

LRA Worldwide Participates in Study on Customer Experience Design for Service

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Philadelphia-based company links customer experience initiatives with financial return

LRA Worldwide, Inc., one of the leaders in the rapidly-growing field of Customer Experience Management, recently participated in a study titled 'Customer Experience (cX) Design for Services.' Sponsored by Peer Insight LLC, the multi-phased study brought together thought leaders in customer experience, consulting and industry to better understand and codify the current models in use for experience design and improve upon them.

The most recent meeting of the study members took place in September in Washington, DC at the Hotel Palomar, where LRA joined industry leaders from companies such as McDonald's, UPS, Dow Corning and The Hartford. LRA's CEO, Rob Rush, and Senior Vice President of Research, Rob Kaplan-Sherman, were featured speakers on the agenda, presenting a topic entitled 'The End of cX as a Faith-Based Initiative.' Rush and Kaplan-Sherman's presentation focused on how certain types of quantitative research designs can predict and measure the value of changes in the customer experience.

'For customer experience design to become a mainstream business practice, it is vitally important that it can be definitively linked to tangible financial returns,' explained Tim Ogilvie, CEO of Peer Insight, a Washington, DC-based research and consulting firm focused on service innovation and customer experience design. 'Everyone intuitively 'gets' why cX is important, but LRA is doing some very important work in helping its clients quantify the impact of various customer experiences, both good and bad. Their presentation provided our study with key insights into how a typical cX initiative is poised to shift from one based in faith to one grounded in finance.'

'Traditional customer satisfaction studies frequently fail because executives have 'faith' that increasing customer satisfaction will positively impact other business outcomes,' said Kaplan-Sherman. 'Our approach is to eliminate that element of 'faith' and directly link cX enhancements to specific business outcomes.'

The session in Washington, DC was the second of five planned meetings for the study, each of which is followed by a debriefing webinar and confidential research paper. Participating companies were chosen for the study based on their innovative approaches to customer experience design and modeling in the workplace, and donated their time in exchange for access to the proprietary findings.

'We are thrilled that Peer Insight included us in this study,' Rush noted. 'Customer Experience Management, or CEM, is a concept that we helped develop and pioneer in the marketplace as a vital business discipline, and it is very gratifying for us to be part of the effort to, in essence, help customer experience 'grow up.' The work that we are doing with Peer Insight will help cX design make the transition from good idea to essential strategic growth tool.'

LRA's Research practice, which provided the analysis for this phase of the study, serves either as a stand-alone service provider or as an integrated part of an overall Customer Experience Management consulting project. LRA custom designs studies with a focus on 'experience optimization' in some form that can be validated against predefined business goals and metrics. LRA has designed and implemented innovative studies for industry leaders in lodging (Hyatt Hotels), real estate (Toll Brothers), senior living (ARAMARK Senior Living), sports (Stowe Mountain Resort, The PGA TOUR), gaming (Penn National Gaming) and travel (Signature Flight Support), among others.

About LRA Worldwide, Inc:

LRA Worldwide, Inc. is a leading consulting, organizational development and research company that specializes in Customer Experience Management (CEM). LRA helps companies and brands design and deliver the optimal customer experience across all key touch points using an integrated suite of services that measure and improve service quality, customer satisfaction, employee performance, loyalty, customer advocacy and profitability. LRA specializes in 'operationalizing the brand' - turning brand promise and customer strategy into operational reality. LRA's CEM practice areas include Customer Experience Strategy Design, Standards Development & Content Management, Organizational Development & Training, Research and Quality Assurance & Mystery Shopping, these are either deployed together in a strategic manner to continually monitor and improve the customer experience or deployed individually to address a specific tactical client need.

LRA's clients include some of the world's leading companies and brands, including Starwood Hotels & Resorts, Hard Rock Hotels and Casinos, the PGA TOUR, Albertsons Supermarkets, the NBA and First Niagara Financial Group. For more information, visit the company's Web site at www.LRAworldwide.com.

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