

Omni-Channel Customer Interactions

Description

Most organizations understand the direct correlation between Customer Experience (CX), profitability and market share and, as a result, are committed to improving the service they deliver to their customers. Providing customers with the flexibility to engage on their terms is essential and there is a wide range of technologies that assist in these areas. Omni-channel interaction platforms provide the foundation for these experiences.

Omni-channel platforms are becoming more robust and unified. Where previously many vendors specialized in a singular channel (e.g. email or text messaging), most omni-channel or unified commerce providers now offer platforms that support all customer engagement channels in a seamless and integrated manner. Omni-channel vendors are now offering cloud-based platforms (Contact Center As a Service or CCaaS) that eliminate the need for multi-vendor product integration, support and related costs. In addition to delivering all channels in an integrated framework (both operational and technical), these solutions also include robust Workforce Optimization (WFO) capabilities.

A separate and rapidly growing sub-set of this space is sometimes referred to as Digital-first channel providers who focus on simple, rules based, high volume transactions frequently handled without or with limited involvement of human customer service associates.

And lastly, this segment is not to be confused with the functionality provided by vendors in the pure Unified Communications (UC) segment that service many corporate functions.

Major Vendors:

Avaya
Cisco
Five9
Genesys
LivePerson
NICE (inContact)
Serenova
Talkdesk

Digital Channels:

24[7].ai
eGain
LivePerson
LogMeIn
Nuance

Case Studies:

[Transforming to an Omni-Channel Customer Experience](#)

[M&A Crisis Management and Employee Experience Redesign](#)

[Centralized Telephony Improves Post-Merger Customer Experience](#)

Application

Cloud-based, omni-channel platforms, by definition, encompass a broad suite of customer engagement solutions across multiple channels. However, they are not necessarily appropriate for all businesses. Some organizations do not need or want to enable every channel and other organizations are comfortable integrating a series of point solutions from various software vendors into a cohesive multi-channel solution. The range of capabilities frequently include:

- Outbound telephony calls to customers and prospects (typically sales oriented) and inbound calls from customers and prospects (typically service oriented or direct mail response driven).
- Over time, these voice channels have evolved and include predictive dialing capabilities, automated voice response systems (IVRs) and integrations with Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems, all of which have improved efficiency and effectiveness.
- Channels have also diversified digitally by adding capabilities such as email, on-line chat, texting, co-browsing/screen sharing and social media while also including automation and self-service delivered in conjunction with advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- Many omni-channel providers have expanded their solutions horizontally and offer integrated WFO products and related functionality (see WFO section).

.An example of a sophisticated customer experience that benefits from a totally unified, omni-channel platform is described below:

- A prospect receives a promotional email and clicks on a link to the company's website, browses products and clicks on a link for online chat (this demonstrates the integration between digital marketing campaign automation, website and an omni-channel platform)
- A company builds a conversational chatbot that handles many standard inquiries (this demonstrates the integration between NLU/NLP technologies and an omni-channel platform)
- A prospect has a complex question and requests a call from a company representative who reviews the promotion sent, results from the automated chat dialog and then calls customer (this demonstrates the integration between website and an omni-channel platform)
- An omni-channel platform records the interaction across channels and mines for market intelligence, customer satisfaction and customer representative performance (this demonstrates omni-channel and WFO integration)

As mentioned above, these seamless and holistic solutions are not needed for every organization. However, if companies are committed to building customer experiences that meet and even exceed their expectations, omni-channel solutions are certainly helpful as the channels and all associated data are (ideally) seamlessly integrated.

How to Get Started

There are many paths that companies can take to get started, each aimed at allowing their customers and prospects to interact on their preferred terms, but some of the critical steps include:

- Develop a Customer Experience (CX) Strategy – company’s vision and definition of success for interactions with customers and prospects
- Identify of Customer Personas – the characteristics of various customer and prospect segments/cohorts, including how they prefer to interact, how they respond and their overall value
- Map Customer Journeys – how various Customer Personas interact with your business from initial need, product/service research, selection, payment and consumption across preferred engagement channels
- Evaluate Measurement Mechanisms – how your company measures transactions and relationships across channels in terms of efficiencies and effectiveness
- Complete Gap Analysis and Continuous Improvement – where interactions and relationships fall short of your customers’ expectations and modeling how changes to channel capabilities can improve results
- Execute and Repeat – implementation of advanced channel capabilities, measurement of impact and then revisiting alignment with CX strategy, persona and journey mapping, measurement of results, identification of gaps and continuous improvement

White Papers:

[Modern Identity Management Promises to Improve BOTH Security and Customer Experience](#)

[Customer-centric Business Transformation is the Key to Market Leadership](#)

[The Four Dimensions of the Customer Experience](#)

[Next Generation Customer Experience](#)

[5 Key Steps to Align Customer Experience with Evolving Customer Expectations](#)

Our Services

Business Agility

Advanced Analytics

Technology Architecture

Digital Transformation

Artificial Intelligence

Interim CIO, CDO & CTO

Customer Experience

IT Performance Improvement

Critical Initiative Leadership

About Cimphoni

Cimphoni is built on the premise that technology, when properly applied and led, can deliver innovative solutions that transform businesses. The Cimphoni team is comprised of technology, operations and business consultants with a thirst for innovation and a passion for leveraging emerging technologies to deliver exceptional, measurable results for our clients. Founded in 2012, Cimphoni serves customers throughout the United States from its headquarters in suburban Milwaukee. More information can be found at cimphoni.com