

# Customers are demanding greater digital engagement from service providers

By [George Fraser](#)

29 Oct 2020

The Covid-19 pandemic is accelerating the move to digital, as large proportions of the population have continued to work, learn and be entertained remotely, while others have trialled services such as remote health care for the first time. These were amongst the findings of a recent Amdocs survey of 1,000 US consumers.



George Fraser

The results draw many clear parallels with the South African reality and that of the continent in general, with connectivity constraints providing a key exception. Driven by digital giants such as Apple, Amazon and Facebook, industries across Africa are racing to digitalise their operations.

The objective is to match their customers' expectations for real-time, personalised and guided experiences in their channel of choice, as they have become accustomed to from these players.

For communications service providers looking to enable a simple, intelligence-driven and streamlined experience, many are starting with their current offerings and looking for ways to add value. Establishing partnerships and collaborating with players in adjacent industries provide the most obvious opportunities.

One of the most prominent US examples is Waze, Google's social GPS navigation app, which embedded Spotify and Apple Music to enable its users to play music in their car without leaving the original app.

In the service bundling area, African customers' expectations continue to increase as they demand the power to select the bundle, device and music of their choice – on demand and with one click. Digital catalogues with embedded features, as well as the ability to merge with third-party catalogues offer significant potential, allowing carriers to, for example, sell connectivity bundles, with Netflix on top and Amazon gaming miles added as a giveaway.

## **A mindset change: prioritising digital**

The ability to exceed consumers' expectations demands that service providers adopt a digital-first mindset; that is, promoting the adoption of unassisted channels where customers can easily self-serve, consume and manage their account autonomously. Moreover, the highly competitive African landscape makes speed and agility crucial, including the need to rapidly adapt and bring solutions to market to meet ever-changing consumer demands.

To enable these new experiences and support complex business operations, service providers worldwide and in Africa must embark on transformation journeys – centred on the cloud and the agility this brings – by implementing AI-driven operations focused on continuous improvement. This will allow them to stay one step ahead, with full automation.

A company that successfully transformed its customer experience is Indonesia-based mobile telecommunications services operator, XL. With a view to increasing its in-store conversion rate and empowering agents to deliver personalised services with targeted offers, a sales-on-tablet application was introduced, which offered a unique user design that allowed for guided agent experiences and significantly improved personalisation.

Agents felt empowered to approach customers with more confidence and could convert care issues into upsell opportunities more easily. In addition, the average handling time was reduced and the overall process of dealing with the customer, bills and related interactions simplified.

In the Philippines, telecommunications services provider Globe, also introduced a sales-via-tablet application, as well as an omni channel solution that was initiated for its retail channel and expanded to incorporate its contact centre and self-service channels. This was aimed at simplifying the retail store experience, improving agent experience and helping to monetise the digital economy.

Globe's journey to digital resulted in a 60% improvement in average handling time – from 60 minutes to 25 minutes; a 90% satisfaction rate amongst store agents; the condensing of a complex re-contracting; an error rate reduction of about three to four times; and the quick launch of new bundles and offers.

By adopting similar approaches, communication service providers in Africa can improve engagement, build customer loyalty, promote the adoption of unassisted channels and ultimately become customer experience leaders in the industry.

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

George Fraser, VP. Customer Business Executive - Africa at Amdocs