

6 experience management best practices for CMOs to adopt amid COVID-19

Listen, interpret, + act on feedback to achieve a frictionless customer experience

The retail industry is adjusting to a new normal. Customer-centric brands must quickly pivot to provide contactless experiences and prioritize the health and safety of employees and consumers above all else. As operational strategies are being reshaped by the hour, it's more important than ever to monitor consumer behavior and feedback in real time so you're able to remain agile and adapt to these rapidly evolving circumstances.



SMG is proactively partnering with our retail clients to understand customer needs and deliver on expectations in this unprecedented business environment. We recommend implementing the following experience management best practices to achieve a frictionless customer experience amid COVID-19.

1 Ask the right questions

For essential businesses retaining in-store operations, modify your customer experience (CX) survey to focus on item availability, cleanliness, + safety, while configuring real-time alerts to route time-sensitive feedback to key personnel. If providing new services like curbside pick-up, add question blocks to measure + improve front-line performance over the coming weeks.

2 Drive digital CX efficiencies

Shelter-in-place mandates are funneling customers to digital channels. Stress-test the operational readiness of online platforms and take a critical eye to your UX. SMG's digital CX solutions allow clients to collect unsolicited feedback through our feedback tab, see touchpoints through the customer's eyes with session replays, and initiate surveys with highly configurable invitation triggers.

3 Listen across touchpoints

Ensure your measurement strategy encompasses solicited and unsolicited channels to understand the full scope of how the virus is changing customer behaviors. Whether it's website traffic, online ratings + reviews, contact center interactions, or in-store visits, establish effective listening posts at each step in the customer journey.

4 Optimize text analytics

Update your text analytics library to track the coronavirus trend and analyze sentiment in customers' and employees' open-ended comments. The most common keywords our clients are seeing are: coronavirus, corona virus, caronavirus, carona virus, COVID-19, COVID 19, COVID19.

5 Close the loop on customer issues

Review your case management workflows + escalation processes to ensure your team is immediately notified of coronavirus-related problems and has the tools to quickly resolve issues. SMG's multi-source alerting + case management technology provides customer care teams with a centralized hub for tracking and responding to time-sensitive issues.

6 Monitor purchaser + non-purchaser behavior

Conduct continuous research on behavioral + feedback data to develop a comprehensive view of your customers. Through our research efforts and patented visit-detection technology, SMG helps clients analyze purchaser + non-purchaser trends to understand key drivers, benchmark scores against named competitors, and optimize cross-channel conversion strategies.



When navigating such uncertain times, the more information you're able to draw on, the more confidently you'll be able to act. SMG partners with more than 500 brands—including 25% of the NRF Top 100—to help them measure and manage customer + employee experiences.

To learn how SMG helps brands listen, interpret, + act on customer feedback amid COVID-19, visit [smg.com/contact-us](https://www.smg.com/contact-us).



About Service Management Group

SMG inspires experiences that improve people's lives. We are a catalyst for change, providing actionable customer, patient, and employee insights that boost loyalty and drive business outcomes. Our unique model puts a dual focus on platform technology and professional services—making it easier to collect, analyze, and share feedback and behavioral data across the enterprise. To learn more about our customer experience management, employee experience, and brand research solutions, visit www.smg.com.