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Driving adoption across digital channels of communications

This article discusses the essential components for driving a digital adoption framework. Driving digital adoption among customers is easier said than done, ask any of the large enterprises that have been focussed on deflecting customers from voice to digital channels of communications. Each year, organizations invest millions in strategizing digital adoption by engaging consultants, in-house strategy teams, buying software, etc. without realizing that the efforts that fail to keep customers in the centre of the design, or do not have a framework will most likely fail.

Let's look at the essential components for driving a digital adoption framework for an organization driving customers from costlier channels of communication to digital ones.

Why driving digital adoption is such a big deal?

Cost of servicing a customer conversation via voice channel is almost four-five times more per transaction when compared to digital channels. Add to this the fact that meeting customer needs and requirements is not enough. 75% of customers expect service to be faster and more relevant[1]. But at the same time, 94% of consumers have experienced frustration when using voice channels to communicate with a company[2]. 52% of customers have called out "having to repeat themselves", 49% of customers have highlighted "waiting for a live agent" as key issues.

Now in the midst of all of this, let's not forget that 7/10 customers are ready to pay more for a better customer service[3] and 78% of the millennials

expect customer support agents to already know their contact and product information when they reach out for support[4].

How to view deflection from a customer's perspective?

To kick things on, Organizations should conduct the "Inside-out Analysis" by leveraging call listening and speech analytics to identify call types that can be easily deflected. A top-call driver analysis would come handy here with details listed towards the sub-call types aka reasons for the main conversations, a step further into the analysis would include understanding the need of human intervention required, rule-based solutions and ease of implementation.

Example: Consider a TV services provider's customer service scenario where customers have been reaching out to the contact centre for resolving recording issues about the programs that they love to watch later. Call sub-types if looked at granularly reveal that troubleshooting for certain call types is doable by customers themselves either via mobile apps, configuration settings on TV app itself, or website videos for resolution. Customers needn't call the contact centre and waste their precious time waiting for instructions. Now, we're not saying that every age group/ customer will be able to handle things on their own but if we're to do a pareto analysis and still achieve business benefits, it's worth trying. Also, within target call types, certain calls will need to be excluded considering the level of customer support, value risk and exceptions.

Inside-out analysis

Assess starting point of the issues and identify customer service conversations most suited for deflection

Journey mapping exercise

Ascertain most efficient channel(s) to handle deflectable conversations

Adoption methodology implementation

Design migration strategy and establish a system for enhancement of current channels of support

Adoption

Develop functionalities and design easy-to-use customer inter-face across channels

1. Ascertain most efficient channel(s) to handle deflectable conversations
2. Create a 'dual architecture'
3. Sponsorship and governance to ensure clear ownership

Figure 1: Digital adoption framework

50% of "recording clashed" calls should not be deflected – it can lead to poor customer experience or revenue loss

% top call drivers
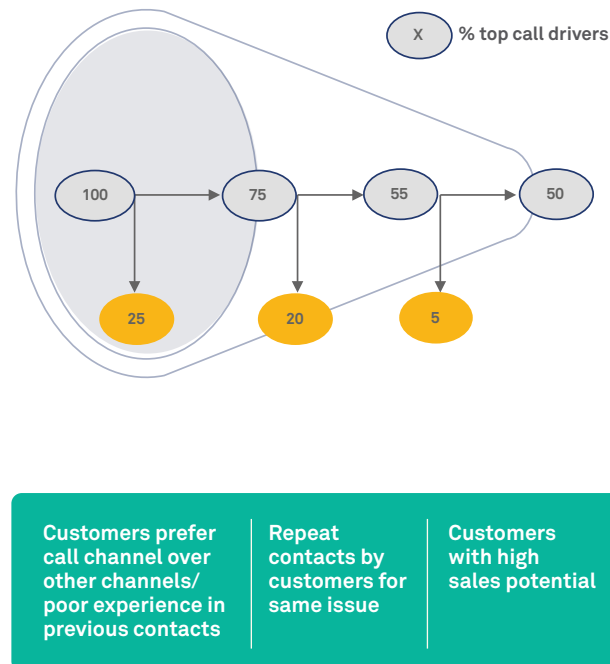
Call type	Call sub-types	Call deflection %
Billing	First bill issues	
	Package change issues	
	Pro rata billing issues	
	Payment of bills	
	Incorrect bill generation	
	Offer renewal at the end of plan	
	Changes/ issues in direct debit	
Technical	On demand failure with BB working	
	Recording clashed	
	Series link unable to record	
	No listings	
	Download issues	
	Box restart issues	
	Service call booking follow-up	
	Recording failed	
	Weather issues	
	Obstruction issues	

Customers prefer call channel over other channels/ poor experience in previous contacts | **Repeat contacts by customers for same issue** | **Customers with high sales potential**

18% Total deflection potential among TV help calls

Figure 2: Conversation deflection analysis mechanism

Customer support today runs through multiple channels combined by various journeys; prioritization between channels helps drive better customer experience efficiently. Given that every customer journey is unique, but can touch various digital channels (website FAQs, website account, apps, chat, social networks, forums) and traditional channels (IVR, contact centres).
Mapping out various journeys for customers and capturing their priorities in terms of channel is key part of ascertaining the most efficient channels to handle customer conversations.

As a third step, developing a comprehensive migration strategy to deflect customers to priority channels via Push and Pull actions:

1. Push actions:
   - Incentives for customers to use digital services (e.g., online available only services)
   - Disincentives for customer to use contact centre (e.g., charged hotline)
   - Advertising of digital channels availability though e.g. TV, commercial campaign

2. Pull actions:
   - Superior value proposition for digital channels (e.g., 24/7 service)
   - Targeted communication for selected group of customers though other channels (e.g., IVR messages/SMS)

Two key factors that should be kept in mind that: Born digital customers are more likely to stay on digital channels –onboarding is critical to log term digital use. Migration is not done on average at a very granular level (e.g. contact reason, client segment) and migration strategy should involve targeted initiatives for different customer groups with key metrics to track performance.

Finally, on an on-going basis, customer journeys should be analysed to detect gaps in the design and functionality of digital channels. One mode of assessing the impact of digital channels would be to use customer surveys to deep dive on the key reasons behind these gaps and address them by redesigning interfaces and adding new functionalities.

How to measure impact of the digital adoption framework?

Having a strategy in place is of no use if there aren't any performance measures in place to assess the progress made over a duration of time and validate the on-ground-realities. On a high-level, there should be at least two variations of the KPIs being assessed:

1. Vertical KPIs:
   - Volume of contacts made
   - Volume of unique users
   - Customer experience / Net promoter score
   - First contact resolution

2. Journey KPIs:
   - Users going through journey per month
   - Distribution of usage by customer behaviours
   - "Ricochet effect" – customer contact within 24hours of digital channel use

These KPIs need to be assessed by channel from an "as-is" to a "to-be" state target perspective where the movement across the live & self-service channels should be tracked in relation to the historical data. What would be really important here is to understand the migration impact that gets created within inter and intra channels of support, because organizations would want to stay away from not being able to support customer at the hour of need or turning them away from a channel of choice in the first go.

It must be a process where slowly, but steadily an organization is able to shift adoption towards digital channels for the right conversation types.

To support the performance measurement, **dual architecture** to accelerate the adoption of newer channels is also a key parameter:

Any transformational framework would require proper organization structure and governance to enable fulfilment of best practices. Digital Adoption Unit should ensure that:

- Digital care channels are run by a single unit
- Unit has top management visibility and is positioned on the same level (or higher) as traditional channels (i.e. cc)
- Electronic Care Digital channels are clearly focused on care, even organizationally

Operating model should define the right level of RACI (Responsible Accountable Consulted Informed) keeping in mind:

- A person (CXO, CXO-1) or a committee is appointed to ensure coherent design across channels for specific functionalities avoiding silos
- "Agile" IT and "Agile" marketing concepts in place
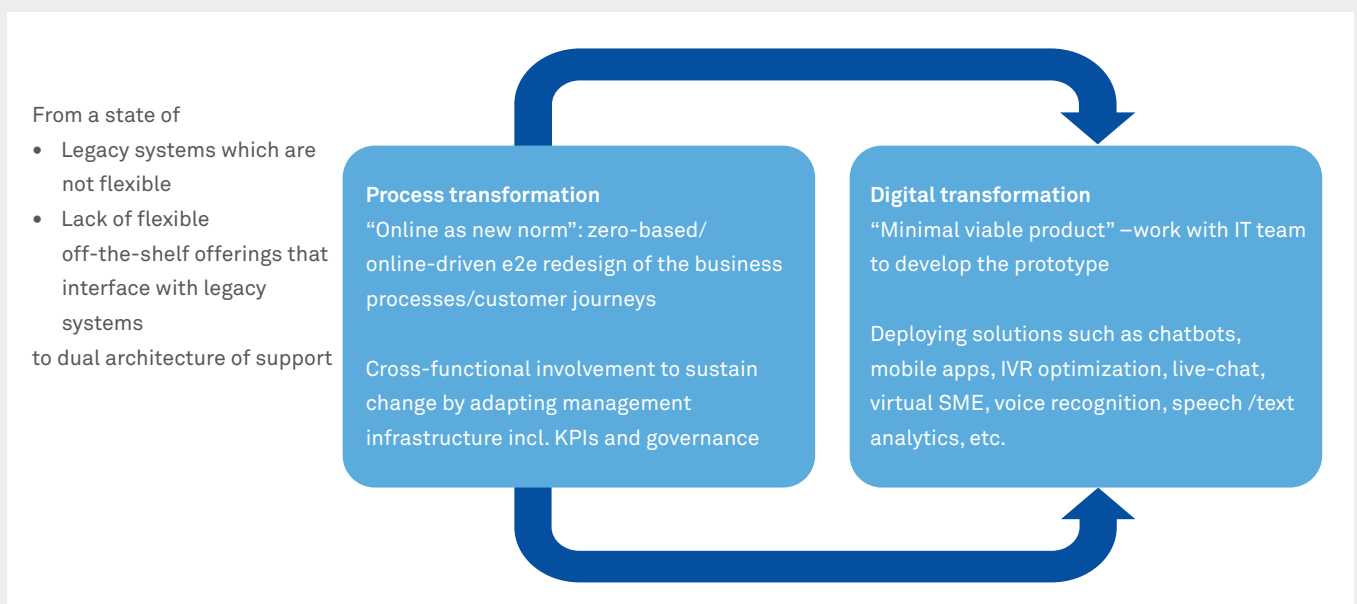- Online unit has both decision and execution powers in the outsourcing process

From a state of
- Legacy systems which are not flexible
- Lack of flexible off-the-shelf offerings that interface with legacy systems

to dual architecture of support

Process transformation
"Online as new norm": zero-based/ online-driven e2e redesign of the business processes/customer journeys

Cross-functional involvement to sustain change by adapting management infrastructure incl. KPIs and governance

Digital transformation
"Minimal viable product" –work with IT team to develop the prototype

Deploying solutions such as chatbots, mobile apps, IVR optimization, live-chat, virtual SME, voice recognition, speech /text analytics, etc.

Figure 3: Process transformation powered by technology levers

Has anyone ever benefited from this approach?

Yes, several organizations.

Company	Initiative	Benefits
Italian integrated fixed-mobile operator	Comprehensive digital transformation focusing on designing a complete care suite (including Social channels)	Reduction of call centre Opex of ~15% Turn-around of customer care social operations (e.g., Facebook, Twitter)
US pay TV provider	Prioritization roadmap of care initiatives, including business case and light implementation support	Reduced call volume by 15-20% Increased transactional NPS score by 10-15 pts
US mobile operator	Launch of targeted migration initiatives based on detailed customer segmentation	Reduced call volume 15-20% Increased CSAT by 1-2 pts
Global insurance	Revamped the personal injury claims process using AI	Saved 40,000 hours of manual labour. Reduction of processing time from 58 mins to 10 seconds per medical report
UK based TV, broadband & media company	Moved customers from email to digital support channels such as chatbot, website, forums, etc.	Shut the email-channel down – slowly. Introduced mobile apps, guided support, help videos, community

*Source: Wipro research

So, what's next

Customers are already shifting their preferences, product and service organizations have also understood this but clearly there's much to do. Adapting technology with a method to the madness (a framework) is imperative for any modern organization (product or service provider) to lead the path to digital transformation. There will be challenges along the way, and it's not an easy path, but with one-step at a time, service organizations can truly master the act of driving adoption across digital channels of communications.

Footnote

[1] https://www.salesforce.com/research/customer-expectations/

[2] https://1gm5bx1onm8i3xs8wd1jtohb-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/to_text_or_to_talk.pdf

[3] https://www.accenture.com/us-en/services/interactive-index

[4] https://info.microsoft.com/rs/157-GQE-382/images/dynamics365-en-global-state-customer-service.pdf

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