



Customer experience tech
strategy – It's a thing!



The need to connect technology strategy to customer experience strategy

Customer Experience (CX) strategy is as much about technology today as it is about user experience. With innovation turbocharging the tech industry, customer experience management (CXM) professionals are spoilt for choice of technology. Vendors are riding the tech wave and offering a plethora of tech options that align to the need of enabling great customer experience. But are these tech offerings being leveraged optimally to achieve CX maturity? How aligned are technology strategies and customer experience needs in an organization?

Every business requires certain customer experience capabilities or competencies to deliver impactful and relevant CX. Technologies aligned to these competencies are critical. So is a sync between the two. Currently, CX, mostly, has a siloed approach (Each of these siloes may have a different tech landscape) with minimal coordination among stakeholders.

The digital age demands that technology development adapts to the customer challenge and along with IT, the agenda of the CIO includes business technology. Business and Tech strategies need to work hand in hand to achieve customer-driven outcomes.

Vasupradha Srinivasan from Wipro speaks about the changing CX space and the need to bridge the gap between technology strategy and customer experience strategy.

What is the current CX scene in most organizations? What is the role of technology in CXM?

CX is both a core competency and a key performance indicator today. Businesses understand the importance of investing in, and the consequent returns that good customer experience delivers. We have seen most organizations driving a shift from a product-based measurement to an experience-oriented measurement.

Technology is a key enabler for CX. CX organizations rely on technology to understand customers better, provide quicker resolutions, empower better and personalized interactions, and proactively engage for both, sales and support.

Technology, in particular, data analytics and visualization tech, are also critical components that drive the CX strategy. Customer journey mapping, decoding visitor behavior, channel preferences, insights and recommendations on how to predict intent and engage contextually are the areas that organizations seek to solve when they look to investing in CX.

How can customer experience professionals make the right technology choice?

Technologies including predictive analytics, programmatic marketing, personalization, robotics, automation, customer experience platforms, web analytics, self-serve tools, digital applications and artificial intelligence are revolutionizing customer experience.

With the increase in the number of options for technology solutions in the market, it is difficult for the CX professionals to make the right choice. They are overburdened with information that they need to process to achieve a specific output. They need to define this output. Once the professionals know what insights they need from a technology solution, it will help them make the right choice. They should always go for a solution that matches their domain expertise as well. It is important to understand the business' vision and goal towards CX. Every organization desires a different outcome from CX. Understanding the solution, business requirements and further mapping it with their desired outputs will help them make the correct choice. The starting point is to set a very clear objective for CX improvement and plan a roadmap that will systematically onboard technology that adds value.

We understand that technology is a vital enabler of CX and there are multiple tech options available for enabling CX, however, is it true that CXM pros do not have access to apt technologies?

Business and IT are two independent divisions in any business. Ideally, they need to work together to achieve the best outcomes for the organization. However, this is not the case everywhere. In many organizations, there is a lack of sync between the IT team and the CX team. These teams work in siloes and many times, do not sync up to formulate CX strategies together. This leads to lack of communication and skewed outlook towards outcomes, resulting in a gap between the requirement and the availability of technology. Most often, IT is not made part of the CX strategy and are involved only at the implementation stage. Understandably, this results in disagreements between businesses and IT, and the IT-business divide grows. Also, lack of vision into essential IT needs for CXM leads to wasted efforts and low ROI.

What roles should IT and CXM professionals in an organization play for building a strong customer experience strategy?

Enabling a digital customer experience calls for the interplay of various tools and strategies. A very simple end customer interaction like recharging a plan on a mobile app means that the customer is touching 4-5 backend systems, all of which have to perform seamlessly to ensure the best customer experience.

While the CX organization is the custodian for customer experience strategy, there is a need to engage and onboard the CTO and CIO organizations to align to the vision being driven by CX. Customer experience is not a siloed measure anymore. IT and CX organizations must put a unified business technology agenda into practice that engages today's empowered customers.

CX professional need to be involved in choosing the right IT solutions along with the IT team. They should be in a position to influence decisions on long-term technology strategy and planning to ensure it supports the path to customer experience maturity. They should help IT professionals understand the type of output they need to draft a strong CX roadmap for the organization. The involvement of the CX professionals will help the IT solution to evolve and improve self-learning of the system as well.

To sum it up, the top management should be aligned, on both the business and IT side, for their CX vision. Both the teams should choose the technology solutions together, keeping in mind the end goal. IT should focus on the feasibility and accessibility parameters and business should drive productivity and ROI for the organization. Customers will also play an important role. They are the end users and their experience defines the success of these technology enablers. Business teams should act as a medium between the IT and the customers to facilitate best results.



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