WIPRO
Applying Thought

Transform Your Enterprise into a Customer Company

Embrace collaboration and introduce continuous innovation to maximize customer value.

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Redefining competitive advantage in the 21st century

Like several other things, the 21st century is redefining the notion of competitive advantage. Organizations know that they must break conventional thinking if they are to stay relevant. This means continuing to adapt products and services to market needs and customer behaviour, but with a difference: in a knowledge economy, we must turn to ways of achieving this more accurately, much faster and with noticeably higher returns. There is a growing pool of evidence to suggest that businesses that bring together diverse skills, knowledge, ideas and capabilities are the ones that drive collaboration and innovation to achieve this. They understand that collaboration and continuous innovation opens the door to the

future. The question therefore is not, "Why should I adopt collaboration and innovation to maximize results?" it is, "How can I do this successfully?"

There is a gap between collaboration and innovation, and the strategies that enable organisations to maximize results and generate value from these concepts. How do they stimulate collaboration? What are the tools that are required? How can complex business challenges be addressed by bringing together proven knowledge from diverse disciplines? How can we co-create fresh and powerful customer-centric solutions ahead of the competition?

360⁰ collaboration: Just what the doctor ordered

The need for customer centricity is well understood by customer-facing professionals. Over the years, they have watched how customer engagement has changed. Today's customers command the conversation. When they raise a question on a social platform, companies are forced to address their concerns in real time. The interface with the customer has changed. Today CRM must extend itself beyond multi-channel contact and seek customer collaboration to find solutions that build and connect, long-term engagement and loyalty.

> *"Collaboration is equally important within the business and with external suppliers, resellers and partners. In that sense, businesses need to become 'social' in every manner."*

When conversations are quickly enabled across organizational silos and value networks, everyone has a chance to help improve the outcomes. This is why we need the salesperson speaking in real time with the inventory manager who in turn should be able to communicate directly with the finance

Inventory manager

Finance person

Sales person

IDEAS

Project manager
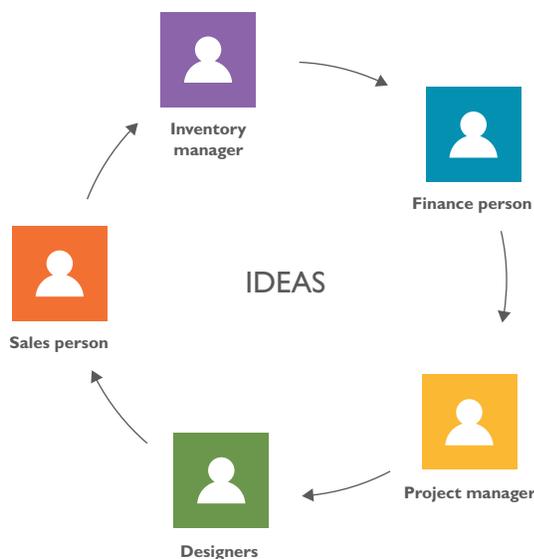
Designers

person and the project managers who in turn collaborate with designers and backroom R&D teams. The gaps between these functions — sales, operations, finance, production, R&D, etc. — can be bound by a unique glue called ideas.

This kind of enterprise collaboration is tantalising. It creates a customer-focused revolution within and outside companies. But for many organizations, built on generations of siloed operations, it has become a business challenge as well.

Breaking out of the silos means interfacing and integrating with diverse communication and collaboration applications. Invariably the end result is increased complexity. Collaboration should be made simple, like sending an email, a ping on WhatsApp or posting on Facebook. These solutions should be easily extendible so that they reach right within complex ERP systems for real-time distribution of data. When this happens, everyone across the enterprise is enabled to make better decisions. From an applications point of view, what this does is unique: it multiplies the value of every application within the collaboration network, having an impact on tangibles and intangible parameters alike, thus maximizing ROI and the overall impact.

Through our experience with implementation of salesforce.com, over the last seven years, we have come to realize that it is very important to adopt collaborative solutions that society is leading us to.

Innovation: The outcome of collaboration

We no longer live in the age of Digital Immigrants. We are seeing the arrival of Digital Natives — the Connected Social Generation, if you will. This is a generation that was born with the Internet as the new normal. Collaboration is natural to them.

Collaboration drives innovation. And rapid-fire, continuous innovation has become essential to the success of every business. Digital Natives are eager to collaborate. But they are very impatient with innovation. Today's generation cannot wait for upgrades. They demand incessant improvement in features. That's one reason why apps today are upgraded routinely, without intervention from users. It is almost as if we live in a version-less universe of apps. This is especially pronounced for mobile apps – and rightly so, because Digital Natives have adopted mobile devices as the platform of choice.

The era of projects that extend over months with annual reviews and assessments are over. Today, applications must become 'living' entities, constantly evolving, growing, strengthening - nourished by the energising tonic of seamless innovation across the organization. The most immediate impact of this has been on transformational engagements that are becoming more complex. It is important to note that the focus of these engagements has shifted from features to business agility improving the impact of delivery.

A higher order of innovation is possible by going beyond the common boundaries of collaboration. Innovative solutions ensure that the enterprise can collaborate with machines as well. This is exciting. It is the cutting edge of innovation. Connecting enterprise data with man-machine conversations offers fresh ways to solve problems, develop intuitive solutions and faster ways to prototype ideas.

Innovation driven companies use gamification for crowdsourcing of ideas for their product portfolio or development, and support these with robust software platforms to increase their stakeholders' involvement in the ideation process. In a gamified environment, the divergent tensions created in

the ecosystem are enhanced, resulting in innovative ideas through gamified collaboration.

Here is an example of the intersection of technologies that we are familiar with. While the example deals with Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), it could just as well apply to cases of hypertension, blood pressure or diabetes.

Gamification of ADHD therapy using mobility is coming to the rescue. ADHD patients are encouraged to play specially designed games that ensure they improve their focus, thus reducing the intensity of their medication, eliminating the need for regular visits to specialists and reducing the burden on caregivers[*]. The games (apps) challenge, engage and reward ADHD patients for meeting targets and thereby improve compliance to therapy. The apps record activity, analyze it and alert medical teams remotely when intervention is required. They maintain a record of treatment, provide reminders, and ensure that patients can directly speak to experts from within the app. The success of this innovation depends on continuous collaboration between doctors, gamers, mobile networks, caregivers and the patient.

Notice how the ideas are towering up to maximize value: collaboration, cloud, mobility, and gamification are intersecting, keeping the customer at the core, leveraging the comfort of Digital Natives with cutting edge applications.

[*]ADHD treatment with games, apps, and digital media:
http://learningworksforkids.com/2012/11/adhd-treatment-the-digital-approach/

Maximizing value: Innovation on steroids

It is important for businesses to understand and get behind the needs of their customers. Delivering value to customers then depends on how creatively and intelligently a business stitches and integrates solutions together. The outcomes are spread across several business vectors:

Create Value:

Innovations such as gamification or connecting systems for greater transparency and faster response can only lead to higher value of services. Many of these innovations help bring to light new services that customers want and can be turned into recurring revenue sources across a customer's lifecycle.

New channels create fresh ways to acquire new customers and retain old ones, and also cut down customer service costs. Communities created on social channels can find innovative ways of addressing customer concerns or take a step further by offering a platform to co-create customer offerings, thereby reducing the cost of creating solutions while servicing a customer. This ultimately improves overall returns on investment. Companies that do not invest in leveraging new channels for customer outreach are likely to be left behind.

Sustain Value:

Today, all it takes is a customer's tweet or a post on Facebook to tarnish a company's reputation. Often, customers only want the company to acknowledge

that a service was not rendered as agreed – and want an assurance that it will delivered as promised the next time. In a hyper-connected world, social listening and rapid response is critical. It can build brand equity or complete destroy it.

Maximize Value:

Understanding how different customer segments use various channels can help create intelligent upsell / cross sell opportunities. Digital marketing tools make it possible to identify customers who provide the most value over their lifecycle. Once such customers are identified, recognizing them and respecting them within the community can turn them into brand ambassadors. From a solution and technology standpoint, SaaS and pay-as-you-go models enhance business values, while offering much better returns on investment. While this is today's reality, an ongoing process of innovation will create models and solutions that will provide even better returns, focusing on 'value maximization'.

Conclusion

The future is rarely ahead of us. Every morning when we wake up, we are already in the future – many things that we were dreaming of until last night may have become a reality by morning. Collaboration between men and machines, innovation at home and in the workplace, cloud and mobile communication are all building blocks at our disposal. Only their optimal use will answer - "Would the customer like keeping our company in the future?"

About the Authors

Siddharth (Sid) Mishra heads the SaaS Solutions and Global Presales for On-Cloud Services at Wipro. Sid has over 13 years of IT consulting, delivery, sales and solutions experience across enterprise applications and process areas, specializing in customer relationship management. He has been a key contributor in incubating and growing SaaS CRM capability within Wipro. His strength lies in formulating strategy and creating solutions that combine process and application knowledge with IT innovation and consumer behavior trends, to help achieve customer success.

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