

3 KEY FACTORS TO CREATING YOUR CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY



By Alan See

Did you know that early phone books included detailed directions on how to use the telephone? For example, a New York City telephone directory from 1885 gave the following instructions:

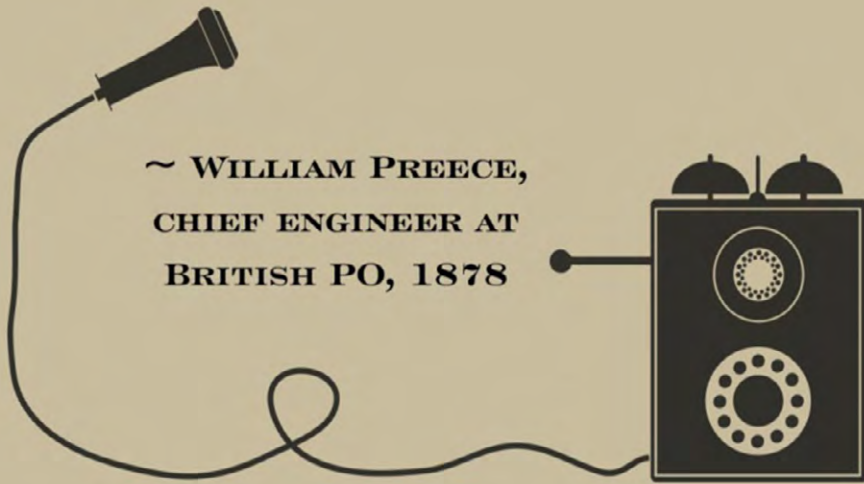
To Call

Press in the button and turn the crank once only; unhook the listening telephone (receiver) and put it close to your ear, when Central Office will enquire: "What number?" Give Central Office and number of person wanted, and upon receiving the answer "All right," hang up the receiver, and wait until your bell rings, then place the receiver to your ear and address person called. If you do not immediately hear his voice, the delay – except in rare cases – is owing to his failure to promptly answer the call. Therefore, hang up the receiver, press in the button and ring twice, then put the receiver again to your ear. Speak in a moderate, clear tone, with mouth three or four inches from transmitter. Loud speaking jars the mechanism of the instrument and produces a confused sound. When through do not fail to hang up the receiver, and call off, pressing in button and turning crank once. If you wish to call for a subscriber before disconnection is made, hang up your receiver, press in button, and turn crank once; then immediately place receiver to your ear and Central Office will answer.

If subscribers will respond quickly when their bells are rung the service will be much improved.

If bell rings once pay no attention – you are not wanted. If it rings twice you are wanted. Unhook receiver and speak immediately. The receiver, except when at your ear, must be always on the hook.

**THE AMERICANS HAVE
NEED OF THE TELEPHONE,
BUT WE DON'T.
WE HAVE PLENTY OF
MESSENGER BOYS**



~ WILLIAM PREECE,
CHIEF ENGINEER AT
BRITISH PO, 1878

We can laugh about that passage now; but think about it, in 1885 the telephone was new technology and nobody had any idea how to use one. In fact, even after the telephone had been demonstrated, there was not universal agreement that it had any immediate practical use. The telegraph and other communications options were working just fine, thank you very much.

Today, many organizations have tossed out the owner's manual as the ability to immediately start using a device or application without instructions is a feature of User Experience (UX) and User Interface (UI) design. However, judging by the number of "For Dummies," and other how-to books and videos it's apparent that not all consumer-focused UX/UI design is intuitive. Or for that matter, that the target audience can visualize the new product or service helping them achieve their goals or solve problems. After all, if the product doesn't align with the customer's needs and expectations then what's the point?

President Rutherford B. Hayes to Alexander Graham Bell in 1876 on viewing the telephone for the first time:

"That's an amazing invention, but who would ever want to use one of them?"