# How Unified Experience Management® drove better CX and EX for a multi-location retail brand

Employee experiences directly shape customer experiences and, ultimately, business success. But knowing there's a connection isn't enough. To truly understand how one impacts the other, brands need to track and analyze customer experience (CX) and employee experience (EX) data together.

By uniting CX and EX programs, this retail brand was able to spot the patterns that really made a difference. The connection helped them see which day-to-day practices were boosting both employee engagement and customer satisfaction.

CX+EX
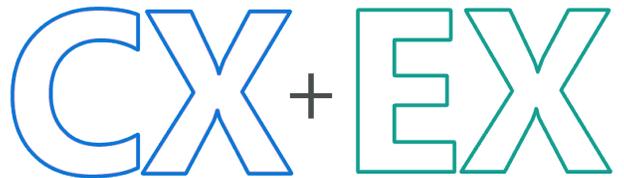
The data

This brand teamed up with SMG to dig deeper into what set high-performing locations apart. Data pointed to big gaps in employee engagement between locations.

Performance gap of stores with high vs. low employee engagement

+8.5 ppts
in Availability of Merchandise

+8.1 ppts
in Availability of Assistance

+7.9 ppts
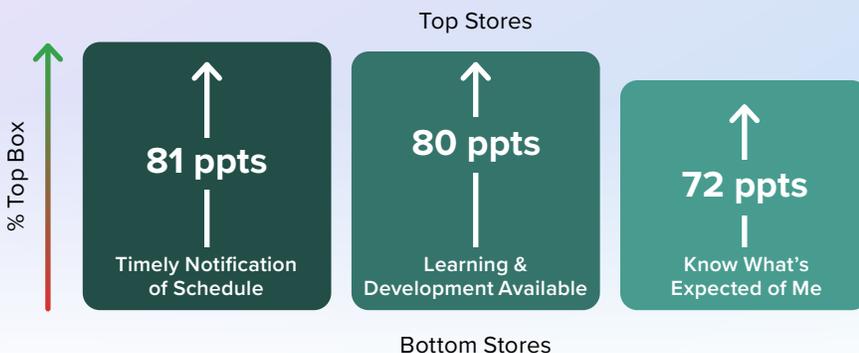in Merchandise Organized Neatly

+7.8 ppts
in Cleanliness

When comparing high- and low-performing employee engagement stores, one thing stood out: customer satisfaction was consistently higher in locations with stronger employee engagement.

These weren't just surface-level wins. They pointed to something deeper happening behind the scenes—an engaged team that was set up for success.

The data revealed three employee experience drivers most strongly linked to inconsistent customer satisfaction:

Variance in key drivers across locations

Top Stores

% Top Box

81 ppts
Timely Notification of Schedule

80 ppts
Learning & Development Available

72 ppts
Know What's Expected of Me

Bottom Stores

When top-performing stores focused on these areas, they saw an average year-over-year performance lift of +17 points, a strong signal that getting clear factors in the employee experience right can have a measurable impact.

So, what did these stores do differently? A closer look reveals a simple but powerful practice: **regular pre-shift check-ins**. Stores that excel in the top EX drivers hold these pre-shift meetings at a **54 ppt higher rate** than lower-performing locations.

These meetings directly support the top drivers of employee engagement:

- "Learning & Development Available"
- "Know What's Expected of Me"

% Top box with key driver agreement with 'Have regular pre-shift check-ins'

+67 ppts

+60 ppts

- Agree that they have regular pre-shift check-ins
- **Strongly Agree** that they have regular pre-shift check-ins

Know What's Expected of Me?

Learning & Development Available
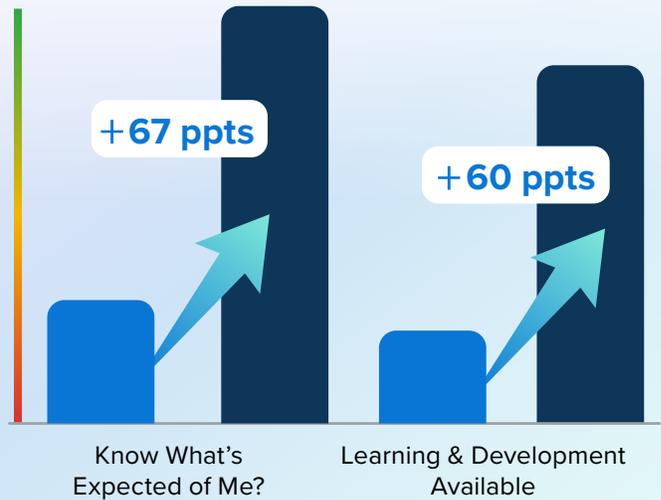
The impact goes far beyond routine communication. Locations that prioritize these pre-shift check-ins also have longer manager tenure, 15 ppts lower employee turnover (which results in lower employee overhead expenses as well), and nearly 6 ppts higher customer satisfaction (OSAT).

Top vs bottom performing stores in associate key drivers

	Bottom Stores	Top Stores
Have regular pre-shift check-ins		+54.3 ppts
Customer OSAT		+5.7 ppts
Turnover		-15.2 ppts
Avg store manager tenure at location		+1.5 yrs

The data makes it clear: something as simple as consistent pre-shift check-ins drives alignment, boosts engagement, and fuels better customer experiences. These short, structured conversations let managers set expectations, address issues, and strengthen team connections—driving more satisfied employees, better service, and measurable business results.

Bringing CX and EX data together makes these insights even clearer, and more importantly, helps pinpoint real steps teams can take to drive meaningful, scalable results.

Why it matters

For multi-location businesses, improving customer experience often starts with empowering the teams on the ground. Frontline employees and managers are the ones delivering the brand promise every day, interacting with customers, solving problems, and keeping operations running smoothly. When they have the clarity, the tools, and the support they need, they're better equipped to create great experiences.

But without clear direction, even well-intentioned teams can struggle. Identifying the right actions to improve both employee performance and customer satisfaction can feel like a moving target. It's not enough to assume what works —you need proof. By looking at customer and employee data together, you uncover the most effective interventions, prioritize what will have the greatest impact, and scale with confidence.

At this brand, when comparing stores based on **overall employee engagement**, we see a **4.6 percentage point gap** in OSAT between the top and bottom performers. But when focusing on key drivers both tied to regular pre-shift check-ins, the gap widens to **5.7 points**.

The takeaway? Focusing on what actually drives the employee experience makes a bigger difference for employee experience and customer satisfaction.

Impact of focusing on overall engagement vs. key drivers on OSAT

Customer OSAT gap top vs bottom

+1.1 ppts

4.6 ppts | 5.7 ppts

Overall employee engagement | Engagement on key drivers
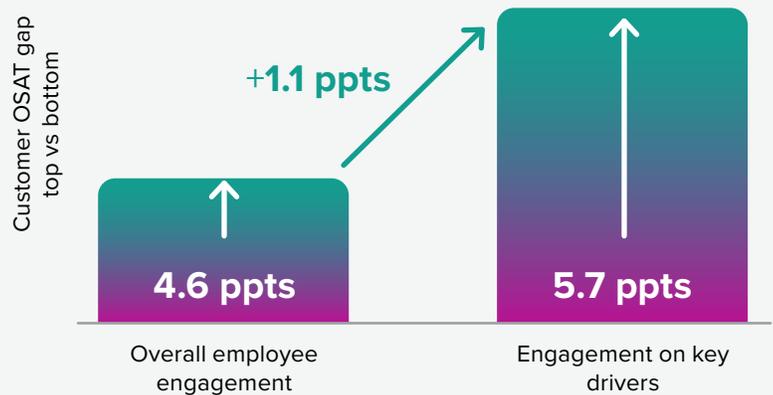
What's next

Of course, what works for this brand and their industry won't be a perfect fit for every organization. That's why a one-size-fits-all strategy won't cut it. Unified Experience Management®, which brings brand, customer, and employee experience management together, makes it easier to find surprising insights and tailor actions to your unique needs. And when you pair that with our XM expertise, you gain a clear path forward: one grounded in data, aligned with your goals, and designed to deliver the highest potential impact.

See what Unified Experience Management can do for your business. Contact us today!

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