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Digital Experience: The Internet of Me

CEO White Paper

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Introduction

More.

If one word could describe customer expectations today, it would be “more.” More personalization. More convenience. More engagement. More customer service. More speed. More choice. More accountability.

Today’s customers are calling the shots, and they have become *more* powerful than ever.

In fact, it is customers, not competitors, that are now the primary disruptive force for businesses.¹ And 70% of them say connected and seamless processes—like contextualized engagement and frictionless experiences—are crucial to winning their business.² They expect customization and tailored experiences across any and every channel.

A quality product is imperative, but customer experience (CX) is king.

Rising Customer Expectations

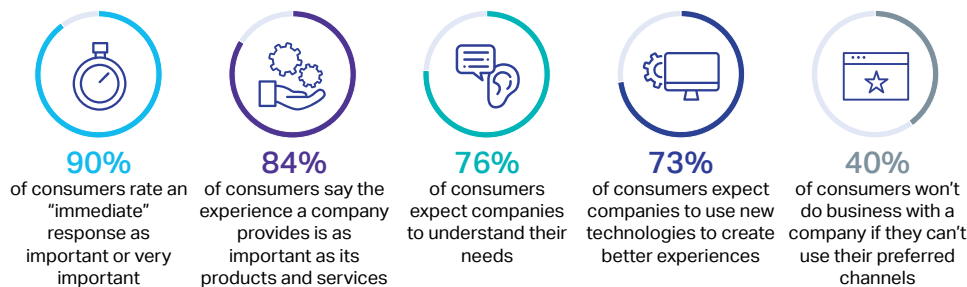


Figure 1:

Consumer Expectations Are Rising^{3,4,5}

This is not only about consumers. Business buyers have equally high expectations, with 89% saying that the experience a company provides is *as important as* its products and services.⁶

Rising Business Buyer Expectations

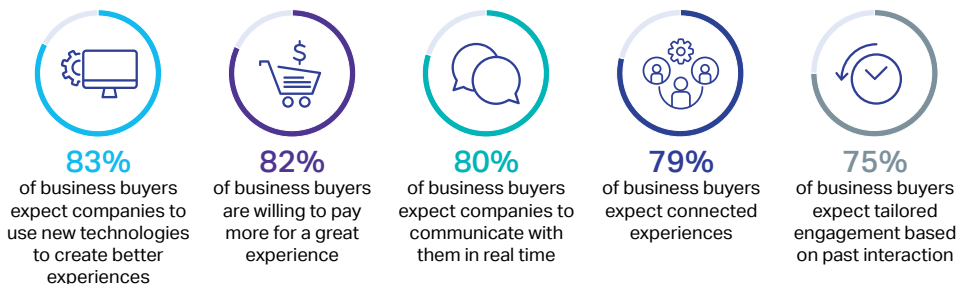


Figure 2:

Business Buyer Expectations Are Rising, Too⁷

In the current era of technological advancement, information overload and constant connectivity, companies that do not rise to the challenge can expect their customers to kick them to the curb and never look back. Customers can find another business that meets their needs within minutes; everything is at their fingertips, just a search away. In light of this, it is not surprising that nearly half of American consumers switched companies based on a poor customer experience within the last year alone.⁸

We are living in the fourth industrial revolution, characterized by technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), 5G, the Internet of Things (IoT), robotic process automation, nanotechnology, and countless others. Industry 4.0 is exponential, and yet organizations must still find ways to provide exceptional customer experience in the midst of this onslaught of new trends, microtrends and disruptive technologies.

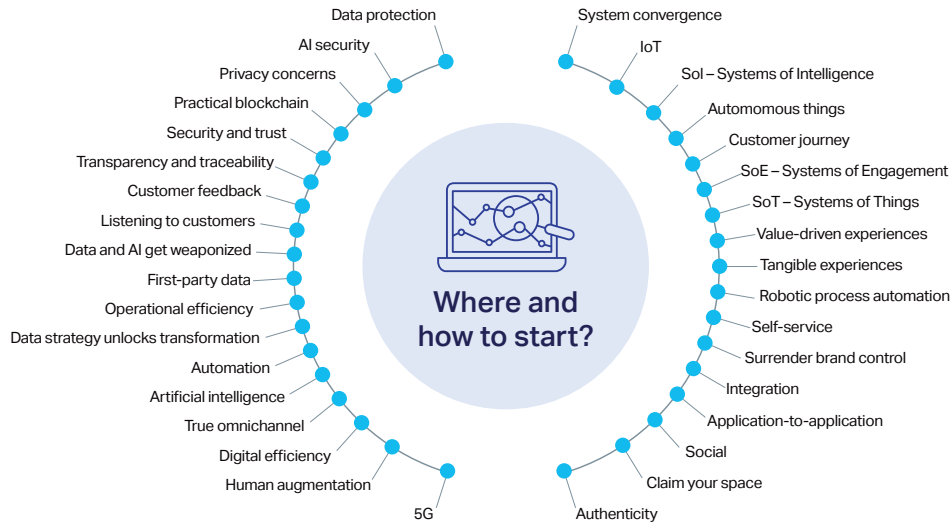


Figure 3:

An Onslaught of Competing Trends

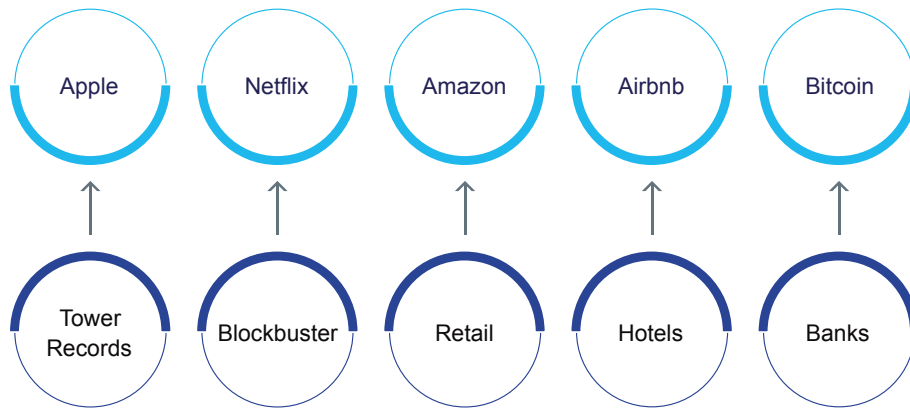
Over 100 years ago, rumor has it that Henry Ford took this narrow approach to customer choice: *“Any customer can have a car painted any color that they want, so long as it is black.”* While it sounds miserly, Ford was aiming to make cars affordable for more people by limiting production variation to keep costs down.

What a difference a century makes.

In 2020, we reside within a digital ecosystem of personal data, content and devices that makes the online world different for every user—it is the age of the Internet of Me.

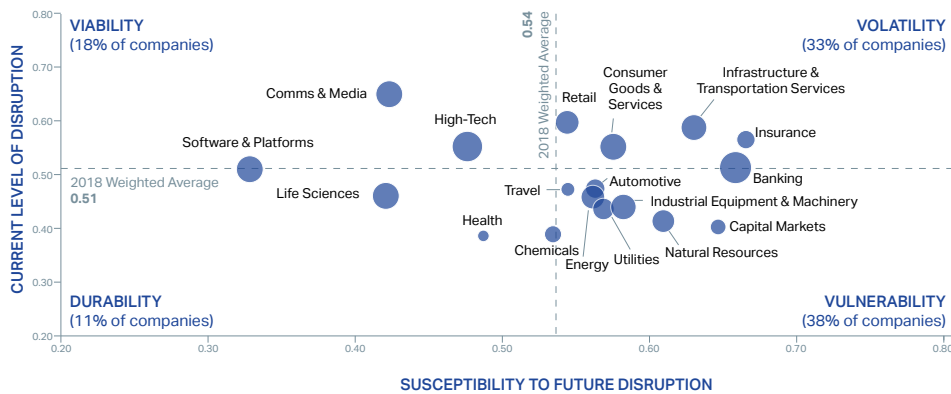
Digital Disruption and the Internet of Me

Digitally native companies are disrupting markets. They are capitalizing on the capabilities of Industry 4.0 technologies. They are creating a significant advantage by using their information to the fullest. They are branching into new products and services. They are developing new business models and changing all of the rules.



The world is changing, and the mantra is *get on board or get left behind*. It is happening in every industry.

Disruptability Index Industry Sector Matrix - 2018 results
0-1 scale (1 = most susceptible/disrupted)



Source: Accenture Research Disruptability Index 2.0.

Disruption is not something that happens once and is done. Truly disruptive companies do not rest on their laurels. Consider the quintessential disruptor, Amazon. Well-known for selling physical items online and reinventing ecommerce, logistics and delivery, the company also offers a video streaming service that competes with Netflix. They even produce original content for the platform. Meanwhile, Apple is rumored to have returned to its work on developing autonomous vehicles, supposedly destined for release sometime between 2023 and 2025.¹⁰ And Alphabet, formerly known as Google, started with search and now has its hand in basically everything under the sun—the most popular smartphone operating system, life sciences research to combat aging and disease, AI, drones, wearables and the list goes on (and on, and on...).

Figure 4:

Digital Disruptors

Figure 5:

Digital Disruption Index by Industry⁹

Tech giants are not the only organizations redefining themselves: traditional companies are adopting new digital business models too. Agriculture, for instance, might appear low-tech at first glance, but the industry is leveraging big data and other tech trends in order to compete in global markets. John Deere’s digital portal gives agri-businesses insight into equipment function, weather and farm performance through sensors embedded in the machines and soil. These sensors automatically upload data to the cloud, where it is used to analyze and optimize everything from irrigation to seed placement to harvest.¹¹

From a customer perspective, the center of all this technological disruption is the Internet of Me. AI makes personalized suggestions about what to watch, the best route for the commute and what items we might be interested in purchasing next. Every device we own—phones, tablets, wearables, thermostats, appliances, security systems—remembers our preferences and collects data in order to constantly improve the experience. Cloud syncs all of our apps and content, allowing us to navigate cyberspace with ease.

Three key aspects are at the heart of the Internet of Me: customer choice, multiple channels and the IoT. That is, customers demand experiences that represent “*my choice, my channel and my devices.*”

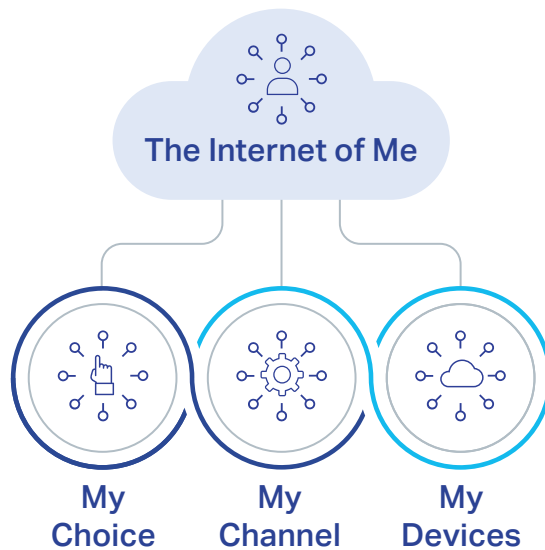


Figure 6:

The Internet of Me

1. My Choice

Competition is stiff. Globalization has taken business out of the neighborhood and onto the world stage. Digital disruption has minimized barriers to entry in every industry. Digital marketing empowers any company anywhere in the world to reach any customer. Consumers are given new choices for products and services every day.

With more choice than ever, customers will be won over by companies that leverage data to offer exactly the experiences they want. They are fickle, want instant gratification and expect businesses to not only respond to their preferences in the moment, but remember them for future interactions as well. Research demonstrates that 80% of customers are more likely to make a purchase when offered tailored interactions, with 49% having made an impulse purchase after receiving a more personalized experience.^{12,13}

Consider the hospitality industry as an example. Marriott Hotels lets guests check in using the guests' phones as room keys, allowing customers to bypass waiting in line at the front desk for service. In the future, such apps will use machine learning to customize hotel rooms prior to each guest's arrival (e.g. setting the temperature, dimming the lights or diffusing a certain scent), based on preferences that guests have shared with the app through previous stays and on social media. According to Marriott's VP of Global Loyalty, *"To have relevance, we need to have personalization."*¹⁴

In the Internet of Me, companies need to know their customers well and give them choices in their products and experiences, drawing on data for insight.

2. My Channel

Whether customers are interacting with an organization on apps, social media, mobile, desktop, kiosks, call centers or in-person, every touchpoint must offer a seamless transition between channels, a personalized experience and a consistent customer journey.

Businesses need an integrated omnichannel approach.

For example, a single customer journey to buy a pair of jeans from a retailer can involve several channels. A prospective customer sees a billboard for jeans on the train to work. She browses the retailer's website on her phone and ends up asking questions to a chatbot on Facebook. Later, on desktop, she orders jeans from the website, and she gets email updates about the status of her order over the next few days. She finally picks up the jeans in-store from a human employee.

If any stage of this journey is dissatisfactory—if the website will not load properly or the chatbot's answers are too formulaic, for example—the sale could fall through and the retailer's reputation with the buyer will be harmed. Customers gather information on multiple channels and potentially buy on another. If the interaction is not seamless, the company will miss opportunities to secure sales and customer loyalty.

This is especially important given spikes in digital buying. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, 30% of people plan to shop online more often in the future—and this shift is cross-generational, including 28% of those over the age of 65.¹⁵ Much of this shopping will be on mobile devices, a trend that was steeply rising even before the pandemic. In February of 2020, experts predicted that, by the end of the year and for the first time in history, more than half of all digital commerce globally would be on a mobile device.¹⁶

3. My Devices

With the Internet of Things, everyday objects interact with the online world—and with each other. Your refrigerator could tell your grocery store when you are running low on butter. A traffic light could tell your car about a traffic jam ahead and suggest an alternate route. Your smart watch, connected to your home automation system, could offer to preheat the oven in preparation for dinner or alert you that someone is ringing your doorbell.

Wearables and other devices provide additional touchpoints that organizations can use to generate value. For example, Disney’s MyMagic band is a digital bracelet that gives users access to parks, rides and hotel rooms, but it also serves as an easy way for users to pay for food and souvenirs, reminds them of rides they may have missed, coordinates snapshots of memorable moments and prompts them to buy photos.

What was once a product is now an ongoing service, providing a highly individualized experience long after purchase—and even assisting with future purchases. On a basic level, customers want products and services that interact with the devices they already have and those they will purchase in future. They expect devices to share information and provide a holistic, seamless end-user experience. Beyond that, they want their devices to provide customized solutions for their unique needs. According to Gartner, 45% of companies offering IoT endpoints will use AI to support customer retention by 2023, up from less than 5% in 2018.¹⁷

To thrive, companies must evolve with this new means of buying and using products and services. Each organization will need a strategy to combine the Internet of Things with omnichannel access and personalization. To create a *frictionless* digital experience.

Frictionless Experiences: A New Paradigm

In the era of the Internet of Me, customers expect the same smooth, fast access that they experience with companies like Amazon and Netflix. The last thing any organization needs is to create obstacles for the consumer along the way. The lower the friction, the less resistance the customer encounters and the more inclined they will be to complete a purchase. And make repeat purchases. A business can improve its profits anywhere from 25% to 95% by boosting its customer retention by a mere five percent.¹⁸

Friction happens when consumers experience glitches in their customer journey, anywhere from research and discovery of a product through to payment, shipment and customer care. It could be waiting in long lineups, products featured online that are not in stock, inaccurate information, online transactions that time out, the requirement to fill out multiple forms, hidden costs or poor after-purchase customer service.

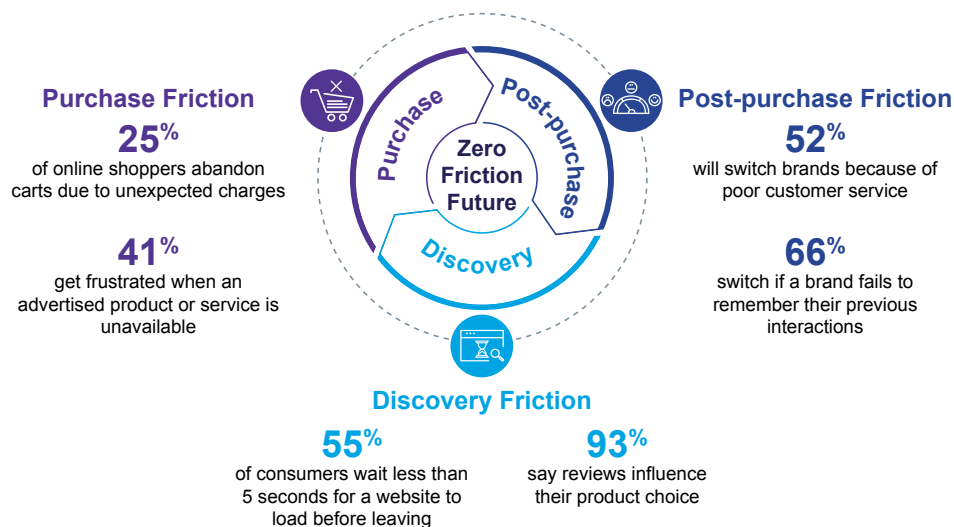


Figure 7:

Potential Friction Points in the Customer Journey¹⁹

To create zero friction experiences, companies must give consumers access to the information they want, on the device they want it on, when they want it (in real time). Personalization goes hand in hand with this need for speed. The journey can only be tailored if a customer's information is integrated between channels, and the story of their needs and interactions is known and shared across the different departments and services involved in the journey.

Then, payment must be smooth and fast whether it is via credit card, debit, PayPal, transfer, smartphone or other methods. Contactless payment options—now soaring in usage thanks to the pandemic—have streamlined check-out processes even more. This includes options like being able to simply walk out of a store with items or step out of a ride-share, and have an app automatically charge the desired credit card; a wearable watch or bracelet embedded with RFID for payment; or, a QR code for “pay and pass” capabilities. Payment options will continue to evolve as innovative technologies—such as beacons, biometrics and AI—come on the scene to provide even more immediate and intuitive ways to access information, goods and services.

Just as consumers expect choice in products and payment methods, they expect to be able to fulfill their orders in multiple ways. Shipment should be immediate and direct, or available for pickup at a convenient location. Technologies like drones are already being used to help create frictionless order fulfillment. They are delivering goods to remote locations, groceries to consumers, and component parts to manufacturers.

Post-purchase, customer support is paramount. Unforeseen challenges can arise after purchase: a product can be faulty, the consumer might not know how a product or service functions, or they might want to return their purchase. If friction is not smoothed over, consumers will leave. As with the rest of the customer journey, customer support should be immediate, omnichannel, personalized and positive.

The costs of not providing a smooth digital experience are high. Research shows that customers are twice as likely to share reviews about companies after a negative experience than after a positive one.²⁰ And after just one bad experience, one in three customers will leave a brand they love; and 92% will leave a company after two or three negative interactions.²¹

Friction leads to lost customers, revenue and opportunities that amount to hundreds of billions of dollars each year.

Digital technologies are giving businesses increased opportunities to engage with customers at every touchpoint of their purchasing journey, to listen and understand what customers really want and need, and to deliver more relevant, individualized and exceptional experiences. Taken together, there has never been a better time for organizations to undergo a customer-centric business transformation.

Customer-Centric Business Transformation

Customer expectations are rising. To stay ahead of disruption, businesses must embrace digital transformation. And to thrive, businesses must use those digital technologies as a springboard to new strategies that put the customer (not the product) at the center.

It is time to translate expectation into experience.

Companies in every industry are now compelled to design connected experiences, irrespective of touchpoint or channel, so that customers can enjoy them whenever, wherever and however they choose. Without this, customer satisfaction suffers—impacting the bottom line. Customer-centric companies outperform their competitors across the board, with companies that excel at customer experience growing their revenues four to eight percent above their market average.²²

Digital adoption is accelerating, whether businesses are ready or not. Thanks to the COVID-19 crisis, it has recently taken another significant leap forward, even among digitally adverse groups. In March of 2020, Facebook messaging use increased by 50%, while Facebook video and messaging calls more than doubled.²³ Business users began using video conferencing as the default for meetings. App downloads for Instacart, Walmart Grocery and Shipt surged by 218%, 160% and 124%, respectively.²⁴ Telehealth visits rose by 50%.²⁵ Interest in online shopping doubled worldwide.²⁶ Contactless customer journeys became the norm.

Consumers and business users alike are adopting new digital habits—habits that will not revert to the old ways once the pandemic is over. There is a new normal, and it is digital.

Organizations must take a hard look at their approach and pivot to the next normal with a focus on:

1. Becoming customer-centric
2. Optimizing operations
3. Enabling digital business models

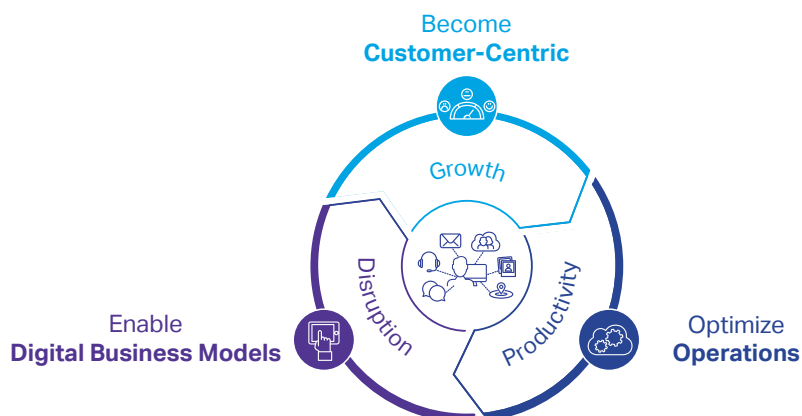


Figure 8:
Digital Transformation

1. Become Customer-Centric

Customer experience is the ideal starting point for digital transformation.²⁷ In fact, digital leaders called out customer-centricity as *the* most important characteristic for a truly “digital-native” culture, according to a recent survey.²⁸

Which characteristics do you think are most important in establishing a truly 'digital native' culture?

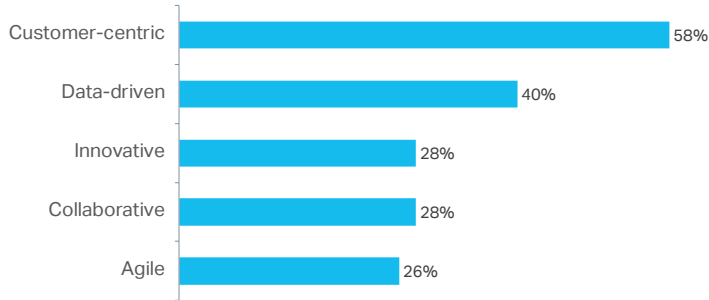


Figure 9:

Establishing a Digital-Native Culture²⁹

Building a customer-centric organization also has a fast return on investment. A change of mindset focusing on the customer, along with corresponding operational and IT improvements, can increase customer satisfaction by 20% to 30%, employee satisfaction by 10% to 20%, and economic gains by 20% to 50%.³⁰

Achieving these gains requires organizations to be strategic and purposeful in reimagining their customer experience. They must first understand how digital disruption is changing customer behaviors and preferences, then use new digital technologies to reinvent—sometimes scrapping the old model entirely—their customer engagement approach and journey. They must also redefine many employee roles to ensure that everyone in the organization is on the same page.

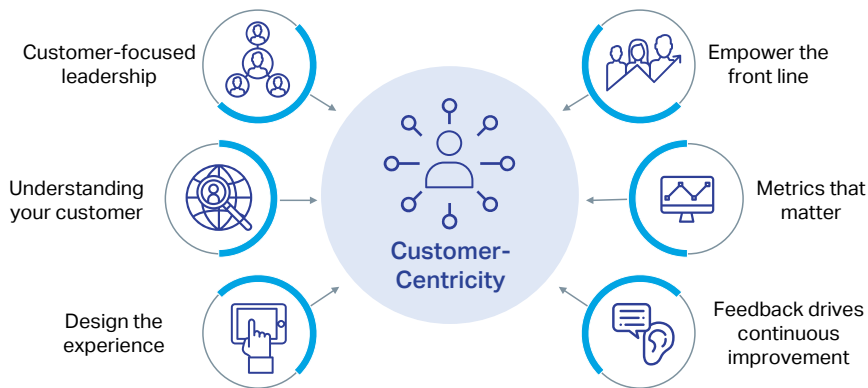


Figure 10:

Customer-Centricity

Three building blocks are necessary for success: *aligning* leadership teams to clear goals, *implementing* a disciplined transformation process, and building up the *enablers* to make it all work.

1. Align: To ensure a shared vision, top management must buy in to the customer-centric strategy. In 80% of companies considered digitization front runners, employees cited their CEO as the driving force behind the organization’s successful cultural transformation.³¹

2. Implement: Collecting and using customer data at each touchpoint is the key to transforming customer journeys. Data allows organizations to identify what needs to be changed, target barriers causing friction, leverage insights to make smarter decisions and digitize the journey for a seamless experience from start to finish.³²

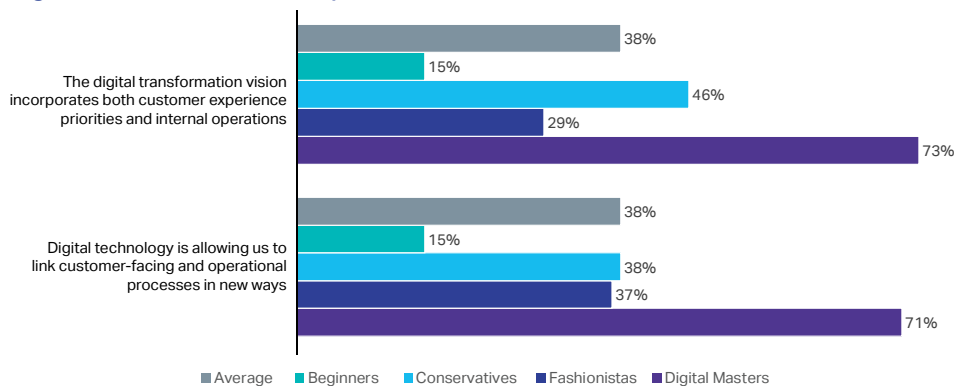
3. Enable: Enabling transformation requires establishing a permanent, live feedback loop from customers to as many employees as possible.

2. Optimize Operations

Organizations need a strong technological backbone to empower a successful digital transformation; robust, seamless operations and processes are prerequisites for outstanding customer experience.

Operational excellence improves productivity and outcomes through streamlining and automating processes, thereby freeing employees from the drudgery of banal activities and enabling them to dedicate their time and effort to creating value for customers. Not to mention, delivering a great experience reduces the cost to serve customers by as much as 33%.³³

Digital masters ensure their operations are customer centric and linked to the vision



Source: Capgemini Research Institute. Digital Mastery Survey; April-May 2018, N=757 organizations; N=244 Digital Masters.

Figure 11:

Digital Masters Ensure Operations Are Customer-Centric and Linked to the Vision³⁴

3. Enable Digital Business Models

Digital leaders see new technologies as opportunities to break free from their limitations and build new business models. Disruption is a call to address customer needs in innovative ways.

Whether they reinvent industry norms, redesign delivery models or create new products or services, the common thread is that digital leaders disrupt their markets by offering better experiences. Amazon, Tesla and Apple are successful because they build their business models on customer data and tailor all of their activities to customer needs.

Successful players are also using their data to get into entirely new verticals and disrupt traditional industries. For example, French telecommunication company Orange launched its own online bank in 2018. And energy drink company RedBull launched RedBull Media House, which has become one of the world's leading premium content media companies for original sports, culture and lifestyle content.³⁵

The Importance of First-Party Data

According to Forrester, insight-driven businesses are growing 30% annually—eight times faster than the global GDP.³⁶

Collecting first-party data is essential for understanding customers better, analyzing their reactions and getting feedback that will define the “next best action” to enrich the customer experience.

Customer data is generated constantly in the age of ubiquitous connectivity, myriad devices, the IoT and social media. Machines can identify voices through a microphone and track biometrics through wearables. AI can understand and extract sentiment, tone and emotion from unstructured textual data. Even in offline interactions, creative companies are finding ways to gather data—a QR Code on a cereal box that launches a game or facial recognition technology within a retail location.

However, to realize the benefits, companies must be able to engage with their data in meaningful ways. Anywhere from 55% to 99.5% of the data companies collect goes unused.^{37 38} And as our information sits in the dark, so do we. It is not enough to simply collect masses of data—it must be leveraged for success.

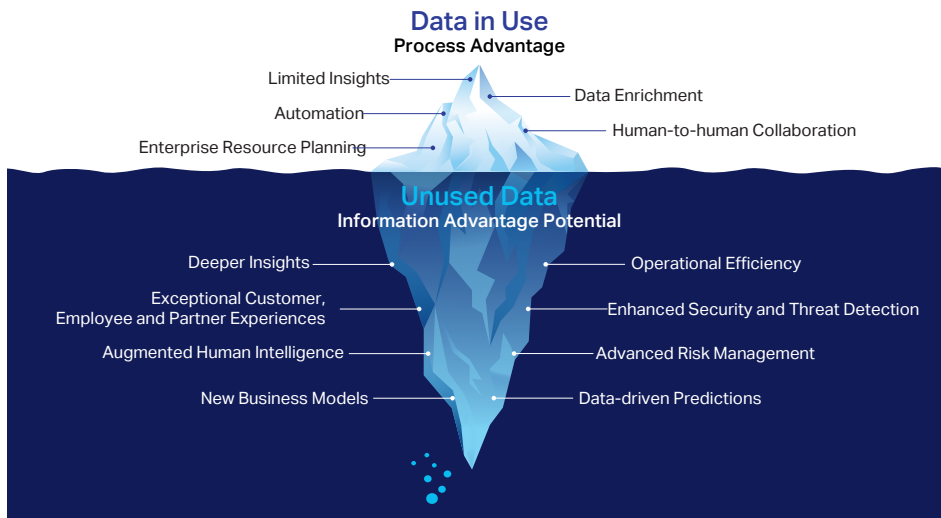


Figure 12:
The Untapped Potential of Information

When customer data is collected and used effectively, a virtuous cycle begins: better insights result in better customer relationships; better customer relationships produce even higher quality insights; higher quality insights drive enhancements in products, services and experiences; all of which enables the company to capture new prospects and keep current customers; and these customers will then provide even more data with every subsequent interaction.

It is a positive feedback loop that generates better business outcomes with every revolution.

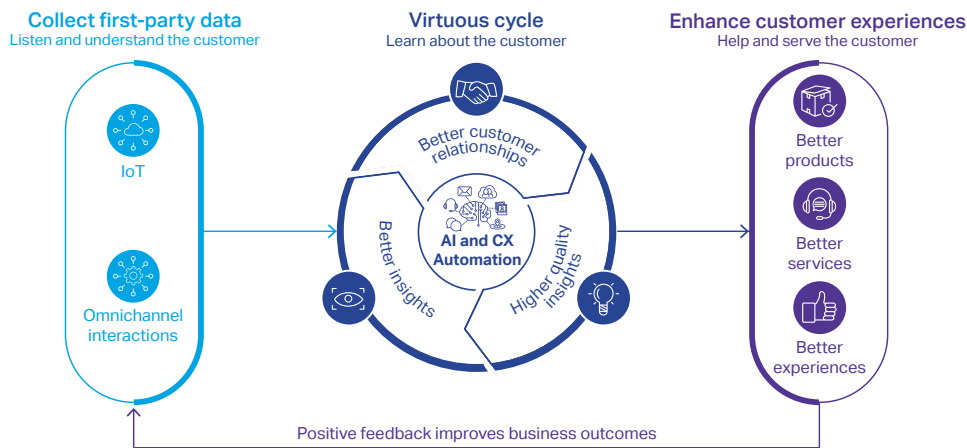


Figure 13:

Virtuous Customer Data Cycle

When organizations embrace digital transformation and customer-centricity—and when they are able to glean valuable insights from their data and continually turn those insights into strategic actions—they are ready to launch their customer experience into the stratosphere.

Creating Exceptional Experiences

« Customer experience is the new brand. »

–Shep Hyken, Customer Experience Expert, Speaker and Best-selling Author

Gartner defines customer experience as: *“the customer’s perceptions and related feelings caused by the one-off and cumulative effect of interactions with a supplier’s employees, systems, channels, or products.”*³⁹

Think of it like a recipe. Many companies might have similar ingredients—products, services, channels, marketing—but the *recipe*, the customer experience, is unique. This is where differentiation happens; it is where a company can either stand out or blend into obscurity.

Well-executed customer experiences have an immensely positive impact. Increasing a brand’s CX Index™ (a measure of CX quality including effectiveness, ease and emotion) by just one point can equal up to one million dollars in incremental revenue.⁴⁰

Analyzing customer sentiment and providing an exceptional experience helps:



What Is an Exceptional Experience?

No single answer is sufficient to define an exceptional customer experience in general terms. The true gauge is the response from real customers. And their criteria change depending on the company they are dealing with, what their needs are, the channels they are using and the context they are in.

For instance, customers expect efficiency when shopping online for groceries at Amazon, but inspiring, curated content when they look for a new high-end piece of clothing.

The only way for an organization to understand what an exceptional experience is in the eyes of its customers is to follow the data.

Figure 14:

Creating Exceptional Experiences^{41 42 43}

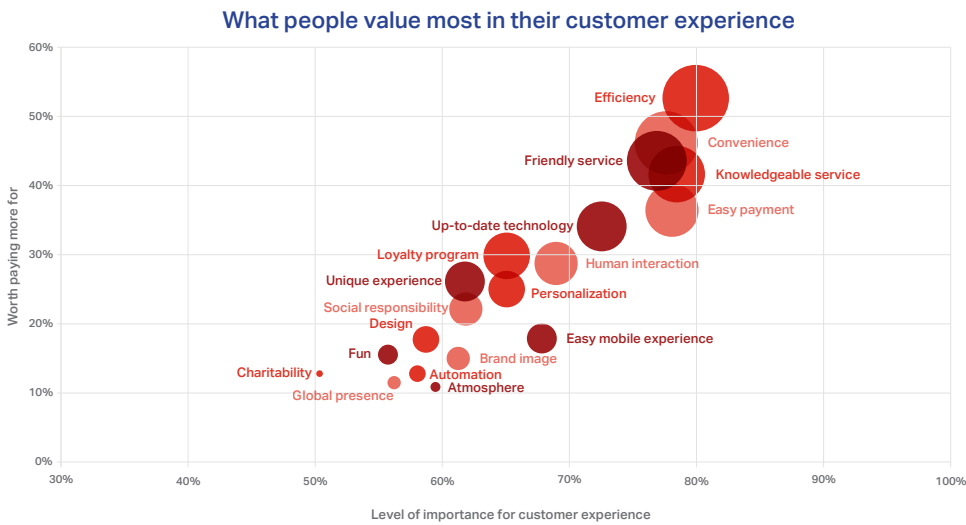


Figure 15:

Most Important Factors for CX⁴⁴

Just as cooking shares certain methods across different recipes, exceptional experiences share common criteria. They must be seamless across all channels; they must be designed as end-to-end experiences; they must offer rich content; and they must be driven by insight.

Frictionless Experiences Across Channels

To deliver exceptional experiences, companies must bring consistency and fluidity between the channels, along all points in the customer’s journey. As discussed, the buying process often involves multiple touchpoints, including research on the web, downloading an app, contacting customer service, going in-store, and interacting through additional devices, like wearables.

Customers constantly transition between these channels and they expect data, information and assets to move seamlessly with them. It should be effortless, in any modality: voice, touch, gesture, click, text, augmented reality and so on.

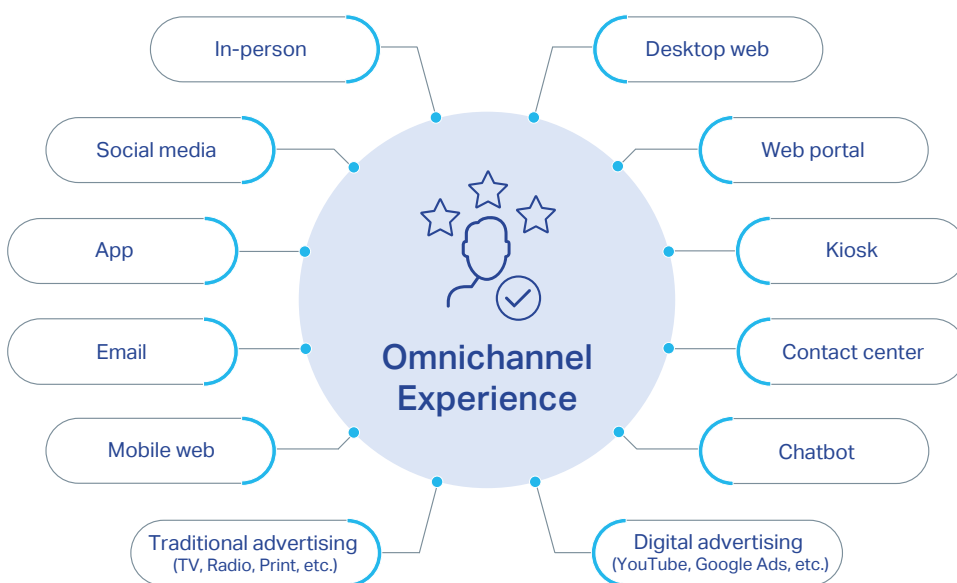


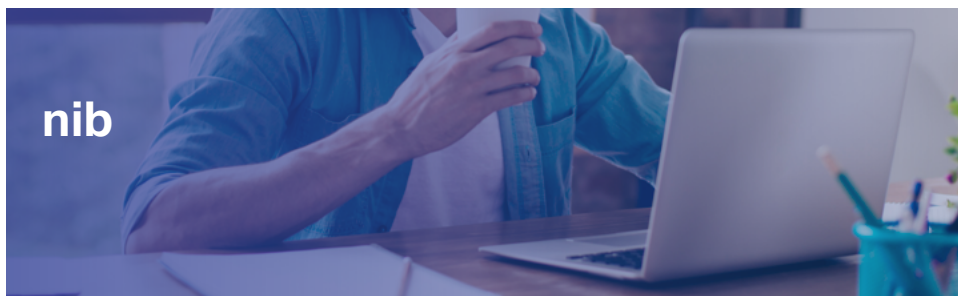
Figure 16:

The Omnichannel Experience

To customers, the channel they are using is unimportant—what matters is that they can get what they want (information, products, support, etc.) in the most convenient and intuitive way possible.

Successful organizations manage their cross-channel integration to create that seamless experience—especially as the market moves from omnichannel experiences to multi-experience. Domino's Pizza is the leader of the pack with its innovative multi-experience solution, Domino's AnyWare™. Pizza can be ordered in multiple applications, on any device (including wearables), in multiple modes and even with zero clicks (a single click is one click too many, according to Domino's).⁴⁵ This is what a frictionless experience looks like.

Organizations need to know and understand a customer's preferences, profiles and favorites, then deliver on expectations with simplicity and ease across every channel.



nib provides value for money and affordable health insurance to over one million people across Australia and New Zealand. nib has an enduring philosophy: that the needs of the community will be better served if private health insurance is easy to understand, has simple to process claims and, most of all, clearly represents good value.

In early 2014, nib wanted to take the positive experiences of its existing and prospective customers to a new dimension. Senior management were major sponsors in the move to upgrade the capability of the existing Customer Communication Management (CCM) platform. Opportunities were identified by nib to better support the growth and diversification of the company, specifically around: increasing throughput to support high burst volumes in bulk mailouts; greater document personalization through better template management and extending support to multiple delivery and device channels; an improved ability to achieve consistent records management archiving; and greater flexibility to support nib's business segments and partner brands.

A new CCM platform was necessary for nib to transform its customer communication process, thereby enabling the company and its partners to achieve their growth targets and capture new markets. The company needed a platform that would make it easy and cost-effective to create high-quality personalized customer correspondence for multiple business segments and partner brands. With OpenText Exstream, they simplified and consolidated correspondence generation across all business segments, as well as upgrading their customer communications capability, enhancing customer experience and supporting business growth. nib is closely monitoring Exstream's benefits, which include customer feedback surveys, document production and delivery costs, and improvements in process efficiency and the time taken to get correspondence initiatives to market.

Touchpoints versus Journey: The End-to-End Experience

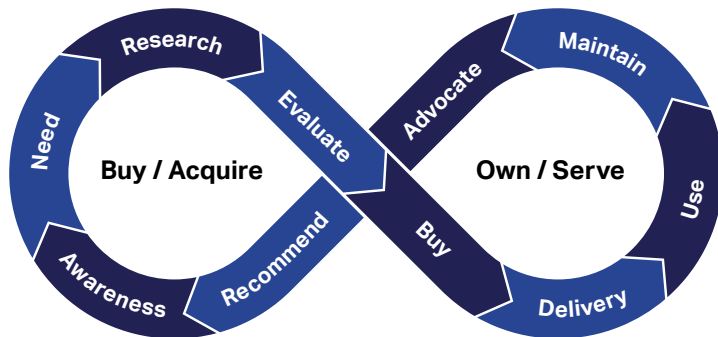


Figure 17:

The Customer Journey

Customers evaluate their journey as a whole, not based on individual touchpoints. With an ever-growing number of channels and countless combinations of interactions, it is even more important to have a holistic view of the customer. A commercial on YouTube or an online form can impact the overall experience as much as a call with the customer service center or a piece of direct mail.

Still, many companies focus on improving touchpoints instead of customer journeys. On the surface, this seems logical—it reflects organizational accountability and it is relatively easy to build into operations. However, this siloed approach based on isolated interactions with customer services, sales staff or marketing material misses the bigger picture: the end-to-end customer experience. Failing to see the big picture leads to negative consequences, such as high call volumes and customer churn.

To avoid missing the forest for the trees, companies must:

- Identify their key customer journeys
- Understand how customers navigate across the touchpoints
- Anticipate customer needs
- Understand what works and what does not
- Set improvement priorities
- Fix the root causes of issues, and redesign customer journeys for a better experience

Rich Content

Content is anything that communicates a message to the audience, such as product descriptions, blogs, images, videos and other media. Rich digital content contributes to an elevated user experience and a higher conversion rate. Producing a dynamic and refined user experience (UX) is at the top of every digital content marketer's task list. In fact, a well-designed UX could improve conversion rates by up to 200%.⁴⁶

Conversion rate is not the only thing that sees a dramatic difference when marketers focus on user experience; brands can see drastic changes in bounce rates, time on page and even average order value.

San Jose Sharks



The San Jose Sharks are a professional ice hockey team that competes in North America's National Hockey League (NHL). SJSharks Productions, the Production and Event Presentation for the San Jose Sharks, produces video content for everything ranging from television commercials to in-arena programming, as well as shooting video at every game. The team realized they needed a digital asset management (DAM) system to better manage media for rapid creative production. A key requirement for the DAM system was the need to integrate with other applications, which would allow users to find assets quickly without leaving the application they were working in.

With this in mind, the San Jose Sharks chose OpenText Digital Asset Management for SAP Solutions, a consolidated asset repository that integrates with enterprise applications such as Adobe Creative Cloud Suite, SAP and Microsoft to facilitate an integrated digital media system. With OpenText DAM on the roster, the SJSharks Productions team can easily drop their assets into the repository with the appropriate metadata needed to find and share those files quickly. The new solution helps meet the needs of Sharks fans who are socially networked, knowledgeable and eager for information. The SJSharks Productions team can respond to requests and finish projects faster with improved productivity and collaboration. The DAM solution also streamlines production to quickly complete video projects that build brand value.

Further, when the COVID-19 pandemic shut down the NHL, the SJSharks Productions team was able to quickly transition to working from home. With no games on the schedule, staff accessed the OpenText solution remotely to catch up on game footage that had not yet been logged and to produce new pieces to keep fans engaged. Connecting with fans and maintaining their engagement with the Sharks continues to be the ultimate goal. The OpenText DAM solution will assist the team in responding quickly to demands for content.

Insight-driven

As customers shift to new channels, journeys are increasingly dynamic and constantly changing. It is more crucial than ever to understand how customers are behaving throughout their journeys. Collecting, aggregating and analyzing data to generate insights is the key to managing customers' preferences and expectations now, as well as understanding how consumers will evolve in the future.

With an ever-growing volume of data, organizations must rely on machines (like AI) to link different aspects of the interaction and connect information in a single view of the customer. Armed with the capability to derive meaningful insights, organizations can use methods like A/B testing to adjust the experience in ways that will make a difference. Voice of the Customer solutions are also an essential component to collect and analyze customer feedback.

What Do Organizations Need?

Realigning an organization to prioritize customer experience is not a trivial task. Both the culture and the technology must promote innovation and agility. Furthermore, the collection, analysis and utilization of data must be embedded into every process.

But it can be done if organizations are committed to customer-centricity and invest in these key capabilities to accelerate their digital transformation.

Agility

For an organization to respond quickly to customer needs, it must embrace a degree of risk and decision-making decentralization. Testing, measuring and adapting quickly should replace restrictive approval cycles, empowering employees to innovate and respond to customers faster.

Although this will inevitably result in some failures, the benefits of this “fail fast and pivot” approach far outweigh the risks. Agile organizations will find that the failures are limited in scope, while the data gathered (from both successes and failures) accelerates improvements to the overall customer experience. It also enables the business to respond more rapidly to unexpected situations and become more resilient under adverse conditions.

A Platform for Innovation with an API-first Approach

Legacy technology platforms have high inertia, which prevents rapid responses to new data or changing conditions. Implementing an API-first framework boosts pace, innovation and agility.

Through APIs, organizations can obtain assets like master data (data essential to operations in a specific business or business unit) and rich media (e.g., videos) from systems of record, and leverage services like secure payment and media transformation as building blocks to create new tools and experiences. This approach provides the integrations and capabilities companies need to use data and services seamlessly, across multiple applications and across largely independent teams.

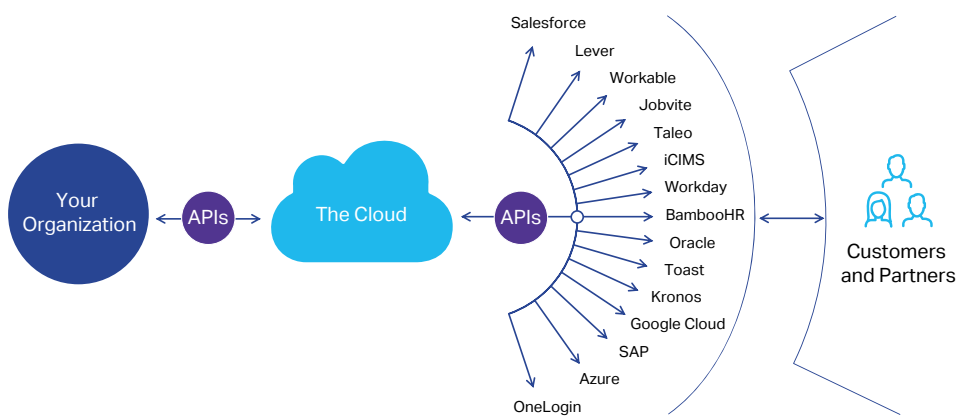


Figure 18:
API Framework

Data-driven Experiences

Customers want companies to understand and support them. To do that, businesses must start by listening to what customers really need—and that insight must come from data. That is why first-party data, not opinion or previous experience, is at the core of customer-centric digital transformation.



I believe in evidence. I believe in observation, measurement, and reasoning, confirmed by independent observers. I'll believe anything, no matter how wild and ridiculous, if there is evidence for it. The wilder and more ridiculous something is, however, the firmer and more solid the evidence will have to be.



—Isaac Asimov⁴⁷

Usable data should be collected at every customer interaction. As we go beyond omnichannel to multi-experience and IoT, the number of potential touchpoints increases; and with that, so too does the opportunity for gathering data. However, it also becomes more difficult to avoid customer record duplication and to connect the entire experience. For example, it will be necessary to link engagement via an advertisement on a wearable device, a chatbot dialogue on a website and a visit to a branch into a single customer journey.

The first step is gathering data for analysis, which will inform innovation and improvement through the test and measure process. Certain data, like location or device, can also be used directly to improve relevance.

Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning

Without assistance, employees are faced with a tidal wave of touchpoints and oceans of data, and will soon drown. Only machines are capable of sifting through the masses of data that are accumulating—that is why organizations need AI and machine learning technology to augment their human teams.

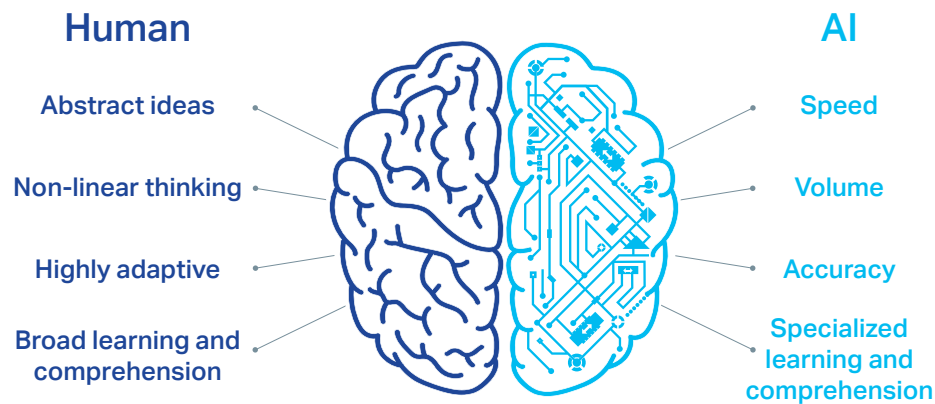


Figure 19:
Human Intelligence + Artificial Intelligence

AI can summarize data, extract complex nuances including context, sentiment and emotion, and recommend courses of action, assisting teams in making better data-led decisions. When properly deployed, AI can extend the capabilities of employees, making it possible to deliver dynamic, personalized customer experiences at scales previously impossible (just ask Amazon). However, AI is not a “magic bullet.” It requires investments in time and effort before it can deliver the promised gains in productivity and customer engagement.

Analysis and Visualization

In Industry 4.0, every company is an information company. All organizations produce huge quantities of raw data that are invaluable—if they can be leveraged meaningfully.

Traditional methods of data collection and presentation, such as web analytics, footfall reports and loyalty programs, while useful, are often limited to just one or two selling channels and exclude data about internal processes and emerging touchpoints.

To excel at customer experience, organizations must invest in methods that centralize analytics and decision-making at scale, across all connected channels.

Analytics platforms use data science and AI to consolidate and analyze raw data, in its entirety, for trends and variations. And, because visualizations, interactive dashboards and reports can easily be made available across the organization, cross-functional teams can collaborate on managing customer experiences and prevent their efforts from being siloed. The teams receive insights tracking the performance of applications, processes, designs, messaging, content and products, enabling them to more quickly aggregate learnings, operationalize analytics and make complex customer decisions.

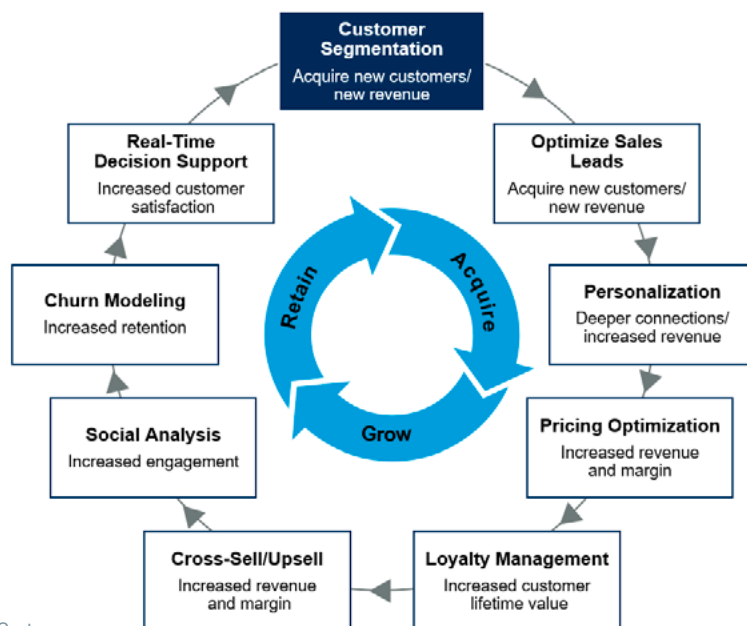


Figure 20: Customer Analytics Drives Value Across the Customer Life Cycle⁴⁸

Source: Gartner

Without question, creating exceptional customer experiences and building a customer-centric organization requires organizations to gather, measure and use customer data to the fullest. And to do that—as with anything worth doing—there are challenges that must be overcome.

Even when data *does* exist in an organization’s systems of records, it might not be available to the teams that need it. Or it might not be integrated with the processes that need it, making it impractical to use. Or broad access *is* available, but employees lack the expertise to leverage it. Whatever the case, CX initiatives become less efficient, less data-based and ultimately doomed to collapse.

Functional silos are the number one challenge in achieving a truly customer-centric organization.

And without the right data, decisions are made on educated guesses and gut feelings rather than on solid, empirically driven insights.

Experience Measurement

Customer-centric transformation means putting the customer first—a notion that is easy to agree on but can be difficult for leadership to buy into in practice. Leadership must commit to prioritizing CX along with total sales, revenue and profitability, even when CX’s ROI is not as readily measurable. For this reason, CX can fall by the wayside, preventing companies from building the right competencies to realize the rewards in the long term.

To achieve the benefits of providing an exceptional customer experience, companies need a consistent method for measuring customer satisfaction and customer service quality. Applying KPIs—the *right* KPIs—to CX is how organizations can track their teams’ effectiveness at delivering stellar customer service each step of the way.

Industry research has discovered dozens of potential KPIs for businesses to consider when establishing their core metrics for assessing the state of their customer experiences. The metrics can be categorized as follows:

- **Business Generated:** Tracked via the systems and technology that deliver the customer experience.
- **Employee Rated:** Require employee judgment to rate.
- **Survey Scores:** Require customers to tell you about themselves.



Figure 23

Choosing the Right KPIs

Change Management

The shift from product-focused to customer-centric is a major transition. Teams from across the entire business must align and work toward a common goal—and they must share the results of their efforts.

Unfortunately, organizational silos are even harder to break than technological ones. Sixty-two percent of companies report that their own corporate culture is the biggest hurdle on the path to digital transformation.⁵⁰

Humans are naturally resistant to change.

This resistance takes many forms, including an unwillingness to learn new systems, disagreement with management decisions, and uncertainty over changing job requirements and outcomes. When departments are accustomed to working in isolation, it can be an uphill battle to implement new integrated solutions, share access to data and drive insight-based decision making.

And without communication and coordination, the business impact of transformation projects and other innovation initiatives is limited. Costs increase as initiatives either conflict or compete from one channel to another, reinforcing silos and fragmenting the customer experience. All CX initiatives across an organization must fit together to enable a seamless experience.

CEOs play an essential role in setting the vision and engendering buy-in. They must lead not only a digital transformation but a cultural one too. They must work with other leaders in the organization to enhance communication, annihilate silos and allay employees' fears. With strong leadership to champion the company's initiatives and set cross-departmental goals, CX efforts flourish and deliver on their great potential.

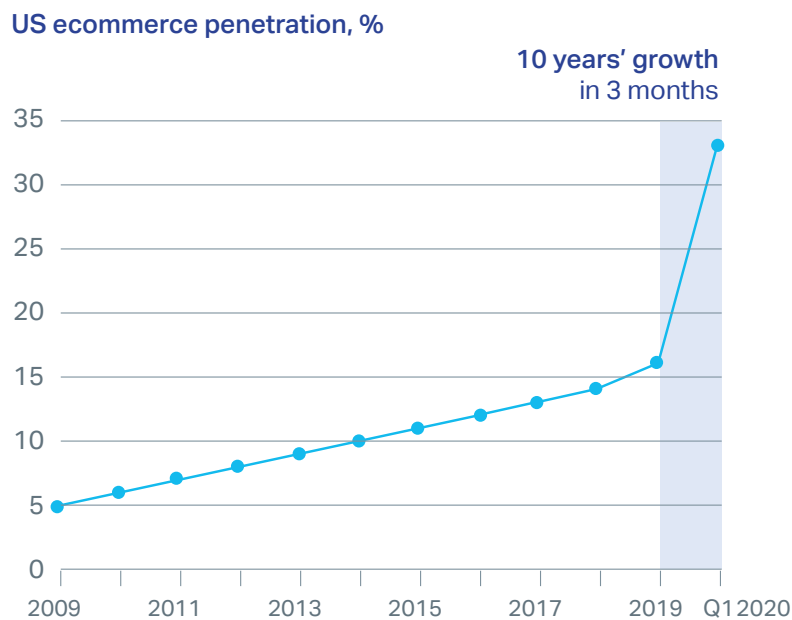
Once an organization is aligned on its priorities and enabled to execute with agility, all that remains is deploying the right technologies to facilitate the creation of exceptional experiences.

Digital Experience Platforms

Companies compete on customer experience. In many cases, it is *the* differentiator.

Although products, prices or services remain top-of-mind for customers, positive experiences influence purchasing decisions in every industry. Customers rate them as particularly influential in healthcare (78%), banking (75%) and hotels (74%).⁵¹

The coronavirus pandemic has accelerated the need to invest in building excellent digital experiences. Ecommerce, for example, has jumped forward by 10 years in just three months.⁵²



Source: Bank of America; Forrester Analytics; ShawSpring research; US Department of Commerce; McKinsey analysis

Figure 24

The Coronavirus Pandemic Has Propelled Ecommerce 10 Years Forward⁵³

Customer expectations and behaviors are rapidly evolving, and in some cases are completely changed. They expect seamless digital experiences. They expect speed, reliability and support. They expect personalization matched with convenience. They expect adaptation to changing circumstances without disruption in service.

Businesses have reacted quickly to implement tools that facilitate new realities like working from home and digital transactions. However, it is important to recognize that many of the changes wrought by the pandemic will be permanent—and businesses need to implement solutions that will work for the long term, not just band-aids to get through today.

Regardless of their digital maturity level, organizations of all sizes need to improve the way they manage, measure and leverage customer interactions. They must optimize their operations to reduce costs and increase efficiency. As customer journeys become increasingly digital and complex, only a digital experience (DX) platform can manage them effectively and gather the data necessary to understand changing customer needs.

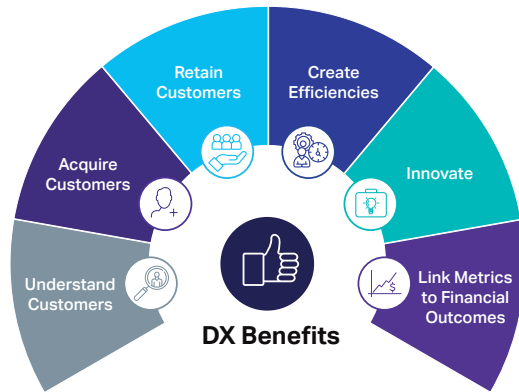


Figure 25:
Digital Experience Benefits

What Is a Digital Experience Platform?

A DX platform is an integrated set of technologies that support the composition, management, delivery and optimization of contextualized digital experiences. DX technologies are designed to provide the right combination of speed, agility and insight.

An advanced DX platform enables brands to deliver relevant, frictionless, data-driven experiences. By incorporating the latest technologies and techniques, these platforms make it easier to optimize and understand interactions with customers as well as to maximize the performance of teams. Customers and employees enjoy smooth transitions as they move between systems, channels and touchpoints.

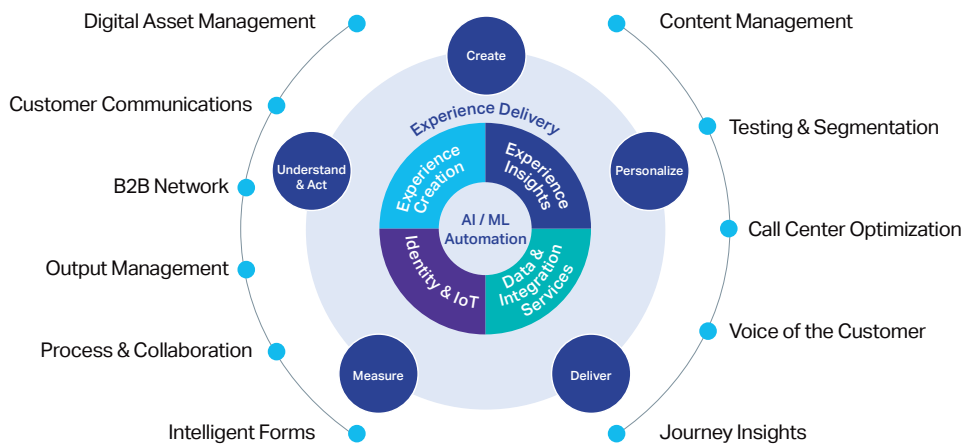


Figure 26
Digital Experience Management Technologies

To perform in highly competitive markets, companies need to create, personalize and deliver relevant individualized experiences at scale—which means deploying DX solutions that combine content management with customer insight.

Content management is essential to a great customer experience and should be a priority when building a DX platform. Accelerating the shift to digital requires the ability to manage content and deliver it in a highly personalized way, on all digital channels: web, apps, kiosks and many others. Companies need agile content services and hybrid/headless solutions¹ to orchestrate delivery consistently on all channels.

¹A headless Content Management System (CMS) is a backend-only solution which stores content and distributes it via RESTful API. A hybrid CMS is a decoupled CMS which offers headless content management, plus all the content authoring features that marketers know.

Customer insight is the other critical piece. Because organizations need to personalize the experience on a large scale, they must acquire, access, analyze and action customer data. To do this, the platform must offer seamless integration capabilities to systems of records (CRM, ERP, etc.), as well as data analytics solutions and AI services that can analyze structured and unstructured data. The more a DX platform can integrate, the better for customer experience professionals.

Taken together, the DX solution should act as a single platform to facilitate customer experience across channels.

Miami-Dade County

Miami-Dade County is home to more than 2.8 million diverse residents living in 34 municipalities and unincorporated areas across a 2,431-square-mile area and is the seventh largest metropolitan area in the United States. Miami-Dade County's government is comprised of over 70 agencies and offices, including elected officials, departments, as well as boards and trusts, that create policy and provide government information and services to various customer groups—the residents, businesses and visitors of Miami-Dade County.

Miami-Dade had an outdated content management system and their web portal enterprise system had been retired. With more than 5,000 pages organized by department, content was often duplicated, outdated and difficult to find. Since pages were not optimized for mobile devices, they required visitors to constantly zoom and pinch to read content. That is, if users could even find the content in the bureaucracy-based architecture. A new content management system was needed to create the single source of information its architects envisioned. This content management system would be one based on structured data types, be mobile and device agnostic, and power a new search and search-driven architecture.

Miami-Dade County recognized the need to rethink its content management system. With OpenText TeamSite, it gained flexibility and the ability to customize. All County departments, as well as the mayor's office and board of County Commissioners, use TeamSite to deliver omnichannel digital experiences to residents. The system is integrated with the County's GIS database and email management system, plus personalization and survey software. Powered by the OpenText platform, Miami-Dade County is now meeting the needs of millions of residents to deliver the information they need, how they need it. Before the re-launch of miamidade.gov, about 60% of visits were from desktop devices, with the other 40% coming from mobile devices and tablets. Now those numbers have flipped, which is a key goal of miamidade.gov's new responsive design. User-friendly design and TeamSite capabilities speed access to information even with twice the volume of web pages compared to the outdated site organized by department.

A Modular, Integrated Approach

Many organizations have already implemented multiple customer experience solutions—often too many, increasing the cost of maintenance, escalating complexity and introducing redundancies across different departments or branches. The 2020 marketing technology landscape includes 8,000 software solutions, 24.5% of which are new entries.⁵⁴ Not all of them are needed. In fact, the half-life of most software is less than 24 months.

In today's economic context, companies must make technology choices based on what will deliver the best ROI, then ensure the solution is integrated organization-wide. A big part of both ROI and user adoption is choosing solutions that will augment the current technology stack, not “rip and replace” existing investments.

This means expanding the DX platform in a manageable way with a modular “plug and play” approach and choosing content-centric solutions that play well with other important systems and processes (CRM, MRM, ERP, AI, cloud, etc.). Systems of record are not typically capable of delivering omnichannel individualized experiences on their own, but an integrated DX platform will bridge the gap and turn data lakes into insights, action and granular customization.

An extensible, true hybrid/headless platform at a reasonable total cost of ownership (TCO) adjusts to each organization's pace and expands with its needs.

Get Started



Figure 27

How to Get Started

1. Define the Essentials

With an ever-growing amount of content and digital assets, organizations should put their Content Management Systems (CMS) and Digital Asset Management (DAM) solution at the center of their platform, along with their CRM and commerce solutions.

Experience and Journey Analytics—ideally with AI capabilities—are also essential components, delivering a 360-degree view of the customer across the customer journey. And with COVID-19, the rising need for frequent, relevant and personalized communications has brought Customer Communication Management (CCM) into the core of the DX platform, particularly as customer communications have become increasingly managed by marketing departments.



Marks & Spencer (M&S) is an international, multichannel retailer, with nearly 1,000 stores in the UK. The company sells clothing, home products and food sourced from 3,000 global suppliers, with 85,000 employees. As a large retailer, M&S needs to interact with its customers across multiple channels, including web, mobile, tablet, apps, in-store, staff-assisted and phone.

To ensure brand consistency and efficiency across these channels and to deliver a consistent customer experience, M&S needed a centralized digital asset repository for imagery and video. Previously, M&S had multiple Digital Asset Management (DAM) repositories across different departments and functions. With several different DAMs in use, the company struggled to handle its assets effectively. As part of a wider multichannel digital transformation program, M&S looked for a single, enterprise-class DAM.

M&S chose OpenText Media Management as its centralized DAM. Working closely with OpenText, who provided on-site resources, the system was live and serving images to in-store screens in just seven months. Within a year, the OpenText solution was providing images to M&S's website for all products. The OpenText system delivers a fast, efficient means for submission, review, approval and ongoing management of digital assets. M&S is able to publish assets live on the website as quickly as possible, which is a key target. The system streamlines and accelerates operations by reducing the amount of manual processing needed, due to features such as automated integrations, handling files in the correct format and automated handling of appropriate filenames. It also makes it easy to manage system access for external suppliers and agencies.

2. Understand What Is in Place: Internal Capabilities Audit

Regardless of digital maturity, companies should perform an assessment of their customer experience technology stack and existing capabilities.

Fully delineating the systems in place illuminates what is available and what is missing. As mentioned, many companies run multiple similar solutions (whether because of a siloed culture or because of acquisitions). Because of this, present technology solutions and processes may be underutilized, superfluous or simply not serving their initial purpose.

3. Build the DX Platform Strategy

The best way to start building an experience platform strategy is to define: 1) the type of experience the company wants to bring to their customers, and 2) how the journeys should deliver that experience.

It is important to be pragmatic and focus on high-value activities first. This could mean starting with improving call center response times or shortening a claim process to avoid customer churn. Once this is defined and mapped out (with a clear view of the different touchpoints, KPIs and metrics), the internal capabilities audit will help identify the gaps that prevent the company from delivering the desired experience.

From there, the business can determine which plug and play solution will best fill those gaps or address the need.



BlueShore Financial, a company that offers carefully tailored financial solutions in Canada, traditionally outsourced core banking operations and employed offset printers to produce clients' statements and end-of-year tax forms. However, the outdated banking system lacked flexibility and the business wanted to align statements more closely with its goal of expert financial advice. Moreover, the outsourcing company was changing the system, potentially increasing the risk of business disruption. BlueShore Financial, as part of their core banking system conversion, wanted the ability to combine a clients' banking, credit card, debit card and insurance information into a single statement to provide clients with an overall view of their finances. But the company knew that standard banking software packages couldn't generate that; they needed a client communications software package.

With OpenText Exstream, BlueShore Financial now has a single software platform to create, manage and deliver postscript files to an outsourced printing partner. The platform offers variable design, testing and real-time composition capabilities, as well as advanced data and content integration, 22 output formats and controlled editing of interactive documents. Today, BlueShore Financial uses Exstream to design a variety of statements and maintain complete control over print content. Exstream allows the organization to make changes rapidly or combine different data to satisfy individual client requirements. By deploying OpenText Exstream, in-branch documents can be created with a consistent brand to satisfy different clients' needs and support changes in channel alignments. Ultimately, it provides the bank with a competitive edge.

There is no easy path and no silver bullet—building a successful customer experience requires strong leadership, commitment and a willingness to make financial investments in technologies and expertise. But the most important step is always the first: get started.

Digital transformation and customer experience disruption is only picking up speed as we hurdle into the future. And like the proverb says: *“The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now.”* Now is the time to make exceptional customer experiences a priority.

Brave New World of Me

« O, brave new world that has such people in't! »

–William Shakespeare, The Tempest

The world is fundamentally changing. Already within the past decade, the largescale pivot to digital and the rise of smartphones have completely altered the ways we work, play, shop and live. Change will not stop there; in fact, it is accelerating.

We are entering a future of personalization unlike anything we have seen before—a future of individualized interactions and tailored journeys, where customers expect to feel a real connection to the companies they interact with. In the Internet of Me, no two people will have the exact same experience.

Let us return to the metaphor of the recipe. Many cafés have the separate elements needed to make and serve a cup of coffee—but what is your favorite café’s unique way of putting those “ingredients” together? What is that *thing* that compels you to return again and again? Does it have to do with the atmosphere inside the establishment? Or perhaps the friendly baristas who know your name? Or maybe it is the convenience and speed with which you can get your beverage and be on your way.

In the same way as the coffee shop, what matters about the digital experience is how the various pieces come together to make its customers *feel*.

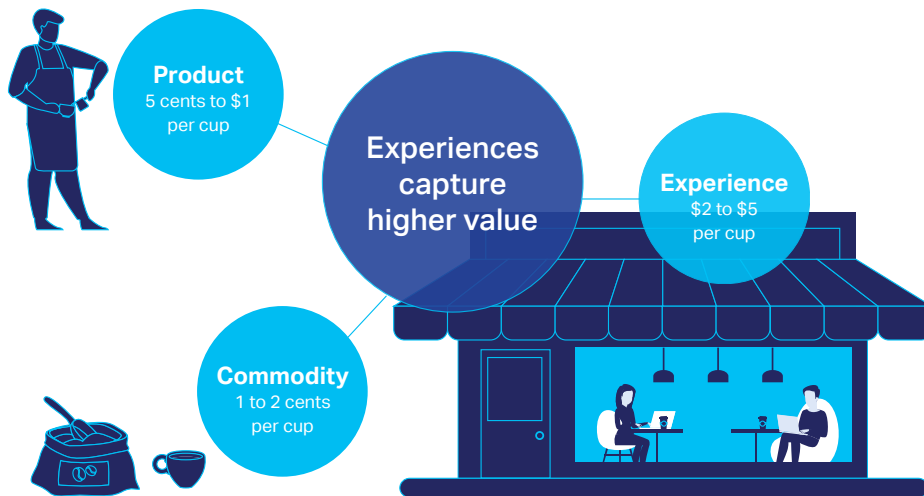


Figure 28

A Cup of Coffee—
Product versus Experience

Technological transformation is driving the evolution of the customer experience. That much is clear. New technologies offer new ways to remove friction, create streamlined digital journeys and hyper-personalize the experience with real time data-driven insights. Innovations in two specific technologies will be especially key moving forward: the IoT and AI.

Internet of Things

We have already discussed the impact of the Internet of Things on customer touchpoints and channels of interaction; but organizations must also be ready for their newest customer: the machine, authorized to make purchases automatically.

In a world shaped by the IoT, the classic example is the smart refrigerator that orders groceries when it notices we are running low. But it does not stop there. Smart appliances will order their own maintenance products (e.g. furnace filters, coffee brewer descaler, oven cleaner) when needed. The closet could order specific styles of clothing from a fashion subscription service after monitoring which items we take out and wear most often. Washing machines are already buying their own detergent based on consumption.⁵⁵ And eight out of 10 consumers expect that by 2030, they will use a virtual assistant to make online purchases or control a smart home.⁵⁶

Businesses will need to put IoT on the agenda and consider which devices their human customers are using to interact with them, and how this affects the broader digital experience.

Artificial Intelligence

Eighty-five percent of Americans are already using artificial intelligence, often interacting with it multiple times every day.⁵⁷ It is the next big technology that will change the world, with a global market expected to be worth almost \$60 billion by 2025.⁵⁸

In the battle to provide the best customer experience, AI is a vital weapon. It can achieve information processing feats impossible for humans, understanding and analyzing huge volumes of data, at scale and in real time. Leveraging these capabilities is the only path to creating the level of personalization needed in the oncoming generation of digital experiences.

Today's customer experience leaders are preparing for the future: 53% are investing in customer data platforms and 45% are investing in real-time decision engines to scale analytics and decision-making.⁵⁹ These platforms use AI to ensure customers get personalized experiences and optimal content across channels.

AI systems can not only adapt to a customer's preferences but understand the nuances of context and mood as well. AI-driven solutions tap into customer feedback from every source to determine sentiment, tone and emotion. They capture the entire customer journey in a single view, analyzing everything and identifying key engagement and decision drivers throughout the buying journey—informing organizations as they create better customer experiences. They can suggest and execute on the "next best action."

These capabilities will also allow AI-driven customer service tools, like chatbots or call agents, to adapt to emotions in real time, creating a more human connection and helping customers feel understood. This is particularly important in the current climate: Bank of America's virtual assistant, Erica, handled 15 million requests in April of 2020 as a result of increased online usage due to the COVID-19 crisis.⁶⁰

“If interactions enabled by artificial intelligence were more human-like I would...”

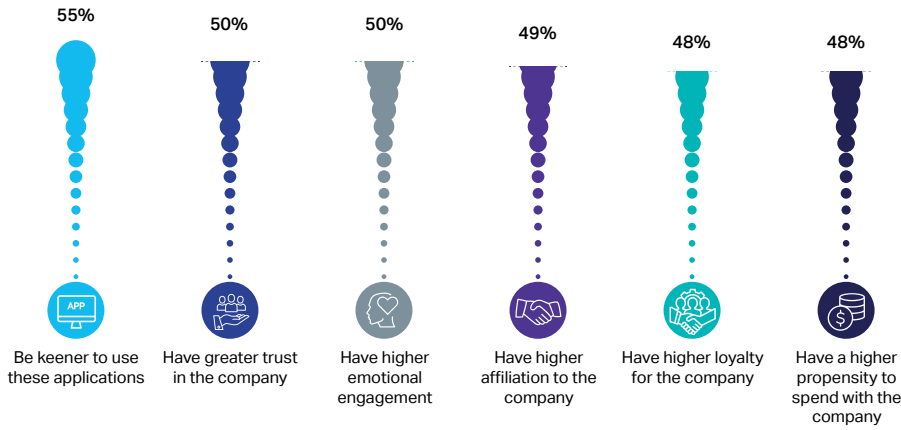


Figure 29

The Benefits of More Human-like AI⁶¹

According to Gartner, by 2022, AI-enabled technologies will guide 70% of customer interactions, up from 15% in 2018.⁶² And by 2030, it will be 80%.⁶³

Be Human

No matter how much technology allows us to do, the customer experience will always be about people. The human—or *human-like*—touch is paramount.

With the COVID-19 crisis and its aftermath, customers expect more than ever that organizations will show empathy and understand their needs. Seventy-eight percent of consumers say that they will stop giving their business to companies who appear to value profits over their customers.⁶⁴ Especially during times of crisis, empathy builds loyalty and shows customers that companies value their long-term relationships with them. This is how brand champions are born.



The Salt River Project

The Salt River Project (SRP) is a Public Utility that serves users and the environment by going above and beyond. On top of supplying power and water to over a million customers in the greater Phoenix area, the not-for-profit also educates and empowers the same customers through outreach programs. Furthermore, SRP develops communications for local chambers of commerce, animal rescue organizations and other nonprofit entities.

To create content, SRP previously relied on paper forms and email—a tedious and time-consuming process for both the marketing team and business users. Thus, they required a digital asset management system and sought an enterprise-class solution that could streamline other efforts and continue to scale with the organization.

SRP ultimately selected OpenText Media Management and OpenText Hightail for streamlined collaboration. Media Management proved a robust deployment for the SRP creative services team and opened opportunities for other departments to utilize it as well. Together, the solutions help users meet the day-to-day demands of operations while acting as editors and producers of high-value content. With its long 100-year history, the organization has grown into a unique blend of power and water company, and marketing agency.

SRP also uses OpenText TeamSite to deploy customer-facing sites that help residential and business clients manage their accounts, review usage, pay bills and apply for savings and rebates. The sites were particularly important during COVID-19, due to the large influx of clients trying to audit and modify their accounts to take advantage of the savings and special programs SRP put in place to help their clients during the pandemic.

Organizations need to dissect and examine the digital experiences they are offering right now. They need to listen to what customers want, understand them better, connect with them, then wield advanced technologies to give them what they need—sometimes before they even realize they need it.

The next phase of digital experience is not about what technologies can do for your business, but what they can do for your customers—as the unique individuals that they are. It is time to discover and then reimagine the digital universe for each customer.

It is time to create the Internet of Me.

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