

Customer Experience 2020

Customer Experience in VUCA World

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The shift towards a consumer-oriented world, which led by companies like Apple and Google is truly transforming the global marketplace. Now, every company is looking for an edge just to survive and with more and more enterprises adopting a customer-centric focus, a look into the future of contact centers could turn out to be a tremendous advantage in this fight to the top.

As business and customer needs turn increasingly dynamic, customer engagement through contact centers needs agility, flexibility and customer-centricity to address the rapidly changing customer needs. Contact centers 2020, or the future of contact centers, will be technology-led, enabling different communication channels such as voice, email, video and social media come together in a seamless and agile manner.

At an event hosted by Business World in partnership with Cisco and Tata Communications, CXOs and key decision makers came together to deliberate and discuss the role of technology in enhancing the customer experience in volatile, uncertain, complex & ambiguous world.

In his welcome address, Sandeep Mehra, Director, Collaboration Sales, Cisco India & SAARC explained how the world we live in today is constantly transforming and how there is a need for organizations to evolve their customer engagement. "We live in an unprecedented time where no one could've thought that a company like Uber could be changing the taxi industry and changing the business model or Flipkart or Amazon transforming retail experience. The customer experience has gone through a tremendous change," he said.

To highlight the importance of customer experience, Vishal Dhar, Co-Founder & President – Marketing, iYogi shared how his company had to



Mr. Vishal Dhar
Co-Founder & President – Marketing, iYogi

transform the way it does business. iYogi, an eight year-old consumer brand offers subscription for technical support. The company realized that customers hate being put on hold and to have to punch in numbers just to talk to someone. "People don't like being put on hold, so we decided not to have an IVR at all. Our average response time is less than one minute. So we built our business on the fundamental tenant of customer experience," Dhar explained.

Dhar's presentation was followed by a panel discussion on customer experience in VUCA world, which was moderated by Akhilesh Tuteja, Partner & Head – IT Advisory Services, KPMG India. VUCA as it stands for volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity, has already been redefined.

Dr. Bob Johansen from The Institute for the Future, redefined VUCA as vision, understanding, clarity and agility. Yet, the largest of companies do not have a division called customer experience training, as explained by Sandeep Soni, President & CEO, Hero BPO. "Bottom of the pyramid employees need to be trained to handle customers in a way that can enhance their buying or service experience. This is the only to survive in a world with changing customer needs," he explained.

Sanjay Mehta, Managing Director, Teleperformance pointed out that the center of power has shifted from the powerful to the powerless of yesterday. "The customer today has become visible from being invisible, he now has a voice from being voiceless. Advertising is becoming less relevant. Rules are being rewritten. Customer is feeling that empowerment," he said.

Citing an example of how he improved customer experience at his company, Somesh Chandra, COO

& CQO, Max Bupa Health Insurance explained how Max Bupa decided to cut down the time for preauthorization for mediclaim at a hospital. "The industry standard was four hours. We decided to cut it down to 30 minutes. We worked on an ecosystem with partnerships, processes and technology. In last four months, we've seen 40% increase in customer satisfaction," he said.

Amit Sinha Roy, Vice President, Marketing & Strategy, Marketing Centre of Excellence, Tata Communications said customer experience is about two Es—expectation and engagement.



Amit Sinha Roy, Vice President, Marketing & Strategy, Marketing Centre of Excellence, Tata Communications;
Sandeep Soni, President & CEO, Hero BPO;
Akhilesh Tuteja, Partner & Head – IT Advisory Services, KPMG India; Sanjay Mehta, Managing Director, Teleperformance
Somesh Chandra, COO & CQO, Max Bupa Health Insurance

The panel discussion was followed by a presentation from Carl Borchardt, Business Development Manager – Cisco Collaboration Asia Pacific. Borchardt explained how organizations can differentiate themselves in price, product or experience. Ankush Gangwani, GM- Product Management & Head of Cloud CCaaS Business, TATA Communications, in a following presentation talked about how consistent customer experience, consolidation and customer segmentation was always a challenge in a premise-based distributed setup.

The last session for the day was a technology panel discussion on 'Cloud based Customer Experience Management Strategies' and was moderated by Atul Gupta, Partner – IT Advisory Services, KPMG India.

Dharmarajan K, Vice President - Customer Experience, Snapdeal.com said the Big Billion Day sale of Flipkart last year was a big learning for the industry as this was when Flipkart was unable to offer consistent experience to customers, being not geared up to address the massive spike in volume.

"In the stage that we are in, it is critical we have the right technology and capability. We believe cloud-based technology is going to significantly influence in providing consistent experience," he said.

Neeraj Sahgal, Vice President – Technologies, Quattro explained how there is a shift in customer demand and expectations. "Customers now want online access, more than just account statement. That's when we created a new business model to align everything together and provide customers with a lot more than what they were demanding." Using big data and graphical representation technology, Quattro then opened a portal where the customer could view their account statement, offer them a graphical representation of their balance sheet.

iYogi had to build 20 different applications to address customer needs in the last five years. Explaining how cloud could be an answer to solve complexity and yet need to be seen with caution, Sarvesh Goorha, Group CIO, iYogi, said, "One shoe doesn't fit all—more so in the cloud story. We had to do a scientific filtering to decide what applications to host on cloud and which ones to host internally. There are so many players in the overall cloud ecosystem, that the problems of the end users are still not addressed."

Suresh Kumar, Partner & CIO, Grant Thornton India, however, insisted on the importance of cloud, especially in the business the company operates in. "Our users are consultants who are always on the move. We are enabling them to provide better customer experience to the end customer. Technologies such as cloud-based voice communication, email and instant messaging are thus helping us to a great extent in improving customer experience," he said. ■



Dharmarajan K, Vice President - Customer Experience, Snapdeal.com;
Suresh Kumar, CIO, Grant Thornton India; Atul Gupta, Partner IT Advisory Services, KPMG India; Sarvesh Goorha, Group CIO, iYogi
Neeraj Sahgal, Vice President – Technologies, Quattro
Ankush Gangwani, Head of Cloud CCaaS Business, TATA Communications



Mr. Carl Borchardt
Business Development Manager – Cisco Collaboration Asia Pacific