

Dancing with Disruption

Answering the big questions on organisational change

CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT



Keeping up with customer engagement in a digital world

Digital disruption is demanding a fresh approach to customer engagement. Transformation in your business should take the opportunity to digitise the customer experience to improve engagement.

As Australia's mid-market business leaders grapple with how to react to disruptive opportunity in their sector, customer engagement becomes a key driver. It is often the case that newcomers have a superior and faster way for customers to engage - from prospect to purchase to delivery. What are the areas to focus on to get ahead?

Today's customers are much more prepared to engage and transact across digital channels in addition to in-person and over the phone. They actually relish the idea of being able to scope, compare, select, purchase and track without needing to pick up the phone - which usually has to happen in business hours anyway.

Multi-channel is now a must

With buying and engagement patterns changing fast, offering digital customer engagement options can be implemented as part of a multi-channel approach.

It's been identified that younger, more technically-savvy customers can effortlessly switch channels for convenience when looking for an answer or shopping for a price or service. For this type of customer, digital methods of engagement are expected - they will be active across Web, mobile and emerging channels such as wearable technology and voice.

When building out digital engagement options such as online, mobile, and voice, there is no need to throw out in-person or phone engagement to go digital. In fact, having multiple ways for customers to engage through a transaction is a must. That means digital and non-digital channels must interact; who has experienced calling a business to chase an online order, only to find the call centre has no access to online activity?

Multi, or "omni-channel", is a necessary approach to any customer experience modernisation program with the goal being a frictionless, enjoyable experience across multiple digital platforms, including Web, mobile, social, voice and in-person.

Asking the right questions about customer engagement

Is our customer base changing in demographic, age, digital literacy?

How well you succeed at customer engagement can depend heavily on changes in your customer base and their expectations. Young people might be happy to transact with a mobile app, yet older customers might still prefer a branch office, as an example.

Are our customers using, or looking for, different digital channels for engagement?

Having knowledge of customer trends is also important. Regardless of demographics, entire industry trends can persuade people to use different digital channels. Get as much engagement knowledge out of customers as you can.

Is our business culture ready to take advantage of digital channels?

The technology is available, but is the business ready to use it for digital engagement? Understand what needs to change if the organisation is stuck in a cultural rut of only doing customer engagement a particular way.

Are our IT systems, processes and people enabling new digital engagement initiatives?

It's a good idea to cross-check existing modernisation programs with digital customer engagement aspirations. The best customer engagement programs are end-to-end and the business might be well on the way to enabling – or require a lot more work.

What strategy do we have for adopting an omni-channel approach?

Omni-channel is fast becoming a standard and it is demanding attention. Evaluate what options you do have and do some real-world testing to see how you fare when it comes to offering consistent service levels across channels.

Integration at the core

Behind the scenes, to succeed at digital engagement, the organisation needs to integrate their various channels of activity into a single 'view of the customer' that supports omni-channel engagement, and takes advantage of each medium to improve the customer experience.

Digitisation of the customer experience should cover:

Marketing activity: Where are customers coming from and how are they rating the brand?

Sales activity: What is the call to action? It is important to see what marketing works and how customers are completing a sale.

Communication and feedback: Have good feedback options and communicate well at every step in the engagement, including the ability for people to call you if anything is going haywire.

Partner for fulfilment: You don't need to try and take on a whole supply chain – there are many options for

connecting to a digital fulfilment partner. Connecting this to your back-end systems and then fulfilment via strong and traceable automation is key to avoiding the "50 lane highway" issue – where a fast, digital front-end experience crashes into a moribund, manual back end process to fulfil.

Consistent view: In most cases you can keep an existing engagement channel, but careful integration is needed to prevent your business having to treat each channel as separate. Customers having to explain "who they are" and why they are engaging is a source of huge frustration for them.

Bringing together the various engagement channels into a central, digitised core that enables a powerful customer view can provide huge efficiency benefits to a business, while also making the customer experience more rewarding - keeping new customers coming back, along with bringing converts they speak with.

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About Accelera

Strategic Disruption Specialists

Accelera is a business-first digital transformation consultancy for mid-market companies. We help private and government organisations get ahead of change and lead disruption by improving their digital capability. Our founders carry 25 years of real-world experience creating and helping mid-market businesses leverage digital transformation. Our purpose is to enable businesses to not only cope with change, but to become innovative disruptors.

We put strategy before technology and results above all. Get ahead of change and start your journey with us today.