

Cloud technology can transform your brand and customer service

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The recent spike in cloud adoption has changed the way many businesses operate. Although forced by global lockdowns, companies have started to reap benefits, including reduced costs and increased productivity - further accelerating digital transformation.



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With compelling business benefits, innovative cloud-based solutions empower organisations across industries to embrace change. Most of us are familiar with cloud-based platforms that are helping teams access documents, collaborate and work remotely, but the cloud can offer so much more than that. From a customer communication and service angle, cloud platforms offer a real competitive advantage for companies looking to stand out and win brand loyalty.

The benefits of the cloud

Generally, implementing cloud technology offers businesses a wide array of benefits. The most obvious being flexibility. Although office space and location are still important for company culture and human interaction, companies are realising that having all employees in the office for five days a week is no longer essential for doing business. Instead, post-

pandemic, businesses will probably move to hybrid models that combine at-home and in-office work.

There are also cost savings associated with a move to the cloud – maintaining and upgrading servers, and other hardware is no longer necessary; those responsibilities (and their associated costs) are now passed on to a cloud provider. Companies don't need to worry about upgrading everyone's software once a year – cloud-based software subscriptions include upgrade and update costs.

Exceeding customer experience expectations

Given recent global events, many customers are also moving online – and this trend holds true for South Africa. Online shopping has made accessing goods and services easier for those with a reliable internet connection, but just as customers expect a great experience from in-store service, they are also looking for this great experience and service online. Cloud technology can be used to augment channel management, data management and personalisation processes, creating a system designed to exceed customer expectations.

Having a single platform where customer service agents can access all relevant information about a customer can be transformative for a business's service levels. We all know what it feels like to have to repeat your customer service issue to ten different agents as you're passed from person to person in the hope that someone new will be able to solve your problem.

If all relevant information (including everything from purchase history to previous service interactions) was instead captured, customers would not have to endure this frustration. Cloud platforms make maintaining a chain of communication that can be tracked and referenced effortless.

A good cloud-based service platform addresses many inefficiencies inherent in customer service or relationship management systems and processes. Platforms that allow service agents to respond to queries on different channels from a single dashboard will save time and customer frustration. Customers now expect problems to be resolved almost instantly, and companies that can use the cloud to do this will come out on top – especially since trends show that many people value customer experience when it comes to choosing a brand.

Cloud-enabled technologies like chatbots, segmented customer communication services and customer data platforms mean that brands can offer their customers more personalised service, 24/7. Although it seems like this would be a more expensive offering because AI is used to handle some service queries, the costs are kept low, and human agents are freed up to offer improved service to customers who need it. Even better, the cloud makes it easy for agents (human or otherwise) to communicate with customers on their chosen platform, whether that's via SMS, voice, email or messenger.

By providing customers with a wide range of communication options, we can eliminate any potential communication barriers. This also means that we can address each message and response as soon as we received it.

This unified approach to communication is what customers have come to expect. But UK research shows that more than

half of customer experience professionals concede that their own contact centres wouldn't meet their needs as a customer. This means that businesses that embrace new technologies to improve customer experience will have a competitive advantage.

Beyond communication

Improving communication isn't the only way that cloud solutions can contribute to customer experience. The Entertainer App is a fitting example of how the cloud and data can be used to bridge the gap between consumers and service providers. The discount app uses cloud technology to create customer profiles from customer data.

These profiles are then analysed to inform which merchants should be added to the app, ensuring that customers are sure to find useful services and that service providers will also be matched with enough customers.

Using the cloud to unify communication channels, eliminate inefficiencies and optimise customer service will undoubtedly give any business an edge over its competitors. With more people embracing online shopping and services, there's never been a better time to think about how a cloud-based communication platform can help you increase customer loyalty and stand out from the crowd.

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