

# *The Impact of Converging Channels and the Connected World on Raising Customer Expectations*

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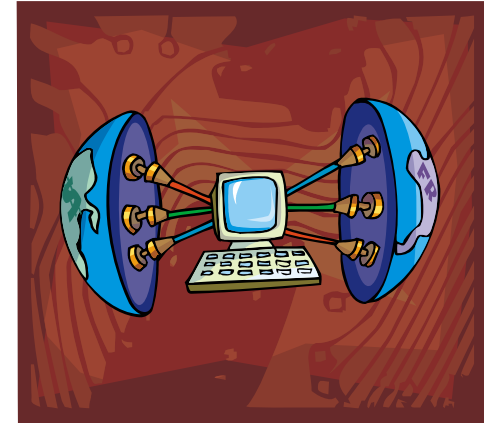
# Changing Customer Experience expectations in our always-connected world

- Businesses either need to “go” or have gone digital
- Data about customers, competitors, suppliers, & employees has exploded / mushroomed
- 90% of all data businesses work with has been created in the past two years
- Expectations continue to change at ever faster rates, which neither businesses nor countries can ignore



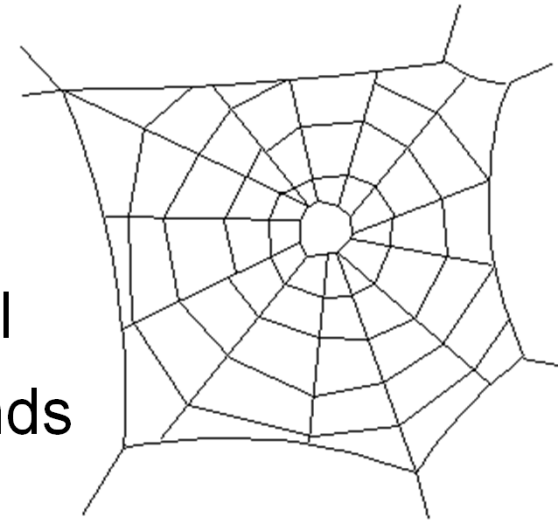
## Our always-connected world

- Scale & speed of change has altered industry structures & how business is done
- Companies are using digital data, separating information from noise and creating new sources of advantage
- The Internet is central to the change, differing from the initial Internet, just like the Internet vs the Aarpanet
- The internet is now ubiquitous & is an ingrained feature of everyday life



## The Internet is changing

- The original Internet has gone beyond developed markets, & now all markets are growing by leaps & bounds
- New entrants are driving increasing levels of innovation making creating the “Internet of everything”, which IBM has predicted will be 1 trillion devices by 2015
- This rise in Internet growth means consumers, businesses & whole countries, are seeing dramatic changes in customer expectations



## Anywhere, Anytime Connectivity

- There is a new business model based on ecosystems that are reshaping the Internet
- Change is being orchestrated by companies such as Amazon, Apple, Facebook, Google & new names such as Baidu & Tencent in China & Yandex in Russia
- Ubiquitous connectivity, has increased the value of information, with 25% of the world's population on-line & forecasters predicting growth to 66% by 2020



# Anywhere, Anytime and on Any Device

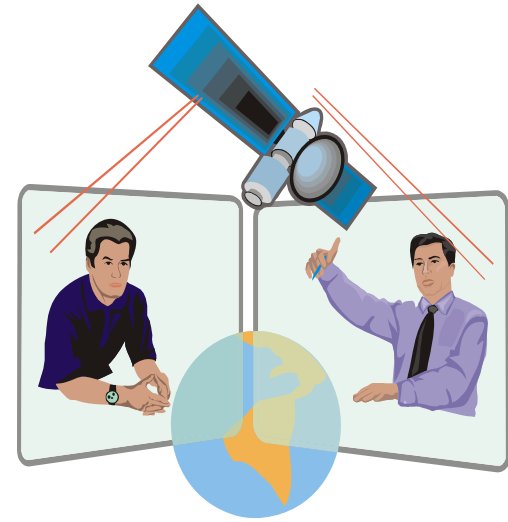
- Information flows across borders blurring the line between our personal and professional lives
- People demand & rely on, seamless & secure access to the information they need no matter where they are or what they're doing
- This is changing how people think & behave
- Online businesses grew by 9% during difficult economic times, but have not fully met customer needs with <20% of companies delighting online visitors



*"His phone is busy, his fax is busy and his modem is busy.  
I'll just walk over and talk to him."*

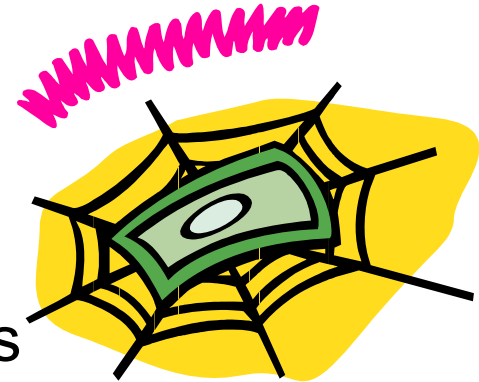
# The “Internet of everything”

- Driven by customer demand and by expanding access to technology, this eco-system has changed how information is created, delivered, and consumed
- The implications of anywhere, anytime, & on any device Internet allow us to carry our digital lives wherever we go
- Sophisticated devices allow us to communicate & deliver data in real-time through any device we choose



# The Internet Economy

- By 2016, there will be 3 billion Internet users globally
- The Internet has generated tremendous economic value, growing from \$2.3 trillion in the G-20 nations in 2010 or 4.1% of GDP, to >\$4.2 trillion in 2016
- In leading economies, it contributes up to 8% of GDP, powering economic growth & creating jobs & in 2010 was larger than the economies of Italy or Brazil





# The Internet Culture

- The internet reflects national characteristics & economic, political, & social influences of individual countries
- The “Millennials” generation grew up on the Internet & has vastly different expectations as employees, citizens and consumers
- The changing Internet economy has far reaching consequences for companies and policymakers alike



# The Digital World

- Organisations need to understand & strengthen their “digital balance sheets”
- They need to build their digital assets while reducing the digital liabilities that limit their ability to grow
- Those that adapt to the digital world will need to improve their people, processes, and organizational structures



## Customer Struggle

- Many Internet experiences don't meet user' expectations, creating Customer Struggle & dissatisfaction
- Some organisations measure customer effort to achieve a resolution, but this is still not fully understood
- Customer Struggle lowers confidence in online & in companies, impacting current & future dealings through higher costs, lower future purchases, & negative WOM



# Multi-Channel vs Cross Channel Support

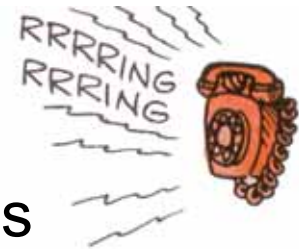
- What is the difference between multi-channel support and cross channel support?



- Multichannel refers to centres handling voice, email, fax, live chat, SMS/text & social media, under 1 organizational umbrella with common resources, processes & tools
- Cross-channel is where contacts & customers move back & forth often crossing channel boundaries
  - Cross-Channel: I go to a self-service website, then talk to someone in the support centre about that interaction
- Multi-channel means all the ways in which customers can call for service and support including self-service

# The Total Customer Experience

- The 2 terms converge where customers are offered multi-channel options & move cross-channel
- Communications happen through both 1-1 channels (phone, mail or in-person), as well as through new technologies
- Customers expect support to do likewise, although they still use email & phone for support requests
- Businesses must consider the impact of offering multi-channel support as well as what it means to not offer it
- Companies are focusing on understanding the true customer experience with their company



## Handling Multi-Channel Support

- Don't allow channel proliferation to overwhelm customer support and service operations, harness it
- Handled appropriately these new channels can:
  - improve the efficiency of a support organization
  - greatly increase customer satisfaction
  - generate new sales opportunities
- Mishandle or don't address at all, & you risk being out of touch and at a competitive disadvantage



# Multi-Channel Customer Experience



- Customers have been telling Service & Support providers for years that their CE is below expectation
- This is driven by a number of elements, but most consistently significant is sub-par resolution performance
- It is a major Customer Loyalty & Retention influence
- Average Service & Support groups achieved 75% customer retention y-o-y in 2011 & little improvement for non, Best-In-Class support organisations in 2012

## Customers will Switch Channels

- Customers switch channels when interacting with you, making it vital cross-channel communications work
- >71% of Web customers switch to some other channel after researching when ready to buy
- 74% of Web customers move to another channel when getting service
- Support organisations often record channel switches as separate interactions & customers expect a continuous experience





## Multiple Channel Issues

- The disjointed 'continuous experience' embodies an interaction imbalance that can quickly result in frustration for customers
- A key aspect of any multi-channel communications strategy has to be about avoiding this situation, lowering the frustration and improving the customer experience



## Data Handling

- Data collected from customers & collected by customers must stay with the support team, throughout the whole interaction
- The key is to not only allow customers to move back and forth across channels, but to keep channels tightly connected so data flows easily between them
- In my last 3 support centres, we used live support channels as a buffer & balancing element for our self-service options



# Why Offer Multi-Channel Support

- So why should you offer Multi-Channel Support?



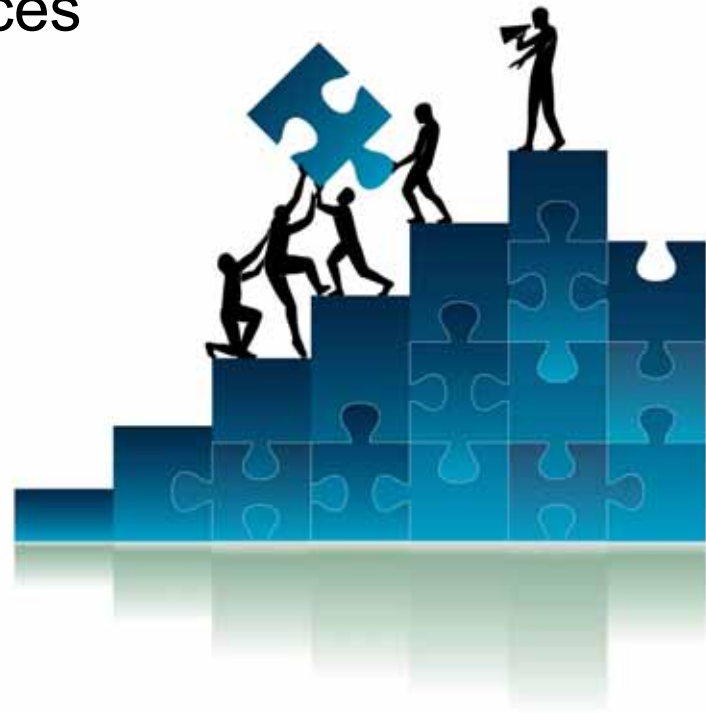
# Multi-Channel Support Adoption Risk

- While opening up new channels has risk, the greater risk is in avoiding adopting them
- “Can we implement multi-channel support to eliminate one or more of our support centres”?
  - In most cases, the answer is no
- Implementation of newer service & support channels does not replace the old phone & email channels
  - changes the mix & results in more & better customer contact
  - Improves support effectiveness & support cost
  - Improves revenue generating opportunities



# Now Our Multi-Channel Support Projects

- These are real life experiences
- Drawn from our internal & Client projects
- High level of success
- Many lessons learnt
- Happy to discuss further



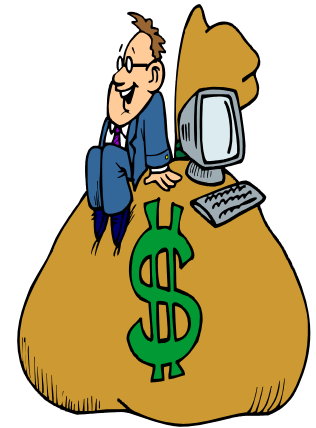
# Our Multi-Channel Support Project Goals

- Improve customer satisfaction & retention performance
- Improve First-Contact Resolution rate
- Improve support agent utilisation over a previous or current position, making them more effective & efficient
- Decrease service & support costs & improve support profitability
- Increase support capabilities & offer additional services
- Achieve outcomes in line with our goals, although at times these outcomes were in different ratios



## Benefits from Our Multi-Channel Projects

- 30% drop in email tickets, with  $\approx$  50% Chat calls
- Significant improvement in support efficiency, flowing from deployment of tools, improved agent focus & minimised call transfer costs
- Consistent communication in spite of incoming channel
- Common tools & processes for all channels supporting efficient & effective issue capture, tracking & resolution
- Kept things from falling through the cracks, much like a single inbox and to-do list keeps things from getting lost



## More of Our Multi-Channel Project Benefits

- Reduced number of data storage places needing to be maintained & reviewed, increasing efficiency
- Implemented a cohesive support philosophy & goals providing consistent support to customers
- Removed inconsistencies, implementing common language (terminologies) across all channels, providing customers with the same information no matter which channel they came through





## Our Outcomes in Customer Service Traffic

1. Traffic grew 300 – 400%, but calls decreased
2. Sales opportunities increased due to expanded influence
3. A dramatic increase in our Twitter mentions, (95% more Twitter mentions than email requests)
4. Proactively reached out to more customers
5. Reduced support backlogs improving responsiveness
6. Opened up the time & areas in which support could happen, gaining access to new support options



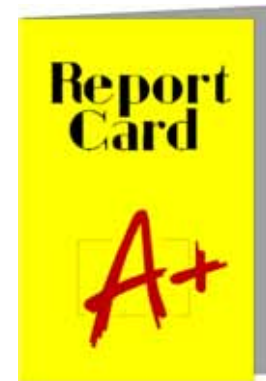
## More of Our Multiple Channel Experiences

- Captured all customer interactions as single tickets regardless of the incoming channel
- Customer data, enquiry records & the entire support history be readily available alongside the ticket
- Customers posted tweets, which became tickets, that could then be turned into a live chat or an on-site visit
- All channels were seamless for the customer while at the same time appearing as 1 interaction to support agents



# Strategies to support multi-channel program

- Optimisation Strategies we created were:
  - A strategy around unifying our tools and processes
  - Strategies & processes to ensure support staff were able to work across-channels so communications were maintained at all times including when support requests moved from email to phone
  - A strategy covering monitoring, engagement and diversion
  - A strategy for maintaining at least one live channel at all times
- Key to success was recognising that customer support via social media required the same underlying processes



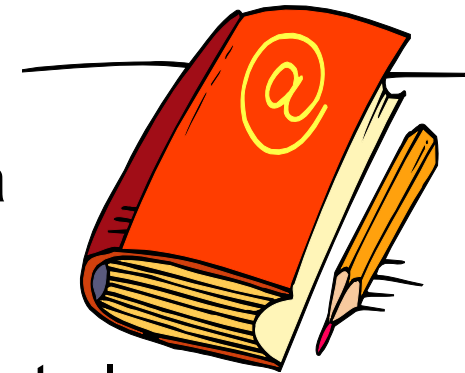
## Our Multi-Channel Project Approaches

- We created a model that captured each customer interaction as captured in a single ticket regardless of the incoming channel
- All data on a customer, their enquiry and their entire support history, was made readily available alongside the ticket
- Even customer posts (tweets) that became a ticket, were turned into live chats or even on-site visits



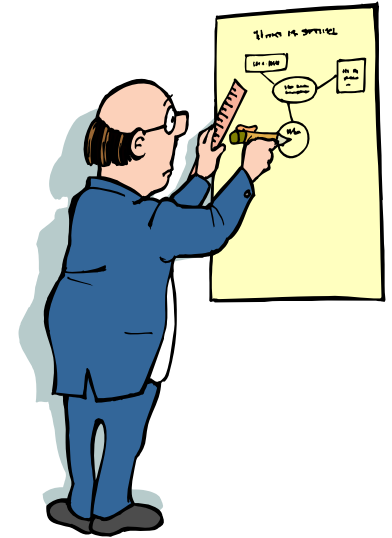
# Our Foundation for Multi-Channel Integration

- Customers must be identified and maintained on a common platform of data for all interactions
- The information had to allow the company to learn incrementally about the customer across all touch points
- It was about asking the right questions at the right time
- Effective multi-channel implementation is complex
- Many organizations fail here because they lack the right information and strategies



# Lessons learnt in establishing multi-channels

- they must be accompanied by a solid maintenance and integration strategy
- that we had to back the channels & not spread ourselves too thin, as we'd raised our customers' expectations for the service we were providing
- An early challenge was insuring the investments made supported the expectations we were creating, which was part of the business integration strategy



# Our 3 Important Multi-Channel Elements

- The three most important elements of our multi-channel support model were:

1. Development & execution of a multi-channel support strategy
2. Development of integrated support systems / tools & processes
3. Development of business models that support channel proliferation & capture data, maintaining it in a common best business practice model, providing future operational success



## Other Key Elements

- Key elements of our multi-channel strategy were:
  - Never let the customer tell us the same thing twice
  - Common Customer identification across all channels
  - Support learns about the customer at all touch points
  - All learnings were incremental





# Customer Centric Focus



- Other questions we asked were:
  - What multi-channel CE would satisfy the needs, wants, & desires of the target customers? Was it an Internet experience?
  - Was it personal contact with a sales rep or a support agent? Was it more ordering capacity through the contact centre?
  - How would we create momentum to drive a cust-centric focus?
  - What business process needed to be different for any channel?
- Channels are not created equal: looking at the unique characteristics of each, how do they influence our clients

## When we Got Started

- We recognised that all touch points needed to interact in an integrated & positive way across the customer life cycle
- We wanted to take advantage of multi-channel support, without losing our minds, & decided to proceed by:
  - Assessing our current situation & the direction our target customers were heading, which produced a base for decisions
  - Weighing our key business & technology priorities, then confirming multi-channel comms was a direction we needed to move & where we wanted to be & by when (and at which points)



# Assessing Our Needs

- Care not to get caught up in the solution, but to focus on where we were are & where we needed to be and by when
- During the assessment, it is beneficial to answer the following questions:
  1. Did we find it difficult to offer the same level of service as other support centres were?
  2. Did our competitors offer multi-channel services?
  3. Was providing exceptional customer service a priority, and would it differentiate our business?



## Assessing Our Needs continued

4. What age group were our typical customers and was this changing?
5. With the right resources, was there something we could offer our customers that our competitors couldn't?
6. Had hiring the "right" agents and emphasizing agent training gone as far as it could go?
7. Did the support centre struggle to meet business requirements due to lack of resources or expertise?
8. Did we have a capital budget to support this initiative, and in a case where we didn't, developed a budget to support it?



Thank You



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