



Transforming Customer Experience in the New Digital World

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Executive Summary

In today's world, new digital communications channels are being continuously introduced. Customers are quickly adopting these new channels – including web, social and mobile – and want to use them to contact the companies with whom they do business. But this proliferation of channels makes it difficult for companies to provide effective, cost-efficient customer service. In their struggle to find the right way to handle new digital channels, many companies take a siloed approach such as setting up a separate group to manage social customer service, web interactions, or mobile customer engagement. As a result, companies that treat digital channels as independent interaction points handled by disparate systems and disconnected employees have no way to understand the full customer journey or to meet their customer's needs with an outstanding, efficient and consistent experience across channels.



This white paper will show you how taking a holistic approach to digital channels in the contact center and beyond and integrating them into your customer experience strategy, allowing you to transform the end-to-end customer journey and deliver consistent, seamless and personalized experiences across all channels, touchpoints and interactions .

The Rise of the Mobile, Social, and Web Customer Relationship

From Twitter and Facebook to YouTube, to web chat and smartphone apps, the ways consumers communicate with each other has skyrocketed in the past few years. As these new channels keep coming, consumers also want to use them to interact with their favorite companies and brands.

To meet the challenge, many enterprises have started to respond to these new interactions, often throwing resources at each new channel as it arises and implanting point solutions that fix the immediate problem, but do not enable longer term business and IT transformation. For example, Marketing departments that own and operate an enterprise's web experience have begun to expand their reach into the social realm. Contact centers have begun to respond to

emails generated from their company's website. Newly formed teams that focus on the mobile experience have developed customer-focused smartphone apps. While all of these individual efforts are designed to provide solid customer experiences, they fall short of that goal because each lives in its own silo.

These silos fragment the customer experience. With no connections between channels, customers cannot escalate from channel to channel. Given the multichannel nature of the modern consumer experience, this inability to switch channels frustrates customers. And even when companies do allow for jumping from one channel to another, they rarely have any mechanism in place to pass information or context from one channel to the next.

When each channel has its own silo, it's also impossible to provide an exceptional customer experience across the end-to-end journey. Agents have to hunt through multiple tools to try and find the customer's history. Because management and reporting are also done in silos, companies don't get a solid ROI for the money they spend on digital channels. Siloed reporting also makes it difficult for management to get insight into the overall customer experience, understand issues and staff training needs, and have the agility and knowledge to solve them. For the end customer, it's hard to do business with a company or organization that provides an inconsistent experience that makes customers repeat information whenever they enter a new channel – and that frustrates them. On average, less than 50% of customers are satisfied when switching channels and that can equate to significant loyalty leakage. In today's world of digital channels – the harder it is to do business with a company, the less likely a customer will remain loyal and be profitable. Loyalty and customer effort expended during an interaction is critical to business growth, with 94% of customers willing to repurchase and 88% of customers increasing spend due to low effort interactions – leading to a 2.6x loyalty advantage over their competition.

Voice Still Number One, But Remains a Silo

Despite the rapid adoption of digital channels in the contact center, traditional voice remains a valuable way to connect with customers. There are times when a call with a live agent provides a more satisfying experience for the customer and a more valuable interaction for the company. These are the times when the direct to agent human touch can make the difference between a happy customer and an unhappy one. Some examples include:

- When there are complex problems that are more easily and quickly solved with real-time interactions and where voice increases confidence that an iterative process will lead to a resolution
- When customers want a commitment from a company – they would rather hear that commitment verbally to better assess its validity
- When time is of the essence
- When customers are already frustrated and may require special attention and care

Unfortunately, the voice channel often sits in its own silo, making it impossible to move interactions from digital channels to voice. This also makes it impossible to provide proactive human assistance for digital customers. Too often, it means that customers must end their digital channel interaction, pick up a phone and call into the contact center, where the agent has no knowledge of what the customer was doing on the digital channel. The already frustrated customer must repeat their problem and their attempts to solve it. This disconnect between the digital realm and the voice world and the inability to proactively provide the human touch when customers need it results in lost customers and bad word of mouth.

Converting Key Touchpoints into Opportunities Across Channels

While automation such as web-based knowledge bases can trim costs from contact center operations, it also removes opportunities where a human connection can make a difference. A customer can find the details on a complex product in a knowledge base article. But if an agent was involved in the interaction, they might have discovered that the customer was actually a prospective customer and could have closed a sale on the spot. Companies miss many such opportunities by not being able to connect self-service customers who need more help to the right employee quickly and conveniently, on the channel of the customer's choice.

Digital Experiences in the Contact Center

Solving these issues requires rethinking the approach to using digital channels within the contact center. Providing outstanding customer experiences that drive new revenue, cut costs and create customer advocates means harnessing the power of all these new digital channels. It also means seeing customer interactions as customers see them, as a single dialog between one customer and one organization.

One face to the customer, regardless of channel: Company silos drive customers crazy. Receiving different answers from different employees of the same company or experiencing different types of service on two different channels increases customer frustration and results in lost business. With a cohesive approach applied to digital channels in the contact center, customers receive the same, consistent experience from all employees and across all channels.

One conversation with the customer across channels: Customers will use the channel they feel is most appropriate at a certain point in time and switch to another channel when it becomes more convenient. For most companies and firms, that jump across channels typically erases all context – there is no ability to see what just happened with the customer on another channel. Building contextual intelligence into a digital contact center solution allows a business to hold one seamless conversation with a customer across all channels.

One view of the customer, understanding all channels, touchpoints and interactions: The ability to tailor service – and have more profitable interactions – means having all relevant information about a customer, including what they have been doing across multiple channels. For example, if an airline could see that a traveler who had flown 120,000 miles with them this year had searched for international flights on his mobile app yesterday, it could make an intelligent decision about which agent should respond to his web chat today and what offers they should make to this valuable customer. This is exactly what a holistic digital contact center solution should provide.

One customer care strategy, including personalized self-service and the human touch when required: Understanding the best ways to interact with customers on digital channels can provide great experiences some of the time. But for those instances where a human touch can make the difference, the digital contact center and overall customer experience need to be able to feed into a common customer experience platform, with common routing, reporting and analytics across all channels.

The Business Case

A flexible and holistic digital customer experience – especially in the contact center – can tangibly impact the customer experience and the end-to-end customer journey, improving top and bottom line numbers. Its benefits include:

Better Customer Experience. On the experience side, a digital channels solution can improve the customer experience and drive increased customer satisfaction and profits. Providing the

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customer with the appropriate service on the channel of their choice can significantly reduce customer effort and create an efficient and personalized customer experience. To create the perfect setting for a highly satisfied customer, a company should know who the customer is, what they have done on other channels and in other interactions, and what they want to do.

Increased Sales. When the contact center understands a customer's behaviors on multiple channels, and integrates that with the full customer history, enterprise can identify moments of truth. These are moments when a customer is likely to defect to the competition or is primed to purchase a product or service. Because a digital contact center solution enables companies to reach out to the customer at this moment of truth and provide a human touch, it allows revenues to be captured that would otherwise have gone unrealized or lost to a competitor.

Reduced Escalation Costs. When escalations from personalized self-service channels are required, a savvy solution provides the full customer context so that the interaction is resolved quickly and effectively. This keeps costs down, while allowing customers to tap into higher cost service channels when a human touch will make the difference.

Increased Cost Savings. An answer supplied to a customer query on a social channel isn't an answer to just that single person. That answer may have been disseminated to potentially hundreds of thousands of others who might have had the same question - reducing to the need for repetitious inquiries.

Improved Company Reputation. Providing excellent service in such a public way also functions as outstanding marketing, driving into the minds of thousands of consumers the perception of the company as one that is responsive and easy to do business with. An effective digital contact center solution proves that the right service experience is the best marketing investment a company can make.

Key Takeaways

The harder it is to do business with you, the more likely your customer will leave. Siloed channels across voice and digital drive customers away.

Create a consistent brand and unleash great experiences across channels, interactions and touchpoints. Integrating digital channels into your contact center and customer experience strategies, along with the complete customer history and context provides a unified view of the customer and connects the end-to-end customer journey.

Improve your bottom line. Consistency across channels and touchpoints not only increases your customers' satisfaction, it increases sales, reduces costs and enhances your company's reputation.



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