

WHITEPAPER

Customer Centricity and Business Support Systems Transformation

How Communication
Service Providers
are transforming
customer experience

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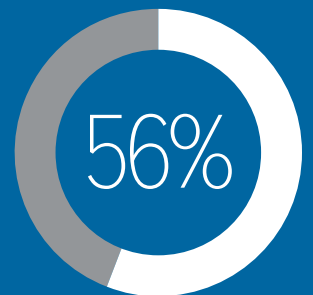
As Communication Service Providers (CSPs) continue to transform their businesses to deliver and manage digital services, there is added emphasis on customer experience. Building and securing the network will always be a priority for CSPs, but that's not enough. Engaging with customers and delivering value added services with seamless connectivity reveals the customer experience and 83% of operators are making it a key part of their digital transformation strategy going forward.

Transformation is about changing the business, not just upgrading the network. CSPs have been engaged in digital transformation for a number of years, but have only recently recognized that customer experience is as critical as network expansion. Progress is slow but steady and CSPs are starting to evaluate operations from the outside (customer) in rather than just the traditional view from the inside (network) out.

Omnichannel experiences are becoming the norm for customers to place an order, check their bill, get help with devices and access third party applications. Customer experience is the aggregation of network and service utilization plus digital, in-person and phone interactions with the CSP. Customers interact with CSPs using a variety of methods and channels. Online access, mobile apps and in-person interactions must be aligned and consistent across platforms. That's a major departure from the silos of systems implemented in the past.

CSPs know that customers aren't worried about how they're connecting but rather quality, availability and the ability to reliably connect to whatever they want, anytime and anywhere. As operators increasingly rely on distributed infrastructure and applications to serve customers, how do they not only manage the customer experience but improve it? Traditional customer-facing processes like ordering, fulfillment, billing and care have become omni-channel and, as a result, require a customer engagement platform that aligns data from across operations to create a more complete and accurate view of each customer.

A 2020 survey of 100 CSPs worldwide by ICT Intuition, LLC revealed that 56% of all customer transactions are digital.



CX EVERYWHERE, ALL THE TIME

Customer experience matters more than ever. A Walker study published in 2020 found that customer experience overtakes price and product as the key brand differentiator. Customers look to CSPs for connectivity. The ability to connect anytime from anywhere is critical and CSPs ubiquitously deliver. When all traffic is data and connectivity is assured, the differentiator for CSPs is customer experience.

Defining and delivering digital services is complex and ensuring that the resultant customer experience is easy and efficient requires careful planning and execution. There are multiple network and application connections both inside and outside the walls of the CSP and between the user, the operator and supporting systems. Customers access mobile, social and digital networks with a wide variety of devices.

There are applications that send data back and forth between data centers and there are numerous other systems and networks called upon in the background to access applications, process payments, verify credit and addresses, confirm deliveries, email bills and receipts, execute settlements with banks and credit card companies, collect fees, and maintain multiple copies of the transaction for the customer and all the other parties involved. And if any of these fails, the CSP gets blamed.



While a good customer experience is unique to each individual, there are common characteristics that make up that experience.

- **Simplicity** – Customers don't want to spend a long time searching for answers or support. Automation can answer questions about account balances or device setup anytime day or night. For something more complex, make it easy to get to a person with the right training.
- **Product differentiation** – When the network services and costs are the same, CSPs need to offer more. Highlight unique features of the service, partner access and relevant promotions. If a customer has a problem, don't try to upsell. Solve the problem and remind the customer later of their good experience so the upsell is welcome.
- **Order validation and suggestions** – Placing an order requires the CSP to ensure that the device works with the service and the apps used by the customer will continue to work as expected. Recommending value-added services, apps that simplify use or align with existing utilization is more effective when the order is being captured rather than later when there is a problem.
- **One-touch automated provisioning, automated device configuration** – Transferring settings and data to new devices, enabling cloud backup and recovery are now part of the fulfillment process. A customer that accepts an offer wants it to be available immediately without cumbersome setup or delays.
- **Available and useful self-care** – Customers don't necessarily know that their problem is "provisioning" and have no desire to wade through a long list of FAQs. Simple, interactive questions and answers can point customers where they need to go, assuming the data is there. If not, access to a trained person should be readily available. Updates should be automated and configured to an individual's device and preferences.
- **Managing promotions and unsolicited contacts** – Customers demand control of unsolicited contacts. Frequency, time-of-day and other parameters should all be within their control. Customers don't mind receiving those notices but can be easily overwhelmed by volume and interruptions that can result in losing contact completely.
- **Sharing shopping and usage experiences** – Customers are social and the ability to easily share experiences across a variety of platforms is important. Seamlessly offering that capability is valuable, but bad experiences are shared too.

The customer experience is everywhere and a customer engagement platform is the key to getting it right. A customer engagement platform captures and aligns customer data to create a detailed view of each customer and ensures that the view of the customer and communication with that customer are consistent across systems and channels.

BSS, DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND A SUPERIOR CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

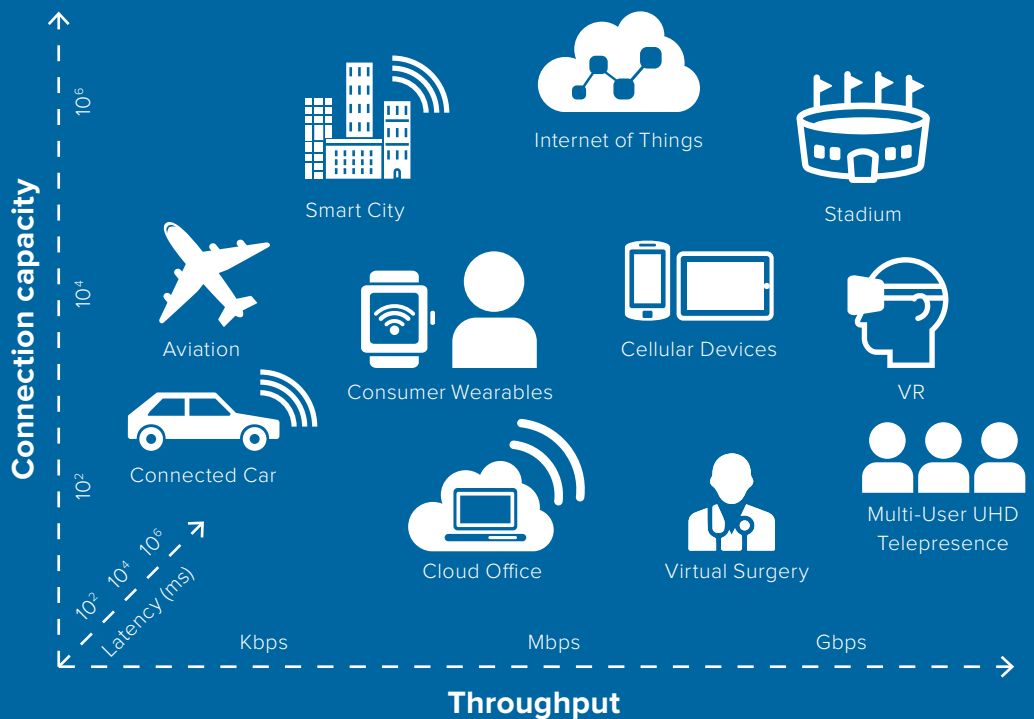
Customer data is no longer confined to billing and customer relationship management (CRM) systems, yet it is those business support systems (BSS) that operators currently rely on to manage the customer experience. While BSS is a good place to start, a customer engagement platform captures data from the network, services, partners, operations support systems (OSS) and BSS to develop a more complete view of the customer and their experiences.

Transformation strategies have to take a view of customer experience that includes product definition and development, product management, order management, revenue management, performance and relationship management. The ability to offer product bundles and upsell services in real time improves customer satisfaction and reduces churn. However, most existing OSS/BSS solutions were not designed to order, deliver and manage complex and dynamic service offerings.

To market, sell and support next generation 5G, wireless broadband and fiber services requires a new approach to customer-facing OSS/BSS solutions.

Innovative 5G Use Cases

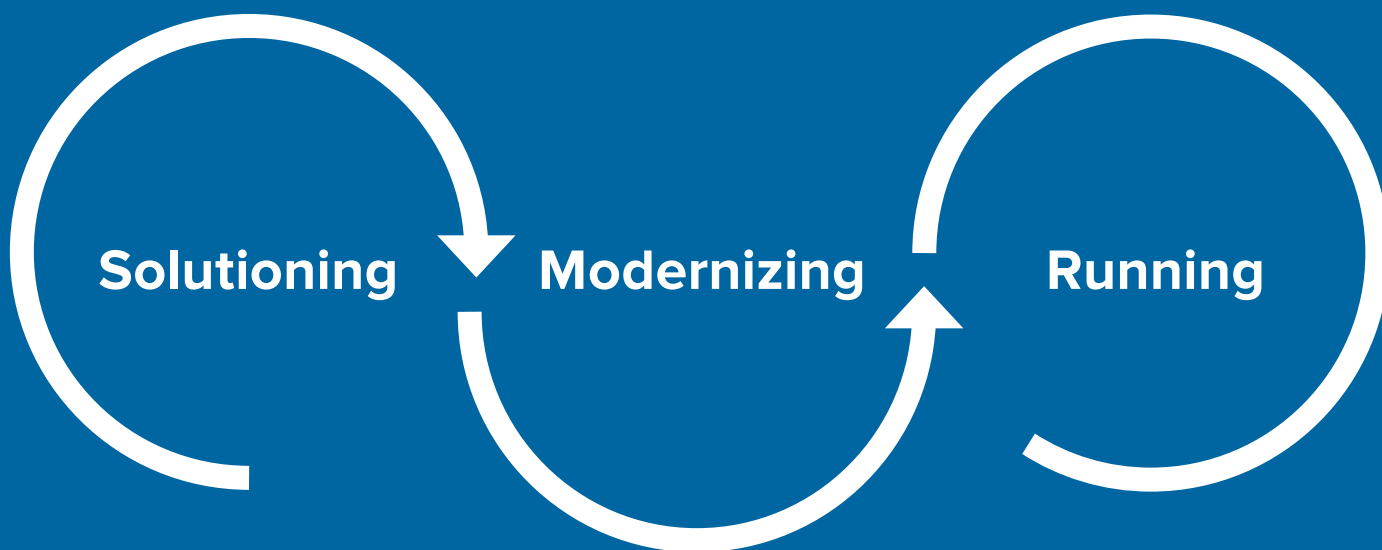
5G is paving the way for innovative use cases around automated vehicles, smart cities, automated factories, and a new wave of business communications. New use cases rely on the increased speed, consistency and latency reductions that 5G offers. The [International Telecommunications Union \(ITU\)](#) is driving this innovation with three main application performance indicators for 5G: Enhanced Mobile Broadband (eMBB), Ultra-Reliable Low Latency Communications (URLLC), and Massive Machine Type Communications (mMTC).



Delivering a superior digital customer experience requires the implementation, maintenance and management of complex integrations of providers, platforms, applications and data. CSPs have been slow to track individual interactions and behaviors due to high volume and isolation of usage and customer data in individual silos. The quality of the customer experience is only as good as the weakest link in the digital customer journey. There is a growing need to understand what an individual journey looks like and understand where intelligence and automation are valuable and when live, well-trained support is necessary. Once understood, a customer engagement platform can make it happen.

When partnering with an IT service provider to help with this transformation look for a unique blend of expertise, experience and solutions that engage disparate OSS/BSS solutions, partners and data to deliver a unified customer engagement platform that takes full advantage of existing data, cloud capabilities, analytics, artificial intelligence and machine learning.

Customer experience is unique and always evolving. Customer engagement platform strategies should be designed to support ongoing evolution.



- **Platform Solutioning** identifies requirements for a customer engagement platform, maps customer journeys, helps build a business case, designs reference model and architecture, plans implementation and implements change management.
- **Application Modernization and Migration** implements the ideal technologies to ensure the new platform integrates with existing systems, data models and architectures; migrates data, ensures interoperability and retires legacy.
- **Smart Operations** includes qualified staff and services for next generation maintenance and support of end-to-end operations.

REIMAGINING CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Digital services are growing in popularity and complexity, yet complexity is not an excuse for poor customer experience – customers don't care.

Existing systems are rightly focused on the technologies each was designed to support. However, there remains a need to measure digital experience quality for each customer and that relies on data from multiple systems. Atos, for example, relies on an integrated service delivery model that assists the operator with a proven process for defining, designing and delivering a customer engagement platform that is truly customer-centric.

Set the strategy. BSS transformation requires commitment from across the organization. A desire to “improve the customer experience” isn't enough. There needs to be a solid business strategy and organization in place to execute it. For example, a leading operator in Morocco needed a unified view of its customers and prospects to be able to create complex offers for a wide variety of customers while providing an intuitive experience for customers and support staff. As part of its CRM modernization, Atos helped the operator implement Salesforce with telecom vertical enabler VLOCITY, resulting in a 4x performance improvement over legacy solutions.

Awareness. Existing processes deliver existing results. A fresh look at what the customer needs and wants help to redefine customer-facing processes that optimize the journey. Get close to those closest to the customer to get it right. At TIM, contact center processes were reimaged to transform the existing contact center into a digital contact center. An Advanced Customer Profiling system was introduced to deliver personalized dynamic routing of customers to the most suitable support method across all channels (virtual, shops, CRM, live).

Context. There are also existing systems and data, all of which must be considered. Some will be integrated into the customer engagement platform, some will become data sources, and others will be retired. Moving OSS/BSS to the cloud can reduce the number of systems, add automation and reduce costs. As customers and functions are moved to cloud platforms, duplicate functionality is eliminated and legacy is decommissioned resulting in capex and opex savings of up to 50% for a leading European mobile operator.

Focus. Although customer experience is a measure of interactions across the CSP business, there is a need to focus on interactions separate from the network. In a study by Salesforce, 79% of consumers say the experience a company provides is as important as its products and services. An operator engages with customers in-person, on the phone and

via social media and each has to deliver a consistent experience and outcomes. Creating a positive digital experience requires a 360-degree view of each customer across systems and data.

Global design. CSPs have unique requirements for system scalability, reliability, availability and interoperability. Each customer interaction traverses a wide variety of systems and operators, requiring a global view of end-to-end customer experience and performance. Across geographies and languages, currencies and regulations; it is important for operators to deliver a consistent experience. An Agile/DevOps environment enables operators to implement repeatable software development processes and automate testing. Agile/DevOps processes implemented consistently enable global operators to transform customer experience worldwide.

Detail design and implementation. Transformation of customer experience requires the optimization of business processes, definition of requirements and data models, selection of new or replacement solutions, definition of standard interfaces and integration of numerous systems and data sources. Transforming customer experience benefits from Atos accelerators combined with structured DevOps practices apply prebuilt templates and tools for data migration, development, integration, testing and deployment. Atos is a key distributed DevOps partner for delivering a hybrid cloud and digital workplace.

Delivery. Adding automation is the key to delivering a positive customer experience while reducing staffing costs. A wide variety of vendors offer products that, properly integrated, enable automation. Knowing how to work with those vendors and having a library of proven interfaces and integrations reduces testing time and prevents interoperability issues. A major South American operator reduced the number of full-time support staff required by 141 upon completion of a new customer delivery platform.

Measuring excellence. Governance of complex, global implementations is critical throughout the project to ensure that outcomes meet expectations. A phased planning approach that moves the operator toward the target strategy while ensuring reliable 24x7 operations requires that each phase is sustainable once delivered. Retaining existing customers while adding new services and customers requires governance at every point in the Agile/DevOps lifecycle. Once delivered; business, customer and system key performance indicators (KPIs) are continuously monitored and adjusted. Process KPIs ensure that business and service value are delivered from the core of the network to the customer.

Evaluating the market for innovative solutions; applying service delivery accelerators, customer collaboration, innovation centers and global strategic alliances enables your IT service provider to bring the right skills, strategies, processes, templates, tools and partners together to deliver digital customer experience transformation efficiently and effectively.

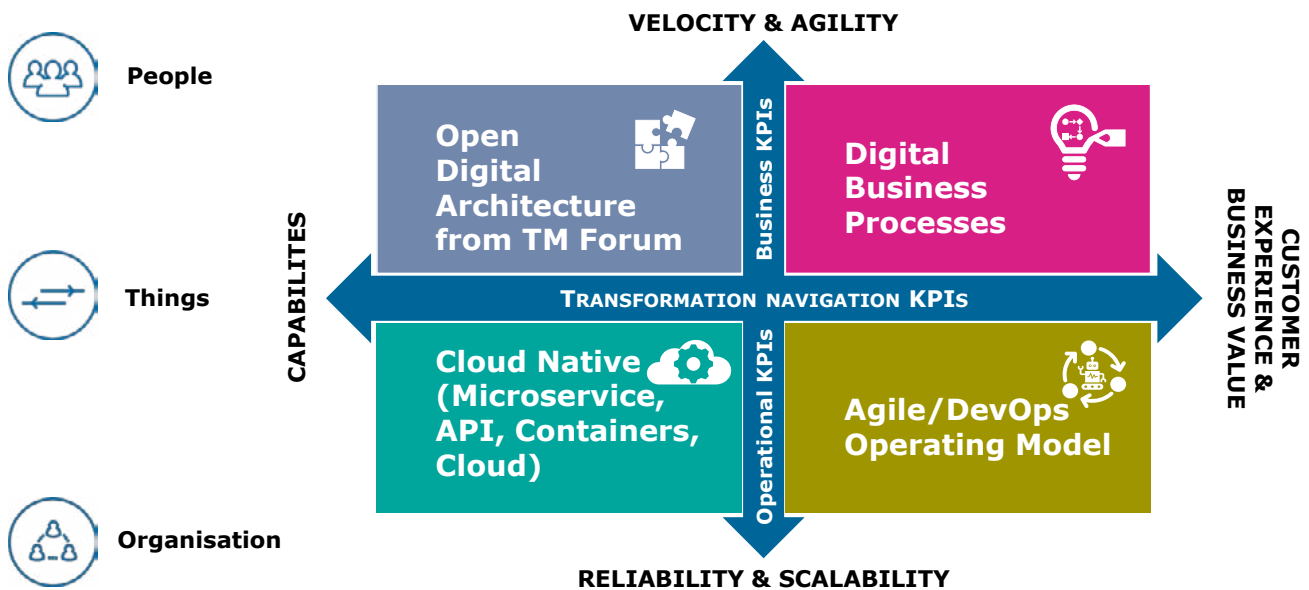
CASE STUDY:

CRM Replacement and Upgrade to Customer Engagement

A global CSP was planning to replace an existing CRM solution and also upgrade B2B sales, order management, sales processes and social interactions with a digital customer engagement platform that could be rapidly deployed in a competitive market. The upgrade also includes business process automation to accelerate service design and delivery.

The CSP teamed up with Atos to convert millions of customers from its legacy BSS platforms to its target platform. An assessment of the conversion process, comparing existing and target processes, identified more than 100 specific impacts on customers. Those impacts were mapped by functional areas and customer scenarios to identify the areas at risk. The operator developed detailed plans for communicating with customers and notifying them of upcoming changes, and provided instructions on where to find more information. Consequently, the operator minimized the effects on customers and carefully managed expectations.

Deploying the customer engagement solution improved overall performance by 4X over the legacy CRM solution and resultant sales and order processing workflow are more efficient with fewer errors and held orders. Time-to-market for new products is reduced as are operating expenses and customer complaints.



Atos aims to modernize CSP product, processes and IT to deliver savings from the outset. The Atos Telecom Business Process Model identifies and groups functional blocks for translation to business processes. These processes can be detailed up to the level of working instructions. Rapid innovation and accelerated rollouts enable CSPs to grow revenue, reduce expenses and increase customer satisfaction by simplifying the IT landscape and enabling the operator to focus on demand, growth and future services.



The right people, the right processes and the right tools deliver the right CX solutions.

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