

Janet LeBlanc

Director, Customer Value Management

Canada Post

"Trendsetter" isn't a word you normally associate with a company that's been around more than 150 years. But for Janet LeBlanc of Canada Post, it's a daily part of the job. LeBlanc is director of customer value management for Canada's mail delivery organization. She and her team take a magnifying glass to the customer experience, identifying and measuring how customers interact and perceive their relationship with Canada Post.


You may recognize Canada Post as a recent 1to1 Impact Award winner. And one of last year's 1to1 Customer Champions was CEO Moya Greene. The company has led a turnaround the past few years from an internally focused, efficiency-based logistics organization into a flexible, dynamic, customer-focused company that competes with the likes of FedEx and UPS. Efforts from the top down have shown results, and the people—like LeBlanc—behind the processes make it happen.

A 10-year veteran of Canada Post, LeBlanc was a marketing professor when she came across the book *Managing Customer Value* by Bradley Gale in 1994. It ignited her passion for the concept, and she has led the charge to create and evolve the Customer Value Management program at Canada Post over the past five years. "My goal was to get people on the journey to improving the customer experience," she says.

LeBlanc created a Customer Value Index composed of three customer value metrics—overall quality, overall value, and likelihood to recommend. Customers also rate Canada Post on overall quality for product offerings (features/benefits), product delivery, price competitiveness, service culture, and reputation and image.

The Customer Value Management Program clarifies for employees what customers expect, as well as what Canada Post is particularly accountable for: delivering a consistent and predictable customer experience from its 70,000 employees across Canada. Each employee has a role in that, from being timely in customer responses and creating the right marketing message to offering appropriate pricing and service delivery. As a result, Customer Value Index scores are included in employee performance scorecards throughout the company.

In fact, what's most important to LeBlanc is accountability among employees for improving the customer experience. "Everyone is accountable to the customer," she says. "It's my job to make sure individual employees know what they can do in their role to improve the customer experience." She explains that this strategy is much less daunting than throwing out the broad idea of being "customer-centric" without relating it to specific roles.



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It was difficult at first for some employees who were content with the status quo to warm to the new customer value program, but the more LeBlanc's team correlated customer experience improvements to financial impact, the more people started listening.

"There was a big reality check within the organization at first," she says. "We were in a state of denial as to how bad the customer experience was in some instances."

LeBlanc continues to grow the program by leveraging deeper customer insight and tying metrics back to the bottom line. "My main responsibility is advocacy at the executive level to make sure that the company recognizes the benefit of the program and will continue to support it," LeBlanc says. Members of her team put together customer-advocacy action plans for certain employee groups—marketing, sales, service, postal carriers, operations, IT, etc. They meet with field employees on monthly phone calls to keep information like local office results, best practices, and action plans flowing. And LeBlanc has a dedicated person responsible for communicating internally customer-focused education programs about the insight the group collects.

"We need to understand what value we bring to the customer," LeBlanc says. "That's why I have been passionate about driving this program through and helping the organization understand what is value, what value do we provide, and what additional value do our customers want." > *Elizabeth Glagowski*