



MANAGING CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE THROUGH **THE DIGITAL**

The foremost challenge in front of digital marketers at present is to meet the increasing pressure to deliver efficient business outcomes. According to a recent CMO Spend Report by Gartner that surveyed 315 marketing decision makers representing various organisations, digital marketing budgets will increase by 8% in 2015.

The pinnacle of this bloom of digital marketing is the explosion of e-commerce. The way e-commerce platforms have utilised, synthesised and deployed the web and mobile technologies to cater to an ever-floating and extremely demanding customer base is a success story that often gets emulated and yet may not always be triumphant.

A recent report that surveyed Europeans in the age-group of 16-24 revealed that more than 80% of the internet users watch TV and listen to the Radio on internet only. The American consumer on an average consumes media to a bewildering 11 hours per day. Capturing the attention of the viewers, or getting them engaged, out whom a large chunk will be prospective customers, will be a [precious commodity](#) for the businesses in order to leave an impact on the customer behaviour in the age of digital marketing.

However, capturing the attention and imagination of the customer have not remained simple in the times of digital marketing and digital businesses. [Google Trends](#) show that the searches for 'ad block' have doubled in the previous year. On a similar note, 70% Of the [‘this is spam’](#) complaints have originated from marketing emails.

The buzzword in the industry to tap this engagement and which appears to capture everyone's imagination is SMAC, an acronym that encompasses Social, Mobility, Analytics and Cloud. Digital marketing buffs regularly revert back to the basic tenets of SMAC when any impending strategy on the drawing board or during implementation tends to go berserk.



Social

Are customers happy and satisfied with the products and services?

What are the sentiments reflected by their engagement and transactions with a business?

Engaging with the customers by bringing them into direct, agile and personalised contact with the business is essential.

Customer value and myriad customer experiences are enhanced and accredited by the social.



Mobility

Mobility is the touch point relying on which customer satisfaction can be both measured and assured.

Mobility is only a decisive means to the end, not the end in itself. It entails evolving by effectively knowing the customer.

It morphs the business interface pertaining to the customer to a more precise, cohesive and comprehensive framework, not to mention making it agile and efficient.

Social media, emails, mobile messages and web channels can be excellent hosts in favourably owning the customer experience



Analytics

For efficient engagement with the customer and to ensure quality delivery, customer preferences need to be measured, assessed and analysed.

Analytics reveals what changes and alterations or even paradigm shifts are required in terms of meeting the needs proliferating out of the customer end.

With acute digitalisation, CIOs and CMOs of major as well as smaller enterprises will have to work as a cohesive team rather than conventional silo-based outputs.



Cloud

It is the texture of finesse underneath that supports and sustains the aforementioned three.

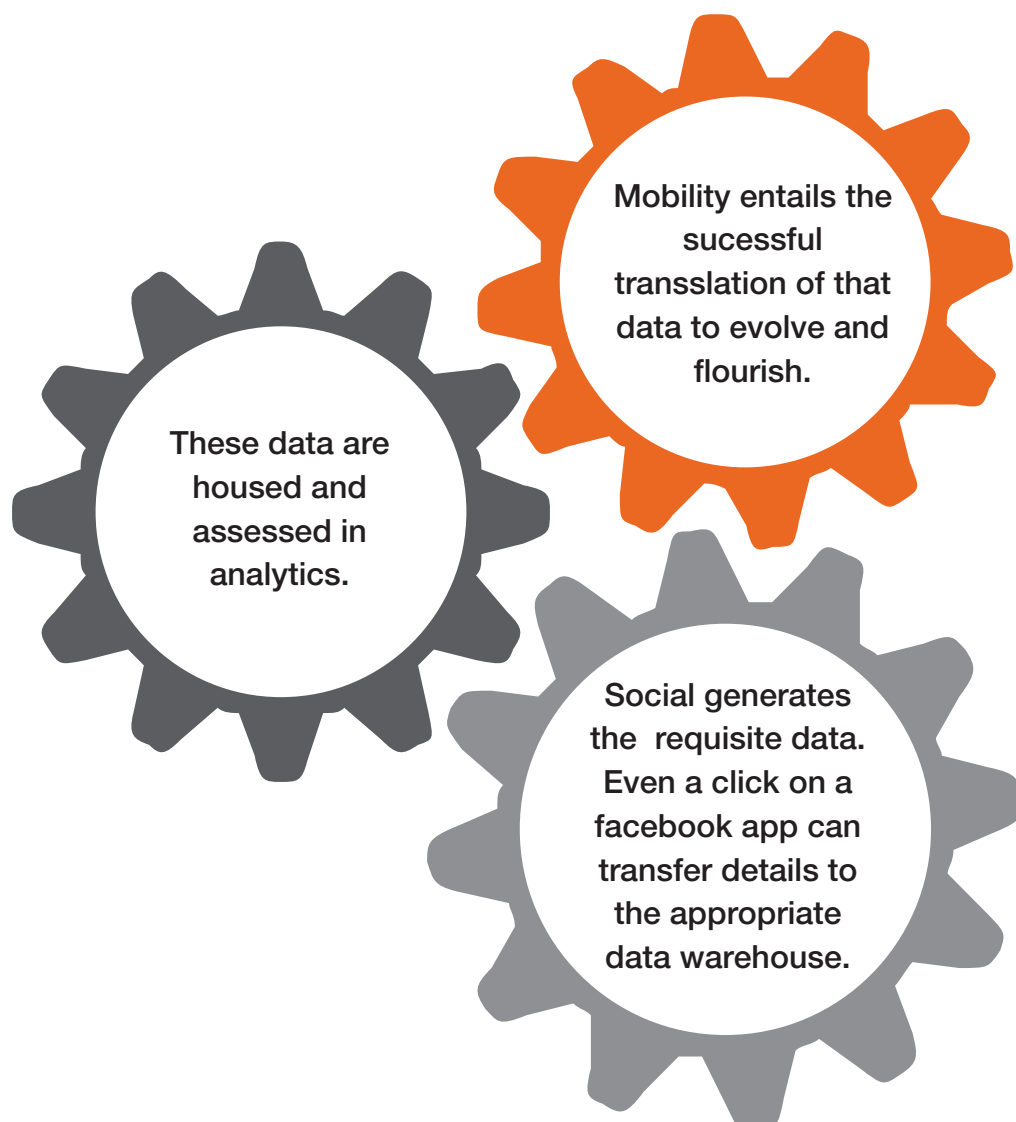
To make SMAC work as a dynamic output strategy, proper selection, modification and implementation of proper toolsets and methods is extremely crucial.

These tools can be found in and are derived from the cloud.

These four tenets can exist in both cyclical and hierarchical processes. As data governance regimes form the crux of the digital enterprises, the generation and packaging of the data remain at the top and hence, social and mobility occurs at the zenith of the pyramid of organisational architecture.

The interlinking factor here is the Analytics which is the tour-de-force behind this structural matrix and where the optimum and utmost harnessing of the data undergoes to process them towards the business ends. [Real-time digital marketing](#) boosted by efforts such as web-personalisation and marketing automation that sense and respond to specific and specified customer behaviours will give customers what they want, provided there is scope for relentless optimisation.

However, beneath this structural behemoth, what provides the poise to the matrix is the Cloud technology to where businesses need to revert back for any implementation of strategy with efficacy, in order to successfully exploit the spoils of the digital technology.



In other words, SMAC can either be a synonym and a euphemism for digital ends and digitalisation of services and products. Customer values, customer experiences and customer expectations all are virtually derived from pre-emptive SMAC as well as a successful transition towards SMAC. Effectual Digital Business encompasses [four quintessential attributes](#)

Customer Value

The rudimentary tenet of this approach consists of continuous exploitation of digital means to engender fresh sources of value and to augment operational agility of services for customers.

Customer's expectation to derive value from brands, products and services and their perception of value are progressively becoming more dependent on digital experiences.

No one 'owns' digital

Neither CIOs nor CMOs can singlehandedly be made liable and accountable to usurp the outcomes of digital technology exploitation, as it demands a concrete and coherent amalgamation of digital business and digital technology, which can only be reaped by a successful CIO/CMO partnership.

Sturdy leadership and certain degree of devolution in terms of control and ownership over the digital on all fronts is crucial.

Changing and Evolving

As conventional operational modes will neither be feasible nor be pragmatic in digital approaches, abdicating certain degree of managerial control, forming flexible DevOps teams to flank the customer experience and marketing teams and creating more agility by bringing a rupture to the existing business silos will be able to meet the rapidly changing customer expectations and experiences.

Employee efficacy needs to be aligned to result in improving customer value.

Data and Analysis

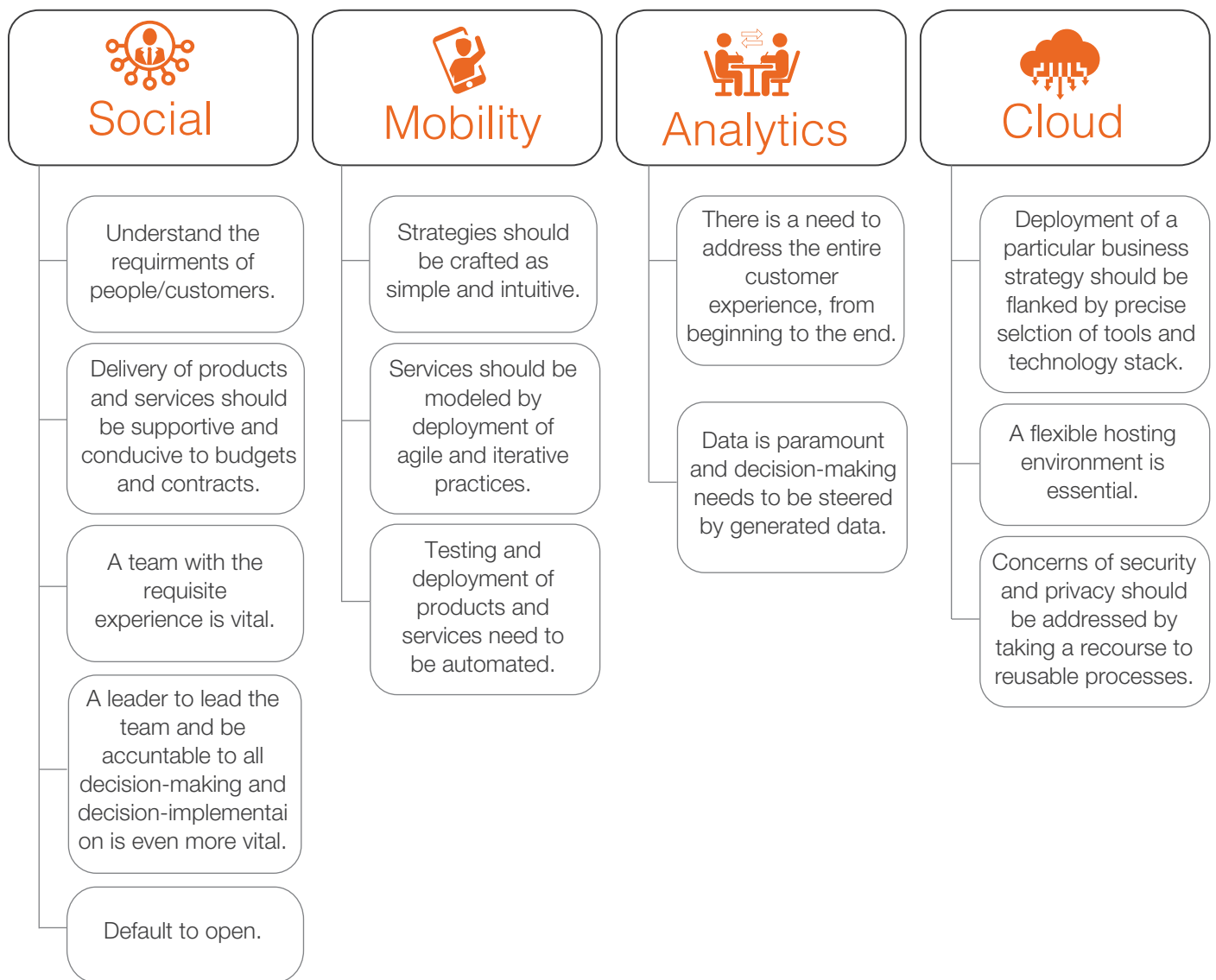
Digital mastery is intertwined with the ability to collate and deploy the right data to bring value to the customer. This data can either be generated by direct interaction with the customers or can be gathered from other agencies.

A [report](#) published by Forrester in last March indicated that all businesses must thrive to evolve into digital businesses. On a similar note, the President of US mentioned in The White House Blog that the future of even the government is going to be digital, by announcing the promulgation of the US Digital Service, which will reinforce the need to bring greater agility in federal technology management.

"A core part of the President's Management Agenda is improving the value we deliver to citizens through Federal IT. That's why, today, the Administration is formally launching the U.S. Digital Service. The Digital Service will be a small team made up of our country's brightest digital talent that will work with agencies to remove barriers to exceptional service delivery and help remake the digital experience that people and businesses have with their government."

-The White House Blog

The White House also announced the release of the [Digital Services Playbook](#), outlining 13 Federal digital service strategies and principles. However, these strategies can be adapted and translated to other corporate and managerial contexts as well-



Integration of digital customer experience and digital operational excellence is crucial for digital businesses. In addition, a fundamental refurbishing in organisational structures, technologies, measurement frameworks and operating models is essential to the success, survival and sustenance of a [digital business](#).

As the emerging disruptive technologies have not been able to meet the needs emerging out of the conversational and personalised nature of new customer engagement processes, contemporary digital marketers have remained undecided between two [different strategies](#)-



Enterprise content management/ Digital marketing backbone technology

Amalgamation and consolidation of smaller web content management systems, multiple marketing solutions and preemptive ventures into social publishing and analytics.

While functionally effective, it checks the proliferation and growth of innovation.

An ad hoc measure to separately handle websites, optimisation of content, automation of marketing and management of social media. Chiefly employed in mid-level enterprises.

While changes are quicker, technology is over-purchased and can quickly render obsolete.

Point Solution system

Due to the inefficiency of the existing models, newer paradigms of processes needed to be brought into application. What exactly newly digitalised or newly emerging [businesses need](#) to do are-

Organisational value should be driven by the state of digital readiness

- Digital customer experience and digital operational excellence need to be synthesised.
- Obsolete organisational architecture, technology, measurement metrics and operational models. needs to be overhauled.

Secure support from those in top of the business

- By devising a specific business technology agenda, a business can gain competitive advantage in a business field.

Heading

- Making optimum and maximum use of the digital skills, expertise and human resources available.
- Recruiting people with the skillsets that are lacking in an existing enterprise will be beneficial during digitalisation.

The digital readiness of a business organisation relies on recognising and assessing both risks and gains and also gauging how to engage with them. With the footprints of digital technology making itself evident on almost all levels and spheres of industry, businesses must thrive to rely more on prioritised digital marketing to indulge the customer.

Failure of an enterprise to exploit digital technologies to generate new avenues of value and augment the responsiveness of the operations may lead to getting disrupted or being completely obliterated from the competition. To make the most out of customer experiences, [what one needs](#) to engage with is to convey their messages by interlacing them in the context of the rapidly evolving digital landscape, rather than relying on one-way communication channels.



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