and find out what's really important to them and just listen and ask questions, and then take that insight. You have, that goldmine treasure trove, and you present it in a way that speaks to what they shared with you was important, and then what happens is now your allies, and now it comes down to, hey, you know, whenever you're planning for that next promo, I'd love for you to include me, and I can bring this type of data forward to help you again, not as the adversary, but as the ally, the colleague.

**Scott Shurson**  
**[23:59 - 24:33]:**

I think it's also important to note that it's not just like a customer service on the phone, you know, answering chat bot, you know, that kind of stuff, too. It's the frontline employee who's interacting with the customer has that same level of influence. From my experience, like providing employee training for the people on the floor, people actually working with a customer, they have to have that same level, because in a lot of cases, they're also the customer service. I'm helping you with the return. I'm helping you problem solve, because it's easy for people to just come in and, like, show you instead of call in.

**Michelle**  
**Brigman [24:34 - 24:43]:**

Well, Amber, I mean, you brought it up in the beginning. You said, okay, but how do we create that continuous improvement? You were talking about prevention, right?

**Amber Collins**  
**[24:43 - 24:44]:**

Yeah.

**Michelle**  
**Brigman [24:44 -**  
**26:22]:**

People don't have time to just go out of their way to figure this out. It is up to the organization to come together and say, how do we implement easy, easy, easy, easy processes and systems that allow us to do that? Maybe it's technology, maybe it's monthly meetings. I don't know. Every company is different. It's whatever works for your culture, your environment and your infrastructure. But find that system where you can bring those folks in there. And we're working together toward bettering the thing. And the more specific you can be about what the thing is you're solving. You know, I mean, going back to the convenience example, launching a whole new coffee program, right? So we had the social data showing up live real time in the coffee control room. We had the feedback coming in. We had the coffee product teams, we had the operators, we had the stores and everybody talking about the nuances that they were singing. And then because you had these people working in that kind of agile environment, pod environment, man, anytime something started emerging, you had all the right decision makers in the room to do something about it because you created the system to make that possible. It's got to be intentional and deliberate and thought out if you want this to really work, to become that place where you're preventing always in that cycle of preventive, continuously learning and prevention, and then you're much better at delivering that very seamless, easy, great experience for your customers where you don't piss them off.

**Amber Collins**  
**[26:22 - 28:25]:**

I love that. Thank you so much for this conversation today, Michelle. There's a million other things that we could sit here and talk to you about forever. I know. I want to wrap up today's conversation with three takeaways that we each got from this. I'll start. My first one that I heard from you was finding that ally, that one person, and it really just takes one to get that ball rolling and deliver value for them and build upon that and use them as the proof point. You know, I think that it makes a lot of sense, but I think that everybody sort of sees a big project like migrating a loyalty program or implementing a new one, and they want to take these large bites off of it, slow down, find that one person, solve some problems, deliver some value, get some proof, and move on. And move on and just build upon it like a snowball. And then secondly, customers are not data point. Really, some of the tactics that you gave us here today, I love them because I hadn't heard those before. I mean, you're really humanizing people. And ultimately, at the end of the day, this is all about customers. We're creating this experience for them. And I think that marketing and customer experience and product has been doing buyer Personas and profiling and segmentation for a long time. And there's been small movements in the advancement of how you address people. But I really like your sort of tactics of humanizing and

creating that emotional connection with your, with your internal state holders to represent and elevate your external stakeholders. And then thirdly, for me, CS has a goldmine of insights. I absolutely agree. As a product marketing manager, I am always wondering the questions that they're getting, the reasons why people are calling in. They are probably some of the first people to see trends that go back to a product may need to be revisited. They are getting the positive, they're getting the negative. And so I absolutely agree. Customer service, customer success, they have a gold mine of insights and I. It probably wouldn't be too bad to give them a tap on the shoulder when you're looking to justify some large customer facing projects. How about you, Scott?

**Scott Shurson**  
[28:26 - 30:27]:

Very similar to yours. First one is definitely the, you know, the hit a single analogy. Again, huge baseball fan, so automatically was going to resonate with me. But I think what I mentioned earlier about, it's not about me hitting a bunch of singles, it's about me helping, you know, my customer advocates, you know, hit a bunch of singles, making them the champions of the game so that we win as a, as a team, a collaborative, you know, group. Um, the other thing, and I'm going to come back to my number two is, I'm going to say my number three, which is the, you know, elevating it beyond just a Persona, right? Like we get Personas all the time to help, you know, support a marketing need and create a, of a loyalty plan, but elevating it beyond just that, like the single individual. So using things like ratings and reviews, using customer video advocacy and getting the feedback and make breaking it beyond. I am Joe, I am 24 years old and I happen to like Snickers bars, you know, just breaking it out beyond all of that. My, my biggest one however, is just what you're saying about the coffee or I organization, about if you build it right, if you implement all of this right, you can create this team that can respond to customer things and issues and problems sometimes before it happens, but definitely in a way that will piss off fewer people in the long run. That's what we're talking about. We're talking about not pissing off, you know, the customers. So let's build on that. Right? So being able to address it in an agile approach really works. It helps it's not just a throwaway thing on a finance sheet. It's not a group that's sitting out there not wanting to do anything. Building that agile team really does work.

**Amber Collins**  
[30:28 - 30:36]:

So, Michelle, again, Michelle, please wrap it up for us. What would you like the audience to take away, really?

**Michelle  
Brigman [30:36 -  
31:16]:**

I just like to say that it's a hard job. Right. This is a hard job. And give yourself permission and grace to, like, step out and get creative because you truly can have a lot of fun with this and recognize, I mean, I think you guys did an amazing job of just summing up the takeaways and it's just go develop those relationships. Please go develop those relationships. And remember that you have so much

that you can bring back to the organization to where you aren't left out, you know, the left out on an island alone. Just pay attention to what's important to them and help them be successful. And in turn, that is the way that you can be the strongest champion for customer.

**Amber Collins**  
**[31:17 - 31:35]:**

I love that. And as a customer centric or self proclaimed customer centered, I think we all try to be customer centric person. That definitely resonates with me. So Michelle, how can anybody reach you if they'd like to continue the conversation? If they'd like to work with you, what's the best way to get in touch with you? Awesome.

**Michelle**  
**Brigman [31:35 - 31:50]:**

So first of all, LinkedIn is great. Just connect with me there. My email is michelleichellebrigman.com and my website is advantagecx.com dot. So check it out, any of those places. Look forward to getting to know you and hear what resonated, frankly.

**Amber Collins**  
**[31:50 - 32:02]:**

Absolutely. So thank you, Scott. Thank you, Michelle. This has been another episode of CX Anonymous, and we have several more in this series, so we hope that you'll stick with us and continue the conversation.

**Scott Shurson**  
**[32:03 - 33:52]:**

Thanks for holding on for a second with me. There are a couple of things from that discussion I really wanted to break into that. I think we're very loyalty centric and I wanted to really touch on them because of our audience is generally going to be a very loyalty centric audience beyond just the customer experience, wealth of knowledge that we just got. One of those things is the creation of a loyalty program. The creation of a loyalty program can definitely be built out of an environment we want to build, get to know our customers better. We want to dive in there and change some of those revenue facts and figures. But what I heard from Michelle is that there are some untapped areas in the major areas of the organization that the marketing team can really hone. In, on, in order to, um, evolve their loyalty program. I know that we produce a lot of reports that, you know, say the effectiveness of a transaction, points gained, value of a point, and am I self funding by, by doing all of these things? But it's only taking it so far. Like it's a very financial and, you know, monoptic, uh, approach towards it. Using these CS teams, using these frontline persons to learn from the customer themselves. The people who are dealing with this loyalty program. And how should I evolve it? Remember, they're the people helping the customer use the app. They're the people, you know, trying to figure out where the heck did those points come from or where did they go. And I don't know that they are being valued enough to get that information out of them. I don't know if you had something to add to that.

**Amber Collins**  
**[33:52 - 36:12]:**

So, truthfully, I think that people should look at their loyalty program as a product. It's a customer facing product, and products always

need improvement. And there's absolutely a roadmap and evolution of that. So we think about the loyalty program, and customers are asking for really great programs that can, I think, foreshadow what they want when they use, how they use the program, what they want from it, how they use it, where they want to use it. And so when it, think about it, by the time you get to a customer service person like you perhaps have tried other things, and now you're, now you're throwing your hands up and you're saying, I need help. That right there is a flag that says, hey, if we're looking for something to improve, that's where we need to be looking at. And is this affecting other people who are not loyalty members? And these are just the people who are taking the time to raise their hand and say, I have a problem, this could be better, help me with this. This is my feedback on it. And so when people are only looking at like, transactions or like time, time on call or things like that, I think that with their not categorizing why they're calling, they're missing that opportunity to even affect those metrics that you were talking about. So it's not necessarily the what. It's like who, what, what, how many calls, what was the timing on them? It's the why they were calling. And, you know, which, which type of member are they and how long have they been on the program? You know, do we need to do something better for people who are just entering the program? Do we need to do something to keep people from turning out of the program and really segmenting that information so that it is actionable, so that it is translatable to the other departments. Right. Because you said that the data doesn't really get out of that department. I think a part of that problem is that perhaps the other departments are not receiving it in a language that they can understand and it be actionable. And then the question to me becomes, whose job is it to translate that information so that that other department can understand it and put it in their language? Is that like a customer service analyst type of situation? Is it marketing, receiving this information and their analyst is the one who translates it? I think that a lot of companies to, like, have that gray area of I'm giving you the data, but the other person is saying it's in a language that I can't read.

**Scott Shurson**  
**[36:13 - 37:27]:**

You're right. Like, because people are quite quitting loyalty programs, right? They're just stop using them because of one reason or the other. The people who have that information are these CS teams, these customer experience teams, frontline and people on the phone behind the chat. They're the ones who are getting this firsthand. If we're not doing something about it, if we're not making changes to that, not just solving the problem, you know, okay, I'll give you 50 points to make it right. We're talking, we're talking about evolving the program, as Michelle said, fixing the website so that the people who are quiet, quitting are going to stop what we need, what customers need to do, or our customers. And loyalty people need to do is evolve that program alongside the member journey, not just, you know, increasing transactions and getting rid of extra product.

You know, it's more than that. But I also think that that's kind of a unique problem to us because we are sitting on top of a more of an experiential loyalty platform rather than somebody that is buy stuff, get points, kind of somebody who's still at that level. They're just thinking, how do I get revenue in the door? How do I, you know.

**Amber Collins**  
[37:27 - 37:29]:

And that's more purchases, right?

**Scott Shurson**  
[37:29 - 37:30]:

Exactly.

**Amber Collins**  
[37:31 - 38:50]:

I think that's a wonderful explanation of sort of the difference and what really, what we have and the way that we, we view it here at Annex Cloud loyalty, being that it's not just transactional, it's behavioral, it's social, it's emotional. It can support experiential. And that involves a lot more teams than a simply earn and burn situation. Right. If we're talking about experiential, that's going to involve your in-store team, how are you getting back your feedback from your in-store team to create events and experiences that customers are going to look forward to? That customers, how are you involving your social media team to run these contests, to have these actions be tied back to your loyalty platform so that they can get rewarded for those things that all these capabilities that you can do. You're going to bring in your marketing team, you're going to bring in your social team. You may be marketing, you may be loyalty, but you're going to have to bring in the social team. How are you going to do the behavioral, when you talk about personalization and the data team and the digital team that is doing feeding these AI engines and feeding these recommendation engines, how are you going to tie that back to loyalty and help feed their models? Because if they don't have access to that or you haven't brought them in, you're missing a huge opportunity to share that data and really be, like Michelle said, be hitting singles for them. They need data for those models in order for it to be effective.

**Scott Shurson**  
[38:50 - 39:31]:

Well, I think that what you're hitting on is something that goes back to our last conversation too. I know we've got to wrap this up, but basically a lot of customers are coming to this because they're dipping the toe for the first time in experiential loyalty. They've had transactional, they've had earn burn in the past. So we need to be educating them on who else to bring to the table. They've never done it before in many cases or they've done it in a simplistic and non customer centric way. So bring telling them who else to bring to the table. Let's talk to them, let's get those buy in. Let me help them hit a single because they have all of this information.

**Amber Collins**  
**[39:31 - 40:03]:**

Absolutely. And like I said, I think it does go back to translating it into a language that they can understand everything that we've talked about, finding that ally, finding what's in it for them because then you will get what's in it for you. But I think that also it has to do with understanding their language. And I use this metaphor of language because I mean, marketing, procurement, it operations, they are all speaking a different language and they're using different, they're using different metrics, they're using different KPI's, they're using, they're using different prioritization structures, they're using, you know, and it's pain chain. Exactly.

**Scott Shurson**  
**[40:03 - 40:08]:**

What I get measured on is what I, what I get bonus time is what I affect.

**Amber Collins**  
**[40:08 - 41:01]:**

Exactly. So. So sometimes you do have to be a translator and use the data that you have and go and get the data. And then I, and if this was your initiative, especially, you will have to be that champion, that translator. And one thing that I learned was that it was better to go to sort of each one of those people get the buy in before you put them all in a room together, know that they're going to say yes, or know that they've got some wants or needs or caveats that they need before you get them in there. They all look around and say, did you know that this elephant was this big? Did you know that this elephant was this big? Oh, yeah, I knew because I touched the leg and they showed me the whole leg, and I knew how that fit on the whole elephant. So that's definitely something that's right for me. And loyalty is big. It's across the entire customer journey, and you have the opportunity to make it this organizational product that really shines through for all of your stakeholders.

**Scott Shurson**  
**[41:02 - 41:13]:**

It's probably why Michelle is so successful, because it takes that rose and in the thorny bush to be able to speak from one organization to another like she's able to do.