

CX is not a quick fix but a long-term gain

By [Neville Quinton](#)

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Customer experience - or CX as its commonly known - is rapidly becoming a new battleground for businesses. It's not enough to re-skin the old customer contact centre model. Rather, CX has to be part of a comprehensive digital transformation strategy to unlock real value and give corporates the competitive advantage they're looking for.



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Two-thirds of consumers expect companies to understand their needs, but the same number say they're generally treated like numbers rather than individuals, according to Salesforce's State of the Connected Customer [report](#). And 62% say their experiences with one industry influences what they expect from others – showing that superlative customer service raises the standard for everyone, even non-competitors.

Amazon is a byword for success – an entirely digital giant that started as a bookstore and now spans the globe offering every product you can think of. How did they get there? According to founder Jeff Bezos, it was all about Amazon's "obsessive-compulsive focus" on the customer, rather than its superior technology and platform ecosystem.



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Now, Amazon is setting the bar for companies across the economy, including financial services, telecommunications and more. Consumers all expect – and demand – easy, personalised interactions with companies who know who they are and what they want, and who quickly resolve any issues that come up.

This is a challenge for companies who have had to rapidly adapt and evolve their contact centres, with varying degrees of success. Many corporates have moved quickly to incorporate chatbots, WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger as customer channels but, more often than not, consumers report a frustrating experience.

Contact channels are siloed rather than seamless, agents are unavailable rather than accessible, and consumers have to give the same information over and over.



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Unfortunately, several companies today believe that they will be able to significantly improve the way they can reach and access their customers by implementing the most expensive technology without considering how this relates to their overall digital transformation journey. They fail to understand that technology platforms and a digital transformation strategy related to CX are only an enabler.

Almost 70% of digital transformation initiatives fail because digital transformation aspirations and efforts are not coordinated and focused on key customer journeys, according to McKinsey.

Successful companies understand the relationship between their customers' transformation journey and an organisation's digital transformation journey. The goal should be to create the best version of customer experience from customers' perspectives rather than the organisation's (outside-in vs inside-out).

This requires a step-change for contact centres, which were previously designed with voice-first technology in mind, rather than offering an omnichannel experience. Contact centres need to bring together human interaction, AI, social media and digital messaging, sharing data across these channels and departments and business units, without compromising security and privacy.

CX is understood as part of a company's marketing function – but it should also be seen as a critical part of its technology requirements. Because those companies who get it right will stand head and shoulders above the rest.

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