

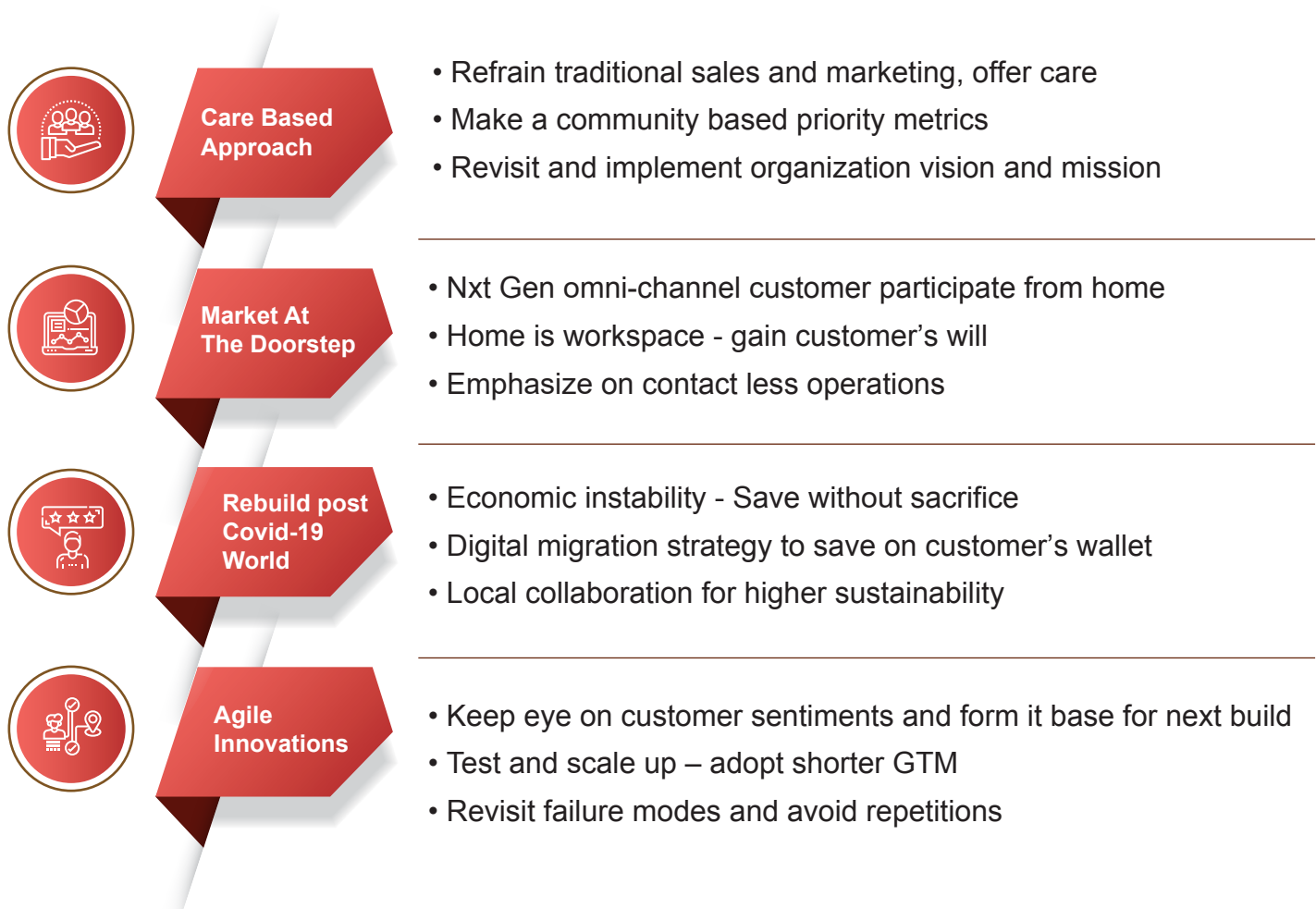
Managing CX in **COVID-19**

In the blink of an eye, COVID-19 has overawed the lives and livelihoods of people across the globe. Individuals earning highest customer ratings have suddenly become vulnerable to changed customer journeys and satisfaction indices, compelling everyone to rethink on how exactly CX will be. Can it be the way it was before Covid-19? This has spiked a sudden need to re-imagine the customer experience journeys.

Historic data has always revealed that during crisis, two factors trigger a lasting effect. First is trust and other is loyalty. Now is the time for CX leaders to stand out and put themselves in the forefront of this disruption and analyze the customer behaviour amidst the Covid-19 crisis. Keeping an eagle's eye on the changing trends and agility in CX redesigns will be the keys to thrive.

To respond to this situation in short time, below is the response model which talks about four parameters and two horizontal cuts which compliment these pillars.

Post Covid – CX Response Model



XaaS – Adoption of As a Service Model
(Workstation, Technical Infrastructure, Channels, Logistics, People)

Strong integration with security level to offer seamless experience -
Network security, Asset security

Let's explore each pillar in brief:

1. Care Based Approach

Now more than ever, customers need additional information, hand holding and support to make way through these unusual set of challenges. From keeping their offices closed to helping employees adopt working from home even if the real business setup doesn't allow - customers have dealt with a lot. In such times, when the whole supply chain has staggered, customers will look for resources they can trust. They need a partner who can show them certainty in such uncertain times. Below are the three themes for you to think over:



A. Sell "Care"

At such times, your customer will not look for products, services, promotions, offers or even discounts (the most luring factor) but will look for care. So build your products around it. Tweak and twist your offerings in such a way that customer's faith in you should be retained. Refrain from traditional way of sales and marketing. Although "social" is a very important aspect of sales, but rethink how this can be managed without it as per the respective industry and culture norms.

B. Community Based Priority Matrices

While you sell and offer services to customers in such times, make them realize that this sales traction / interaction is part of the greater cause. Keep community – a circle of employees, contractors, vendors and common subjects at the core of your proposals. The sense of serving the community while driving the business can help you win trust of customers and together can contribute to the greater cause.

C. Revisit Mission and Vision

Don't just make it a part of your legal requirement. The true essence of these statements are very well reflected even if they were coined in normal situations. All you need is one prism to look through and the seven colours that get reflected will make much sense in any situation. Live it, adopt it, implement it, reflect it and institutionalize it till the last node of your organization. A task force could be succour in here.



2. Market At Doorstep

Normal life of customers is distorted. Activities have come to a halt and there is sudden rise in e-activities. With people under lock down, business are doing their best in reaching out to them with doorstep delivery. But are our systems braced up enough to capture this shock of sudden spike of E-everything? Major challenge is, this might create a supply chain bottleneck resulting in a system collapse. Many studies have shown a rise in online shopping and adoption to digital channels. While drone deliveries have already been piloted, from CX leaders POV, this needs to be addressed in a much tangible way. This can be done by the following:



A. Nxt Gen Omni-Channel Strategy:

Word Nxt Gen doesn't anymore just reflect technological disruption. Our omni-channel strategy needs to take this aspect as a crucial factor. The digital adoption has never been so strong. Even the "digitally challenged" customers are adopting the channel given there is no other option. As per McKinsey's report, over 44,000 views tuned into webinar of Bank of China which shows the impact of corona on investment markets and dealing without harming one's investments. It is quite evident that the E-everything is the new norm and isn't deviating in near future.

B. Home - New Workspace

While all of us are experiencing this but the major challenge was for outsourcing industry and industries involving field work. While industries like petro-chemical, supply chain, mining, dairy, pharma etc. have realized that their big spends on corporate offices were merely a bandwagon effect and work can be managed from home as well. Outsourcing industry has its own challenges like ensuring customers that their data security and e-infra are not breached even if the setup is moved to home. With WaaS coming into the picture, it has been made available as a vital offering to win of customer's confidence in managing work from home & enhancing CX.

C. Contact Less Operation

Although 'contact free' is being highly adopted, but CX leader might have to work with their teams to find out which customer journeys are still on physical channels and try to bring them on digital. Almost 90% coverage of all customer journeys looks a challenge but can be well paid off. This will certainly be backed by strong digital infrastructure and high security integration.



3. Rebuild Post COVID-19 World

Covid-19 pandemic will end for sure. However, when it ends it will leave behind many traces which will be hard to wipe out. As per behavioral science it takes humans 21 days to adopt to any new change. Since this lockdown extended beyond 60 days, it can be said that customers and consumers have adopted to this new way of living and doing business. As per a McKinsey report, over 55% of China's population have permanently shifted to online grocery shopping. Businesses now have challenges to sustain themselves in such rapid drifts and moreover be profitable while rebuilding themselves.



A. Save Without Sacrifice - Digital Migration

It is evident that economic slowdown has happened and the wave will hit most businesses. Many businesses will opt for salary cuts or even shutdown for a while. These factors can create a negative ripple for brands and hence could not be an addendum to CX. With consumers themselves being part of the business ecology, the actions taken might impact them. In such points, CX managers have to gravel out the negations and plan for a digital strategy which will help shifting focus on online journeys and open new avenues for businesses without much sacrifices but a perfect win - win for all.

B. Local Collaboration – High Sustainability

To maintain strong customer experience, it is important to keep high eye on changing dynamics. With partner system taking a toll given to international restrictions, outsourcing firms should rely much on the local technology partners which would offer better go to time in the moment of crisis and quicker resolution to technical glitches. Hence strong inward flow of partner and vendor management will help CX leaders to have an edge with high scalability in services.

4. Agile Innovation

The novel corona virus has made consumers more vulnerable to the word “patience”. As access to internet has gone multifold, so has the usage of online channels. CX leaders will now have to think of how availability and scalability can be managed in order to give a seamless experience to the customers. With little to no time left for things to go to normal, it's no deal for traditional R&D based approach for innovation to CX journeys. Adopting to agile innovation in drafting CS plans will be the next game changer.



With every transition, (current and previous) every customer leaves behind his behavioural pattern and digital footprint. Data and its pattern analysis based on demography and geography will help CX leaders draft a plan for future.

Keeping a close eye on all past failures and referring to the repositories of all root causes will help in mitigating the risk by almost 50%. The agents when fed with outcomes of such presenting, they will be well equipped in handling all sorts of objection to sales be it in service or products. This will also lay a proactive way to reach customers and identify the needs based on future metrics the customer falls into. The market basket analysis of all such customers be it in B2B or B2C environment will only help in farming the new leads and nurture the existing one with accurate mining leading to much shorter GTM.

While these four pillars are intact, their base are the two major horizontals that will supplement the model to work. Be it any vertical, these horizontals are major enablers and act as catalysts to the frame. However it is a recommendation, but implementation should be taken as per your organization business and delivery model.

1. Adopting X-aaS

Everything-as-a-service (XaaS) is an operational and strategic model which over next few months (or years) is likely to begin unveiling the refined operational models, helping CS leaders to redefine their goals of CX management. Sales, distribution, procurement, corporate dailies can fall under XaaS, the CX leaders can bet on any horse of the herd and it will cross the line!

With Uberized model XaaS has been talk of the biz world. CX manager need to on-board this wave and think of all possible ways to adopt it and make it in line with their organization. There will be many challenges while breaking switching over to everything as a service. What will be an elevating factor here is use of cloud by outsourcing vendors to channelize their way to manage the business.

BPaaS is one such area from XaaS that can help businesses thrive through this working from home scene and make workspace and other outsourcing infrastructure available via cloud.

2. Security

While the CX leaders move to adopt XaaS and draft new customer journeys around it, it is imperative that organizations should leave no stone unturned to manage security. The security of cloud has been a major aspect of the XaaS model. Cloud manager of your organization needs to make it an integral part of their cloud migration strategy. While the cloud is being setup, CX managers need to put their thinking hats on to adopt a new journey that would match and will be lite to any architectural changes for implementation in XaaS model. So the security managers, system architects, cloud managers and CX leaders need to work hand in hand for the success of adoption of XaaS to make CX an enchanting factor for the end customers.

Consultant Profiles



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Brijendra heads Business Transformation Services, the consulting arm of TechM BPS. He has 20+ years of work experience in the BPS industry across various domains ranging from BFSI, Supply Chain and Telecom. He has helped clients in their front, middle and back office transformations. He has 19+ years of experience in BPS industry across many domains. He is Lean Six Sigma Master Black Belt holder.

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