

LAL

Using Customer Experience as the basis for brand differentiation for global language school

GLOBAL STAFF ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME

RENEWED BRAND PROPOSITION, SERVICE BLUEPRINT AND OPERATIONS PLAYBOOK FOR SCHOOLS

NEW END-TO-END LEARNER JOURNEY APP AND SALES TOOLKIT

THE BRIEF

LAL has been offering English language courses since 1981.

From modest beginnings in Torbay, Devon, the company has grown into a global player with schools and partnerships in the UK, Ireland, Malta, the USA, Canada, Australia and South Africa.

During this period of expansion, several challenges have emerged:

- competition for English language courses provision has increased significantly with price discounting putting substantial pressure on margins;
- while there has been some growth in the 'young learner' market, adult learner numbers have been falling;
- the over-reliance on student recruitment agents leads to a high cost of learner acquisition.

LAL required the design and implementation of a business turnaround strategy focused on working towards an excellent customer experience for both students and recruitment agents which would drive continued sustainability and profitability through a differentiated brand proposition.

A key part of the project was establishing the baseline and setting financial and non-financial objectives.

- benchmarking LAL's customer experience;
- increasing positive feedback;
- reducing complaints;
- increasing customer referrals;
- increasing repeat business; and

WE SEE FOUR KEY CUSTOMER OUTCOMES





- boosting staff morale.

OUR APPROACH



Insight & Implementation

Our ‘deep dive’ workshop with the management team and interviews with LAL customers and agents highlighted that LAL’s staff were its biggest asset, and that while LAL students and agents loved what they did, LAL was not consistently delivering to customer expectations.

LAL’s proposition to market was not clear. This resulted in a sales strategy that got dragged into dependency on price and discounts while staff engagement was limited to annual staff surveys.

Its procedure for actioning customer feedback was ineffective and the satisfaction surveys completed at the end of courses did not provide actionable insights to help improve the customer experience.

We identified four key customer outcomes, namely improving the processes for finding and acquiring learners, improving teacher engagement in the classroom, improving the learning experience outside the classroom, and keeping the experience alive for learners once they had completed their course.

Heartbeat and Customer Promises

Heartbeat is CGA’s proprietary journey mapping methodology which brings the voice of customers to life and identifies where proactive intervention and change offer the greatest value.

Forrester Research has recognised Heartbeat® as one of the world’s leading journey mapping and measurement solutions and, uniquely, as a measurable master blueprinting tool for brands to design compelling and engaging customer experiences.

Heartbeat assesses the functional and emotional expectations of customers and measures the gap between these and perceptions of how well the business delivers them. It supports change programmes and predicts where future focus will offer the greatest rewards through increased revenue, higher margins and better relationships.

Working with LAL we built a bespoke Heartbeat Tracker to identify what it does well and what needs improvement.

This brought out LAL’s three ‘Customer Promises’:

1. We will provide inspiring English language learning,
2. We will ensure you achieve your learning goals, and
3. We will give you learning for life.

These promises helped LAL frame its detailed transformation roadmap.

Staff Engagement

Delivered online, the first ever global all staff engagement event saw the Senior Leadership Team providing an update on the current operating environment and sharing the company's vision and future direction



I was concerned about asking my team to undertake a new project. But, I asked them anyway. To my surprise, they were all up for it and very keen.

I now realise I should always ask for their input and not be scared to engage them.

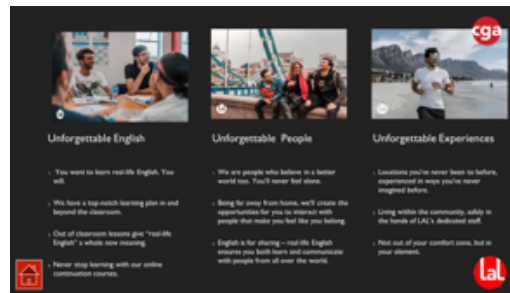
(member of LAL SLT)

Staff were given the opportunity to ask questions and empowered to own the customer experience in their schools.

This resulted in significant boost in staff morale and improved levels of engagement with staff who have asked for future engagement events. These are now planned to take place twice a year.

Brand Proposition

Our work led to LAL refreshing their brand with a new, clear proposition: 'LAL Unforgettable'. It also led to the company refining its visual identity, improving its messaging and communication, and launching a new product which has been positively received by agents and seen as a real differentiator in the market



Sales Toolkit

We also provided a set of tools and frameworks to LAL to support the training of the newly organised sales team.

RESULTS

LAL have completely redesigned their approach to measuring impact. Staff have been encouraged to engage with students to seek real time feedback on their individual experience. Student feedback is now collected by the 'LAL App' after each stage of the journey, with easy to complete questions relevant to the stage of their journey.

LAL now has timely feedback which it can act on whilst students are still on their courses. Students receive progress updates on issues they have reported, and, over time, data collected will enable LAL to plan future service improvements.

Review the format of the survey and replace it with a series of shorter questionnaires to ensure you get timely conversational insight that you can act on.

From **FEEDBACK** to **LISTENING**

What did success look like?

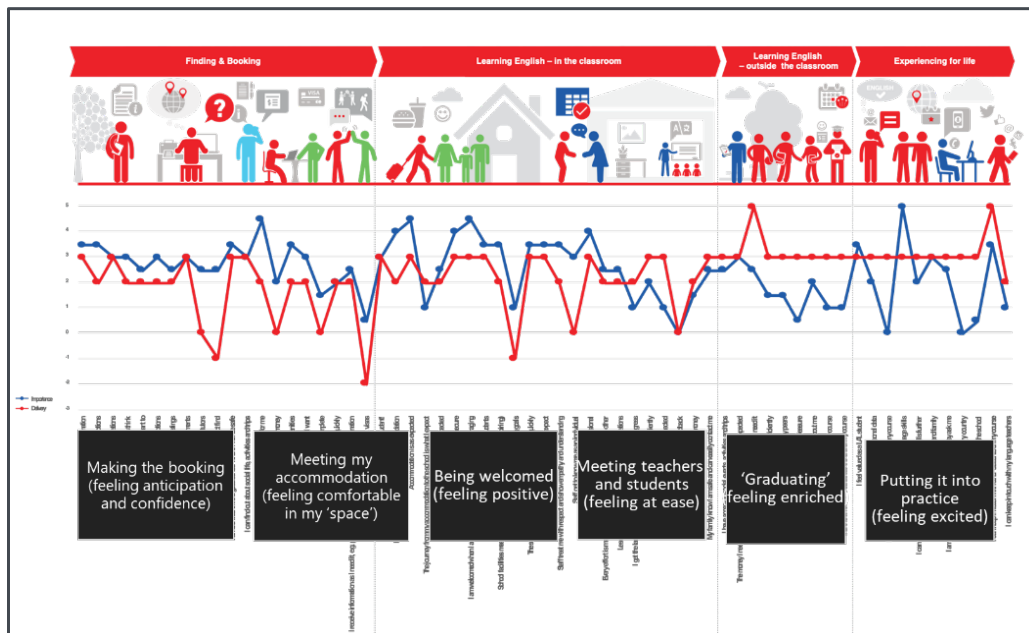
LAL reported immediate improvements, including:

- staff engagement and morale was up;
- staff are now proactively engaging students to seek feedback, and this feedback is increasingly positive;

- summer operations, the busiest time of the year, has improved. This is important from both an operational and sales perspective as agents had previously been hesitant to send students to LAL summer schools due to operational delivery issues.

The new approach means that LAL will be able to continue successfully targeting:

- increased positive references;
- increased repeat business;
- increased staff morale; and
- reduced complaints.



Watch LAL's promotional video here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mz1NUYJ0gRA&feature=youtu.be>