GET BETTER

WITH A CROSS-CHANNEL STRATEGY

The agent experience should be a primary focus for your business to GET BETTER along its journey to being a modern customer service organization. Agent experience means the people, practices, and processes that support and empower agents to assist the customers.

The systems, desktops, knowledge, and data should streamline every step in every interaction, making it seamless for agents to effectively engage and nurture the soft-skill development that helps them grow. Do you have the right skill set today? Are you accurately planning the skill set for tomorrow to match what customers will need? How many of your agents are "super agents" who can seamlessly work e-mail, phone, chat, and social—and author/maintain knowledge content? Can you extend that same quality service onto devices, into games, over SMS, blended with social? As your customers traverse the different devices, channels, and agents, your organization will need to be aligned, unified and efficient in order to keep the balance of the experience.

STANDARDIZE SERVICE

- Having many systems of communications or types of communication styles result in fragmented, disjointed, inconsistent, and irrelevant customer engagements. In turn, this has a negative impact on the customers' experiences as well as that of the agents. The result is long/hold response and lengthy resolution times. Your most valuable agents will quickly burn out.

- By leveraging a cloud-based platform or solution, businesses can rapidly deploy, configure, maintain, and extend the systems. This allows the business to meet the needs of each agent, group of agents, available channels, workflow/ routing, and business groups without the heavy lift of ongoing IT requests.

- It's necessary to empower agents with a complete customer-engagement platform for all channels. One that delivers a unified cross-channel agent desktop; allows them to have one place to log in as well as have a single view of the customer. Additionally, the platform will enable and guide the communication flow between channels, and ensure that the same quality of service is delivered by even newly trained tier-one agents, field customer service agents, and third-party/ overflow contact centers.
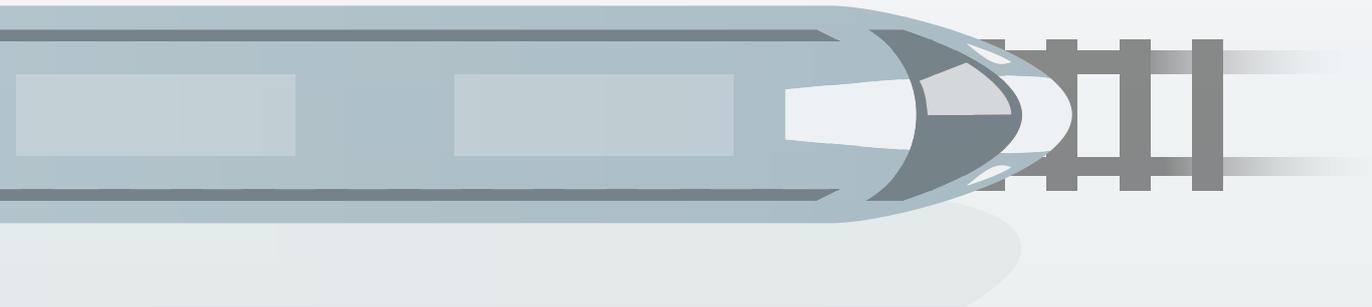
INNOVATE NEW ENGAGEMENTS

- Customer service and support is typically at the tail end of customer-engagement innovations. At best, this is an afterthought, where a simple link or contact instructions are provided. Usually service and support departments are not included at all. After customers take the plunge to adopt the innovation, they are forced to disconnect from the experience and switch channels in order to get the service they need. Worse is that the innovations are often placed in silo systems, leaving the experience data in a vacuum.

- Whether it's during a field engagement, in a website redesign, a new mobile app, an interactive display, on an ATM, in a new advertising campaign, or a layout design for a store, businesses need to design with customer service and support at the forefront of the thinking and infuse it into the engagement, not just bolt it on. Designing innovation with the relationship to the customer in mind (not just the transaction) will elevate and promote success across all your CX efforts. Effectively using technology that connects all data as well as providing authentic content can also help you achieve industry recognition for your accomplishments.

- Businesses need to look towards cloud platforms that allow for visual configuration and have extensive open APIs with development examples. They must be mobile, as well as social-ready, and can be easily extended with PaaS (platform as a service) development. Additionally, they should provide both OOTB (out-of-the-box) and reference integrations.

  Capabilities such as these help address IT's objections with regards to the level of effort needed to incorporate service requests into the design process. Those capabilities enable innovation without the need for heavy/costly customization, integration or middleware development—issues that are typically raised.

ORACLE®

CONNECT ALL KNOWLEDGE SILOS

- Typically, a business's largest volume of knowledge-related content is authored and disparately managed outside the customer service and support organization. This content is usually tailored to the more complex customer issues and resolutions. These require a broad and deep level of associated products, service, usage, and knowledge in order to identify the nugget of information required to resolve that particular issue. This type of knowledge can be considered as the remaining 80 percent of content that is needed to support 20 percent of customers. The types of customer who require this depth and breadth of knowledge represent your current, past or future most valuable engagements. They may require more expensive agent-assisted channels, and/or multiple customer engagements before getting the information that they need to resolve their service problem.

- Adopting knowledge-management best practices enables enterprises to gather, structure, and distribute knowledge, along with technologies that help customers/agents find and access the knowledge in a measurable and unified way across all current and legacy systems. Furthermore, it generates the cost-justification insights required for ongoing investments in evaluating, revising, translating, syndicating, and maintaining the most valuable knowledge assets for the right audiences.

- Businesses should look at solutions that have well-structured natural-language-processing capabilities that can adapt to understand your business language as it changes; your customer/agent needs as they evolve their learning; and your content (at word, sentence, or document level) for what it answers. They need to be robust enough to handle the ever-growing volumes of content and usage data. Connect knowledge as a service through open APIs that are integrated across your enterprise systems. Augment any application with the right version of the content, delivered for the right person, at the right time, over any channel. Design applications that can be infused with your simple FAQ knowledge in a modular way to relate associated articles within a complete resolution flow.

SUMMARY

These cross-channel disciplines will help you keep your customers loyal and your business streamlined, and provide maximum returns on customer retention:

Standardize consistent service by consolidating on a single engagement platform that optimizes your people and processes, and that can be easily tuned to your evolving business needs.

Introduce convenient service so customers get easy access to support, even in the far reaches of where your brand touches the customer.

Deliver reliable service by connecting all silos and formats of knowledge in your business to efficiently handle even the most complex issues.

Want to know more?

This is the second in a series of miniguides on the journey to modern customer service. If you'd like to find the rest and explore a range of other useful resources to help you plan and navigate your own roadmap, visit **oracle.com/goto/roadmap-to-modern-service**.

ORACLE®