WIPRO
Applying Thought

THE CHANNELS MAY DIFFER.
THE EXPERIENCE NEEDN'T.

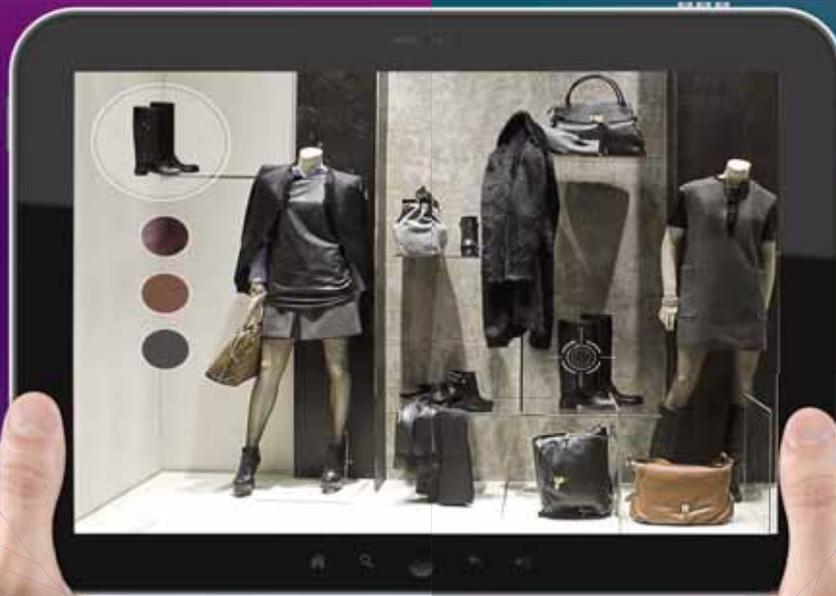The New Proactive CXM Of 2017 and How You Can Prepare For It Now.

By Jayakrishnan Sasidharan

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A customer walks into a megastore, her mobile device on and displaying the shopping list she created on the store's app. Recognizing her presence through location-intelligence technology, the app immediately maps the physical location of the items in the store and provides an optimized visual route to help her quickly pick them up. The app is also linked on the back-end to the store's inventory system, and updates any changes to stock levels so that the inventory team can keep the shelves replenished. Thanks to intelligent analytics, the app also suggests other items for the shopper, pushing coupons and spot discounts for the suggested new items to convert new sales or add the items to a wish list. Once the shopper has made all her purchases, she just walks out. Thanks to Near Field Communications, mobile payments are automatically processed on the back-end, freeing her from having to wait in line for a conventional checkout.

This, in short, is the next generation of customer experience management that enterprises need to prepare for before 2017.

Today enterprises are trying hard to keep up with the various ways consumers are accessing their products and services - whether it's through the web, mobile, social media, or brick and mortar locations. Often, customer experience management, or CXM, remains siloed within discreet pockets of the organization, usually marketing and customer service. And, it is often still reactive-opting to deal with problems presented to them instead of identifying progressive, comprehensive and meaningful strategies that create a positive customer experience.

Looking ahead to 2017, however, the next generation CXM will be proactive and engage the entire organization. It will strive to understand what customers are thinking about them before they seek to buy their products and services. It will seek to provide a consistent brand experience in any and all channels the customer prefers. In fact, CXM in 2017 is all about "channel independence." Customers can use whatever channel they like whenever they like to interact with the brand, regardless of the service or ecosystem, and enjoy a richness of experience in any of them.

The Evolution of CXM

While CXM has been around for a while, until recently its adoption by organizations has been ad hoc. It was kept siloed, usually on a single channel focusing primarily on product-based interactions and transactions with customers. Only a few years ago did it evolve to incorporate multiple channels and mature from simply being transactional to include customer communication and information as touch points for delivery.

Today, CXM is more defined. It can include two-way interactions with consumers and deliver more consistent, integrated information and experiences across multiple channels.

But it's still lacking. For the most part it remains offline and reactive. You may be able to solve problems, but you're not truly transforming the customer experience.

We believe the next generation CXM puts customers first, driving customer satisfaction and loyalty. It engages with them proactively in interactions before the product or service is consumed. That's how enterprises can truly understand what customers are thinking and create market-relevant products and services.

Instead of current CXM initiatives, which seem to aim only at streamlining organizational operations to serve customers quickly and effectively (in effect, still putting the organization ahead of its customers), next generation CXM will have a highly mature, closed-loop system that provides engagement, management, enablement and measurement of the Customer experience being delivered. By collaborating with customers, enterprises can co-create products / services and design an end-to-end customer experience model.

CXM of the Future

We see four trends that global enterprises are grappling with today and how digital advances will impact the next generation of CXM.

- **ENGAGING THE CUSTOMER PROACTIVELY**

    Enterprises want to move closer to the customer with interactions that occur before the product or service is consumed. CXM of the future would make that engagement event driven and pull from every aspect of the organization, including those not traditionally directly linked to customer care.

    An obvious-if not always followed-way to do this, for example, is to ensure service and product standards are being met. For instance, a telecom customer with Internet service may be underwhelmed by the speed of the connection he was promised and threaten to cancel service. Typically, the company would then try to offer a better package to keep the customer.

    A more dynamic CXM approach would be that organizations would establish customer metrics with respect to its services to make sure standards are met. This can be done through direct contact with customers as well as social listening. And the organization can establish a set of rules-based actions that are taken if something, like a data connection slowdown, occurs. In this scenario, the company makes a practice of monitoring output, and if a slowdown is identified, communicates the recognized problem across various social channels, issues rebates to affected customers before they have a chance to complain-to the company directly or on social media platforms - and, of course, quickly fixes the problem. Now the organization has maintained its standards, headed off potential customer complaints, and created a customer-friendly reputation for its brand.

- **CONTEXT-AWARE CUSTOMER INTERACTION**

    Thanks to geo-location intelligence built into devices, we're already seeing a host of interesting applications where location, customer need and cutting-edge technologies are leveraged to provide value to customers. Starbucks, for example, rewards its frequent customers with special discounts on their products of choice, based on the customer's proximity to a Starbucks outlet and check-ins with location-based social network applications.

    But, let's look ahead and see how this could evolve. Instead of an enterprise thinking about partnering with a specific app or adopting a specific solution, future CXM solutions would call for a more sustained interaction with context-aware solutions in every interaction with the customer. So, when a customer checks into a mall and posts his location with friends during the lunch hour, a restaurant in the mall could then send out a text for a group lunch to increase its business. The apps that drive these kinds of interactions will not just be marketing based, but move to the core of the enterprise and provide even more valuable information and services to the customer.

- **IMMERSIVE INTERACTION**

    There was a time-before the advent of the Internet and mobile technologies-when it was the enterprise that had the technologies that controlled interactions between them and their customers. Customers were merely the recipients and followed technology adoptions led by the enterprise.

    This has clearly been reversed, thanks to the development of multiple new channels ranging from mobile to social to smart TV. And, advances keep coming at an astounding pace. Now it's up to enterprises to keep up.

In this brave new world, digital design and architecture will play a much bigger role as enterprises are forced to consider technologies like touch, voice-enabled and biometrics, gesture-based computing, near-field communications, and more advanced payment solutions to create an enriching digital immersive user experience.

- **MULTI-CHANNEL OF THE FUTURE**
  Today, even as new web, mobile, and social channels have emerged that challenge or even replace traditional points of sale, development of these new channels and interactions with customers in each of them remains siloed. Indeed, the innovations are pursued as though customers who engage in one don't engage in the others, instead of what is more likely-that they engage in all--PC owners may also have tablets and mobile phones and engage on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest. And, as the Internet of things develops, in which a multitude of objects have connectivity, the channel resources any single consumer employs will continue to multiply.
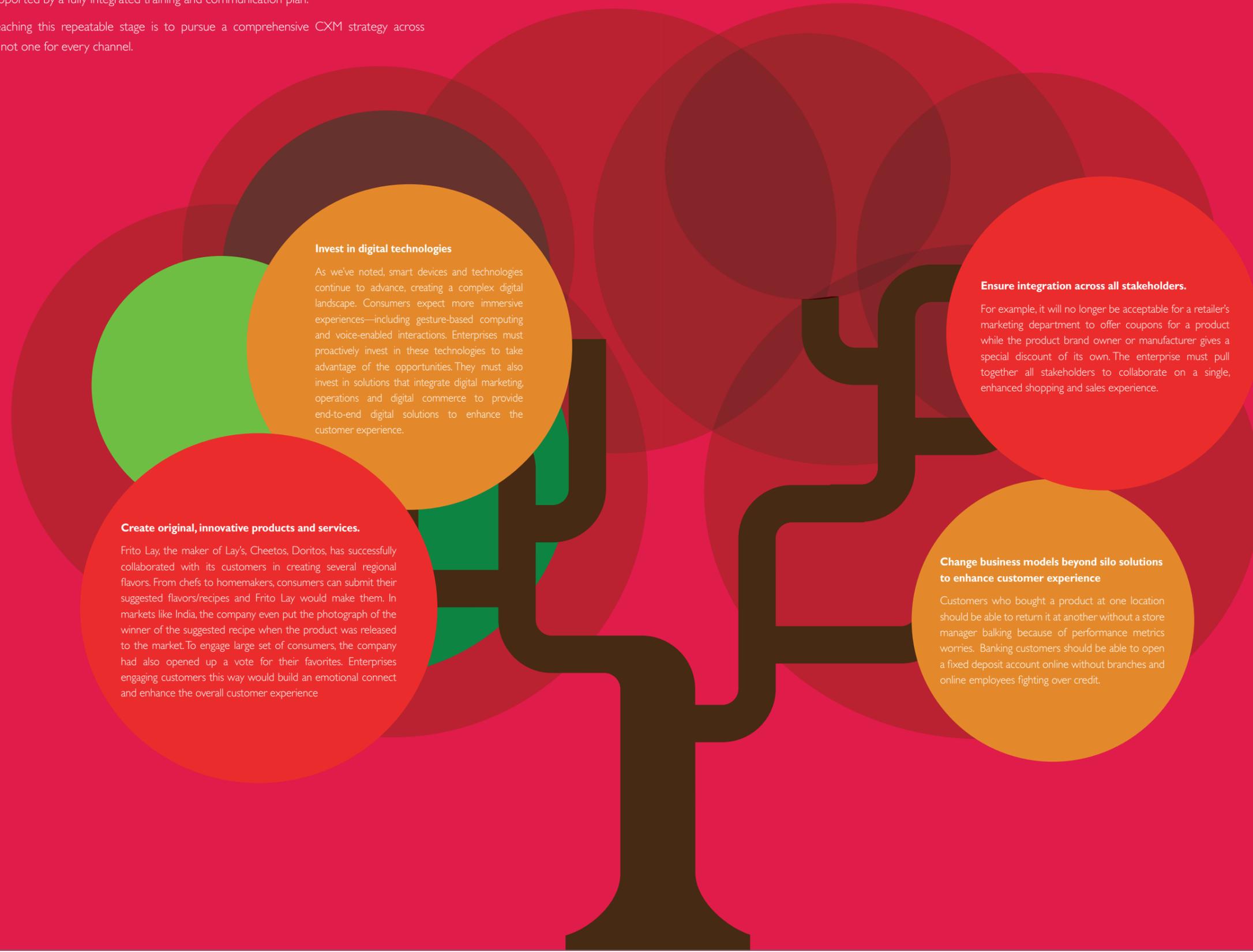
That means that by 2017, multi-channel for enterprises must transition to an omni-channel experience--meaning that customers could browse through product information on any media while conversing with friends on social media, and then order the product through any device, perhaps using gestures or gaming interactions. It means that their televisions are multi-functional and can support immediate purchases for products viewers see advertised through the click of a remote control button. Or, if their smart refrigerator breaks down, it is automatically reported to the manufacturer or retailer and the touch screen on the refrigerator door offers the owner the ability to purchase a new part and schedule the repair. The options for interaction are endless, but the point is the experience is seamless and consistent, no matter what channel is used and what channels evolve in the future. The enterprise's backend systems and solutions should enable it to add new channels and capabilities with ease to support their customers' choices and behaviors.

Preparing for **CXM 2017** now

While CXM is being pursued by many enterprises today, it's unclear how integrated their approach is as, we head towards 2017. We envision a repeatable CXM maturity model that implies that an enterprise has completely synchronized CXM and IT strategies with an integrated, institutionalized roadmap-all supported by a fully integrated training and communication plan.

The key to reaching this repeatable stage is to pursue a comprehensive CXM strategy across the enterprise, not one for every channel.

Things enterprises must do to pursue a comprehensive **CXM** strategy.

Invest in digital technologies

As we've noted, smart devices and technologies continue to advance, creating a complex digital landscape. Consumers expect more immersive experiences—including gesture-based computing and voice-enabled interactions. Enterprises must proactively invest in these technologies to take advantage of the opportunities. They must also invest in solutions that integrate digital marketing, operations and digital commerce to provide end-to-end digital solutions to enhance the customer experience.

Ensure integration across all stakeholders.

For example, it will no longer be acceptable for a retailer's marketing department to offer coupons for a product while the product brand owner or manufacturer gives a special discount of its own. The enterprise must pull together all stakeholders to collaborate on a single, enhanced shopping and sales experience.

Create original, innovative products and services.

Frito Lay, the maker of Lay's, Cheetos, Doritos, has successfully collaborated with its customers in creating several regional flavors. From chefs to homemakers, consumers can submit their suggested flavors/recipes and Frito Lay would make them. In markets like India, the company even put the photograph of the winner of the suggested recipe when the product was released to the market. To engage large set of consumers, the company had also opened up a vote for their favorites. Enterprises engaging customers this way would build an emotional connect and enhance the overall customer experience

Change business models beyond silo solutions to enhance customer experience

Customers who bought a product at one location should be able to return it at another without a store manager balking because of performance metrics worries. Banking customers should be able to open a fixed deposit account online without branches and online employees fighting over credit.

Essentially, this approach creates a single, unified customer-centric organization that is a way of life for businesses and facilitates their ability to repeat and institutionalize CXM success.

Here are some questions you should be asking now as you get ready to start:

- Are we losing business to competitors because they deliver a better and more cohesive customer experience?

- Are we able to engage customers in their "channels of choice" and deliver consistent information and experiences across multiple channels?

- Are our CMO & CIO synergized to work together to deliver a better customer experience?

- Do we need a cultural shift to deliver better customer experience and make employees better aligned and engaged towards delivering the right experience?

- Do we have the right data, technology, tools, and vendors to get the actionable insights which can enable it to deliver the right experience?

- Are we leveraging digital media like mobile, web and social effectively for personalized engagement and marketing? How are they integrated into the rest of the enterprise?

- Do our customers view us as a leader in providing innovative digital solutions?

- How can we collaborate with our customers better to create new products or services?

Today's customers are growing increasingly digitally savvy and have greater expectations for what technology can provide them in their interactions with the companies they engage with. Companies already are recognizing that socially active customers have the potential to become influencers in their own social media circles, with the potential to impact the perceptions of their brands. There has never been a time when there has been greater pressure on enterprises to create a consistently positive and cohesive customer experience and yet that pressure will only grow as digital channels and the Internet advance and multiply. A progressive, integrated CXM strategy will provide smart enterprises the ability to create a polished, consistent, executable customer experience that can be adapted to inevitable digital evolutions in the future.
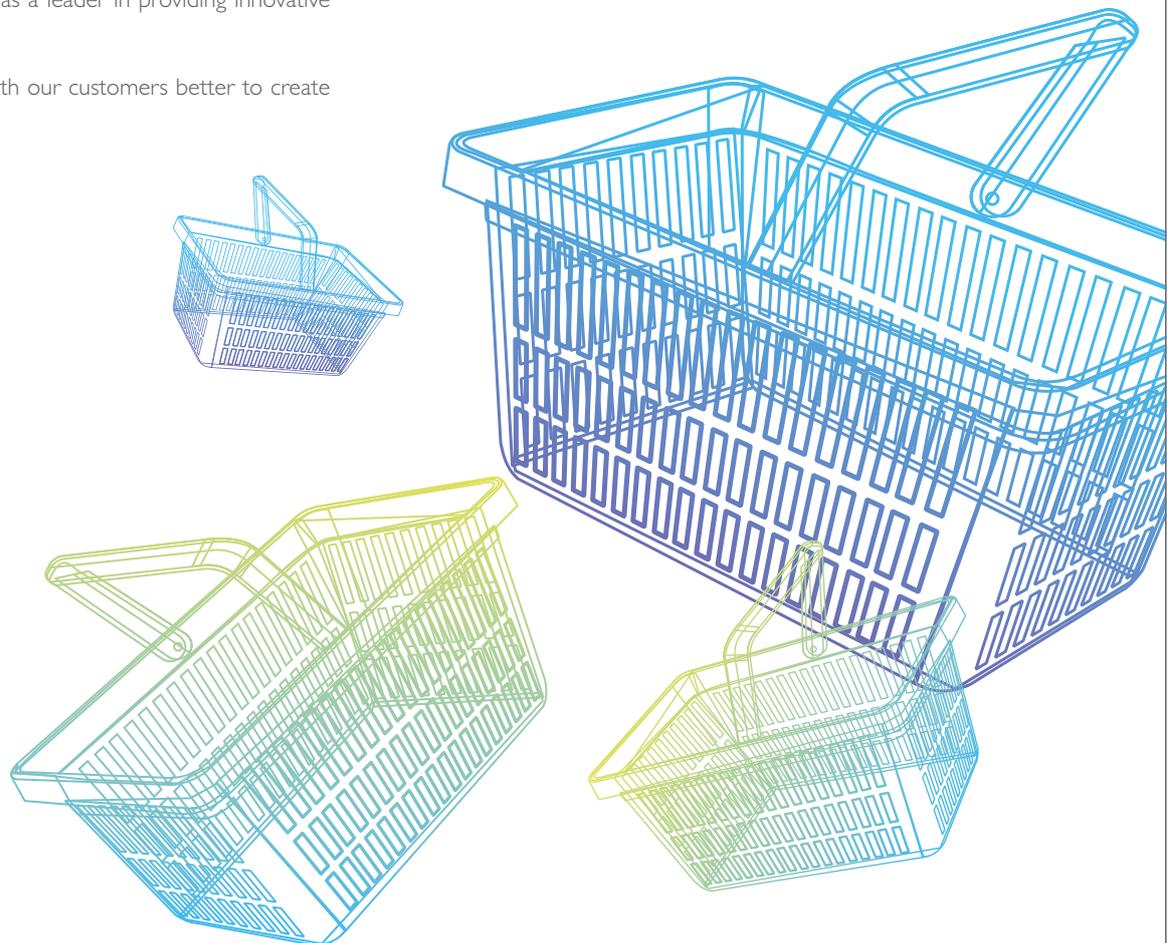
About the Author

Jayakrishnan Sasidharan (Jay) is the Vice President & Global Head- Business Collaboration and Customer Experience Practice atWiproTechnologies. In this role Jay heads business, that plays strategic role of delivering solutions and services in the emerging digital space of Customer Experience, Digital Marketing, Campaign Management, Web 2.0, SaaS and Cloud services to global customers. He has been instrumental in launching some of the first IP and SaaS based solutions for Wipro. He also heads R&D Center of Excellence which focuses on creating IPs and Solutions for customer business needs in this space.

Jay is recognized as thought leader in these emerging technologies and frequently interacts with analysts, media and customers to provide insights. Jay has spoken at leading events like the IDC CIO Summit and Oracle Open World. He has also given keynotes in various forums like the Cloud Slam event. He has 20 years of IT experience of which the last 15 years has been with Wipro in various leadership roles spanning Consulting, Sales and Delivery. Jay holds bachelor's degree in Computer Engineering from Regional Engineering College, (NIT) Calicut

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