

ONEOFFICE: ONENESS IS THE SECRET TO EVERYTHING

Abstract

In a post-pandemic world, there's just one reality that has been staring businesses in the face: digitalization. As digital goes into hyper speed, businesses are still struggling to deal with customer superpowers. Personalization is just another word on the checklist; what customers really demand are exceptional experiences and value creation. Evidently, the overarching mission and purpose of digitalization has changed drastically from simply digitalizing existing business processes. As a result, customer experience (CX) has changed and so has the way that businesses deliver it. But, as they say, never confuse movement with action. Despite the initiatives taken by businesses to improve CX, the missing link here is 'connectedness' that can become the real competitive advantage – turning episodic customer interactions into long-lasting and continuous relationships.

To begin with, this requires connecting the dots internally and externally across different business functions. This is where an integrated support operation powered by the Digital OneOffice framework comes into play. A cohesive framework that brings attributes like collaborative, unified, dynamic, intelligent, responsive, and simple together. Digital OneOffice is squarely focused on delivering digital CX with an intelligent, single office to enable and support it. This white paper outlines the clear demarcation that exists between front office and back office operations and how these boundaries can be dissolved to embrace a holistic view of data, insights, processes, systems, and organizational models, keeping the customer at the center. We will also dive into the benefits of a Digital OneOffice framework in a customer-centered enterprise – the “what, why, and how” of how this framework can help enable leaders to future-proof digital enterprises.

Connected is Not Just a Word

To take the analogy of baking a cake, all ingredients are crucial and have a role to play in the process; digital CX is not much different. The perfect recipe comprises the right amount of every ingredient, integrated and mixed with finesse. In the same vein, digital CX is a culmination of all business functions – customer services, sales, marketing, IT, finance, HR, and supply chain – working in cohesion to deliver the ultimate experience to customers while enabling the business to connect, from back to front in the real sense. In a typical scenario, businesses are left to struggle with disparate processes and systems that evidently affect the CX.

Let's take the view of employers, employees, partners, advisors, investors, and more importantly, the customers into consideration. Each one of these people wants to operate digitally and leverage mobile apps, social media, chatbots, and other interactive technologies. These technologies have already become indispensable in their personal lives; it goes without saying that they want to experience the same level of convenience in their professional lives. Enterprises catering to these digital natives with an obsolete or rather ineffective, time-consuming, and error-prone traditional setup, are heading into oblivion. They need to evade the fate of the dinosaurs (metaphorically) and increase their adaptive capacity.

For instance, a traditional enterprise operating on a legacy business model will risk losing out their existing and potential customers to modern enterprises doling out digital mobile apps, supported by intelligent, affordable BPO and IT functions. Be it a B2B or B2C business model, customers seek real-time responsiveness and easy-to-use apps, with the same level of ease with which they order groceries, shop online, or do banking. The proof is in the pudding: an IT services provider was in the doldrums when a large global client with over 30,000 employees found the services off the mark.

The increased volume of reported incidents from each employee put the IT services provider at the risk of losing an eminent client. To salvage the situation, the provider transformed the incident management process by introducing different levels of incidents based on the level of severity. This new arrangement to dedicate separate teams for minor and severe incidents translated to 45 percent reduction in incidents reported and reinforced the client's trust in the company.

More Like One Team, One Dream

If the question still stands as to why Digital OneOffice is necessary:

Digital organizations must have an operating framework that maps out how they have to operate in the future. Traditional approaches to organizational restructuring have more often than not, failed to have a purpose beyond incremental efficiency or productivity. These models and approaches struggle to drive the unification of digital business models with emerging technologies across business operations.

The panacea to all the challenges mentioned before lies in three words – Digital OneOffice – the organizational end-state to survive, succeed, and deliver one integrated experience. Executives and business unit leaders across disjointed domains like marketing, customer service, IT, sales, finance, supply chain, HR, and procurement must come together to build a digital fabric that stitches all their operations with a robust engagement model. Individual roles must be reevaluated and redefined to consider customer needs and align business processes accordingly. This further involves reevaluating the existing operational model, identifying capabilities gaps, and bridging the same with realistic digital operations. Remember, the crux lies in transforming into a truly digital operation.

This transformation requires a structured methodology: creating a clear connection to value, channeling investments to this mapping, and building a strategic and detailed roadmap to churn success in the process. With this vision, a framework like Digital OneOffice that can enable real-time flow of data across employees, partners, and customers should be established. At the core, Digital OneOffice takes customer and employee engagement metrics to a new high and enables seamless real-time interactions between different stakeholders across diverse touchpoints. These omnichannel interactions combined with advanced analytics deliver a truly digital experience, wherein support teams can achieve better understanding of the customer, their preferences and requirements and provide the desired outcome. This brings us to the most critical aspect of Digital OneOffice, which is enabling a digital support function that eliminates hierarchies and silos. A truly digital business must unify its front, middle, and back office to become successful. Given that real-time data forms the lifeblood of most businesses today, disparate teams and functions in an organization must focus on analyzing the data, understanding the demands, and ensuring that the support function is in sync. Teams must work closely and collaborate seamlessly to achieve a shared outcome.



Rebuilding the Foundation with Intelligent Digital Processes, Support, and Technologies

The building blocks of Digital OneOffice – intelligent digital processes, support, and technologies – can improve the alignment of support functions with business operations and goals significantly. When it comes to technologies, enterprises can automate, digitize, and cloudify manual documents to create converged datasets, which are secure and accessible to anyone, anywhere, and at any time. They can further promote predictive decision-making with intelligent and cognitive processes. Business processes and workflows powered by cognitive technologies can help identify patterns of frequent and persistent problems and create a system that learns and matures from these patterns. Such capabilities are instrumental in automating the utilization of data needed to meet market demands in real time and drive critical decisions.

Working as One Integrated Digital Organization for CX Success

For businesses of all sizes and across all industries – whether they are embarking on a digitalization journey or already en route one – the focus remains the same. Customer experience must be made the pivot around which all business operations must revolve, from front to back. It is also important to note that the entire transformation must drive organizational alignment and also measure value creation, and not just cost reduction. The adaptive capacity of each individual in the organization is important to consider. Enterprises must invest in an inclusive talent strategy, based on people who want to learn and share. Besides strengthening the foundation of the enterprise with powerful technologies, leaders must foster co-innovation relationships and shed legacy relationships.

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Bharath has over two decades of experience in leadership roles across global MNCs and privately held organizations. He has exposure to a wide spectrum of industries ranging from hi-tech, manufacturing to education and has held profit and loss (P&L) responsibilities for several large portfolios as well as partnered with leading Fortune 500 clients to drive significant business transformation across these organizations. Bharath is a metallurgical engineer from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras and an MBA from the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Bangalore. He has a Post Graduate Diploma in Digital Business in collaboration with MIT and Columbia Business School and is a Certified Supply Chain Professional (CSCP) from APICS, The Association for Operations Management, USA.



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