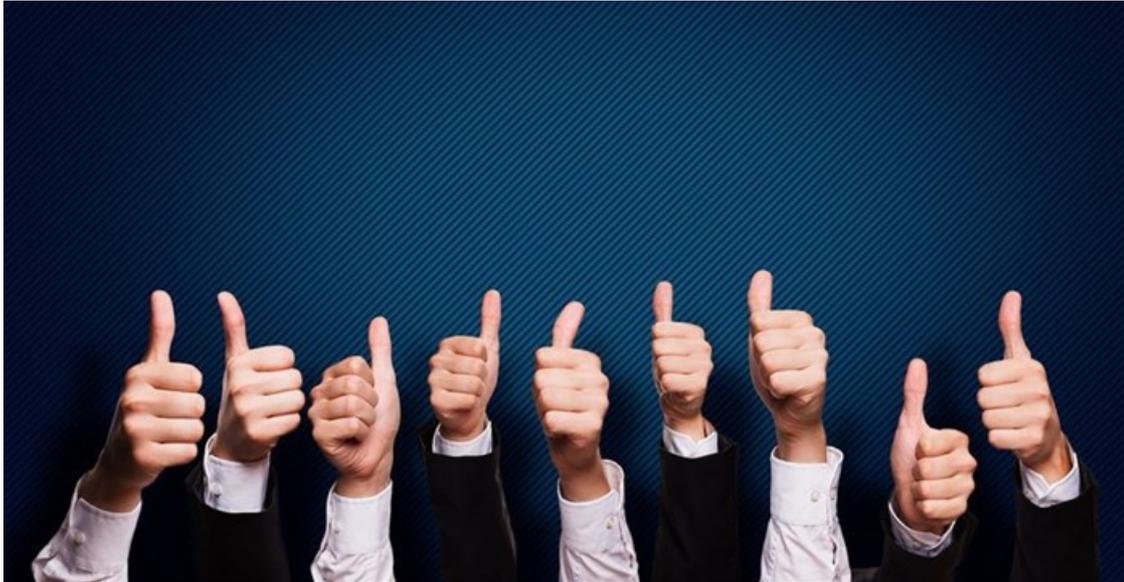


Maximising ROI without compromising on CX - top tips

By  Wynand Smit

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Business-wide strategies are complex - each department operates with structured KPIs that may include boosting profitability, customer feedback ratings, or a host of other criteria - the trick is to ensure that all these departments operate in concert with each other so that differing objectives can be achieved without hindering the overall success of your company.



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In the case of customer service, it is entirely possible to achieve this goal, even with seemingly disparate desired outcomes.

Identifying objectives

First of all, you need a strategy that clearly defines what your objectives are, for example:

- Boost the bottom line
- Increase efficiency and productivity
- Achieve a culture of favourable customer experience

Operationally, this comes down to a number of variables that have to be addressed, and, in most cases, technology

(software, systems and solutions) is the enabler that allows this to take place. It's entirely possible to optimise processes that have an impact on productivity (therefore, technically contributing to the bottom line), but if the rush to tick boxes (such as the quantity of calls made or reducing the time spent on a call, for example) compromises CX, you're operating with flawed metrics.

The processes that govern every step of the customer journey have to be viewed as related; if your customer is not achieving what they want to achieve, then the entire interaction isn't functional. Conversely, if your customer is getting from A to B, but it's taking way too long or involving processes that could be enhanced, then you're also losing out.

Insights lead to slicker workflows

Taking a step back, from the perspective of your customers and agents – use the insights available through data analytics and process monitoring to find out where the pain points are, those hiccups that prevent the customer journey from being a seamless one. The reasons for this could include a lack of access to pertinent information for agents, too many hoops for a customer to jump through to get to the right person or department, or the lack of information and channel integration leading to the necessity for repeat contacts in order to achieve a satisfactory resolution. Identify those pain points, and you're one step closer to ironing out the hurdles that impede slick customer service, the place where CX lives and breathes.

Ultimately, workflows influence business-wide outcomes, particularly in the channel environment, where your contact centre or customer service offering comes to life. Rapid deployments that can greatly improve both ROI and CX include simplifying processes that make up workflows. You could automate certain processes that are rules-based and relatively easy to perform, such as balance enquiries or product information requests – that way, customers don't have to spend inordinate lengths of time waiting for an agent to speak to, they can simply click through a menu, or, another option, request a call back if they would prefer to interact with a live agent.

ROI and efficiency

If a process can be automated or optimised to improve a workflow within a contact centre environment, thus saving time, then this has a direct impact on the efficiency and productivity of the contact centre, often leading to enhanced CX.

However, while time saved translates to profitability for a business (putting forward a strong case for a high ROI on any related solutions), any optimisation needs to be designed around customer needs, preferences and improving the overall customer experience. Self-service options, for example, might be an efficient and cost-effective solution to deal with customer queries, but it must also be the most desirable solution for the customer too. Great CX drives customer loyalty, and retention – delivering a higher customer lifetime value and potentially yielding a long-term ROI that is beyond any initial short-term gains.

Business will always be about the bottom line, but if personalised, functional service that gets the job done according to customer expectations and preferences come first, the rest should ultimately follow.

ABOUT WYNAND SMIT

Wynand Smit is CEO at INOVO, a leading contact centre business solutions provider.

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