



THE *INTEGRATED AXIS* TECH CHRONICLE

What's New

Events Around Town

- 9 & 10 - Tucson Festival of Books
- 17 - St. Patrick's Day Parade
- 22 - Fourth Ave Street Fair
- 23 - Tucson Japanese Festival
- 30 - Easter Eggstravaganza

TRUST IS THE NEW CURRENCY: HOW WEALTHY ARE YOU?



Today, most business transactions – whether buying shampoo or tonight's dinner – are faceless. That's why in our digital world, trust is the new currency. This shift in consumer behavior, sometimes called the "trust economy," is more than the quality of products or services you offer; it's about constructing a bedrock of reliability and transparency so customers choose you over competitors.

"Trust keeps society running. Even the most trivial interactions rely on small acts of trust," the Economist reported. This isn't lost on company leaders either. PwC's 25th Annual Global CEO Survey reported that behind industry conditions, consumer trust is the most important predictor of a company's past and future financial performance.

However, trust is increasingly difficult to earn. Thanks to the recent emergence of AI, frequent mishandling of personal data by companies and relentless cyber-attacks, customers are more skeptical than ever. As product and service providers, PwC points out that we are constantly evaluated by our customers on whether or not we are "forces for good in society." Make one slipup and that trust is gone, perhaps for good.

How you handle data and use technology to influence your customers' experience will decide your fate in the trust economy. Prioritize the most important drivers of trust – empathy, reliability and integrity – and grow your customer loyalty this year and in the years to come.

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CARE²

**Customer Focus
Accountability**

Respect

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March 2024



*This monthly publication
provided courtesy of
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Integrated Axis
Technology Group*

Tech's Role In Improving Trust

Our dependence on technology is undeniable, yet this very reliance makes us vulnerable. Computer pioneer Willis Ware once said, "The only computer that's completely secure is a computer no one can use."

This statement hits a nerve, especially for businesses navigating the complexities of digital security. The challenge, then, is to harness technology in a way that boosts, rather than undermines, customer trust.

Be Transparent About Data Usage

Ever been shopping for a new shirt only to have an online ad pop up later for the same shirt? It's not a coincidence – it's data. Although customers expect you to collect data, they want a say in it. According to a report by Qonsent, 94% of consumers feel that having control over the data they share with companies is important.

Make sure you have a clear privacy policy that tells customers:

- What data you collect
- How you use it
- Who you share it with
- How they can adjust what data they share with you

Additionally, don't collect more data than you need, and ensure your team is well-versed in data security, drawing from clear internal processes around data management. Slack's "Privacy Policy" page is an excellent example of data transparency. It's written for the consumer (not in legalese), and it clearly explains what data is collected and why, and how users can change their preferences.

Take Cyber Security Seriously

Customers want to know if you have a good reputation for protecting their data and information. According to a 2022 McKinsey survey, 53% of consumers will only engage with a company after checking for a good security track record. Even one breach could mean losing a significant amount of your customer base.

To build trust with your customers, make sure your company's cyber security strategy includes:

- Multi-factor authentication
- Proactive security software that stops attacks before they happen
- Regular security awareness training for all employees
- Frequent backups (local and remote, ideally)
- A disaster recovery plan to help you respond quickly and with authority, decreasing the risk of losing your customers after an incident

Leverage Technology To Improve Your Customers' Experience

According to a 2018 report by Deloitte, customers spent 140% more with companies they had a positive experience with. Additionally, companies with positive interactions reduced customer service costs by as much as 33%.

Technology enables businesses to offer personalized, seamless experiences that resonate with customers. Consider how e-commerce platforms use encrypted payment transactions and tailored shopping recommendations to provide secure and helpful interactions. Or CRM systems that act like an assistant who never forgets a face or a conversation, so you can manage customer interactions with greater personalization.

Above all, though, it's the quality of every interaction you have with customers that builds trust. Whether over the phone, by e-mail or across a store counter, remember that your customer wants to trust you. You just have to deliver.

Embrace Trust And Earn Loyalty

Nearly half (46%) of consumers say they'll consider another brand if data practices are unclear, according to the McKinsey survey. On the flip side, organizations prioritizing digital trust are more likely to experience a 10% annual boost to their top and bottom lines. Listen to your customers. Prioritize a trust-based approach to your business and digital security, and you're not just winning trust now, you're setting up for years of loyal customers.

CYBERSECURITY CORNER: CASINO DEL SOL CRIPPLED BY RANSOMWARE

The Casino del Sol, one of Arizona's major casino resorts, recently fell victim to a cyber attack on February 21, causing widespread disruptions to its operations. The attack, possibly orchestrated by the ransomware group Scattered Spider, impacted ATMs, credit card systems, Wi-Fi, TV, phones, and electronic door key systems. While the FBI and local authorities investigate the incident, the casino has managed to restore some services, but challenges persist. The incident highlights the growing trend of cybercriminals targeting high-profile entities, emphasizing the critical need for robust cybersecurity measures in businesses. As the digital landscape evolves, companies must prioritize safeguarding their systems to prevent potentially devastating consequences. The attack on Casino del Sol serves as a stark reminder for businesses to invest in cybersecurity to protect their assets, customer trust, and overall security.



If you want to ensure your business is safe, call IA today to discuss your options.

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: CTI, DRIVING PROGRESS



In the heart of the mining and construction hub of Arizona, CTI stands tall as a key player, contributing to the region's growth and development for over 90 years. Nestled in the town of Marana, CTI has been a steadfast provider of safe and reliable transportation services to numerous dedicated customers across the Southwestern United States.

With operations spanning Arizona and reaching into the western areas of New Mexico through 14 strategically located facilities, CTI plays an integral role in transporting both hazardous and non-hazardous materials. CTI supports the mining communities, power plants, airports, and commercial industries, fostering economic progress throughout the region.

Some of their most valued clients include industry giants like Freeport McMoran, ASARCO, Pinto Valley Mine, Excelsior, Salt River Materials Group, CalPortland, TEP, and LHoist. These partnerships showcase CTI's commitment to excellence and the trust their clients place in the ability to deliver on their unique transportation needs.

Over the past six years, CTI has expanded its transportation business to include transloading materials from railcar to trailer enhancing capabilities, and allowing them to efficiently transport grinding media crucial for mining operations in the Benson and Tucson areas.

In response to the evolving landscape of Arizona's development projects, CTI has invested millions of dollars in state-of-the-art equipment. This commitment enables them to meet the growing demands of initiatives like the border wall project and substantial highway expansions.

CTI's dedication to safety, reliability, and innovation continues to drive the team forward as an industry leader. Looking towards the future, CTI remains steadfast in its mission to play a pivotal role in the success of the mining and construction industries, contributing to the prosperity of the communities they serve.

MIKE ROWE ON THE POWER OF AUTHENTICITY



In today's marketplace, where consumer trust is the linchpin of success, authenticity emerges as a key differentiator for businesses. Who better to break down the power of authenticity than one of the most down-to-earth TV personalities in America – Mike Rowe?

Known for his unscripted, real-life experiences, Rowe has had a career – spanning from his unconventional presentations on QVC to his adventures in Discovery's Dirty Jobs – that offers rich lessons on the power of authenticity in life and business.

Balance Authenticity And Authority

In 2001, Rowe worked at San Francisco's KPIX-TV. Eventually, he started a segment called "Somebody's Gotta Do It," where he interviewed tradespeople. Initially, Rowe imagined that he, the host, would explain the interviewee's work to the audience. After all, that's how his hosting experience had been so far.

Down in the sewers of San Francisco with Gene Cruz, Rowe began his opening line for the show. Just then, human feces splattered across his face. In response, Cruz said something that later became Rowe's mantra: "Down here in the sewer, it's best to keep your mouth shut." But Rowe kept trying his line – and failing. Between invasive cockroaches and rats, he couldn't get it right. Finally, Rowe gave up and let Cruz do the talking. The show was a massive hit and later became Rowe's foundation for his legendary performance on Dirty Jobs.

Instead of talking as the expert, Rowe let the real expert talk. In the city sewers, he realized he had to strike a new balance between expert authority and authenticity in order to connect sincerely with his audience.

"At that moment, I transitioned from – what I would call in cable TV anyway – the age of authority, where all the information came from an expert or a host, into the age of authenticity we're living in today, where the viewer is more skeptical and prefers to get their information by watching a conversation instead of a lecture," he explains. Somewhere between authority – knowing your business and having all the facts – and genuine authenticity – being completely yourself with no offense (which your audience doesn't want to see anyway) – is where authenticity lives, Rowe says. The key to building a loyal audience to figure out how to strike that balance.

Authenticity Is More Than Passion

In an early episode of Dirty Jobs, Mike plunged into a septic tank alongside Les Swanson. After 15 years as a guidance counselor and psychologist, Swanson had left his career to start a septic-tank-pumping venture near Madison, Wisconsin.

"It was Les Swanson who said to me, 'I'm not here because I'm passionate about septic tanks,'" Mike reflects. "I'm here because I wanted to do something different."

Rowe's journey mirrored a similar path. He'd crawled into sewers and septic tanks, using his skills in conversation to shine a light on others' important work. "The lesson isn't to not have passion. Passion is important to follow – bring it with you in all things," Rowe says. "But real job satisfaction comes from finding an opportunity and finding a way to be great at it, and then finding a way to love it."