

# Putting customers first

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Business has always been built around the customer, and recent developments have caused a shift in how companies are dealing with their customers. They are forced to examine their business processes, with resulting benefits for companies and the added benefit of improved customer experience (CX) for customers.



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## The voice of the customer

Customers have more channels than ever to choose from when dealing with companies; chat, email, online platforms, and voice - to name but a few.

These channels are utilised differently for different purposes like sales, customer service, and debt collection, but they give the customer options according to their preferred means of contact.

With the advent of social media, and customers not hesitating to speak up when they're dissatisfied, it's imperative that companies work towards speedy resolution of problems.

## Tearing down channel silos

This makes it necessary to tear down the different channel silos to ensure that agents can access as much customer intelligence and product information as possible. Multi-channel contact centres are becoming more adept at this, reducing the need for repeated contacts – a cost-saving benefit as agents are freed up for more contacts with other customers and potential customers.

More than just a voice, however, CX is the central element to business planning. Business solutions designed to sort out pain points are based on improving efficiency and productivity. This translates to customers having their customer service queries resolved faster and more accurately or being able to conclude queries within a single contact, removing the pain points of repeated calls, missing information and more.

## The whole customer journey

CX is about the whole customer journey, not just the point when a sale is made or a complaint resolved. It takes into account who the customer is, how they prefer to conduct business and what companies can learn from the intelligence gathered.

Analytics and BI derived from customer data are steering how companies operate, for the benefit of agents and customers alike.

It's a challenge companies face: should they rely on older systems as they always have, or upgrade?

Legacy contact centre systems can hinder commercial progress: the older a system is, the greater the likelihood that a complete overhaul may be necessary, as the original purpose for which these were implemented may be rendered obsolete by adaptations and advancements in how companies are achieving their business objectives.

## Expectations rising

As customers are becoming increasingly tech-savvy, their expectations regarding what companies are doing become higher, too.

Business solutions are more than simply replacing systems, a business solution takes into account the entire flow of business according to the company's business strategy, then this is built into the solution itself, bearing in mind that all teams working with the solution have a working understanding of how to optimise the benefits of the solution. The solution enables the company to access more efficient and productive processes and ultimately improves the customer experience.

It's no longer an option to just plod along, and it doesn't make good business sense.

A great business solution with all the key elements of a business strategy built into it can revolutionise how companies deal with customers, and that's exactly what the customer wants.

## ABOUT WYNAND SMIT

Wynand Smit is CEO at INOVO, a leading contact centre business solutions provider.

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