



# Digital Experience Platforms:

Designed for Digital Transformation



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# Introduction:

## Digital Experiences Change Everything

From social media marketing to in-house customer service, digital technologies are changing everything about how companies interact with people. Data from Pew Research Center<sup>1</sup> shows that, in all of human history, no technology has been adopted more quickly by more people than the mobile phone. This change isn't just about the rising influence of millennials; it represents a new shift in how consumers and businesses access and understand online experiences. Mobile-only internet usage is becoming more common as users find their needs met by apps and responsive sites.<sup>2</sup> Companies now offer live-chat and self-service options for customers that prefer not to call support lines. Embedded devices such as beacons augment physical business locations by connecting to smartphones, further personalizing customer experiences. And Gartner predicts that, by 2020, more than half of major new business processes and systems will incorporate some element of the Internet of Things.<sup>3</sup> Every day, we are introduced to new ways for digital channels to intersect our physical lives, and the rate at which we adopt these new technologies is increasing.

The Internet used to be a desktop computer plugged into a wall. Now, it's a 24-hour stream of information and services that can be accessed through any number of channels, including computers, tablets, smartphones, wearables, nearables, augmented and virtual reality technologies, embedded devices, shared devices and smart devices. As consumers are given more ways to interact with companies digitally, they are increasingly comfortable with the experience.

However, consumers' patience and willingness to overlook faults is much lower in the digital space. In a brick and mortar store, they might excuse a long line as something the store can't control, but they will abandon a slow-loading web page in *less than ten seconds*. Businesses are now focusing on using exceptional digital experiences to meet these high standards and create competitive advantages for their companies.

As the demand for personalized, connected experiences rises, so too does the need for digital experience platforms. Companies are looking for technology that can unite customers' experiences across digital devices and manage the many channels of interaction. Ultimately, digital experience platforms will empower companies to deliver exceptional experiences to their increasingly connected customers, paving the road to advances in their digital strategies.

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1 [pewinternet.org/2015/10/29/the-demographics-of-device-ownership](http://pewinternet.org/2015/10/29/the-demographics-of-device-ownership)

2 [comscore.com/Insights/Blog/Mobile-Internet-Usage-Skyrockets-in-Past-4-Years-to-Overtake-Desktop-as-Most-Used-Digital-Platform](http://comscore.com/Insights/Blog/Mobile-Internet-Usage-Skyrockets-in-Past-4-Years-to-Overtake-Desktop-as-Most-Used-Digital-Platform)

3 [gartner.com/newsroom/id/3185623](http://gartner.com/newsroom/id/3185623)

# Creating Exceptional Customer Experiences

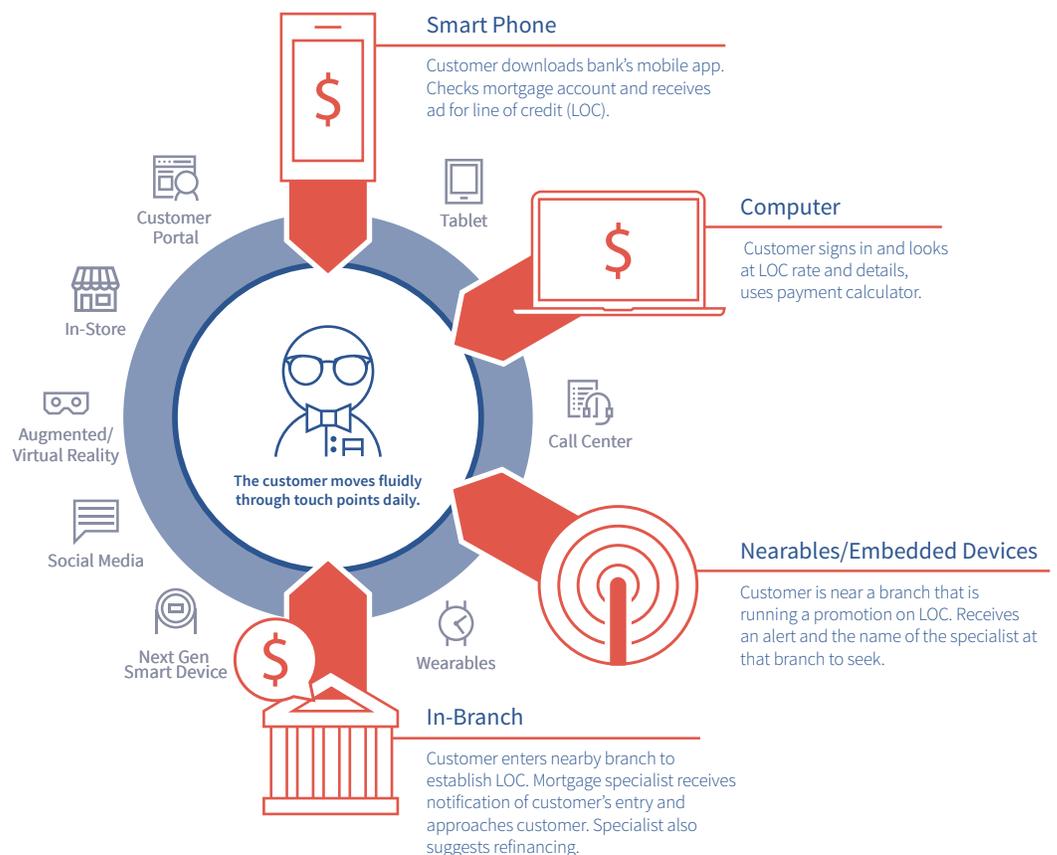
Digital experience delivery — the way a brand presents itself across digital channels — is most successful when it reflects a customer-first reorientation within a company. It isn't driven by the introduction of new technology into the marketplace; rather, it is understanding that technology can (and should) be leveraged to respond to customer needs. This means that companies must be personalized and contextual on the front end, while being flexible and streamlined on the back end.

The Harvard Business Review says that, for customers, digital experience is like viewing a mosaic.<sup>4</sup> All of your touchpoints add up to one brand image. Even if a customer only interacts with one or two touchpoints, she should come away with a cohesive and positive image of your entire brand.

An exceptional digital experience rests on the principle of omnichannel engagement, which offers a single brand image to customers with continuity of their past actions and information as they move from computer to wearable to brick-and-mortar store and any other touchpoint. By providing omnichannel access to your brand, you also have the opportunity to capture data at each point, which can be analyzed for deeper insight into customers and business processes.

The problem is that channels are multiplying and overlapping in a way that yesterday's software solutions aren't equipped to keep up with, and the amount of data being captured is overwhelming.

## The Omnichannel Customer Experience



<sup>4</sup> [hbr.org/2015/11/what-a-great-digital-customer-experience-actually-looks-like](http://hbr.org/2015/11/what-a-great-digital-customer-experience-actually-looks-like)

## Unifying Siloed Experiences for the Customer

Digital experience platforms are technology's response to the need for companies to manage and unify their disparate systems and channels. They provide an architecture for integrating digital technologies so they all work well together, allowing companies to center their business processes on delivering the best customer experiences possible.

Consider this statistic from a 2015 Gartner study<sup>5</sup>: In more than half of the organizations interviewed, content marketers had **two or more** WCM solutions — one for product and brand content and a second for blogs, thought leadership and downloadable content. That's just for WCM. Now multiply that for every other area of business that your company needs software to manage.

This points to a problem in digital business today. Companies waste valuable time piecing together solutions that weren't designed to work together and managing them with separate processes. It's difficult to take innovative steps forward when your time is spent down in the weeds of software integration and syncing up data across systems.

Companies are also looking for better ways to understand their customers today. A digital experience platform will provide a unified view of the customer by drawing information from each of these touchpoints so businesses can use that data to improve the customer experience across all channels.

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<sup>5</sup> [gartner.com/smarterwithgartner/build-content-marketing-agility](http://gartner.com/smarterwithgartner/build-content-marketing-agility)

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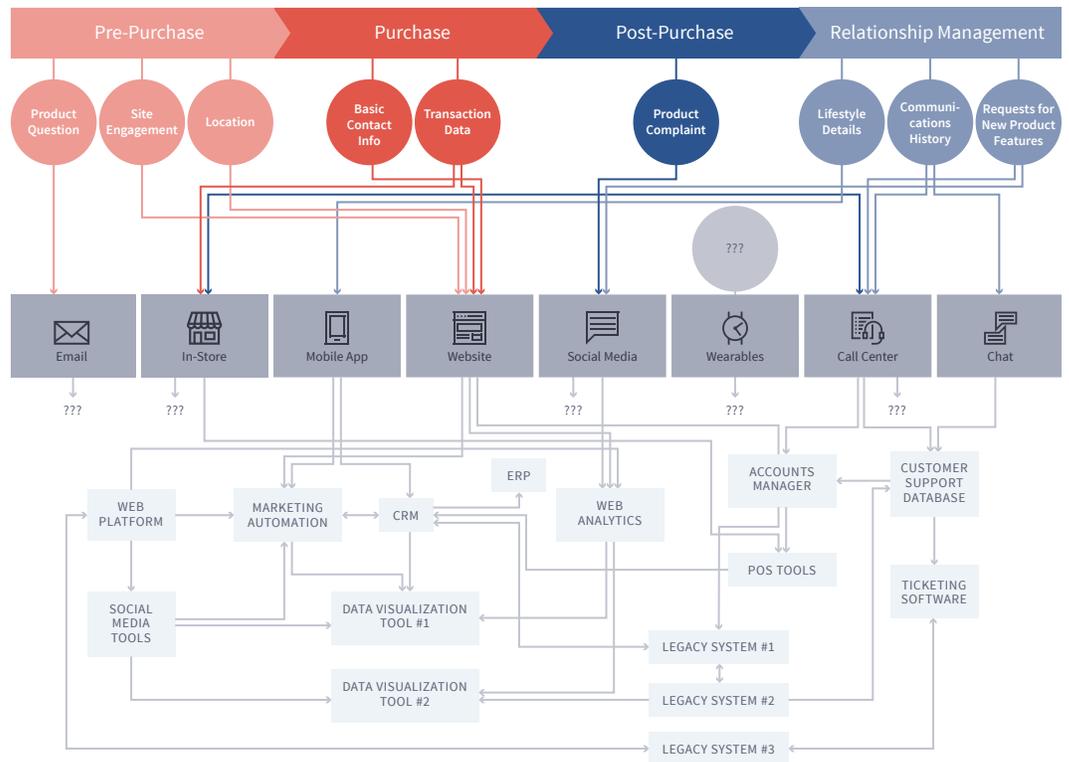


# Key Needs for Digital Business Today

Digital experiences present great opportunities for digital business. Companies can give customers access to what they want on whatever channel they want, which provides a better experience. Additionally, they can draw in data from new channels or previously unmanaged channels and use those insights to make decisions on new products, services or business processes that will continue to refine the customer experience. Together, this means that digital technologies are opening new doors in company-customer relationships that can drive future innovation and growth. But with these opportunities come challenges in creating and managing these touchpoints.

Companies are now asking: How do I solve the real problem of delivering our services across channels in a practical, valuable way to our customers? These are some of the common needs companies are encountering.

## The Current Problem: Fragmented Systems and Customer Data



Because customer data trickles in through different channels linked to different systems, companies run the risk of losing track of valuable information. Data can also become inconsistent or out of sync if it is duplicated across parallel systems. There needs to be a better solution than platforms that are assembled piecemeal.

- Integrating Disjointed Technologies:** The number one technical challenge facing digital experience leaders is inadequate integration with back-end systems, according to a 2016 Forrester report,<sup>6</sup> and new channel additions make it increasingly difficult to keep everything integrated.

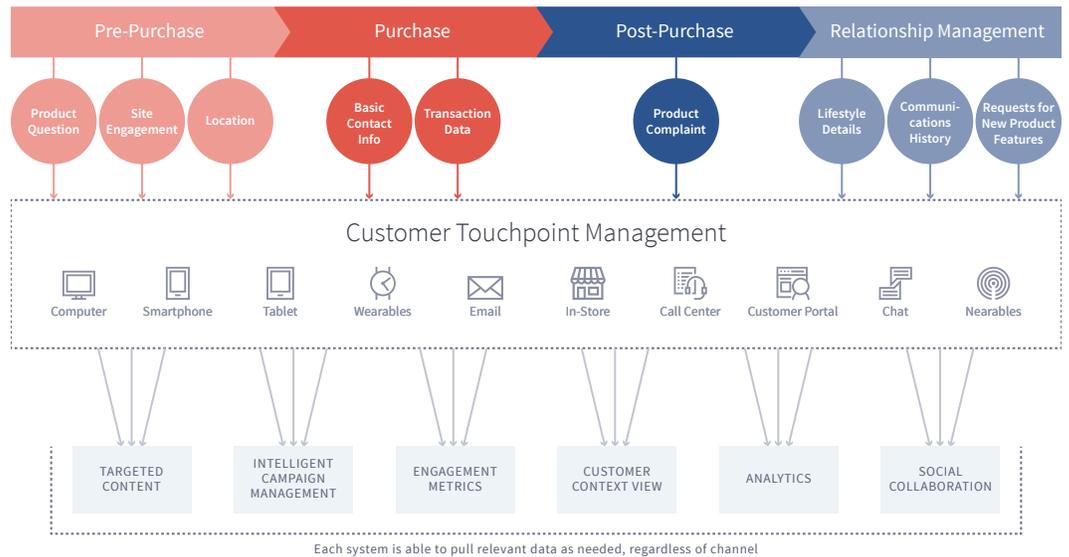
6 Grannan, M. with Powers, S., Schadler, T., Richardson, C., Facemire, M., Hoar, A., Driscoll, K., Harrison, P. (2016) The Forrester Vendor Landscape: Digital Experience Portals

- **Creating a Complete View of the Customer Experience:** Because of the creation of silos over time (websites, mobile apps, portals, touchscreens), businesses are left with a limited view of the customer.
- **Unifying the Organizational Approach to Digital Strategy:** Traditional business processes pass customers from one department to the other, which fragments customer data and locks it into different silos.
- **Addressing the Entire Customer Lifecycle:** A hyper-focus on the discovery and purchase stages ignores revenue opportunities throughout the rest of the customer lifecycle.
- **Transitioning From Legacy Systems:** Companies don't have the time or resources to remove legacy systems completely, so they need software solutions that integrate the new and the old in order to solve immediate problems sooner.

# Digital Experience Platforms: Designed for Digital Transformation

Business processes driven by customer needs are more than a popular trend; they are the driving factor behind successful digital transformation and company culture shifts. Digital experience platforms are designed for companies that understand the importance of breaking down silos and bringing together data and channels in a way that can be shared among business units. Their goal is to enable companies to manage the elements of exceptional experiences with a clear view of business analytics, integration, comprehensive customer data and cost-effective implementation.

## The Solution: A Unifying Digital Platform



*A digital experience platform makes it easy to manage customer data, content and analytics, giving companies the power to discover insights on which to base critical decisions.*

A digital experience platform provides the capabilities that you need to produce a variety of user-facing experiences. Common features include analytics, customer context views, personalization and multichannel support. The exact tools offered will differ by vendor, and it is up to companies to assess their goals and determine which components are required for their strategy. However, the unifying principle for digital experience platforms will remain the same: architecture that integrates core business tools and provides a foundation for future digital innovation.

Some key benefits of digital experience platforms to digital businesses include the following:

### 1. Identify immediate needs in digital customer experience.

As digital business becomes more personalized and unified across devices, it becomes increasingly important to interact with people at every stage of the customer lifecycle. Sophisticated data management streamlines the process of identifying customer pain points or gaps in communication, which can then be leveraged to improve digital experiences. This prioritizes what customers want without locking companies down to any specific technology or type of interaction.

Once companies identify immediate needs in digital customer experience, they can act on them from a place of knowledge, rather than trying to build strategies off of incomplete data. A digital experience platform will then be able to provide tools or integrate with the correct external products to address these needs.

## **2. Improve the accuracy of your marketing and customer engagement through holistic customer data and information.**

The first step to improving experiences is to offer the omnichannel interaction, and the second step is to constantly track, measure and analyze so that customer engagement can grow and evolve. Digital experience platforms allow companies to track customer behavior at each digital touchpoint. As the Internet of Things grows, companies will have access to more channels of customer data, enabling them to draw new insights. The goal is to discover patterns in customer behavior and constantly improve customers' experiences, even before they ask for it.

Customer data can include basic contact information, demographic snapshots, psychographic data points such as details about personalities or lifestyles, transactional data, communications history with the brand, account preferences, responses to marketing campaigns, and site engagement tracked through clicks, browsing time and social media shares. A digital experience platform will pull this data into one place that each department can access as needed through customized views. This ensures that the entire company is working with consistent, updated information and basing decisions on accurate, holistic insights.

## **3. Use integration and flexible architecture to stay on the cutting-edge of digital trends.**

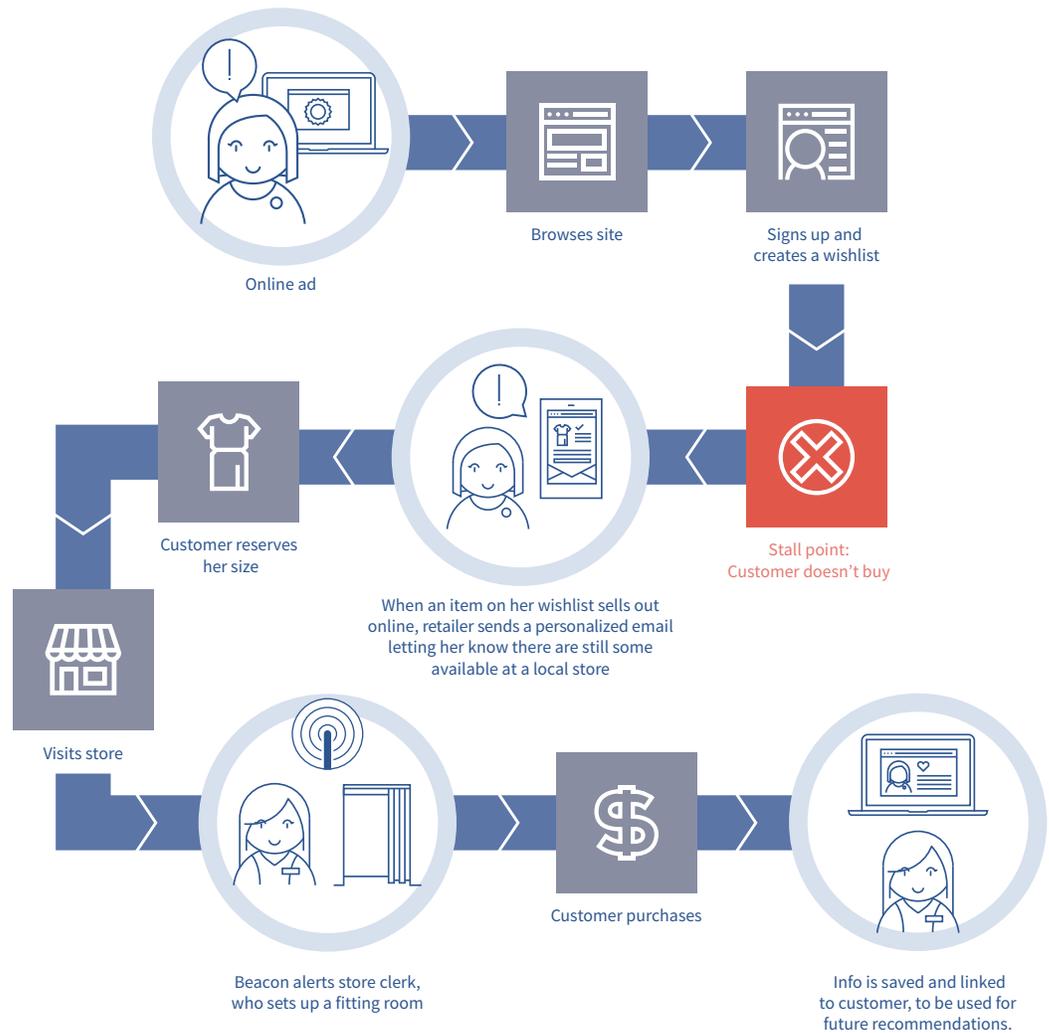
A common burden of technology upgrades is the unforeseen costs when development takes longer or is more complex than planned. If a digital experience platform achieves an effective level of integration and flexibility, then it will be cost-effective over time. Veterans of digital change know that a technology upgrade can take months or even years. Sometimes, by the time you get the technology and strategy right, the trend is in its last days and the industry leaders are already gearing up for the next change. This makes it risky to pursue any new digital trend, because it may have evaporated by the time your company finally gets the fancy new software configured for your needs.

Because a digital experience platform starts with the core components in one place and product, it would be a cost-effective, long-term investment that mitigates the risk in acting on a digital trend. In today's quickly changing digital environment, vendor lock-in is a handicap, and any digital experience platform should also make it easy to integrate with outside products, not just the vendor's own offerings. This could potentially level the playing field for companies that don't have the largest budget, provided they have the foresight and agility to respond to the shifting sands of the market.

# What Will the Customer Experience Look Like With a DXP in Place?

With a digital experience platform, you can draw insights from customer interactions on mobile, websites, call centers, customer portals and other touchpoints in a single customer view. By monitoring where customers are already engaging, companies spot opportunities to make those touchpoints easier to use and more valuable to them. Because data is linked to these touchpoints, companies can improve customer experience and engagement in new ways that utilize current analytics, personalization and marketing technology.

## New Retail Experience:



### Stall point:

Data analysis shows that 30% of customers are dropping out when they reach the shopping cart. But when sent a personalized communication, 60% of these customers go on to purchase, which means it is probably not the product or price that's creating the stall point. The retailer uses this data to develop an improved shopping cart and purchase process that is more user-friendly.

Customers won't always push themselves through the purchase journey, but new channels and tools provide ways for companies to "restart" these journeys wherever they're stalled. A comprehensive customer view allows them to identify exact moments and act on them with personalized communications and offers. This makes business more efficient and uses a holistic view of the customer lifecycle to maximize revenue at previously under-utilized customer stages.

Customer-centric business doesn't have to mean waiting for the customer to come to you through the channel of their choice. Innovative companies will take the initiative to offer what's best for the customer, in ways that customers may not have realized were possible. This is achieved through consistent experiences paired with thorough data collection at each touchpoint, managed from a single platform that brings it all together.

## Summary

Digital experiences define the way customers view brands, and the companies that have superior experiences will retain customers longer and gain new customers faster. Digital experience platforms enable companies to conquer the challenge of managing these touchpoints and the data they bring in, resulting in more agile and streamlined business processes. They are a unified way to manage the customer lifecycle across all channels.

We've grown accustomed to hyper-personalized experience in our personal lives via our smartphones, which allow us to contact friends, work, play games, shop, complete errands, record video, take photos, watch movies, order food, read a book... everything, all in one, customized to our needs as we add and remove tools as we see fit. Now digital experience platforms aspire to achieve this for business.

## Moving Forward

See how the Liferay Digital Experience Platform can help you create customer-first digital experiences. Visit [liferay.com/products](https://www.liferay.com/products)

Talk to a Liferay expert and schedule a demo of our software.  
Visit [liferay.com/request-a-demo](https://www.liferay.com/request-a-demo)



Liferay makes software that helps companies create digital experiences on web, mobile, and connected devices. Our platform is open source, which makes it more reliable, innovative and secure. We try to leave a positive mark on the world through business and technology. Companies such as Adidas, Carrefour, Cisco Systems, Danone, Fujitsu, Lufthansa Flight Training, Siemens, Société Générale and the United Nations use Liferay. Visit us at [www.liferay.com](http://www.liferay.com).

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