



Power of mobile
apps in B2B
telco world



Enterprise telcos are still not completely into the 'War of Apps' compared to the consumer space where majority of digital interactions occur through apps. So, what is it that stops telcos from extending interaction channels to an app for their enterprise customers? The answers could be many, but the most compelling of them would be the fact that enterprise business is predominantly run on escalations and more human interactions are inevitably required to address the day-to-day concerns of enterprise customers. The advent of online portals has addressed this only to an extent and stretched the customer engagement beyond human interactions. Can telcos continue to follow a laidback approach and deprive the most important segment of their business – the enterprise customers – with more control and choice? Apps play a pivotal role in enhancing customer experience for enterprise customers and extension of certain functionalities to an app enables seamless interactions and comfort while engaging with service providers.

Why apps for enterprise customers?

The workforce landscape across industries is changing and telcos are no exception. Millennials will not only dismantle the 'way of working', but also pave way to 'new ways of interactions'. They will expect business interactions to happen the same way they interact with friends or colleagues. Telcos cannot remain oblivious to the fact that rising trends in mobile apps, especially in B2C space, will spread and influence the B2B business: after all, it's all about human interactions across channels. This emphasizes the relevance of two keywords often used to depict the level of customer engagement – 'control' and 'choice'.

'Enterprise' and 'escalations' have become synonymous in telco world. With customers having greater control on their services and requests, telcos will have to deal less with the discontent amongst their enterprise customers. The ability to track and trace their order status, receiving instant notifications about the progress of an incident or service request or managing their account without having to

depend on helpdesk agents, etc., will provide instant gratification and tremendous autonomy to the customer, thereby significantly enhancing the customer experience and Net Promoter Score (NPS). Even though many of the B2B portals today provide some of these capabilities to their customers, having them in the form of a mobile application will ensure that the experience reaches far deeper and wider, at a place and time of their choice!

This throws light on the relevance of the second important characteristic an enterprise mobile app can bring in for their customers – choice. With increasing relevance of 'omni-channel experience' and 'enhanced customer experience' in the telco world, the need for extending business services and experience to customers through a channel of their choice is imperative than ever before. Enterprise customers can instantly be gratified through relevant notifications about their business services and concerns through an app in a far better way than having to send an email or calling an agent or logging into an online portal. This will not only bring the customers closer to the business landscape, but also will give them a sense of 'being cared for' always, anywhere and for anything! The results of having a personalized mobile application with delightful user experience interface will be great for telcos (See Figure 1).

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Apps for enterprise customers



Control

- Provides ability to perform business transactions more efficiently
- Helps stay relevant with proactive notifications and readily available information, anytime and anywhere



Choice

- Enables engagement through a preferred channel
- Enables personalized view of services and instant gratification

Figure1: Empowering enterprise customers with control and choice

The mobile journey to CX

Alan is the CIO of a large retail bank. He gets an instant notification in his mobile about an outage in an area and the likelihood of impact. Meanwhile, his account manager tracks the incidents opened for the same issue and views the dashboard to evaluate service quality, trends and other important updates. He views his account details and initiates a conversation with a virtual agent to get an estimated resolution time. He also gets instantly updated about the progress of the resolution.

Tim leads the sales portfolio of a large enterprise telco. He receives an instant

notification from Twitter about an important business update from one of his customers who are expanding their business chain to one of the heavily invested localities. He opens his personalized application and views the connectivity in that location, potential pricing details, available list of services, pipeline under him and even a sample quote, which would be appreciated by the customer.

The contrasting scenarios mentioned above showcase the possibilities an enterprise app can bring on to the table and the underlying functionalities that could be offered through a much more convenient and interactive channel compared to traditional channels.

A traditional journey to visualize the above scenarios might have demanded multiple logins to the portal, numerous phone calls and emails, and a completely unhealthy workmanship straining the relations and resulting in multiple levels of escalations.

This is where the ubiquity and spontaneity of a mobile application can do wonders for a telco and its enterprise customers. It can be an

instant message box and a digital assistant at one time, while being a knowledge repository and information box at the other.

The overall experience across this mobile journey relies on how seamlessly the information can be passed over to the customer and how interactive and delightful is the user experience, which can be enhanced by delivering apt and dynamic functions (See Figure 2).

Experience-enhancing functions

Unified dashboard	Manage and track	Notify and help
<p>An enterprise customer should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View the number of service requests or incidents in open status • Number of pending orders and order status • List of services availed and any planned maintenance scheduled • History of incidents and trends • Important contact details, billing information, major notifications, etc. 	<p>An enterprise customer should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check the connectivity based on location • Raise/manage a quote, create/track an order • Update profile and order details, manage settings to receive alerts • View and download invoices, search for details • Create/track service requests and incidents 	<p>An enterprise customer should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek assistance, initiate conversations with virtual agents • Access FAQs, video guides • Customize notifications • Receive proactive alerts and promotions, campaigns • Respond to NPS surveys, provide feedbacks, etc.

Figure 2: Functions a mobile app offers to telco enterprise customers

The digital way ahead

Providing more personalized and contextual services through an enterprise mobile application will inarguably delight the customers. At the same time, an intensive mapping of the current pain points in their traditional journeys is essential to augment and refine the experience.

Integrating social to mobile channels will provide telcos insights into the sentiments of the customer, helping them understand their

customers better. Cognitive and analytical capabilities will learn and predict the user behavior and provide more adaptive and spontaneous information to customers. Integration with social and bots will enhance the scope for engagement and provide telcos avenues to adopt new ways of interaction.

Content delivery and real-time behavior based on analytics and cognitive capabilities along with future trends like AR/VR, machine learning and virtual assistants will make these apps engaging, intelligent and interactive.

Apart from having a strong backing of cutting edge technologies and next generation architecture, enterprise apps should also be simplified to make it far more appealing and to be widely adopted.

Needless to say, security will play a pivotal role in generating the trust and thrust needed for a wider reachability within the enterprise telco world. Handling the customer data without compromising on the security while moving to more digitized and personalized interactions

could be a challenge which CSPs need to address.

A mixture of meticulously envisaged experience journey, astute mapping of customer pain points and cutting-edge technology with advanced analytics and architecture can make the mobile app extremely appealing, irresistible and the most viable engagement channel for a telco's most premium and important segment – enterprise customers!

About the author

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Swaminathan is currently a part of the strategy team responsible for enhancing the enterprise customer experience for one of the leading telcos in Europe. He has envisaged couple of future-proof user journeys in the B2C and B2B space, which were represented in

industry forums like Mobile World Congress. He has over nine years of experience in business consulting across the world in multiple industries. An ardent sports lover, he regularly finds time to play badminton and cricket, and loves to read during his leisure time.



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