Q&A Executive Viewpoint
A Conversation with
MATT BROFFMAN

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Orlando's innovation director talks about going beyond traditional outreach to understand and strengthen the public's trust in the city's services

How is the city of Orlando using experience management to improve trust in local government?

We're taking the customer experience practices that have been working in the private sector, and we're adapting and applying them to city government. The first step was figuring out what we wanted to measure. It turns out the Net Promoter Score [which measures customer loyalty] doesn't scale well to cities. Instead, we decided to measure resident trust in government.

Trust is a great key performance indicator for local government. We're in the process of rolling out closed-loop CX feedback across all our hundreds of services. This allows us to see in real time how resident interactions with services are impacting trust and understand what is driving that trust up or down on a given service.

We're also creating a panel of residents — and hundreds of people have already opted in — that will allow us to understand the issues that exist outside service transactions that are impacting trust at any given time.

What is the biggest lesson you've learned along the way?

The biggest and most surprising lesson is that city employees are eager to get experience data to help them improve services. When I worked in the private sector, my employer, like most companies, was focused on revenue as the main KPI. When I got to the City of Orlando, no one was really focused on driving revenue and they were instead focused on the operational data (e.g., how quickly potholes are filled or the rate at which we successfully pick up trash). I had assumed it would be just as difficult to shift the focus to experience data, but it turns out employees were eager to have trust and satisfaction data.

Stepping back and thinking about it, it makes sense. They've been optimizing against the same data point for years and have gotten good at it, but there were still complaints. Now we're about to help them understand what the underlying issues are that are impacting trust and satisfaction. For our staff, that's exciting.

How are you identifying areas for improvement, and how are you measuring success?

I like to think that we're using the best sensors any city has to detect problems — our residents. We're deploying our CX program at scale, and we're measuring success based on increasing our residents' overall trust in the city. We do that by analyzing key drivers to uncover what can build trust and satisfaction in services and policy decisions.

A couple of examples of how this has already been helpful: We've been able to quickly resolve a technical issue that was causing residents' requests for new trash bins to go unanswered, and we increased resident satisfaction in parks reservations by 45% by reducing the number of interactions between the resident and staff.

What advice would you offer other agencies?

Start your CX program today. I don't mean start building a strategy or start figuring out what tool to use — I mean start measuring today. There's a good chance your agency is already using a survey tool. Take every customer you've had for one service for the past month and send them a survey asking how the agency did. You'll learn a lot, and then you'll want to do more. ■