

Omnichannel was yesterday, mobile CRM is the future: 6 trends for successful customer relationships in 2021

Baden, December 8, 2020 – While 2020 is slowly coming to an end, the digital transformation continues to accelerate. As the latest CIO Priorities Report confirms, IT decision-makers across all industries have taken the crisis as an opportunity to increase their IT investment spending, particularly to enhance the customer experience. This approach will strengthen customer relationships for the long term. What developments in customer and data management are accelerating, what the new trends are, and how to stay ahead: The CRM vendor BSI attempts a look into a crystal ball and makes six CRM trend forecasts.

Trend prediction number 1: The crisis will continue to drive digitization

The competition for customers, unleashed by digitization, is not letting up. Therefore, it would be wise for companies in all industries to continue to develop their newly digitized business models and, to do so, join forces to form ecosystem networks. A restaurant might make its menu plus an e-mail ordering function available digitally by creating a QR code. An insurance company might attain a high consent rate for its marketing materials because it uses a successfully digitized data and address form. The key is to maintain this momentum in the interaction with customers and implement it at length in 2021.

Trend prediction number 2: The smartphone is becoming the most important customer contact platform

Three revolutionary products in one device: It appears that we have not gotten the trailblazing message Steve Jobs delivered at the launch of the first iPhone. Yet all it takes is a look into our children's bedrooms to see which computing device will be the first choice for contacting customers in the future. You can use a smartphone to trigger exciting customer journeys – by e-mail, phone, on social media channels, and with or without push notifications. All channels lead to the customer – and most of them reach customers on their cell phones. Thanks to geo-targeting, you can provide directions to your nearest store and offer customized support – and you can provide this service around the clock. Mobile devices make it possible.

Trend prediction number 3: Sharing is caring – collaborations facilitate true customer loyalty

New services continuously emerge through the interplay of digitization and new data management concepts, particularly in the sharing economy. For example, more and more banks make payment transactions easier for their customers by providing partnership deals: contactless payment apps, live chats for assistance with online payments, and valuable employee benefits through the collaboration of banks with companies to exchange data. CRM systems are essential requirements for all these scenarios to have a 360° view of customer histories and provide even more targeted contact information for automated interaction in 2021.

Trend prediction number 4: Zero-party data makes the customer's needs a reality

Every good relationship reaches a point where requests go unheeded. Then, if the topic comes up in conversation, people will say, “Why don't you just ask me?” It is the same with zero-party data: By now, consumers understand that it may very well be mutually beneficial to share specific data with companies. Vendors who give their customers good reasons to share information, with smart and entertaining campaigns, relevant queries, and attractive incentives, will benefit in the long term. Why? Because that is how companies can build strong customer relationships and personalize their services profitably – all while complying with data protection regulations.

Trend prediction number 5: The acceptance of complicated tools is decreasing

Just as the contact between companies and customers is intensifying, the interaction between man and machine is changing. Users expect to see the same high usability standards in day-to-day business automation tools that they expect from the applications and user interfaces on their personal devices. Implementing use cases and business processes quickly, without the need to go through IT – that's what is essential today.

Trend prediction number 6: CRM systems require continuous innovation – and connectivity

Traditional CRM systems have become a commodity. For companies to survive in the market for the long term, their solutions must have distinguishing characteristics that offer customers real added value and investment protection. Continuous product development is a critical factor for success because patching outdated solutions with countless updates will ultimately take companies to a dead end. What is in demand are best-of-breed applications characterized not only by user-friendliness but also by a high degree of connectivity to existing IT backend systems in companies and ecosystems. The SDA Open Industry platform and Zapier are examples. If companies also manage

such service platforms centrally on a digital experience platform and combine straightforward data management with targeted contact management, they can reach the full potential of CRM trends for 2021.

“When they use state-of-the-art CRM systems, companies have the opportunity to differentiate themselves in the market with first-rate customer service and intelligent data analytics,” explained Zeno Hug, CRM and CX Community Manager at software company BSI. “Considering the availability of more than 8,000 mar-tech solutions and the enormous opportunities for personalization, it cannot be about imposing something on customers that does not meet their needs. Optimally digitized processes and a solid CRM solution should match the criteria attentive butlers have to meet. They should provide individualized support wherever and whenever it is needed and help the customer through the process without being in the way or releasing decision-makers from their responsibilities.”

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Impress your customer – we know you will. With our smart software solutions for customer relationship management (CRM) and marketing automation, you can reach prospective and current customers wherever they are and accompany them through their entire customer journey. Win your customers’ hearts with structured customer data, artificial intelligence, and real emotions. At BSI, consulting, software development, and implementation belong together. BSI offers one of the leading omnichannel suites in the market, including solutions ranging from CRM and customer experience to data management. Our systems offer broad functionality and seamless adaptation to individual customer needs – they are specially designed for retail, banking, and insurance. The result is software that is surprisingly easy to use and intuitive and customer experience management that delights end users. BSI is a privately owned software company that was founded in Switzerland in 1996. The company has 338 employees at locations in Baar, Baden, Bern, Darmstadt, Düsseldorf, Hamburg, Munich, and Zurich.