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???Mike Edmonds



> **“**The only sustainable competitive advantage is an organization's ability to learn faster than the competition” ? Peter Senge

The massive shift to the stay-at-home economy has made the digital world more cluttered with transactional experiences that all look the same, and now most CMOs are in a race to differentiate by innovating around a better customer experience. The winners of the race must act on insights faster to deliver experiences that customers value. Doing that requires AI to rapidly turn data into insight, digital platforms that accelerate speed to market, and user experiences that people value.

2020 rewarded businesses that had already anticipated and responded to the advent of digital-first living, but 2020 also showed how hard it is for even industry leaders to adapt to changing consumer behavior, too. The Amazons, Lululemons, and Netflixes of the world enjoyed soaring market capitalizations during the pandemic because they had had invested in intelligent, digital-first content and experiences that took years to build and perfect. Netflix built a streaming service long before the pandemic hit, not as a reaction to it. But when the pandemic spread rapidly, even mighty Amazon

stumbled at times as it tried to respond to surges in demand.

Today, every business, no matter how nimble, faces the same challenge: moving faster and smarter. They must learn quickly about customer wants and needs, execute on those insights by developing new products and services faster than their competitors can, and then offer those products and experiences through great human-centered customer experiences.

In addition, it's not only the business-to-consumer (B2C) companies that need to rapidly sense and respond – so, too, do business-to-business (B2B) sectors. That's partly because the rapid speed of digital affects them, and also because B2B enterprises, even if they don't service consumers directly, are affected by business partners that are.

Consider, say, a manufacturer of kitchen appliances that distributes its products through retailers, online marketplaces, and, to some limited extent, directly to consumers. Such a firm needs to get new products and features to market faster than its customers just as surely as B2C firms do, such as smarter, IoT-enabled refrigerators or more eco-friendly dishwashers. The firm might achieve speed to insight, market, and value thusly:

Speed to insight: Intelligence

It's no secret that any manufacturer is trying to process data at an exponential rate now, and our example is no exception. The business needs to synthesize transactional data (where are people purchasing your product online and offline?), operational data (how quickly are products flowing through the supply chain?) and customer data (e.g., first and third party data). There is no shortage of ways to get data. But the hard part is separating signal from noise, which is where AI comes into play – curating and collecting data in a way that AI can separate useful information from noise. That intelligence is crucial to identifying where, say, demand for a new product or feature might exist.

Speed to market: Platforms

Every company needs help acting on that data to develop platforms where new products can be taken to market rapidly – ranging from websites to mobile apps for making transactions. Fortunately, content and commerce platforms such as Acquia, Adobe, and SAP Hybris can accelerate speed to market while providing the flexibility to meet the needs of your customers.

Speed to value: Experiences

But what matters most? Your customer. How quickly can the manufacturer create an experience that serves the people that you serve. It's not enough to have a website, app, and in-store presence. The omnichannel experience needs to be coherent and consistent everywhere – while respecting the privacy the people involved.

Although I'm breaking these three components apart, they are not linear. There is a circular relationship between data driving speed to insight, market, and experiences. When you turn data into insight faster, you develop new products faster. In turn, when you create a human-centric experience through a platform, and your customers interact with those experiences by buying your product, those customers create more data -- which feeds the pipeline of data required to achieve speed to insight.

The ability to achieve speed to insight, market, and value is within your reach now. Centific works with companies to do just that. Our Intelligent Experience Platforms practice offers to optimize the

user experience, craft powerful content, accelerate growth, and imbue intelligence across all your strategic touchpoints. To learn more about how we do that, contact us. We'll work with you to get where you need to be: speed to insight, market, and value.

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