

Boosting the Customer Experience with Innovative Technology

If there are two phrases that permeated the global marketplace in 2015, they were ‘customer engagement’ and ‘economic uncertainty’. Technology has a role to play in enabling the former and overcoming the latter.

It seems unlikely that any industry, sector or individual business has remained unaffected by either of the aforesaid concepts.

Take enterprise resource planning (ERP) for example. The challenging business landscape and growing demand for a meaningful user experience (UX) has encouraged ERP software developers to focus on developing innovative, customer-centric solutions. Specialised ERP provider, SYSPRO, CEO Phil Duff explains that his company, in keeping in line with the global trend, will remain firmly committed to underpinning all forthcoming endeavours with a user-relevance foundation.

And it is technology that is assisting in this pursuit to place the UX at the front and centre of product improvements and cost reductions. This same technological innovation is pushing businesses to new heights around the world.

A recent CEO and senior business executive survey by Gartner has revealed technology-related change to be the primary tool to achieve growth in 2016.

When asked about their top strategic business priorities, respondents were quick to laud technology as a major contributing factor to the innovative capabilities of an organization.

Companies today are competing via their complete supply-chain competencies and abilities. The emphasis is on collaboration in upstream supply-chain activities, resulting in increased visibility, reduced inventory, improved fill rates, and overall enhanced efficiencies.

The key here is a shift from simply supplying goods and services in full, and on time, to tangibly offering the customer a differentiated experience. This signals a desire to go beyond meeting an expectation; it indicates a level of intuitive personalization at the individual customer level.

Globally, businesses are reacting to the dramatic change in customer behaviour. Consumers today demonstrate increasingly non-linear shopping behaviour. They may research online, turn to their communities for recommendations, trawl the internet for product reviews and then test the product in store before making an online purchase. What is significant here is that neither the digital nor the brick-and-mortar environment plays a central role. Jointly, they build out a more convenient experience for the customer.

The focus on tight integration between these two streams has highlighted the new business designs that have emerged through the fusion of the digital and physical worlds. 25 billion devices constantly streaming statuses, interactions, geographic positions, connections, collaborations, patterns and so much more have forced an evolution well beyond the realms of traditional trend reporting in analytics.

Duff believes that it has become about the gathering of intelligence of inter-related activities, the predictive capabilities of surfacing valuable actions and the notion of learning about human nature.

Digital algorithms are at the core of new customer interactions. Moving forward, companies will be valued not just on their big data, but on the algorithms that turn this data into actions that positively impact the customer.

At this current rate of change, technology innovation (such as these digital algorithms) is creating considerable disruption to traditional processes, markets and the way in which we conduct business. Yet, this very same disruption is unlocking vast opportunities for organisations. It facilitates the rapid adoption of the evolving technologies that are driving this change and creating clear competitive differentiators, fuelling growth rates not seen in the past decade.

The central tenet here is how organizations should structure their IT strategy to both accommodate and embrace this disruption. Systems – such as ERP - that offer a method of process control, accountability and governance are mission critical to securing the economic future of most modern day businesses.

Thanks to the unprecedented rate of innovation, anything could happen in 2016. And it probably will.

About SYSPRO

SYSPRO is one of the longest standing and largest independent, international providers of ERP systems for manufacturers and distributors worldwide. SYSPRO has for more than 35 years delivered on its promise to provide thousands of its customers globally with the tools required to effectively operate and compete. Backed by a truly dedicated and professional team of employees and partners around the world, the company's ability to innovate and develop technologies based on the needs of customers is one of the reasons why SYSPRO enjoys one of the highest retention rates in the industry.