

CX will drive business in 2020

 By Paul McIntyre

7 Feb 2020

While it has become easy to fall into the trap of only paying lip service to customer experience (CX), it is one of the most important aspects of doing business in 2020. But how can companies differentiate themselves when their customers have so many different and unique options available to them?



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People today have access to a wealth of knowledge that feed directly to their mobile devices via social media channels. They can easily find out anything about any product and use aggregators to compare service provider quotes at the swipe of a finger.

This connected customer also expects companies to engage with them using their channels of choice whether that is via a chatbot, social media, email, or an instant messaging platform.

This puts the pressure on the organisation to adopt a leadership position when it comes to CX. To be successful requires not only a more customer-centric way of working but also all the components in the business to work together with technology underpinning the numerous engagement platforms.



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To this end, the cloud has become one of the most vital tools to empower organisations with the solutions needed to capitalise on the customer data (reflecting their unique requirements and expectations) at hand.

Out with the old

Fortunately, South African businesses have embraced the change from Capex to Opex as the need to replace ageing legacy infrastructure with more agile and cloud-centric solutions become a priority. The cloud does provide the opportunity for quick wins enabling the organisation to impact its business in more positive ways. And, best of all, it is consumption-

based so the company only pays for what is used.

Driving all this must be CX initiatives. If organisations are not interacting with their customers in the way customers would like to, it is very easy to simply move to a company willing to do so.

This opens the business to an even bigger risk – those who do CX well will also offer better products and services resulting in a customer never going back to its previous service provider. And never forget the adage that it costs seven times more to acquire a new customer, than servicing and growing an existing one.

Cloud-friendly

While last year saw a shift to software as a service as more companies embraced hosted platforms in local multinational data centres, 2020 will see 'true cloud' providers investing in the country. Their platforms will be deployed within South Africa empowering companies to maximise a true consumption-based model.

Furthermore, decision-makers will be able to move away from risky (and expensive) hardware-based solutions that are becoming difficult to support. Already, this has resulted in the evolution of CX platforms that offer similar features to what was previously seen as back-office solutions.

It has, therefore, become easier to transform a company into a more coherent CX-focused organisation using a centralised platform. This environment makes the same technology accessible to everyone throughout the business. And because the organisation only pays for the features it needs to fulfil user requirements, it becomes easy to customise everything in a more agile manner.

And because such a cloud-centric environment does not require upgrades or is dependent on specific hardware, once someone logs in to the system, they have access to the latest features and functions. That speed, flexibility, and organisation-wide engagement deliver tangible bottom-line results.

Beyond happiness

Technology is very much the enabler to affect change. It provides decision-makers with the foundation on which they can evolve to become more customer-centric. The business requirements of today are focused on seeing investments in a flexible, omnichannel solution.

Of course, CX entails more than just putting a smile on a customer's face. It is a methodology that becomes a way of life for any organisation. If a company is not willing to embrace becoming an inclusive, connected, and informed organisation when dealing with customers, then no solution can fix its problems.

ABOUT PAUL MCINTYRE

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