

5 Steps to Stress-Free Customer Analytics

In the past ten years, customer analytics has evolved from nice-to-have reports in the marketing department to must-have, data-driven, C-suite-influencing metrics. The whole organization now relies on analytics for direction and our businesses are better for it.

But there are issues. The volume of customer data collected is expanding at an astronomical rate – doubling every two years.¹ Customer struggles with your digital properties can pop up anytime and can quickly escalate from hiccups to glitches to full-fledged fires. Users now bounce from work laptop to phone-on-the-subway to tablet-at-home-on-the-couch to make their purchase or complete their transaction. They expect the progression from one device to the next to be seamless. And different parts of the customer story reside in different departments so, every month, you need the help of analysts to put it together. How to keep up?

Cutting-edge best practices in analytics, from just a few years ago, now fall short. The game has changed and requires a more sophisticated methodology. To dependably provide exceptional, seamless customer experiences, your analytics infrastructure now has to manage the data explosion, support and join all your channels and provide insight into customer issues. Customers demand great experiences each time they interact with your brand. Today, if users struggle with your site or app, more than 65 percent of them don't think twice about moving on.²

We've put together a short checklist of what you need to do to stay ahead of the curve.



1. Ensure you have easy access to the right data at the right time.

You're likely relying on data to make key decisions that drive revenue and loyalty, such as where to shift resources or what's the next best campaign. The digital world is moving fast, so it's essential to get detailed information when you need it, while it's still relevant. Is there anything more frustrating than getting the insight you need when it's too late to act? And today you need a view into customer behavior that goes beyond demographics and purchase history.

You need to be able to:

- collect and present thorough and accurate information about individual customer interactions
- collect and present summary data about aggregate customer groups
- deliver the data and insights on demand and in context

The timing from question to decision should be short. Teams have to move quickly. Having the right data at the right time can be the difference between recognizing or missing opportunities.



2. Connect the dots.

These days the data dots are all over the map. Customers are interacting with brands on phones, tablets and laptops, in call centers and in stores. And they do so over time, sometimes taking days, weeks or even months to make a decision. If all the interactions a customer makes with your brand via any channel are integrated into one holistic picture, you'll be armed with better information, and you can make better decisions.

Seeing the full timeline of the customer journey brings the data to life. It can quickly reveal how what's happening in one channel is impacting conversions in another, or identify paths that need improvement.

Make sure you can:

- Connect every touchpoint a customer makes with your brand, regardless of channel
- Connect all disparate data sets
- Present the information as a visual, holistic picture for easy understanding
- See a clear view of the whole customer journey, not just parts
- Gain insight and take action from any point in the journey
- Understand the customer mindset based on their behaviors

Trends are easier to spot when you can see the big picture. If a picture is worth a thousand words, what's the big picture worth?

3. Use one easy-to-use dashboard designed for you.

What if the exact insights you needed for your role could be delivered to your desktop, tablet or phone with a couple of clicks? What if all the data – across the entire journey – were laid out in front of you on a visual dashboard? And what if you had the power to easily explore that data and quickly switch from a bird's-eye overview to the details of an individual's experience, to investigate a problem? No, it's not a glimpse into the future, it's the evolution of today's customer analytics.

A unified, visual dashboard can make the difference between being reactive and having the advance insights needed to make proactive moves.

Have a well-designed dashboard at your fingertips that allows you to:

- Track KPIs
- Measure status vs. goals
- Identify anomalies
- Separate the noise from the insights and track down root causes
- Visualize the whole journey

When the information is clearly visible, you can move more quickly.



4. Make sure your organization has a common view.

Delighting the customer is a team sport. There are many people and departments who contribute to and make use of analytics. In the old, inefficient paradigm, groups worked in parallel siloes and analyses never made it past departmental borders. Or worse, reports were passed around, and by the time they got to everyone, maybe a week or more had passed.

A well-engineered analytics solution is designed to allow cross-functional teams to unite around the customer to provide a seamless experience.

Your organization should leverage:

- Role-based dashboards
- The same underlying data for each team
- Tools for easy sharing

Imagine a new solution where the whole team can join in. Efficiency increases and time to decision is cut drastically. If marketing identifies an issue, they can turn it over to IT for root cause analysis and resolution without moving large databases or spreadsheets. In a new world of collaboration, everyone is empowered to optimize the end user's experience.



5. Zoom all the way in or out, at any point, to gain the most meaningful insights.

You should be able to pivot from an aggregate understanding of what is happening, down to a segment view or all the way to the individual customer level, to understand what happened in a specific interaction. Being able to see the big picture and then drill down can help answer those questions that lead to better relationships with your customers. Who are your customers? Where are they in their journeys? How do they behave and how can I influence their behavior? What do they care about?

When you can zoom in or zoom out at any point along the journey, you can:

- Visualize the entire journey
- Dig into and replay individual customer sessions to see exactly what the customer experienced and understand any struggle
- Drill down to understand root causes
- Try out “what if” scenarios or answer the question, “What don’t I know?”



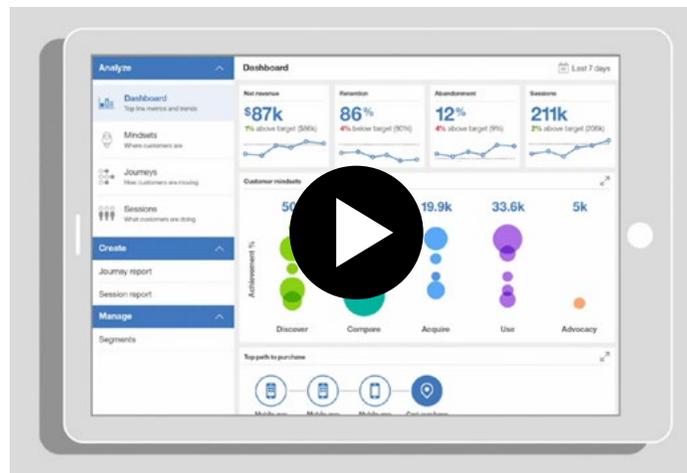
Find the right customer experience analytics to let you stress less and profit more.

It's likely you've had to put up with analytics that are housed all across the organization or that don't provide a clear view to the customer mindset. And when you can't answer the questions from the C-suite and you don't know what needs to be done to improve your customers' experience, your work life is stressful. We've reached a time in the evolution of customer analytics where technology has taken some giant steps forward. If you haven't looked at the new capabilities in customer analytics recently, now's the time.

Data can be brought to life. It can be integrated across channels and presented in ways that makes it both easy to understand and to take action. Decision-makers across the organization can see exactly what the customer experienced – on all channels – on role-based dashboards. We can now proactively identify where customers struggle and zoom in to replay parts of those sessions. We can work with the data to play out ideas and scenarios.

Instead of analyzing data points, we can use our time and energy to frame up points of view on how to innovate and drive business success. We can maybe, for once, free ourselves from constant firefighting and use the opportunity to seize the competitive advantage.

Watch this video to see these tips in action with IBM Customer Experience Analytics.



1 IDC Digital Universe Study, May 2010; Big Data Gets Personal, MIT Technology Review (2013)

2 Harris Interactive Survey, 2011

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