

Welcome to a new customer experience world

 By [Paul McIntyre](#)

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As business heads into 2020, the way customer experience is managed will irrevocably change. Ushering in this new era will be technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) which have already impacted how companies engage with their end-users.



Image source: Gallo/Getty Images.

The increasing popularity of chatbots, and their friendly greetings have made great strides in delivering a more personalised service. Such is the level of their technological sophistication, that these chats are often indiscernible from talking to a (human) call centre agent. It has enabled companies to reduce costs while optimising processes and reaching their customers across all their preferred touchpoints.



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Thanks to rapidly evolving digital technologies and a willingness to use real-time data analytics, the omnichannel has become a reality. This analysis is delivering a wealth of insights for employees. In part, this is fuelled by the growth of the internet of things (IoT) where data is captured at the edge and disseminated into the corporate back-end giving a more complete view of unique customer requirements.

Taking information from various sources and platforms empower the organisation to identify trends and pro-active measures to foster customer loyalty. All this is geared towards that continually changing personalised experience requirements.

Customer-first

Despite this, the biggest driver to embrace innovative technologies will remain the customer. Companies are finding it increasingly difficult to differentiate on product and price. Instead, their attention is shifting towards a customer-centric approach. Just look at the wave of disrupters forcing incumbents to change their approach to remain relevant. Insurance,

financial services, and even online shopping are the primary battlefields in the war for attention.



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Every business must have a 'customer expectation' thought train, linked back to the CX executive. In as much as it is an immediate concern, it is also vital to excite customers well into the future and for the company to remain one step ahead of its competitors.

Challenges become opportunities

Traditional business structures and antiquated processes remain a significant stumbling block. There are those who think that how they have succeeded in the past will be good enough to continue succeeding in 2020 and the years to follow. It is not.

Digital transformation means companies must embrace new technologies and make it work for them to capture new markets, new clients, and create new solutions for a connected world.



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Customers want to engage with a business using the platform of their choice. They also want to do it at a time that suits them and not be left restricted by office hours. It comes down to ensuring that end-users feel that they are heard, the business is there for them and gives them the options they need to not only do self-service but talk to a person for more complicated queries.

The new way

Changing the customer experience in the coming months require a business to embrace all the technological wonders that exist. This requires strategies for self-service, customer engagement platforms, alternative communication channels, and employee enablement.

Leveraging the power of cloud-based environments with their superior computational resources will free up internal resources to deliver more on the strategic value required. Companies must, therefore, lose the spend on antiquated, slow

platforms, and embrace the arrival of multinational data centres.



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As part of this, AI will become a game-changer where it will enable people to make decisions faster and more accurately. Using the information at hand, overlaid by AI and ML, employees can deliver better value to customers by resolving and advising queries faster than before.

So, instead of 'harming' the job market, automation delivered through AI and ML will create opportunities for newer, more information-driven work. All that is needed is an organisation willing to change and embrace the new digital world.

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