IBM BPM:

A Smarter Process Approach to Accelerating Customer Engagements with Mobile and Social

IBM

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Overview

Customer engagement has emerged as the most critical competitive factor in the current environment. Fueled by widespread mobile access and constant social connectedness, customers are demanding that every interaction, across every channel, be simple, streamlined and seamless.

High expectations mean high stakes. When options abound and patience is low, customers don't stick around. Companies need to get it right the first time.

This new customer-centric standard and the ability to connect directly with customers is fueling a depth and breadth of enterprise reinvention. Ensuring that every customer experience across every conceivable channel delights and adds value calls for a Smarter Process approach and a new perspective on business process management.

The Smarter Process platform is IBM's solution for reinventing business operations in a way that infuses every process with intelligence and expertise to deliver greater customer centricity, which in turn fuels top-line growth. It incorporates Business Process Management, Case Management, Operational Decision Management and Process Analytics, along with Process Discovery and Design with an objective of ensuring that customers find it easy to do business and that every interaction includes positive touch points.

Within the context of this new imperative, accessing cloud efficiencies, leveraging mobile for greater engagement, mining big data for insights, and enhancing customer relationships via social media, are proving to be critical and interrelated strategies.

An Outside-In Perspective

Over the past decade and a half, the concept of continuous process improvement has been reconfigured and redefined to leverage emerging technologies and respond to heightened business demands. While continuous process improvement initiatives remain essential, the pervasiveness of mobile and social technologies in the current environment has revolutionized the perspective beyond operational efficiencies and cost savings. Customer centricity is now the key—the focal point from which all aspects of continuous process improvement radiate.

The focus on workflow automation, operational efficiencies, cost reductions and scalable processes has not faded, but the angle from which these processes are viewed has shifted to enhanced capabilities that include continuous process improvements, as well as the creation of a platform to enhance the customer journey.

Customers in Charge

Customers hold more power than ever before. The converging factors of advanced analytics, processes transitioning to the cloud, proliferation of mobile technologies, and empowered, socially networked customers, have given rise to the current customer-centric, Smarter Process era. The key factor that distinguishes this generation of business processes from those that preceded it is a blurring of the lines between customer interactions and business operations.

While past process improvements designed to create a framework for cost savings and back-office efficiencies were invisible to the customer, in the current, customer-centric business climate, process enhancements will directly impact the customer experience.

Efforts to optimize the customer experience will serve as the essential hub from which all other business processes connect or support on some level. Seizing opportunities inherent in this new customer-centric business climate, requires a depth of reinvention, a commitment to transformation and a focus on what's next.

Companies that do not reinvent themselves for this new era stand to lose their competitive advantage; companies that embrace the opportunity stand to reap significant rewards.

Figure 1. This shows the convergence of advanced analytics, processes transitioning to the cloud, proliferation of mobile technologies, and empowered socially networked customers, surrounding a customer-centric, process era.

Supporting Strategies

Specifically, it involves the creation of mobile applications that are essential to customers, the ability to act on real-time information in order to stay a step ahead of customer expectations, and the integration of systems directed toward one essential goal: ensuring extraordinary customer experiences.

Sharpening the focus on this new reality needs to be a focus for every business, as customer experience is projected to overtake price and product as the key brand differentiator by 2020.[1]

Among recent respondents to a survey of global companies with between $50 million and $2 billion in annual revenue, fully 84 percent of respondents indicated that service is key to their financial performance.[2]

Global Companies with between $50 Million and $2 Billion in Annual Revenue

59%
reported that a customer service failure had a clear, significant impact on their company.

84%
Indicated that service is key to their financial performance.

This switch in the status quo is creating new connections among previously siloed business processes as disciplines that include predictive analytics, content management, business intelligence and data management, pool their expertise and resources in pursuit of a common mission to enhance customer engagements via mobile and social.

New Engagement Imperatives

Easy
Within this customer-centric marketplace, customers expect interactions to be easy and seamless. They have no patience for delay, zero tolerance for obstacles, and expect radical simplification. If they don't get it, they go somewhere else. Research indicates that 80 percent of apps are used once and then deleted.[3]

As the bar for differentiated customer experiences continues to rise, competition has broadened beyond peers that offer similar products to the same customers. Customers are evaluating their experiences with one company against engagements with all companies, and applying expectations from the "best" to all.

While mobile technologies have served as the key contributor of this dramatic shift in customer expectations, it's critical to keep in mind that customers touch businesses in many ways, with a wide set of expectations each time they interact. Sometimes it's a request that they expect fulfilled in real time, such as an insurance quote while on the company website. At the other end of the spectrum, they might be at a point where they need to consult with a trusted advisor who can provide research-based counsel on the best way forward. Consistently delighting customers requires a commitment to excelling at every engagement—from personalized straight-through processing for real-time actions, to guided workflows to handle custom requests, and every engagement in between.

Responsive
Social interactions now stand as a firmly rooted aspect of business processes. Fully 84 percent of Millennials and 70 percent of Baby Boomers report that they use social and user-generated content to influence what they buy. Customers are making their voices heard. Systems need to be in place to capture and respond to their input.

The goal of creating mobile applications that are essential to customers, while acting on real-time customer information in order to stay a step ahead of the competition, is a complex endeavor. It requires a vision for how to engage with the customer, experts to plan it out, and solutions to make it come to life. IBM offers the expertise and resources that are essential for thriving in the customer-centric business climate.

Anytime, Anywhere
Customer addiction to mobile devices is a powerful mandate. They expect to transact business from wherever they are and whenever they want.

Currently, an average mobile phone user checks their phone 150 times a day. This represents an enormous opportunity to utilize new mobile contextual opportunities to unlock intelligence and insights, through social interactions. Fully 81 percent of leading organizations report that mobile is fundamentally changing the way that their organization conducts business. The painfully short lifespan of the average app has sparked a surge of investment in developing compelling customer engagements, as well as apps that stick. By 2018, global spending on mobile is projected to reach $13.1 billion for engagement services and $8.9 billion for app development services.[4]

$13.1 Billion

$8.9 Billion

2017   2018   Future
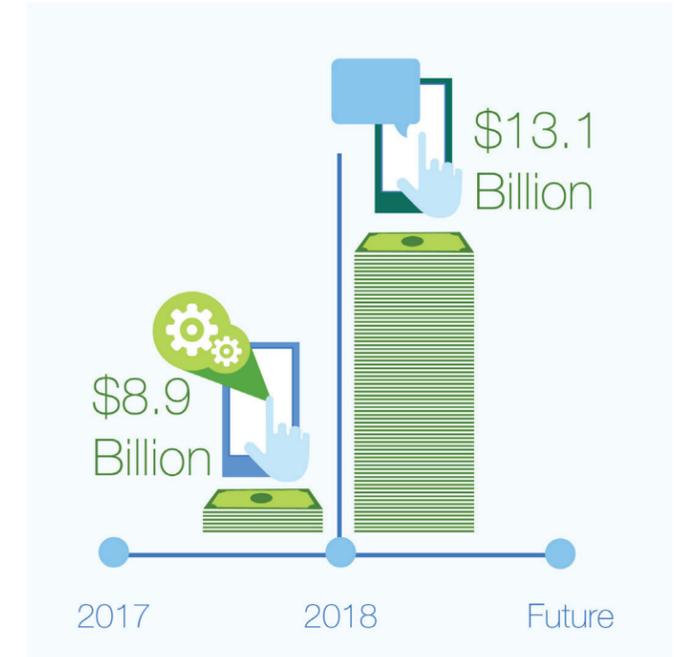
Global Spending **on Mobile**

Personalized

As customers increasingly expect companies to know how to proactively address their current and future needs, IBM Smarter Process is enabling companies to gain insight from all forms of digital interactions—mining for data that drives analytics initiatives and inspiring innovative, new ways of engaging with customers.

The ability to uncover real-time operational intelligence and actionable insights based on customer behavior is a critical Smarter Process imperative. From shifts in market conditions, to changes in interactions with customers, to exceptions in the normal flow of business activity, data emerges that supports consistent, intelligent decision-making.

Repeatable, automated business decisions can be considered a tangible enterprise asset. Integrated with the IBM Operational Decision Management (ODM) solution, IBM Business Process Management (BPM) creates a framework for real-time, actionable insights.

The IBM BPM Advantage

The breadth of IBM's Smarter Process Portfolio enables clients to tailor solutions that meet their distinct objectives for leveraging mobile and social to fuel a customer-centric business transformation that drives growth and sharpens the competitive edge.

Clients have the benefit of market-leading capabilities delivered in a single, unified platform that is scalable and simple enough to engage process participants, regardless of their role. Distinct levels of capability are designed to meet the needs of a wide spectrum of clients. Clients can start simple and expand their infrastructure as their business grows, and IBM is the only BPM vendor that supports all styles of work, including human-centric workflow, case and straight-through processing.

With the recent offering of hybrid cloud options, customers have access to a distinct option for simplifying operations and reducing ownership costs.

For many companies, the prospect of digitizing workflows and the influx of intelligence from an ever-widening array of social interactions may appear at the outset to be a significant challenge, with IBM the process is vastly simplified. Enterprises that adopt the IBM Smarter Process solution have the advantage of consultative support, along with the option of an implementation at a pace that fits current needs, and the prioritization of processes according to current business objectives.

IBM is focused on clients' distinct needs. Instead of requiring enterprise architects, COO's or CMO's to adapt their business processes to a pre-existing, rigid framework, IBM offers a broad range of solutions that can be precisely tailored.

Skilled consultants who have deep process modeling and technical skills gained from countless engagements make it their mission to set up clients for success by drawing upon proven methodologies, best practices and superior product capabilities.

With more than 5,000 customer engagements, that represent three times the install base of the nearest competitor and 20 data centers around the world, the IBM Smarter Process Platform offers unsurpassed capabilities.

Recognized as leader in the Gartner Magic Quadrant for Intelligent Business Process Management Suites (IBPMS) and Forrester Wave™ : BPM Suites Market Evaluation, IBM has continued to enhance its BPM solution with new design-time and runtime case management features, as well as general availability of IBM BPM on its SoftLayer cloud platform, and the ability to deploy and manage hybrid apps, along with the introduction of Workflow and Rules as a Service on Bluemix.

An Ever-sharpening Competitive Edge

As customer expectations and the competitive landscape shifts, companies need to align themselves with the right partner and sharpen their focus on the four major disruptive technologies in order to:

- Use mobile processes for greater engagement
- Access processes in the cloud
- Leverage big data for greater insights and proactive customer service
- Harness social technologies to enhance customer data

Big shifts are in the works. Mobile and social have forever changed the competitive landscape—raising the bar for the speed, simplicity and quality of customer engagements. Joining forces with a strategic partner that has the resources and expertise to position your company for success in the rapidly shifting, customer-centric business climate is the critical first step toward ensuring your competitive edge into the future.

1.IBM Institute for Business Value, "Reinventing the Rules of Engagement: CEO insights from the Global C-suite Study," 2014.

2. Customers 2020: The Future of B-to-B Customer Experience. Walker Information, Inc., 2015.

3. Digital Trends: "Are you a rarity? Only 16% of people will try out an app more than twice." Joshua Pramis, March 12, 2013.

4. Wanted: Mobile Engagement Providers, Ted Schadler and John C. McCarthy, Forrest Research, Inc., Aug. 6, 2013.