CREATE CONTINUOUS CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES

THE SECRET TO GETTING OMNI CHANNEL RIGHT
IT’S NOW SECOND NATURE FOR PEOPLE TO USE TECHNOLOGY TO COMPLETE JUST ABOUT ANY TASK:

The digital revolution has dramatically changed customer expectations. Customers expect to have ways to address their needs anytime, anywhere, through any channel directly at their fingertips. Their expectations are no longer set by the best customer interaction within an industry but by the best customer experience in any industry. Companies such as Airbnb and Amazon set the bar.

For digital native companies the evolution of customer expectations may be business as usual. But, for companies in business prior to the digital revolution, delivering an experience that meets constantly evolving customer expectations requires massive business change.
Not too many years ago, companies primarily controlled when and where customers interacted with them across marketing, sales and customer service. But this “pull” approach to customer interaction no longer aligns to how consumers behave. Customers are in control of when, where and how they engage with businesses. Behaviors are fluid and expectations are high. And, while use of digital channels is growing, demand for human and physical channels is not going away.

Consumers look for consistency regardless of channel, want immediate satisfaction, and expect interactions to be simple and easy. They expect a continuous experience across all phases of their journey from before they start a purchase through support after the sale. They are, in fact, demanding a truly “omni-channel” experience that enables them to engage in meaningful ways across of human, digital and physical channels.
GREATER DEMAND FOR CONNECTED EXPERIENCE DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

- 89% of customers used at least one digital channel\(^1\)
- 60% of total interactions are handled digitally by industry leaders\(^3\)
- Only 13% of customers find digital-physical well aligned\(^1\)

INCREASING MULTI-CHANNEL INTERACTIONS

- 69% of customers want multi-channel service\(^2\)
- Multi-channel customers are 15% more likely than digital-only customers to serve as advocates\(^4\)
- Multi-channel customers are typically 15% more profitable than digital-only customers and 25% more profitable than human-only customers\(^3\)

CUSTOMER ENVIRONMENT GETTING "HARDER"

- 90% now have higher/same expectations as 2014\(^1\)
USE OF DIGITAL CHANNELS IS GROWING, BUT DEMAND FOR HUMAN AND PHYSICAL CHANNELS IS NOT GOING AWAY

- Only 1 IN 8 CUSTOMERS are pure digital-only consumers.
- Experimental customers (those who leverage both digital/physical channels) represent 47% OF TOTAL CUSTOMERS.

WHAT CUSTOMERS DO IF DIGITAL CHANNELS FAILS THEM VARIES DRASTICALLY

- 67% OF CUSTOMERS will try a digital channel again even after three failed attempts, and 6% would never try a physical channel even after repeated failed digital attempts.
- 23% OF CONSUMERS still prefer only physical channels.

BUT MOST AGREE THAT A SEAMLESS EXPERIENCE IS ESSENTIAL IF THEY CAN’T RESOLVE THEIR ISSUE IN A SINGLE CHANNEL

- 75% OF CONSUMERS feel that when they need to use multiple channels to resolve an issue—website, mobile internet, phone, store visit—it is important that the company be able to pick up where they left off previously and avoid making them start over from the beginning.
Omni-channel is an increasingly common term that is often loosely defined. Accenture defines Omni-Channel as the connected, consistent experience across brands, formats and devices, allowing companies to deliver on their revenue, cost and loyalty commitments. Many assume that omni-channel is rooted in technology and is enabled by the tools and systems that connect customers to actions.

While technology is a critical enabling component, building a truly omni-channel experience requires broader business change. It is about impacting the end-to-end customer value chain from how products are built and the way people interact with products to how an organization operates and the way employees are empowered to create an experience.

Companies that are successfully delivering an omni-channel experience have established a strong brand image with products and services that are reliable, relevant and worthy of the cost. They have created experiences that are personalized, continuous, consistent, and add value to the customer. Their employees are empowered and their operating models are aligned to the end-to-end customer value chain. They have strategically invested in platform technology and analytics allowing them to be flexible, agile, automated, insights-driven, and seamless.
With such a broad mandate, what are the critical elements that brands need to get right to succeed in delivering an omni-channel experience? Accenture believes there are seven key elements that combine to orchestrate a true omni-channel customer experience.

FIGURE 1 The “7Ps” of Omni-Channel
PRESENCE
Omni channel crosses all human (call centers), physical (retail stores and logistics), and digital (web and mobile) channels and companies need a strategy for each. Presence is having a deliberate blueprint for the products, services and support available in each channel based on where and how and why customers want to engage.

PERSISTENCE
Persistence is simple: provide a consistent, connected experience across channels. It means a customer can begin an interaction in one channel and finish in another seamlessly. Getting it right means a customer never has to start over—just because they moved to a new channel.

PERSONALIZATION
This “P” is about offering an individualized experience across customer interactions based on the customer’s intent, preferences and history. It is having the right data points to deliver smart, relevant context, recommendations. Personalization is dynamic and is increasingly focused on predictive and proactive ways to make a customer feel valued.

PRODUCTS
At the end of the day, the product is the most tangible and lasting part of an omni-channel customer experience. It is the everyday way that customers interact and gain value from a brand. Looking upstream to the products themselves, aligning those with customer needs, and rethinking how products facilitate ongoing interaction is an essential part of driving a successful experience.

PROCESS
Policies and procedures enable efficiency across interactions with the customer, but often policies get in the way of helping customers reach their intent. Focusing on process helps to ensure there are no artificial barriers to what the customer can accomplish. It helps create a customer friendly environment that remains aligned to the objectives of the organization.

PEOPLE
People refers to the organizational structure that is essential to a truly omni-channel experience. This requires working more collaboratively than companies typically do. Successful organizations are connecting the end-to-end value chain from products to marketing to sales and service with joint objectives centered on the customer. Additionally, omni channel transformation changes roles within the organization and having a plan for evolving to the workforce of the future is critical.

PURPOSE
Purpose is the anchor of omni-channel transformation. Traditionally decisions in an organization have been made based on business objectives. To deliver on the omni-channel promise, the customer must be at the center of everything a company does. By making customer intent the central focus, companies can achieve desired business outcomes in a way that is fit for purpose to customer needs.
ACHIEVABLE RESULTS

The value of an omni-channel experience is comprehensive. It increases customer loyalty and, in tandem, revenue. It provides agility, accelerating business ability to respond to market and business changes. It helps streamline operations, simplify interactions and reduce cost—but getting there is not easy.

As companies realize the end-to-end business impact of creating an omni-channel experience, getting started can be both daunting and overwhelming. As with many large-scale initiatives, it’s best to begin omni-channel transformation by thinking big, starting small and then looking at ways to scale at pace. It’s important to have a unified vision to guide strategy through implementation.

Each transformation journey is unique. Depending on a company’s context it can work best to start in one area, such as service, and connect all 7Ps for the service organization before moving into sales, marketing or product development. Alternatively it might be appropriate to enable one “P,” such as Presence, across all channels and then move onto other “P”s. What is most important to understand is that, with a clear vision, the omni-channel transformation can—and should—be activated modularly to deliver measurable and sustainable results over time.
THE 7PS PROVIDE GUIDEPOSTS to help companies tackle this holistic change, break it into reasonable and achievable initiatives and execute the right things for their customers with purpose.