

# 3 Next-Level Ways to Improve Your Customers' Experiences



## Introduction

There's a whole ecosystem of customers out there, right now, interacting with your brand – on their smartphones, on their tablets or at their desktops. Are they having a good experience, making purchases and completing transactions, or are they frustrated and ready to look elsewhere? Do you know?

If you want to delight your customers, to give them the great experience they expect, you need to know. To understand what it's really like to interact with your website or your app, you have to see and feel what customers are experiencing.

How, exactly, to do that is the hard part. Traditional analytics are a start on the road to greater understanding, but they fall short in being able to provide real insights, the kind that can really help you grow your business. There are new analytics innovations that can improve your view.

## The Customer Experience Gap

89% of companies expect to compete on the basis of customer experience.<sup>1</sup> But a 2015 study by IBM found that while 81% of brands surveyed believe they understand their customers, only 38% of customers agreed.<sup>2</sup> That's the customer experience gap. Here are three reasons why the gap exists and three innovations that can help fix it.

**ISSUE 1:**  
**Data is fragmented by channel**

**SOLUTION 1:**  
**Walk in your customers' shoes**

**ISSUE 2:**  
**Analytics tools are not integrated**

**SOLUTION 2:**  
**Visualize customer journeys across channels**

**ISSUE 3:**  
**Organizations are operating in siloes**

**SOLUTION 3:**  
**Unify your analytics**

### ISSUE 1: Data is fragmented by channel

More than 56% of customer interactions happen during a multi-event, multichannel journey.<sup>3</sup> We've all had this experience: we start the buying process by browsing on one channel, like our phone. We later add a possible "buy" to our cart, maybe on a laptop, and then, after a little more browsing, we complete the transaction on a third device, a tablet. With your current analytics platform, can you follow the movement through the buying process from device to device? For most brands, data is too fragmented to connect customer moves from one channel to another.



### ISSUE 2: Analytics tools are not integrated

Until recently, there hasn't been an analytics solution that can "see" across channels to integrate the data. Marketers have been forced to use multiple systems to answer questions about their customers' experiences. They use web analytics for their digital properties, another tool for mobile and yet another tool for customer behavior analytics. There's no easy process to create a holistic picture.



### ISSUE 3: Organizations operate in siloes

Sales, marketing, e-commerce and customer service departments often have their own separate analytics systems and data sets. If it's even possible to bring together reports from multiple systems, the process is likely to be labor-intensive and time-consuming.



**ISSUE 1:**  
**Data is**  
**fragmented by**  
**channel**



**SOLUTION 1:**

## Walk in your customers' shoes

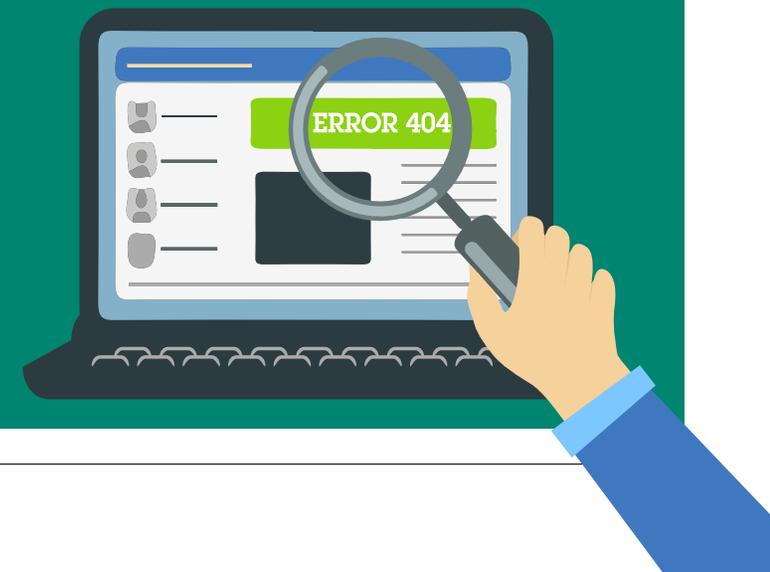
Do you know why your customers fail to complete an action on your site? What prompted them to leave – did they just change their mind, or was it a form issue, a system issue, poor site usability or a mediocre offer? Whether it's a simple checkout, registration or bill pay or a more complicated task like a mortgage application, customers can get stuck and abandon. If you don't know why it happened, you can't fix it.

You need the ability to experience your digital and mobile channels as your customers do. You need to identify when users experience issues, so you can get ahead of the problem. With real-time insight into customers' journeys, you can both proactively fix the problem and follow up with affected customers.

The best way to put yourself in your customers' shoes is by replaying individual customer experiences. A relatively recent analytics innovation, replay allows you to follow paths along the customer journey and pinpoint moments of struggle. More, it gives you the opportunity to relive the experiences customers have, and to see it through their eyes. Add in the ability to zoom in or out for macro and micro views, and you'll be able to see a complete picture of what your customers experience.

## Analytics in Action

You're offering a 20% promo code as part of a big holiday weekend sale, but you're not seeing the uptick in conversions you expected. Analysts are working on the reason why, but now it's Saturday and you have a ton of inventory to move. It takes until Sunday to figure out there is a problem with the promo code and that's where customers are jumping off. If you were able to see your customers' journeys and replay their actions, you could have detected the point of struggle earlier and salvaged the sales weekend.



**ISSUE 2:  
Analytics  
tools are not  
integrated**

**SOLUTION 2:**

## Visualize customer journeys across channels

Your customers are interacting with you across multiple channels — social, mobile, call center, store and website — and they expect their journeys with your brand to be seamless. To make that happen and to really see the progressive paths your customers take, you need to connect the data sets from all your channels.

The ability to collect information from across channels is also a new analytics development. With a holistic view, marketers can more easily pinpoint spots for course correction, replicate successful journeys and answer questions that are essential to driving conversions, revenue and loyalty, such as:

- What's the shortest path to conversion?
- What's the most common path to conversion?
- What path yields the most revenue?
- How does activity in one channel impact conversion in another?

Further, if the aggregate data is presented visually, it's easy to see trends and, in turn, gain insights.

Bringing together the entire customer experience for a big-picture view can inspire insights and help you deliver relevant, personalized journeys.



### **Analytics in Action**

You notice the desktop conversion rate is declining, but without a view to what's happening in other channels, you have no idea why. With the ability to tie data together across the entire journey and, with a more holistic view, you can quickly see where customers are struggling or see that app conversions are replacing desktop activity.

**ISSUE 3:  
Organizations  
are operating  
in siloes**

**SOLUTION 3:**

## Unify your analytics

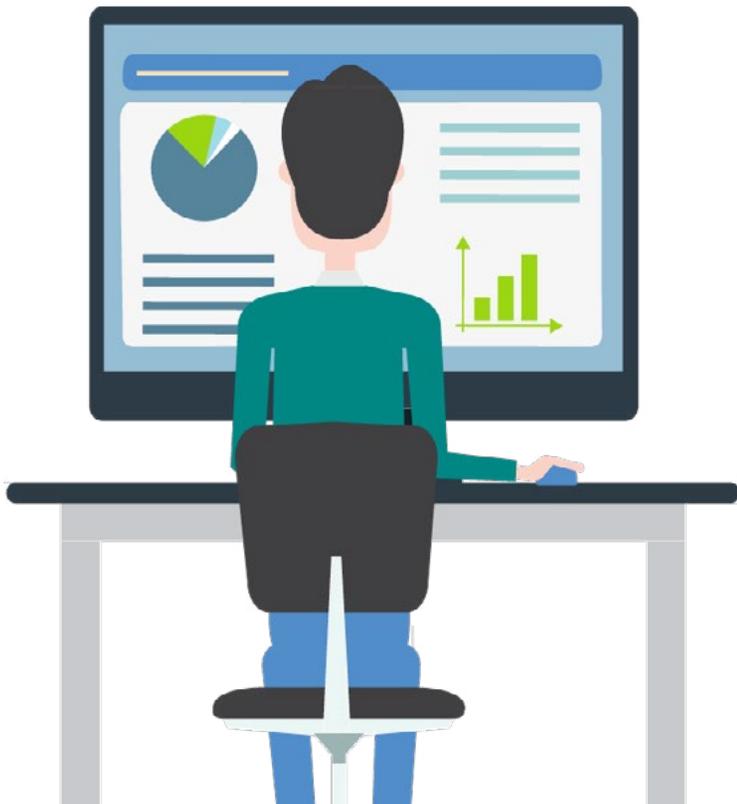
Today, it's not uncommon for brands to cobble together a holistic view of their customers using multiple analytics tools. In one analytics tool, they can identify trends, but can't drill down into the customer journey to see what is causing them. In another tool, they may have a great view of what is happening on the company's website, but can't identify the conversion struggle experienced by mobile customers.

To improve customer engagement, organizations need a holistic view of a customer's interaction with their brand. For instance, to improve mobile sales conversions, the organization needs to investigate and understand the root cause: is there a problem with the products or the offers? If many buyers using the company's mobile app are abandoning their shopping carts during a five-step purchasing process, the solution may be as simple as shortening the process to three steps. Traditional analytics tools can point to the problem, but can't fully resolve it.

You need to be able to pivot from one type of analytics to another. The process could start with an overall view of the customer buying journey across devices, channels and time. Then, aggregate trends identify the most common routes that people take to a purchase. After that, drill down to understand a single person's journey and their specific struggles, and from there, move to digital analytics to analyze a particular customer segment. Ideally, this entire process would be accomplished with a single login and within one environment, using a unified analytics workbench.

### Analytics in Action

E-commerce information is typically siloed within a customer experience or e-commerce solution. But when the e-commerce department is performing a customer retention analysis and wants to look at customer longevity, loyalty and buying cycles, marketing data becomes critical. Likewise, if the marketing group wants to examine the buying journey for high-value customers, it needs customer relationship management (CRM) data to determine which customers are most profitable. What's needed is a way to bring siloed data together.



## Better analytics = better customer experience

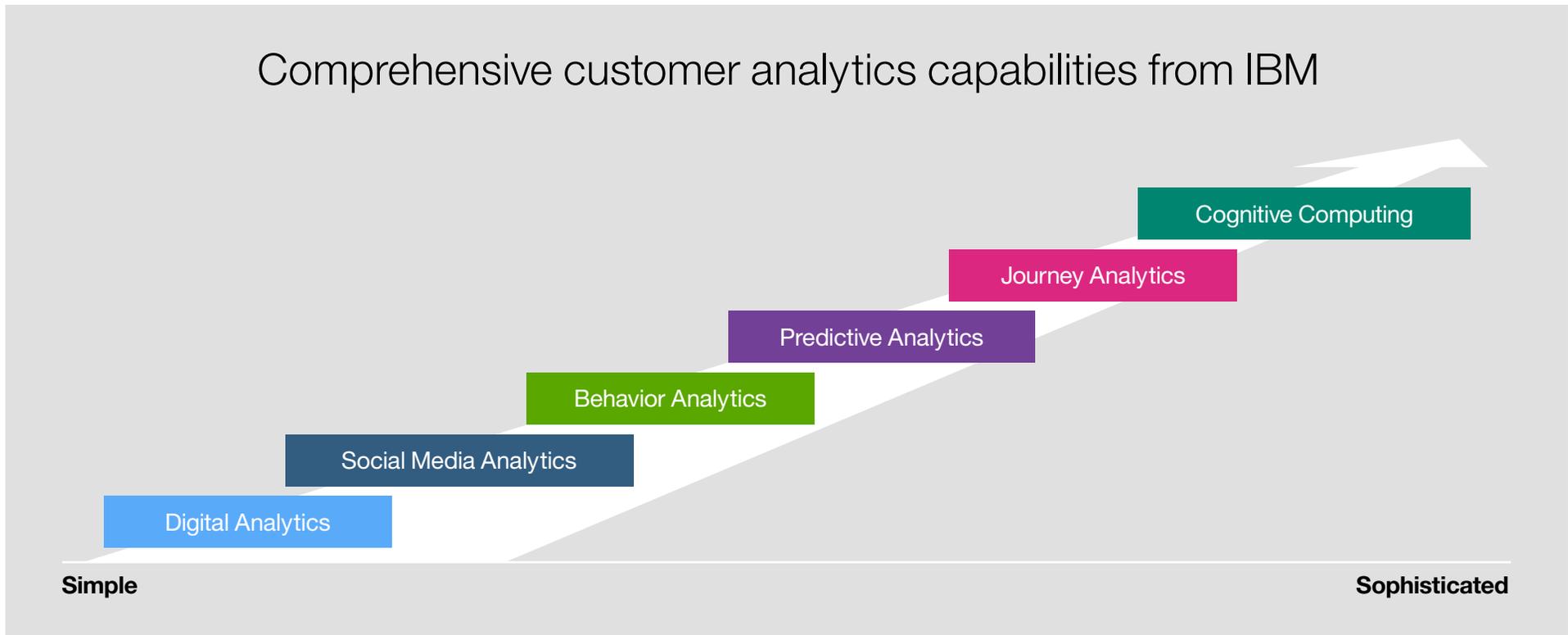
Your ability to view your customers' journeys depends largely on the level of sophistication of your customer analytics platform.

Simple, traditional digital analytics are just a start. You can see the data, and may be able to spot trends, but the web analytics are on a separate report from the social media analytics and the app data is on another.

Behavior analytics and journey analytics add clarity to your view of customer behavior, but the picture is still not complete.

Graduating to a more sophisticated platform will give you a more holistic view of your customers' journeys. A better view means better understanding, better insights and a better chance at conversion.

For more information, visit [ibm.com/cxanalytics](http://ibm.com/cxanalytics)



References:

<sup>1</sup> Sorofman, Jake. "Gartner Surveys Confirm Customer Experience Is the New Battlefield." Posted October 23, 2014. Gartner. <http://blogs.gartner.com/jake-sorofman/gartner-surveys-confirm-customer-experience-new-battlefield>

<sup>2</sup> IBM Econsultancy. "The Consumer Conversation." April 1, 2015. <http://ibm.co/1ahzETg>

<sup>3</sup> McKinsey & Company. "Customer Journey Transformation." September 2013.

---

Copyright IBM Corporation 2016 | IBM Corporation, Route 100, Somers, NY 10589 | Produced in the United States of America | June 2016

IBM, the IBM logo and ibm.com are trademarks or registered trademarks of International Business Machines Corporation in the United States, other countries, or both. If these and other IBM trademarked terms are marked on their first occurrence in this information with a trademark symbol (® or ™), these symbols indicate U.S. registered or common law trademarks owned by IBM at the time this information was published. Such trademarks may also be registered or common law trademarks in other countries. A current list of IBM trademarks is available on the Web at "Copyright and trademark information" at: [ibm.com/legal/copytrade.shtml](http://ibm.com/legal/copytrade.shtml). Other product, company or service names may be trademarks or service marks of others.

This document is current as of the initial date of publication and may be changed by IBM at any time. Not all offerings are available in every country in which IBM operates. The performance data and client examples cited are presented for illustrative purposes only. Actual performance results may vary depending on the specific configurations and operating conditions. It is the user's responsibility to evaluate and verify the operation of any other products or programs with IBM product and programs. THE INFORMATION IN THIS DOCUMENT IS PROVIDED "AS IS" WITHOUT ANY WARRANTY, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING WITHOUT ANY WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY, FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE AND ANY WARRANTY OR CONDITION OF NONINFRINGEMENT.

IBM products are warranted according to the terms and conditions of the agreements under which they are provided.

DOC ID: ZZW03404-USEN-00