# Zurich Insurance revamps customer experience strategy to stay competitive



Zurich Insurance, a major player in the global insurance market, is grappling with the need to overhaul its customer experience (CX) strategy amid rising competition from digital-first insurers. With nearly 60,000 employees and a significant operating profit of $7.4 billion at the end of 2023 — a substantial 21% increase from the previous year — the firm has established a strong foothold in the industry. However, the firm’s size and historic success present challenges in cultivating a culture committed to customer-centricity.

Conny Zalcher, the chief customer officer at Zurich Insurance, emphasised the difficulty of initiating change within a successful organisation. Speaking to Customer Experience Magazine, Zalcher noted, “It’s a challenge when you’re already hugely successful, to change. You don’t have a burning platform, but this needs to be done because customers want it.” Having joined Zurich in 2019, her role focuses on reinvigorating the company's CX approach to align with evolving customer expectations.

The insurance sector has generally been slower to adapt in the digital era; however, Zalcher highlighted that “customer expectations are changing because there are digital first insurers coming into the field, with more data and servicing customers better.” Additionally, she pointed out that other industries, particularly those led by companies like Amazon and Netflix, are shaping consumers' expectations regarding service delivery and interaction.

One core challenge facing Zurich is the need for speed in implementing changes, especially considering its legacy systems deeply embedded within its operations. “The biggest challenge is speed — how to get speed into that [process],” Zalcher remarked.

Zalcher and her team undertook an extensive review of the firm’s customer value proposition and visual identity to support their CX strategy. They aimed to create “meaningful relationships” with customers instead of focusing solely on transactions. The findings from customer feedback led to the development of 33 CX standards designed to enhance customer interactions. These range from straightforward directives, such as ensuring customers can easily locate contact information, to more intricate guidelines that dictate seamless transitions in customer communication.

As Zurich operates on a global scale, the implementation of its CX strategy involves regional differentiation. The central CX team, based at the Zurich headquarters, develops the overarching vision and metrics for success, while local offices are tasked with rolling out specific initiatives. Zalcher explained, “We communicate internally and externally how well we’re progressing,” which serves as a motivator for local teams to engage with the strategy actively.

A notable shift has occurred in Zurich’s approach to measuring performance metrics. The company is utilising transaction net promoter scores (TNPS) and plans to incorporate net revenue retention (NRR) measurements shortly. NRR will provide insight into the financial outcomes of the customer-focused strategy by evaluating customer retention, cross-sell opportunities, and pricing effects over time. Zalcher stated, “On net revenue retention we measure the value that we are creating from the customer-focused strategy,” highlighting its potential impact on investor relations and perceptions of the company’s ongoing CX transformation.

To further enhance the quality of customer service, Zurich has introduced empathy training for its contact centre staff. The results of this training have shown promising improvements, with TNPS rising from 45 to 70, as noted by Zalcher. The firm is adopting a "think global, act local" model, facilitating a tailored approach to customer engagement across various regions.

The current plans for empathic training programmes are set for completion by 2025, with follow-up training extending into 2026. Throughout this transformation, Zurich Insurance aims to cultivate an integrated customer journey, leveraging automation and seamless processes to meet rising customer expectations in an increasingly competitive landscape.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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