

Customer is King as organisations try to differentiate from their competitors

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Africa is currently the world's second-fastest growing region in terms of economic development and Gross Domestic Product (GDP), according to the World Bank, meaning that there is endless potential and opportunity for organisations to grow and transform on the continent.

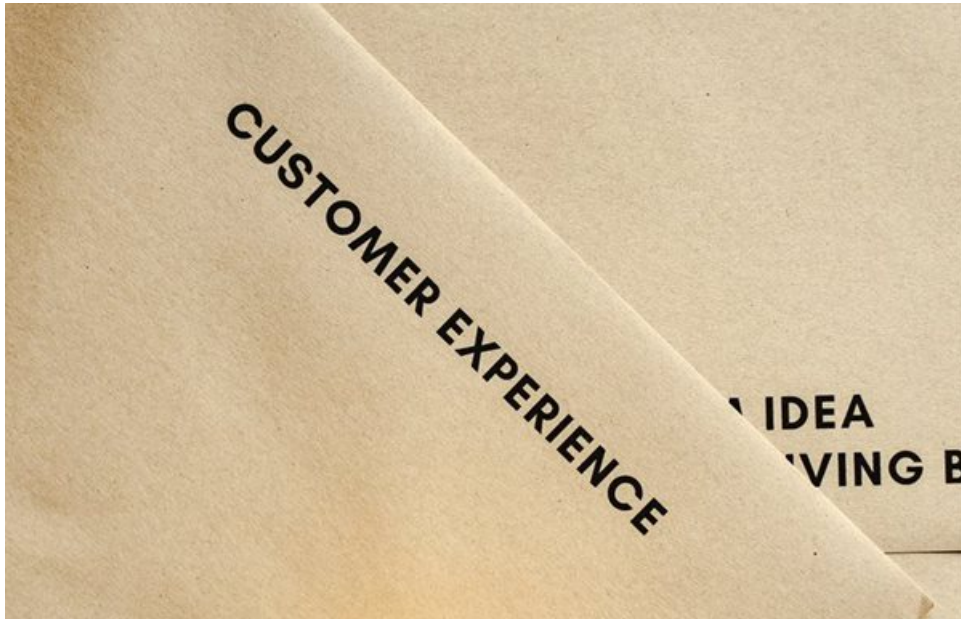


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At the same time, the modern customer is increasingly relying on digital channels to engage with businesses in this fast-growing market, and these need to ensure that they are communicating effectively with the connected consumer to ensure an enhanced customer experience (CX) by engaging faster and via customers' channels of choice.

At present, four to six countries are leaders in this space, including South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria and Egypt. However, most countries on the continent are still dealing with typical developmental challenges such as lack of infrastructure, highly regulated services and high cost of technology adoption. In many cases, CX is driven – and restricted – by local internet and mobile penetration.

Meanwhile, CX in Africa is increasingly becoming one of the leading differentiators among organisations, forcing enterprises to ensure that their CX strategies deliver personalised interactions with customers across the entire customer journey as they strive to increase customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Yet, enterprises in Africa often struggle to find the right technology provider that matches the organisation's approach – especially when considering the various unique markets and challenges in different countries across the continent.



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Understanding the dynamics

Every organisation wants to make money, save money and grow the business. These three pillars are centred around the customer and how an organisation is able to manage its customer base via its communication strategy and available channels, as well as how the customer is able to access these.

Unfortunately, most communication platform and omnichannel providers fail to understand these three dynamics and solely focus on what they perceived to be the needs of an organisation. This challenge becomes particularly pronounced when organisations have to deal with service providers who are not focused on what the outcome of their business should be. Many services providers tend to focus on pricing and not delivering true value to the organisation, leaving organisations to deal with multiple vendors and technologies, instead of focusing on true customer engagement.

However, finding the right technology provider is the key to the success of any business and omnichannel communication is the most effective strategy that a business can adopt to provide seamless customer experience. Organisations want service providers that can deliver a unique brand experience, allowing customers to switch between different channels – be it offline or online and still experience the same quality of service, which results in a satisfactory CX.

Cloud-based communication platforms need to be aligned with an organisations business, objectives and key results, ensuring that their whole communications ecosystem can deliver value across the entire customer journey.



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Continuous innovation

This means that communication platform providers need to continuously innovate so that they can create value for businesses and all participants within the communication ecosystem. Importantly, with Software-as-a-Service (SaaS), organisations want platform providers that offer flexible and dynamic pricing of pay-as-you-go models.

Given the diverse and unique nature of the African market, a one-size-fits-all approach to communication will not work effectively on the continent. Organisations need to be aware that since we live in an increasingly personalised world, so a one-size-fits-all approach will likely be off-putting to customers, especially that customers these days provide a wealth of information about themselves – whether intentionally or not.

Enterprises must understand that every customer is unique and different, meaning that every individual's journey and touchpoints will be different in the way in which they interact with brands. This entails understanding customers' buying behaviour and providing specific solutions that can enhance the CX, as well as customer satisfaction and loyalty.

In order to remain relevant and competitive, organisations must provide an enhanced CX to differentiate themselves from

their competitors. It is, therefore, important that enterprises work with service providers that can deliver solutions that speak to customer-specific use cases. Africa is a rapidly growing market, so providing an enhanced CX is key to harnessing this potential.

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