

## BEYOND DIGITAL

# MEETING CUSTOMERS WHERE THEY'RE AT

*SIMPLIFYING CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE FOR MAXIMUM IMPACT*

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### **"The Digital Push"**

Digital transformation, artificial intelligence, customer expectations and customer engagement are on every business leader's mind. To remain competitive and technologically relevant, most companies have embarked on or are planning their digital journeys. As of this writing, approximately 74% of organizations have begun their digital transformation journey, but only 22% are considered digitally mature, according to MIT Sloan research

While digital transformation offers great advantages for potential efficiencies and self-service capabilities, digital may not be the channel of choice for segments of your customers. If you are looking at digital transformation for contact containment versus contact contentment, your transformation journey may fall short of expectations.





# THE CUSTOMER FIRST (CONT.)



## **The Importance Of Omnichannel**

We are in the age of the connected consumer. Customers expect to engage with companies whenever, wherever, and however they choose. Research shows that customers often use three or more channels for a single transaction, with channel preference varying by transaction type. This behavior necessitates omnichannel integration, ensuring a unified and consistent experience across all touchpoints.

Despite its many benefits, omnichannel integration presents significant challenges. One major hurdle is integrating different systems and technologies across channels. Omnichannel integration requires centralizing all communications data, necessitating significant upfront investment in IT infrastructure, ongoing maintenance, and regular updates. This complexity likely contributes to the low percentage of digitally mature companies.

## **The Importance of Omnichannel (Cont)**

While companies must continue evolving through digital transformation, they must also consider customer preferences, sentiments, and journey stages. A 2018 study by the Sitel Group found that 70% of consumers still prefer human interaction over chatbots for certain queries, highlighting the ongoing demand for a personal touch in customer service (Retail Dive). Voice interactions remain critical, especially for returns and transaction inquiries. Enabling contact center agents to access the customer's journey enhances engagement and satisfaction.

## **Examples for Consideration Patient Portals**

Patient portals have become a common communication tool between healthcare providers and patients. While these portals offer efficient communication and transaction capabilities, they pose challenges for some segments of the population that are less tech-savvy. A June 2023 study by the University of Michigan focused on patient portal use among older adults (ages 50-80) found that over 78% of this demographic have at least one digital portal for healthcare, with nearly half authorizing access to someone else. The study also noted differences in use based on race, income, and wellness.

While portal users preferred online portals for tasks like receiving test results and requesting prescription refills, they favored voice communication for referrals, appointments, and medical questions.



# THE CUSTOMER FIRST (CONT.)



## Examples for Consideration AI and Agent Assist

Major retailers are implementing innovative solutions to meet customers where they are. Target has piloted a generative AI tool called 'Store Companion' for its store employees, with a full launch planned for August 2024 (CX Dive, June 24, 2024). This AI Agent Assist tool aims to make frontline associates' jobs easier, enabling quicker and more efficient work with deeper customer engagement.

The store associate app provides instant answers to questions, enhancing the shopping experience. Similarly, Walmart has launched a comparable tool. These programs help agents meet customers' needs in real-time on the sales floor using AI, blending digital assistance with human interaction.

## Benefits of Combining Digital & Human

Balancing digital approaches with human interaction can be incredibly powerful. A well-defined CX strategy ensures that digital channels and human interactions are not mutually exclusive. Today's connected customers expect 24/7 access to service and demand expedient yet effective solutions. According to Salesforce's State of the Connected Customer study, 78% of customers expect to resolve complex issues by speaking to a single person, while 68% prefer self-service for simple, repetitive tasks.

The real power lies in using AI for intelligent virtual agents and agent assist to improve interaction quality by providing agents with real-time information about the customer's journey, allowing for personalized interactions. As organizations approach CX maturity and develop a robust data strategy, personalization and one-and-done interactions can become a reality.

## Conclusion - Finding The Right Balance

The key to successful customer engagement lies in finding the right balance between digital convenience and the irreplaceable value of human interaction. Attaining this balance requires an in-depth knowledge of your customer segments, their journeys and channel preferences based on the interaction. Centralized contact/channel data combined with predictive intelligence are just the beginning but achieving this balance fosters customer loyalty and enhances overall satisfaction.



# THE CUSTOMER FIRST (CONT.)

## **About BSDE**

We provide best-in-class client call center services to organizations that result in empowering Delawareans who are blind, visually impaired, disabled and/or veterans through providing employment opportunities that enhance their quality of life and support independent living.

## **Our Mission**

BSD Enterprises addresses the critical challenge of unemployment and underemployment among the visually impaired, disabled, and economically vulnerable populations. By offering world-class customer care contact center services, the organization not only provides sustainable employment opportunities but also fosters diversity, equity, and inclusion within the workforce

## **Contact Us:**

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