

How Cognitive will redefine Customer Experience

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Till recently, delivering customer delight was about product quality or service efficiency. In the context of manufacturing, it was about just-in-time supply; in banking it was the ability to offer personalized service and in retail, it was about offering choice. Today, that paradigm is far more complex—it is also about how the customer actually experiences value.

The application economy ruled by the likes of Amazon, Uber, Ola and Flipkart is a prime example of delivering value that is experienced. How do other businesses get there? The answer lies in transformation through **Cognitive**. It's a cycle--the more businesses understand the 'uniqueness' of the buyer; the more they are able to analyze and anticipate the needs and wants of the buyer; the more they empathize with the wallet of the buyer; the better is their appeal and relevance.

Here's an example of customer experience today to understand how **Cognitive** will bring disruption: Almost every kind of business has contact centers for customer service. But how many of us have experienced delight when dealing with a contact center? The Interactive Voice Response System (IVRS) is always frustrating and even when you speak to a human, you are often put on hold, transferred to other desks (more holds!) and you are asked to repeat information and credentials numerous times. In a few minutes, the music that is supposed to soothe when you are on hold seems like it is being streamed straight from customer service hell.

Business organizations like banks realize this problem—that customers are not experiencing value during such interactions. So, what's the solution? **Cognitive** systems use existing knowledge and generate new knowledge. They are constantly learning and thus capture expertise from top performers, build upon knowledge from structured and unstructured sources of information--ranging from social media to news, and can provide consistent expert assistance that results in close to zero customer frustration.



Translated into business terms, this means that when you have a **cognitive** system in place--when you call a bank contact center, you will get information and answers that are personalized for you. You will no longer be faceless and just a member of some market segment based on age or income. And if you allow it, the system will also garner information from your social networks and preferences and use those insights to enhance your experience. It could suggest that since your daughter's birthday is coming up, you might want to sign up for a new financial product meant to create a nest egg for kids. And loan processing will become incredibly quick and accurate.

According to an **IBM Global CEO Study**, 89 percent of banks believe **Cognitive** solutions have the potential to disrupt the banking industry as we know it and help banks deliver a customer service experience that is radically different from what we now get today. In 2012, Citigroup used Watson—IBM's cutting-edge cognitive system—to analyze information from customers and provide suggestions to improve customer interactions, evaluate risk and identify great investment opportunities for customers. End result? A vastly improved customer experience. In South Africa, Standard Bank uses Watson to speed up handling of customer queries, allowing a much better throughput and superior customer service.

The retail sector is another great example. Buying gifts is an incredibly frustrating experience for so many. San Francisco's Westfield Centre leveraged cognitive to solve this challenge. Using Watson, Westfield Centre has a **cognitive** app installed in a kiosk that enables customers to find the right gift using data in the cloud and personality profiles. During the 2015 holiday shopping season, Westfield reached an average of 370 customers per day through the app and boasted an 11 percent conversion rate. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vrJYsQ6M9FI>

Cognitive delivers results across industry sectors. The key is—when you change how your customer experiences value through Cognitive, you own your customer's mindshare. IBM enables this by integrating the best of strategy and consulting, cognitive systems and software, advanced analytics and mobile development and integration platforms, hosted on the cloud and secured by smart security solutions.

Know more about cognitive solutions [here](#).

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