

LOVE IS A VERB:

Embedding Connection in our
'Digital First' World



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Top Speakers

KEN
HUGHES

Leading Consumer &
Shopper Behaviouralist,
CX Strategist and Keynote
Speaker



Speech summary

As we emerge from the pandemic, consumers and employees are looking to reconnect, as indeed is society as a whole. The values around vulnerability, honesty, transparency, trust, empathy and connection are all strong driving forces for brand relevance today, and ones we need to reflect to our customers and prospects.

We speak a lot about Customer Lifetime Value, Brand Loyalty or the Customer/Employee Experience, but we have to start asking ourselves some hard questions relating to how we intend to build relationships deep enough to deliver.

In our new 'digital first' world (where most product/service interactions start digitally), it can all get very transactional. While digital convenience continues to accelerate (get everything you need in one-click, one-swipe, instantly) it can be very transactional, very two-dimensional, and often lacks any depth, empathy or connection.

We are setting off into a decade where the intersection between AI, IoT, technology and consumer expectations will drive digital transformation even further. But this clashes with all the values spoken about earlier – the need for connection, empathy, deep relationship. In our new digital world, we need to be putting more effort than ever before into the human connection element of a customer journey or employee experience.

We need to focus on how everything we do builds deeper, genuine relationships. We need to show our customers that we value them, beyond their spend. That we value their decision to buy from us, to have chosen our brand to be part of their lives.

This speech takes the psychology of human relationship and maps it on to the customer experience. How can we expect customer lifetime value or brand loyalty unless we put the effort in to building and maintaining a relationship? Brands claim to have Customer Relationship Management (CRM systems), but what they actually have are Customer DATA Management (CDM) systems. Data doesn't build relationships, actions do.

Love is a Verb; it is something you show. This speech takes 10 of the key attributes necessary for successful human relationships and maps them on to our customer interactions. We all have relationships that are important to us, our life partners, lovers, children, family and friends. Even in these relationships, we can do better and here the audience is taken on a roller-coaster journey through healthy relationships. At each turn we explore the core of healthy human relationships, and then showcase the implications for customer journey.

We look at love & commitment, quality time together, intimacy, trust & honesty, effective communication, conflict resolution, acts of kindness & gift giving, personal responsibility, personal space, and humour. Applying these and activating them as love languages builds deeper, authentic relationships. If we are serious about customer lifetime value, we need to start activating these attributes in both our digital and physical customer interactions.

Love is a Verb is designed as a speech to inspire and engage, to entertain and to challenge how we think about the nature of relationship and connection. It has been sculpted to tug at the heart-strings of an audience, to connect with them personally as well as professionally.

If we are serious about deepening our customer and employee relationships, we have to invest in emotional intelligence. It starts here.



“Some quotes from this speech

“Customers expect trust and transparency. How can we expect any relationship without those things? But yet corporations continue to put their own interests first. That is not how healthy relationships work”

“We use such aggressive language – Customer Acquisition, Customer Retention. That would be like me putting up a Tinder Profile that says ‘I’d like to chloroform you and lock you in a cage in my basement’. Not exactly the kind of date most people want. We need our customers to chose and stay with us for who we are”

“It should not be about what a customer does for us but what we do for them, and not just at the point-of-sale. Relationships are built in the hard-times, the downtime, in the unexpected moments”

“Ever increasing digital interactions present significant threat in customer experience. Yes they are convenient but unless we put focused effort into how customers ‘feel’ we are going to lose relationship depth with them”



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Key learnings

- ① For everything digital offers us, it also erodes potential depth of human connection and relationship which is key to build relationships.
- ② Relationships are built over time and with significant effort. Brands need to re-think their KPIs and prioritise long-term relationship over short-term 'satisfaction' or NPS scores.
- ③ The 10 key components of healthy happy human relationships can easily be activated along a customer journey and employee experience. This is about the humanisation of experience, regardless of technology.
- ④ Love languages are how we express and communicate that we care. In personal relationships we understand this, but in customer experience we seem to abandon the things that feel right in favour of profit or ease. Learn to live your love languages as a brand.
- ⑤ If we are serious about trust, connection and authenticity (which are all strong key customer and societal values today) we need to embed them in how we do business. We need to make customers 'feel' something, that is how loyalty and trust is built. Emotional engagement is critical.



Testimonials

"Our members loved Ken's new speech. It was so actionable for the call centre industry and really brought everyone so much closer to the human side of CX"

DOROTHY O'BYRNE
CCMA

Love is a Verb was such a powerful way of conveying the importance of relationship in our digital world. As always, Ken was engaging, insightful and entertaining.

FREDERICK FERNHOUT
EURAPCO

"Ken is an energetic, thought-provoking speaker. I've had Ken speak at two Google events now and Ken has scored higher than any other speaker I've ever had before, lasting a longtime in the memories of the delegates"

FIONA JONES
GOOGLE EMEA

"Ken's new speech on relationship simply blew the audience away at our event. It is rare to find a story-teller with such great content but also so entertaining. The delegates loved it. It is why we invite him back year-after-year"

DEMETRIS LOTTIDES
SPPMEDIA

"I could listen to this guy all day. As always an amazing insight into customers and the essence of CX relationships"

ANNETTE HICKEY
PAYPAL

Ken's speech at both our US and European CX events really excited delegates for the need to better engage with the new consumer and get personal and experiential. As a speech it was relevant, insightful as well as great fun. An ideal mix

MOLLIE SPILMAN
CRITEO

Delegate Testimonials



“Such a powerful way to look at customer interactions”

“This guy is amazing”

“I think I learned more there personally than I ever have at a business conference before!”

“That was one of the most enjoyable speeches I’ve ever listened to”

“Fantastic @KenHughesIE. I’m all loved up”

“@KenHughesIE is always such a delight to listen to”

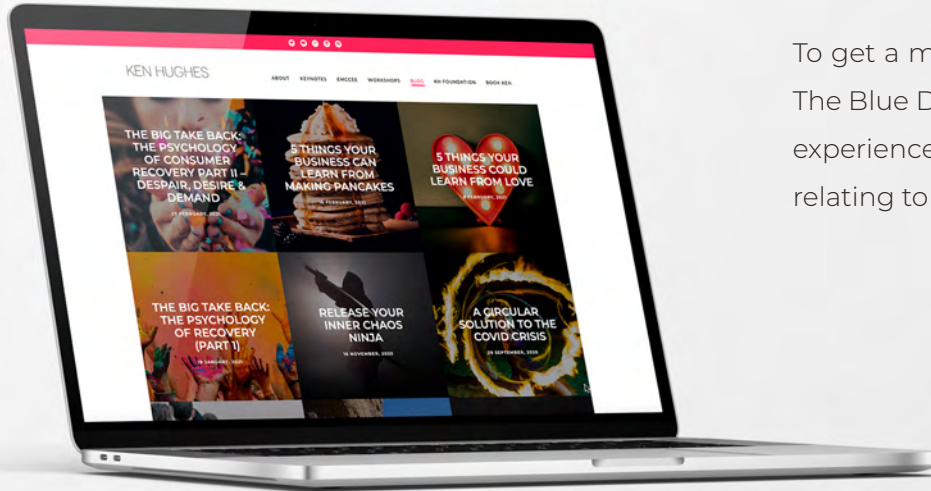
“Humanisation of our Digital World. @KenHughesIE just blowing minds”

“I love this guy even just for his red trousers!”

“I think I want to have a relationship with the speaker”

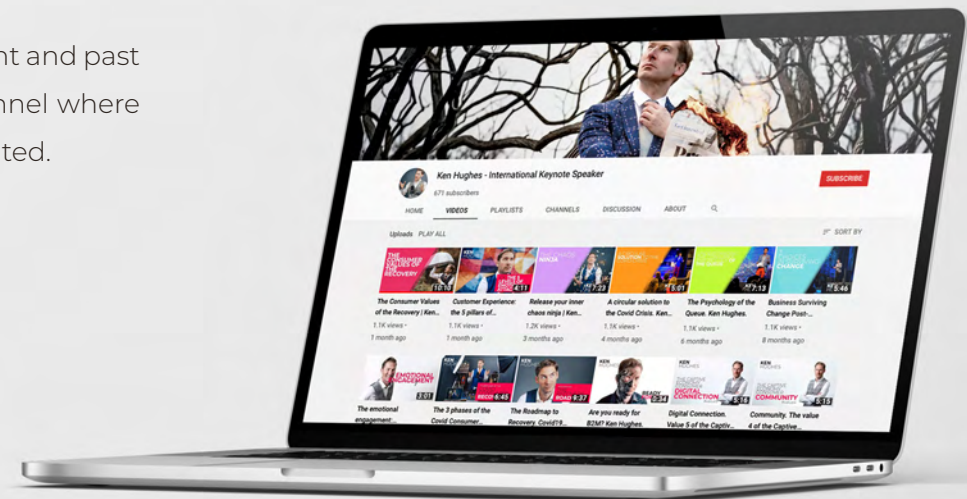
“Well, no one is going back to their desk today thinking about CX and relationship in the same way, or their homes either!”

For more inspirational content from Ken Hughes, click below



To get a more detailed feel for Ken Hughes content, check out his Blog – The Blue Dot Consumer. Widely read by those in the marketing, customer experience and retail worlds, it is full of in-depth discussion and content relating to all things consumer.

For those too lazy to read blogs, and to view further visual content and past performances from Ken Hughes, check out the You Tube channel where he discusses all things consumer and customer experience related.



About Ken Hughes

Ken Hughes is now acknowledged as being one of the world's leading authorities on modern consumer and B2B culture. He is internationally renowned for helping his largely blue-chip client base to understand the future of consumerism, markets, society and the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

With over 20 years' experience as CEO of a consumer insight agency, he blends his understanding of consumer & cyber psychology, digital anthropology, behavioural economics and digital transformation to explore the needs of the new consumer and predict the changes to come.

Ken advises some of the biggest brands in the world on customer and employee experience, omnichannel strategy, artificial intelligence, retail trends, digital transformation, the millennial and Gen Z consumer and the peer-to-peer economy.

As an accomplished author, TED speaker, part-time university lecturer and actor, his performances are not only insightful and thought-provoking but are infamous for their sheer energy, entertainment and passion, not to mention his generous Irish wit.

As a motivational speaker, Ken also brings attendees on an amazing journey of personal development, challenging them to do more with their lives, both professionally and personally. He is known as one of the most powerful motivational speakers on the circuit relating to employee motivation, delivering a perfect blend of inspiration and energy to any audience.

Either live on stage or from his purpose-built home studio, Ken engages and inspires across every continent. Now considered one of the world's top speakers on customer and employee experience, his new speech on relationship sets the bar for audience emotional engagement.





Book this **virtual/
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