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The P-51's Lesson for CX and AI Leaders

I recently had the opportunity to fly in a historic aircraft, the P-51 Mustang. For someone who loves aviation, it was one of those experiences I'll never forget ([watch the video](#)). It reminded me of a lesson that's incredibly important in customer experience and AI. And how we can make a huge leap forward.



The P-51 is considered one of the greatest fighter aircraft ever built. But one of the most important reasons it helped change the course of the air war was a relatively simple improvement.

Earlier in the war, bombers would fly deep into enemy territory, but the fighter aircraft assigned to protect them didn't have enough range. They had to turn back long before the bombers reached their targets, leaving them vulnerable and contributing to devastating losses.

The solution was the addition of external, disposable fuel tanks. That relatively simple enhancement dramatically extended the Mustang's range. Suddenly, it could

escort bombers deep into enemy territory and all the way back home. The losses dropped dramatically.

The Mustang's capabilities didn't fundamentally change. What changed was that a critical constraint (not enough fuel capacity) was removed. And that unlocked the full potential of everything else the airplane could do.

The Mustang's capabilities didn't fundamentally change. What changed was that a critical constraint was removed.

I see the same thing happening in organizations today. Many leaders are searching for the next breakthrough technology, especially when it comes to AI. But often the biggest gains don't come from the most sophisticated technology. They come from identifying and removing the constraint that is holding everything else back.

- Maybe it's a policy that creates unnecessary customer effort.
- Maybe it's fragmented information that prevents employees from helping customers quickly.
- Maybe it's a poor handoff between AI and human advisors.
- Maybe it's an approval process that slows everything down.

Often, the biggest gains don't come from the most sophisticated technology. They come from identifying and removing the constraint that is holding everything else back.

The organizations seeing the strongest results are often the ones that identify these constraints and systematically remove them. Sometimes the real breakthrough isn't adding something new. It's removing the obstacle that has been limiting performance all along.

The P-51 was already a remarkable aircraft. The external fuel tanks allowed it to become what it was truly capable of being.

Sometimes the real breakthrough isn't adding something new. It's removing the obstacle that has been limiting performance all along.

That's the lesson worth remembering. In customer experience, customer service, and AI, the question isn't always, "What's the next big thing?" Sometimes the better question is, "What's the constraint holding us back?" Find that, and a relatively simple change can transform everything.



Watch the video!

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