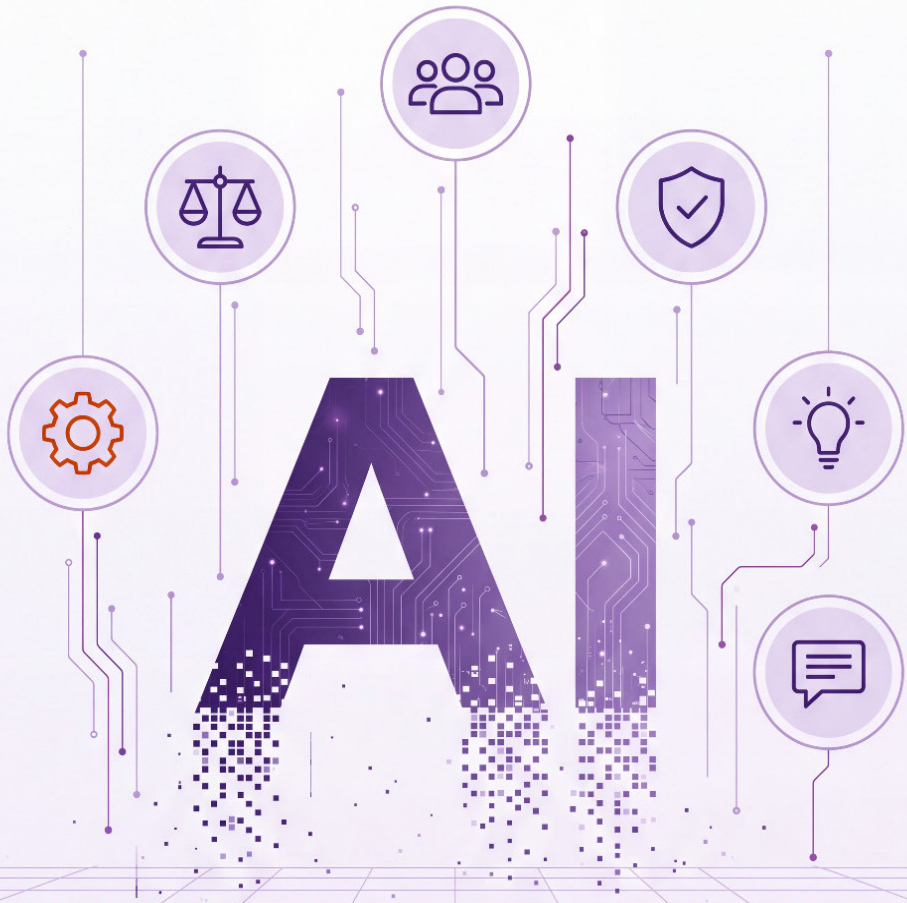
CXPA™

EXECUTIVE GUIDE TO **RESPONSIBLE AI IMPLEMENTATION**



In the prologue to CXPA's Leading CX into the AI Era white paper (2025), two passages stand out:

> *"Customers do not evaluate AI in abstract terms; they judge it through lived experience: Was it faster? Did it feel fair? Did it respect me?"*

> *"AI adoption is not about showcasing technology; it is about creating outcomes that are faster, more personal, and more transparent, without losing the human qualities of empathy and fairness. Customers will ultimately measure success not by how advanced the systems are, but by how those systems make them feel."*

If customer outcomes are where success is measured, responsible AI implementation is where success is created. It brings cross-functional teams together to integrate AI into operations in ways that are legal, ethical, efficient, well received, and designed to meet or exceed customer needs.

The conversation about AI has grown louder and more persistent. Press releases and shareholder reports frequently include announcements about AI investments or initiatives. Some organizations have directed portions of their budgets toward AI use. Others require staff to use AI regularly. Still other organizations have restricted AI use. Regardless, the direction is clear: we have entered a new phase of AI adoption.

AI is already moving into customer-facing and employee-facing systems. It is shaping how customers are routed, how service issues are prioritized, how agents are supported, how messages are personalized, how feedback is interpreted, how journeys are adapted, and how decisions are made. Some of these uses are visible to customers. Many are not. But even when the technology is invisible, the customer feels the impact through speed, clarity, fairness, effort, trust, and resolution quality or a breakdown in any of these elements.

For C-Suite professionals, this creates an important responsibility. The question is no longer only whether C-Suite professionals should understand AI. Increasingly, the challenge for C-Suite professionals is helping their organizations implement AI responsibly.

AI implementation cannot be treated only as a technical deployment, vendor decision, or automation initiative. It must be understood as a customer-impact decision. Every AI-enabled workflow, recommendation, response, handoff, escalation, or decision has the potential to improve the experience, trust and loyalty — or weaken them.



TRUST IS EARNED THROUGH RESPONSIBLE IMPLEMENTATION

Customers trust organizations that treat them fairly, explain what happens when something goes wrong, and offer a path forward.

Trust is not created through communication alone. It is earned through consistent accountability, transparent decisions, and a visible commitment to doing right by customers, even when something fails. In 2023, 58% of customers globally trusted businesses to use AI responsibly. By late 2024, that figure had fallen to 42%, a 16-point decline in just over a year, according to Salesforce State of the AI Connected Customer research. The reported decline underscores the need to evaluate customer outcomes and the accountability structures supporting AI deployment.



Employee trust is equally at stake and is often underestimated. Frontline staff who lack confidence in the AI tools they are expected to use may bypass them, creating issues that can be costly to resolve. AI implementation should therefore include change management and training. Leaders must ensure employees can raise concerns without fear of reprisal and, when appropriate, meaningfully override AI-driven decisions. Employees should also be able to trust that the system was developed through a sound process and properly assessed as a reliable tool.

Organizations that earn sustainable trust through AI adoption share one discipline: they build the conditions for trust before the technology is deployed. That work is done through responsible policy decisions made long before the first customer interaction occurs. It begins with the questions leaders ask before the system is introduced into an experience journey.

WHERE RESPONSIBLE AI IMPLEMENTATION BEGINS

> Responsible AI utilization must begin with the customer need, not the technology.

Responsible AI implementation begins by defining the intended customer outcome and determining whether AI is an appropriate means of achieving it. It also requires establishing safeguards, human judgment, accountability, baseline measures, and success criteria for planning, deployment, post-launch validation, and ongoing operation.

This is where Customer Experience (CX) professionals add distinctive value. They understand customer journeys, expectations, friction points, emotional moments, trust signals, and the gap between internal processes and lived experience. They are trained to see the organization from the outside in. Across planning, design, deployment, monitoring, learning, and adjustment, CX professionals help keep customer needs, journeys, trust, and outcomes visible in organizational decisions through evidence from actual customers, including representative customer research, accessibility testing, and usability validation. CX professionals can also help establish policies and procedures for the real possibility that even a well-designed AI system will produce an incorrect, harmful, or disputed outcome. The goal is not to slow innovation, but to make it more trustworthy, useful, and aligned with better outcomes for customers, employees, and organizations.



THE CUSTOMER AND AI-MEDIATED EXPERIENCES

While AI is reshaping how customers interact with organizations, it has not changed the fundamentals of human psychology. The core lenses customers use to evaluate experiences remain constant:



Ease
Was this simple to navigate?



Clarity
Did I understand what was happening?



Fairness
Was I treated equitably?



Empathy
Did the organization respect my situation?



Trust
Can I rely on this process again?



Satisfactory outcome
Did I accomplish what I intended or hoped to achieve?

AI does not replace these expectations. It intensifies them. What has changed is that AI is enabling instant answers, proactive recommendations, seamless handoffs, personalized journeys, and faster resolution of complex issues. The mechanisms have evolved. Speed has increased. Scale has expanded. Fluidity has improved. When implemented well, AI-mediated experiences may meet (or even exceed) customer needs.

CXPA advocates for the responsible use of technology to improve customer lives. AI is one of the most powerful accelerators of customer experience in a generation. Across industries, AI is reshaping how customers interact with organizations. When AI is implemented responsibly, the experience can feel natural, the steps intuitive, and friction reduced. The customer's goal can be achieved quickly and confidently, raising expectations for future experiences. Technology fades into the background because the positive outcome sets the memory.

> "Customers reward experiences that work." - CXPA

PROOF POINTS

Getting it right: Singapore-headquartered DBS has developed and used AI-enabled capabilities in more than 370 use cases intended to make banking "simpler, smarter, and safer." DBS reported more than 1.2 billion AI-enabled touchpoints and $589 million in tangible economic impact from its AI initiatives as of July 2025.

Getting it wrong: Australian-based Commonwealth Bank announced in August 2025, and then reversed, a plan to replace 45 contact center positions with an AI chatbot to handle customer inquiries when its implementation led to a net rise in calls.



DESIGNING FOR THE MOMENT

If we are to be responsible and intentional in AI-mediated customer experiences, we must understand the nature and consequences of the moment for which we are designing. The following three types describe how customers may experience an interaction:

	WHAT THE MOMENT LOOKS LIKE	AI'S ROLE	EXAMPLE
Routine	Simple, high-volume, repeatable activities. Low stakes, risk and emotion.	High automation	Simple information tasks and lookup such as: ▪ Balance checks ▪ Order status ▪ Appointment reminders
Important	Moments where the customer may feel uncertain, vulnerable, or want to feel heard. Typically more complex situations with some nuance.	Assist, personalize, or recommend — human readily available	▪ Supporting new customers ▪ Understanding a fee or plan change ▪ Service recovery ▪ Lengthy troubleshooting
High-Stakes	Complex or high-consequence instances. Moments with emotional or notable financial consequences. Customer perceives a need for judgment or consideration.	Human leads; AI in a supporting role at most	▪ Fraud ▪ Lingering or unresolved complaints. ▪ Safety-related issues ▪ Financial hardship ▪ Disputes

This classification illustrates how customers might experience AI-mediated interactions. Routine experiences may be highly automated, although traditional rules-based workflows may sometimes be more appropriate and cost-effective than AI. Important experiences require thoughtful orchestration. High-stakes experiences should be human-led and AI-assisted, with clear safeguards and accountability. Risk should be assessed according to context and consequences, not apparent task simplicity alone. Across all three types, organizations should evaluate the complete journey, including handoffs, context preservation, recovery, and accountability for the final resolution. Customers are increasingly sensitive to low-quality or generic AI-generated responses and to forced use of tools that make it

harder to do business. Organizations that treat experience design as a soft add-on will struggle to earn and maintain trust as AI adoption accelerates.

Choice also matters. Giving customers the ability to opt out of AI when practical is a powerful trust signal. It respects customer autonomy and helps organizations understand where customers do not want AI involved. When AI-mediated experiences are required, organizations should provide accessible alternative pathways, including a usable route to an empowered human who receives the relevant context and can resolve or review the matter without unnecessary repetition.

A NARRATIVE EXAMPLE: IMAGINARY BANK

Meet Imaginary Bank, an established retail bank exploring how it can leverage AI. This fictional case, which is included across the Responsible AI Implementation series, is not presented as a model implementation or success story. It illustrates the tensions, trade-offs, and course corrections that established organizations may encounter when seeking customer and business value from AI while protecting trust. You can also read the Imaginary Bank fictional case study in its entirety at www.cxpaglobal.org.

Imaginary Bank had spent several years expanding digital channels and encouraging customers to use self-service options. Digital adoption had grown, but customer contact had not fallen as expected. Routine inquiries remained high while fraud, disputes, and hardship cases required increasing attention and judgment.

AI appeared to offer several possibilities, with tantalizing claims for financial savings, reduced headcount, speed, efficiency, shareholder expectations, and customer demand.

But the Imaginary Bank leadership team did not begin with a position of agreement. That had to be built through a structured approach to responsible AI implementation rooted in a non-negotiable belief that any AI investment would need to improve customer outcomes, support employees, protect trust, and contribute to sustainable business value.

Throughout this white paper series, we include moments from Imaginary Bank's journey as it considers, makes leadership decisions, establishes governance and introduces AI into customer-facing services.

OUR ADVICE

Leaders at organizations that seek to leverage customer experience as a business strategy should be steadfast stewards of this principle: Start with the experience you want customers to have.

At the beginning of any AI implementation, leaders should ask:

- What validated customer need and intended outcome are we addressing?
- Why is AI more appropriate than a non-AI alternative?
- What harms, accessibility barriers, or unequal outcomes could occur, and for whom?
- Who owns human oversight, escalation, recovery, and appeal?
- Which customer, employee, operational, and harm measures will demonstrate improvement, and what thresholds will trigger intervention or rollback?

> You've got to start with the customer experience and work backward to the technology. – Steve Jobs

In the AI race, the goal should be creating compelling customer experiences that meet customer needs in a way that leaves customers feeling positive, respected, and confident in the organization, driving trust and long-term customer loyalty. This requires recognizing the two fronts shaping AI-mediated experiences today:

- **Strong, intentional leadership and governance practices** that provide a solid basis for better strategic decision-making during AI implementations that impact the customer experience. To provide guidance on this, we have written the *CXPA Guide to Responsible Leadership and Governance of AI Implementation.* It is designed for CX professionals and their leadership colleagues charged with crafting AI strategy.
- **Scaling AI from prompts to process automation** by putting the right practices and guardrails in place to execute the desired strategy. For this, we have written the *CXPA Guide to Responsible AI Implementation and Operations.* It is designed for individuals within an organization responsible for developing, scaling, and executing the established CX AI strategy.

- The path we have outlined is not quick, easy, or finite. Responsible CX AI implementation is an ongoing commitment to aligning technology with customer needs, organizational values, and intended outcomes. After launch, organizations should continuously monitor task success, accuracy, customer effort, complaints, escalations, accessibility failures, employee override capacity, and outcomes across relevant customer segments. Accountable leaders should establish review intervals and thresholds for intervention or rollback. Organizations that approach AI with this discipline are better positioned to build trust, strengthen relationships, and create lasting value for customers and the business.

We hope these whitepapers help you ask better questions, make better decisions, and contribute confidently to responsible AI implementation in your organization. We also invite you to leverage the CXPA community and resources as you seek to provide better outcomes for your customers, team, and organization.

AUTHOR AND CONTRIBUTOR RECOGNITION

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Venkata Krishna Dasari, CCXP is IT Head for a global high-tech client at HCLTech and a member of the CXPA Global Board of Directors. With experience leading technology operations, customer and employee experience transformation, service management, data center operations, infrastructure support, and cross-functional technology programs, he focuses on connecting operational excellence with strategic business outcomes. His work spans AI-driven IT operations, digital workplace innovation, service intelligence, and responsible AI adoption, with a focus on aligning technology, human judgment, customer value, and employee experience to deliver trusted and scalable outcomes.

Greg Melia, CAE is Chief Executive Officer of the Customer Experience Professionals Association (CXPA), the global nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing the CX profession. He works with leaders around the world to strengthen CX practices, develop professional standards, and demonstrate the business value of customer-centricity. A frequent speaker and advocate for professional excellence, Greg is passionate about helping organizations and individuals thrive in an era increasingly shaped by AI and human-centered leadership.

Eric Smuda is an award-winning customer experience leader with global success leading large-scale CX transformations with particular expertise in the financial services, technology, insurance, travel and hospitality industries. With a career spanning leadership roles at Auris, Likewize, Hertz and Avis Budget, Eric is a recognized authority in customer experience strategy, voice of customer, and experience delivery. He holds an MBA in Marketing from Southern Methodist University and is known for his ability to drive growth through better customer experience and retention. Eric frequently speaks at industry events and is a passionate advocate for CX as a growth engine.

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Darryl Alexander, CCXP, brings together AI Strategy and CX Innovation, dedicated to shaping the future of customer-centric operations. He helps global teams align enterprise tools with genuine customer outcomes, shifting companies from backward-looking metrics to predictive AI delivery. Darryl is passionate about helping organizations harness frontier technology to build human-centered, intelligent customer experiences.

Sue Duris, CCXP, is Co-Founder and Principal Consultant at M4 Communications, working at the intersection of customer experience, AI governance, and operating-model design to help organizations protect customer trust, reduce risk, and drive sustainable growth. A former CMO with an MBA from UC Irvine, she was named to CX Network's Top 50 AI Leaders in CX (2026). Her work centers on responsible AI through the customer lens.

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Sreeratha (Sree) Govindasamy, CCXP, is a transformative CX leader with over two decades across telecommunications, insurance, banking, and FMCG. She has led enterprise-wide transformations that reimagine people, processes, and productivity, harnessing AI and automation while keeping the voice of the customer at the center. Sree speaks at industry forums and volunteers as a mentor, helping women navigate career growth and find their confidence. A contributor to this paper, she believes transformation begins from within.

Laura Marciano-Sawh, MBA, CCXP, is Vice President of Operations at DrFirst, where she leads customer operations, including the team behind its customer-facing AI experiences. Her team earned a 2025 Silver Stevie Award for Customer Service Team of the Year for reducing ticket volume,

call volume, and handle time. Laura focuses on scaling customer-centric organizations through AI, automation, and operational excellence, with an approach rooted in empathy and data.

James McIntyre is an Australia-based customer experience, loyalty, and growth strategist specializing in journey mapping, lifecycle marketing, retention, and AI-powered personalization across retail, ecommerce, financial services, and membership businesses. He has held senior roles with Wesfarmers OnePass, Flybuys, Medibank, and Cashrewards, and created the ACTIVATE Framework™, an eight-step methodology for AI-enabled CX transformation used with ASX-listed enterprises and mid-market scale-ups. Through his consultancy, James helps organizations identify friction, improve retention, and connect disconnected customer experiences.

Kelli Polk, CCXP, is Customer Experience Insights Manager for the City of Olathe, Kansas, where she leads efforts to strengthen civic engagement and design data-driven, customer-centric feedback systems. A certified Prosci change management professional and seasoned XM strategist, she works across municipal departments to build sustainable CX frameworks, optimize contact center workflows, and empower teams to deliver exceptional community experiences. A passionate advocate for professional excellence and community service, Kelli also serves on the Board of Directors for the Friends of the Olathe Public Library.

Andre Prins is Director of Customer Experience at Cybit, a UK-based technology services provider focused on intelligent data. Drawing on almost 30 years in IT services, from frontline support to country leadership, he helps organizations turn CX ambition into measurable business value, an approach recognized when Cybit received the CXPA's Proven Business Impact award. A CXSA board member, ICXI CX Practitioner Ambassador, and three-time LinkedIn Top Voice for CX, Andre believes AI delivers its greatest value when it makes customer journeys easier while keeping people at the center.

Sasha Rana is Leader, CX Strategy & Enablement at Interac, a Canadian fintech, where she leads the client experience mandate and commercial technology ecosystem. Her work focuses on turning insights into action, while advancing AI across the CX practice. She brings a practical perspective on governance, cross-functional alignment, measurement, and ensuring AI delivers real value for clients and the business.

Brett Sharp is a CX, market research, and AI strategy executive with more than 25 years of experience building customer experience infrastructure across enterprise technology, healthcare, and financial services. He leads Poros Advisory LLC, where he consults on CX-led digital transformation, operating model design, and responsible AI adoption. A contributing author to CXPA's Customer Experience Book of Knowledge, Brett holds a Master's in Marketing Research from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

Karan Thaker, CCXP is Senior Manager for Customer Experience Strategy and Insights at Iron Mountain in Toronto. He has built cross-functional teams and programs across U.S. and Canada to build alignment around

customer needs, market signals, strategic choices and the execution glide paths that deliver simpler, more connected customer experiences that strengthen trust and commercial performance.

Lei Xia, CCXP is a Customer Experience (CX), Voice of Customer (VoC) and transformation leader with over 15 years of experience in the Canadian financial services, including Scotiabank and Tangerine. She specializes in translating customer insights into enterprise strategies, journey improvements and measurable business outcomes. Passionate about human-centered innovation, Lei advocates for integrating CX leadership into enterprise AI strategy to drive responsible adoption, enhance customer and employee experiences, and create sustainable business value.

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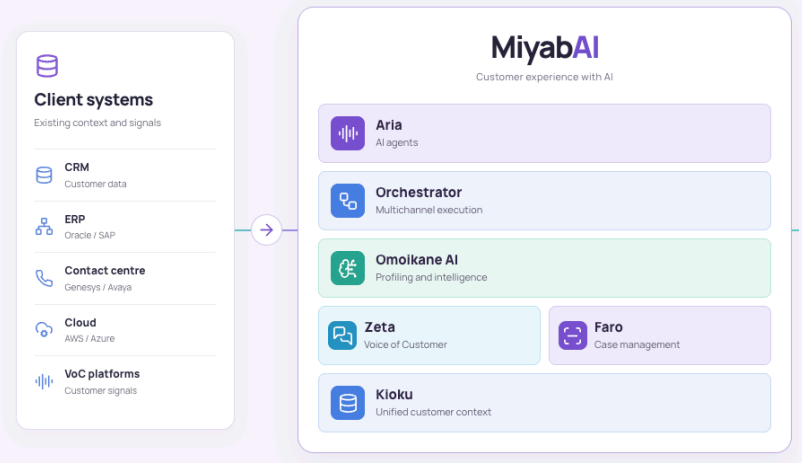
CLIENTSHIP

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE,
END TO END
TECHNOLOGY · CONSULTING · CAX

15 years turning AI into customer experience that works.

MiyabAI, CX consulting and the experience to make both useful — helping organizations move from AI ambition to operational value, connecting what the company already knows, what customers are saying, and the decision that matters next.



A LAYER OVER WHAT YOU ALREADY HAVE — NOT A REPLACEMENT.

SEE IT ON YOUR DATA

Ready to accelerate your AI journey?

Put MiyabAI on a real use case — a no-commitment POC to see the technology work on your own operation.

info@clientship.com

Let's talk about your use case →

TECHNOLOGY

MiyabAI

Turn AI ambition into operational value.

An intelligence layer that brings context together, listens to the voice behind the score, decides with Omoikane AI, and moves the decision into action. From AI pilot to production.

Context · Listen · Decide · Act

CONSULTING

CX Consulting

Good CX strategy has to move.

Senior CX perspective that connects evidence, strategy and execution — so insight becomes operating change, not a deck. Three connected phases, adapted to your question.

Discover · Design · Deliver

EDUCATION

CAX Academy

CX education for the people accountable for it.

Clientship Academy of Experience develops and credentials CX professionals and teams — led by practitioners, grounded in peer-reviewed research, with credentials you can verify.

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"Making Happy Customers and Healthy Companies."

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40+ ENTERPRISES

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Design & Layout by: Farhan Shahid