



Understanding your customers in a digital world

Exceed expectations.

Deliver positive experiences.

Earn customers for life.



How can technology help you to better understand your customers by turning data into intelligence?

WHAT IS IN THIS GUIDE?

1. The value of good customer experiences
2. Unifying the fragmented experience
3. Right time, right channel – service on demand
4. Listening to your customer
5. Turning data into intelligence
6. Empower your people



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Section 1

The value of good customer experiences

We have all encountered good and bad customer experiences. Both can leave a lasting impression and shape the way we view and engage with a brand. In a digital era, where the market is increasingly competitive, a positive customer experience is quickly becoming a more influential buying factor, alongside price and product.

“People are increasingly loyal to the retailers, products, brands and devices that consistently provide exceptional value with minimum friction or stress.”

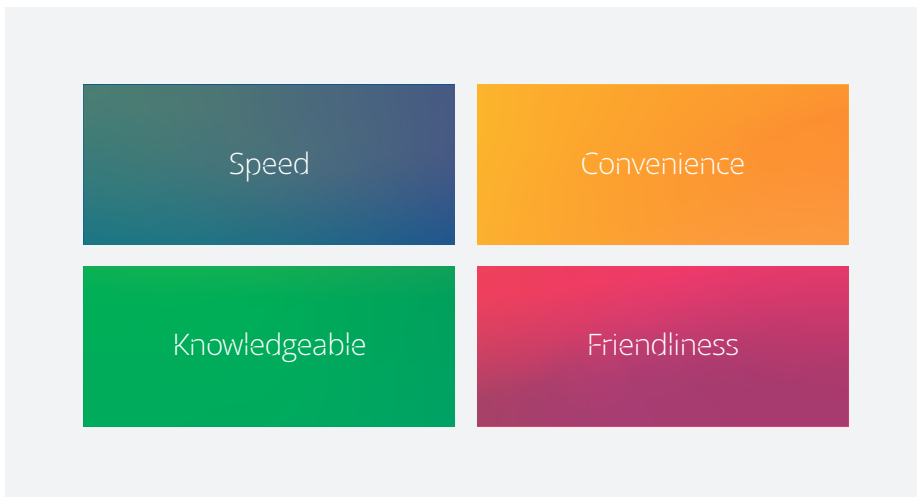
– PWC, Experience in everything: here’s how to get it right

The digital customer has a much greater choice of where to buy from compared to traditional, in-person retail. Therefore, there are more organisations vying for their attention.

When customers are online, an in-depth understanding of their wants and needs is required to remain competitive. Technology can be harnessed to build a better understanding of your customer. Intelligent technology enhances the digital and human customer service experience, to deliver personalised, positive experiences that meet and exceed the expectations of your customers.

WHAT IS GOOD CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE?

Speed, convenience, knowledgeable help and friendliness are some of the top factors people value when they consider good customer experience.



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The factors influencing positive B2B customer experiences paints a similar picture, with the addition of personalisation. Ultimately, for a brand or service to stand out from the crowd, customers need to feel valued and feel they have gained value from the exchange / interaction.

EXPECTATIONS OF A MODERN CUSTOMER

To provide good customer experiences in a digital world, there are several key areas organisations are expected to deliver:

- » Omnichannel engagement
- » Fast mobile-first responses
- » Personalised experiences
- » Friendly service.

Customers will engage with your brands across multiple touchpoints, with 50% of customers using more than four. The expectation of the modern customer is that the experience at each of these touchpoints is consistent.

There are multiple touchpoints throughout the customer lifecycle and a customer will judge a brand at each and every engagement. A negative customer experience at just one touchpoint could cost an organisation loyalty and repeat business.

According to Microsoft, 73% of customers say they will consider switching to a competitive brand after one bad experience, emphasising the importance of consistently delivering good customer experiences and the negative impact that can be caused by allowing standards to slip at any stage.

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

Covid-19 had a dramatic impact on organisations' ability to deliver smooth customer service. When the pandemic hit, many organisations had to move to fully remote teams at fast pace. It was a challenge for many to adapt to the new way of working. According to the Harvard Business Review, when Covid-19 was declared a pandemic by the WHO, the difficulty level of customer service calls sky-rocketed across all industries, making customer service departments one of the hardest hit departments by the pandemic. Agents had to tackle increased customer emotion, with the removal of the support and infrastructure typically found in a physical office space, such as reliable internet and support from peers. The pandemic pulled into focus how business critical a cloud-based, flexible customer service department is to provide support to agents and enable good customer service.

73% of customers say they will consider switching to a competitive brand after one bad experience

– Microsoft, The Power of Knowing Your Customers

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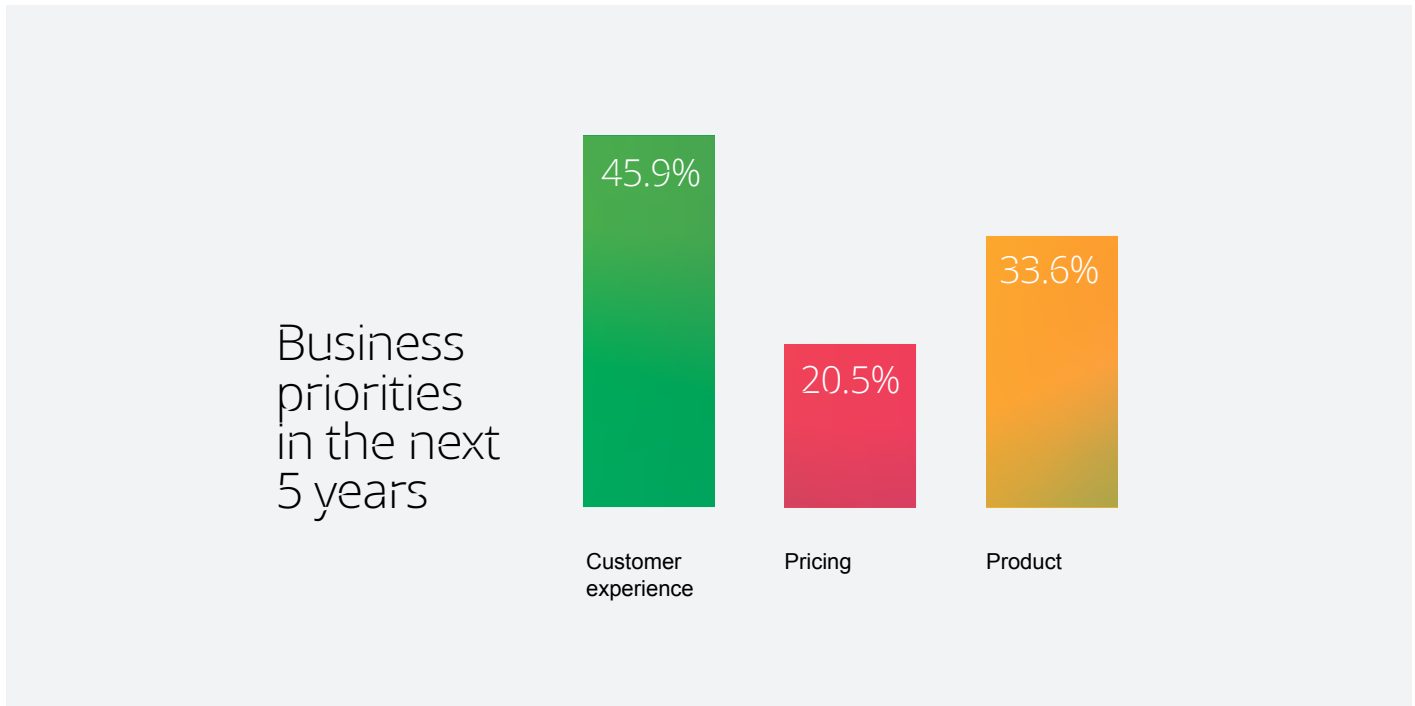


WHAT IS THE VALUE OF GOOD CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE?

Good customer experiences (CX) have become increasingly important for consumers when purchasing and building loyalty with an organisation. A recent study by PWC concluded that 65% of people in the UK rate customer experience as an important factor when purchasing, whilst 43% of buyers will pay more for greater service and convenience. These figures show the real, monetary value of investing in developing and providing a good customer experience.

Organisations, and more specifically CX decision makers, are realising the positive financial return good customer service can bring and are prioritising investment in customer experiences. Organisations that are not, will find themselves quickly falling behind.

When a recent report asked business professionals what their business priority was for the next five years, customer experience came up on top:



Understanding the value of positive customer experience is important, but how do you achieve it in your organisation? The crucial driver is gaining an understanding of your customer. Knowing their previous interactions, capturing their feedback and building an accurate picture of their preferences enables organisations to anticipate the service their customer needs. All of this and more, can be achieved with the Microsoft ecosystem.

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Section 2

Unifying the fragmented experience

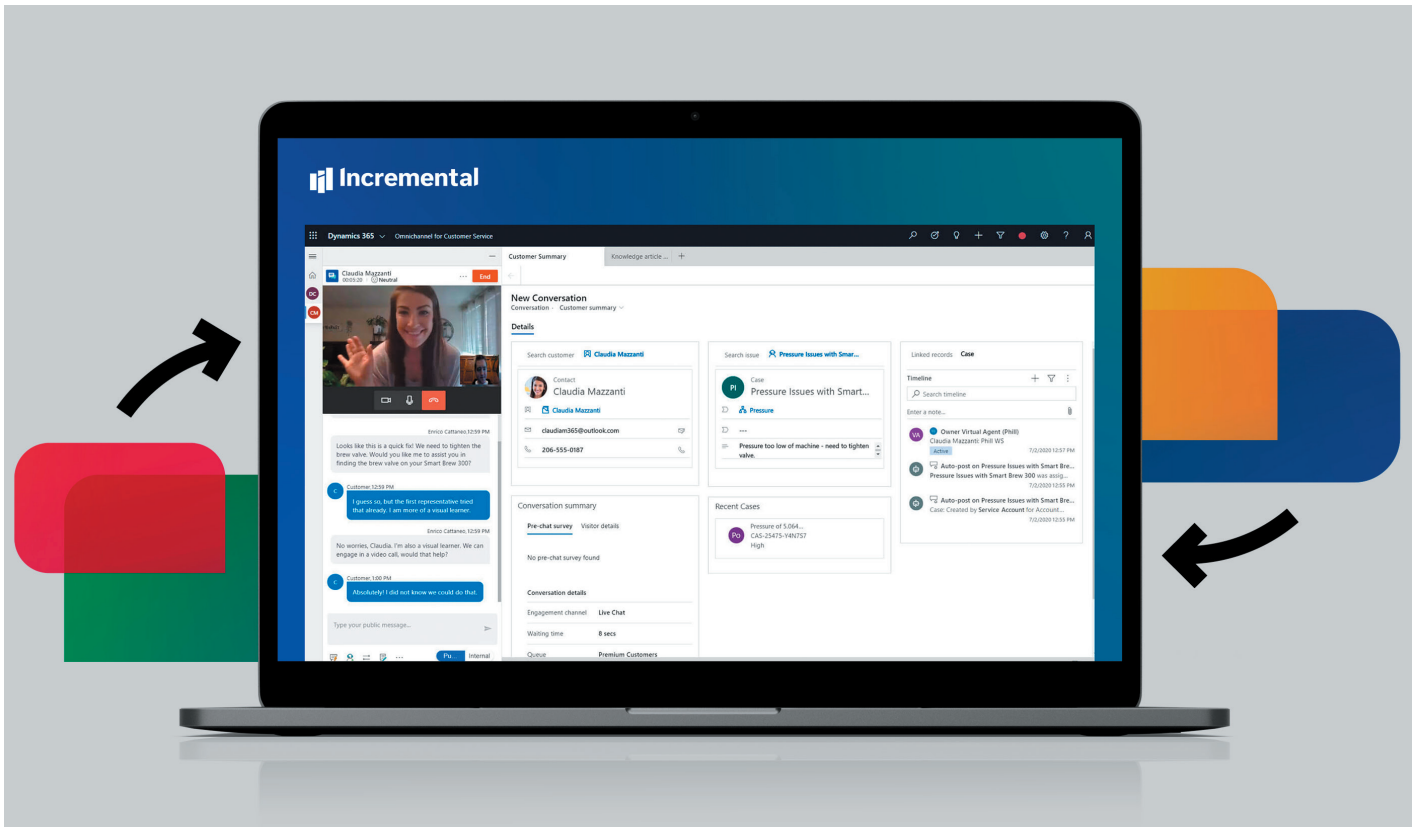
Customers are looking for personalised, proactive experiences which are consistently delivered across all channels. An omnichannel service means that no matter what channel your customer uses to engage with your organisation, either through phone, email, SMS, live chat, web, social media, or in-person, the experience is consistent and connected. Offering an omnichannel experience elevates customer experiences, but it can be challenging to achieve. Internally fragmented data, teams and processes will impact the level of service and consistency you can externally deliver for your customers. A centralised solution is key.

Microsoft Dynamics 365 Customer Service is a powerful CRM solution that enables organisations to centrally manage, track and personalise customer touchpoints. By unifying customer information and insights internally, Dynamics 365 empowers organisations to deliver informed customer experiences and build strong customer relationships with a unified, personalised experience.

Dynamics 365 Customer Service Hub provides at-a-glance views of customers, allowing agents to quickly view conversation summaries, support history and any recent cases. The Omnichannel feature provides agents with accessible, meaningful insight of each customer, including their preferred communication channel. This means that irrespective of what channel a customer uses to engage with service agents, the agent has a full view of the customer and can deliver a unified experience.

"Organisations now have the ability to approach and engage their customers in more proactive, intentional ways than was previously imaginable."

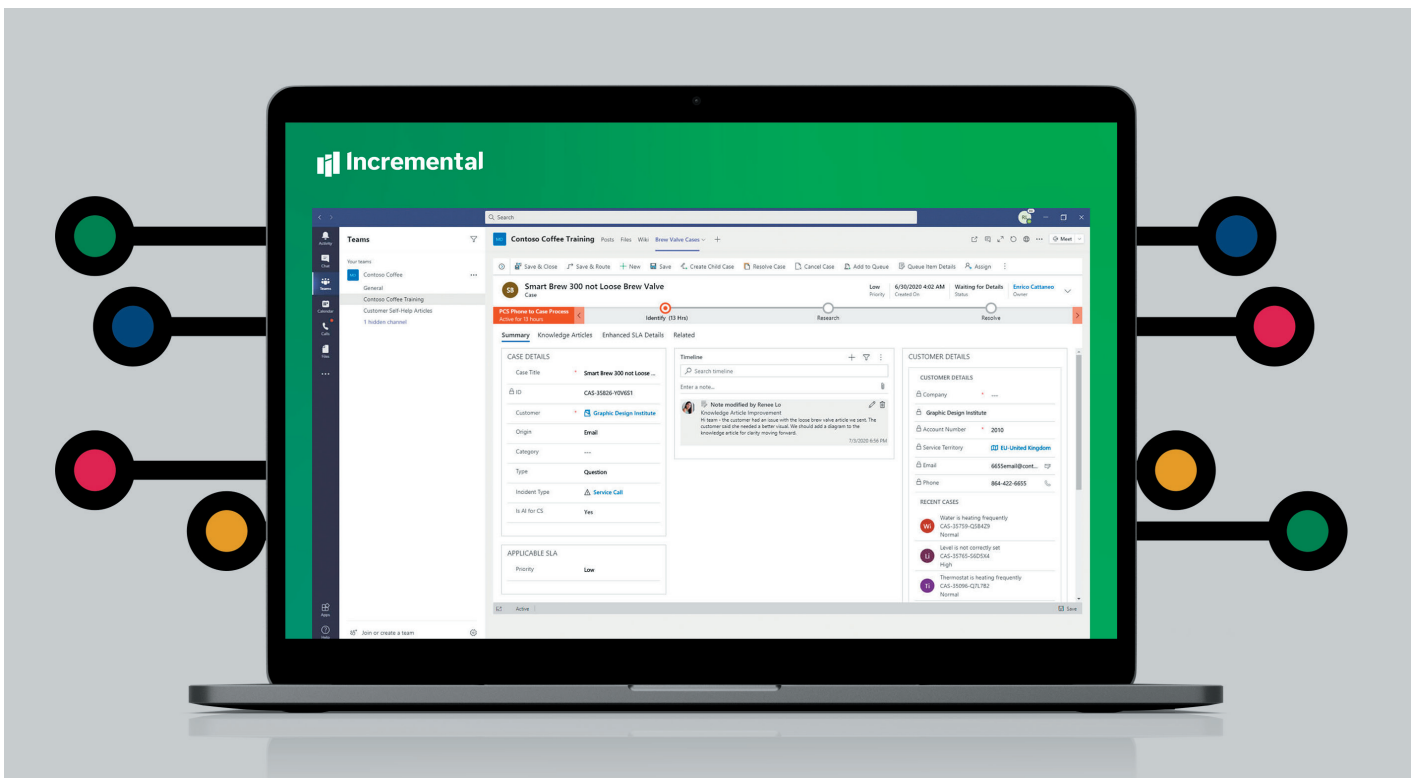
- Microsoft, Delivering personalised experiences





Customers expect personalised experiences. As many as 74% of customers report frustration with receiving irrelevant, generic engagement. Dynamics 365 Customer Service helps you avoid this by combining personalised customer insights with data-driven suggestions to support highly tailored engagements.

Dynamics 365 Customer Service has built-in Artificial Intelligence (AI) capabilities that can transform customer engagement. Embedded AI delivers suggested knowledge articles and similar cases in real-time to support agents when they are dealing with a customer. For example, if an agent is dealing with an issue, AI will highlight useful knowledge articles on the subject and personal insight into this customer, bringing supporting resources to the agent seamlessly. For more complex issues, agents can also utilise Microsoft Teams integration. Teams can function within the agents desktop, meaning agents can connect with subject-matter experts to resolve complex cases quickly, regardless of location.



Providing agents with customer and case insights, enables them to deliver a more effective service and supports a friendly environment. If agents are empowered with the right tools and can anticipate the needs of the customer, they can focus on delivering a positive, proactive service.

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Discover how Dynamics 365 increased productivity for Shelter, allowing it to reduce call times by three minutes and improve customer service levels.

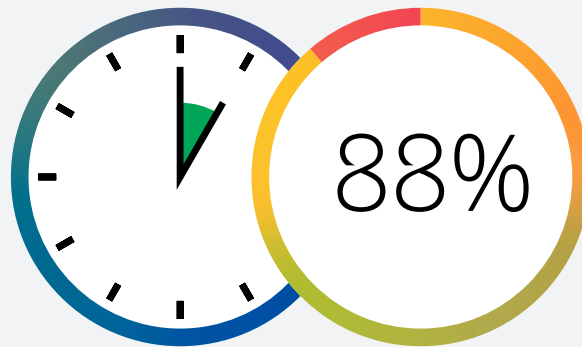




Section 3

Right time, right channel – provide service on demand

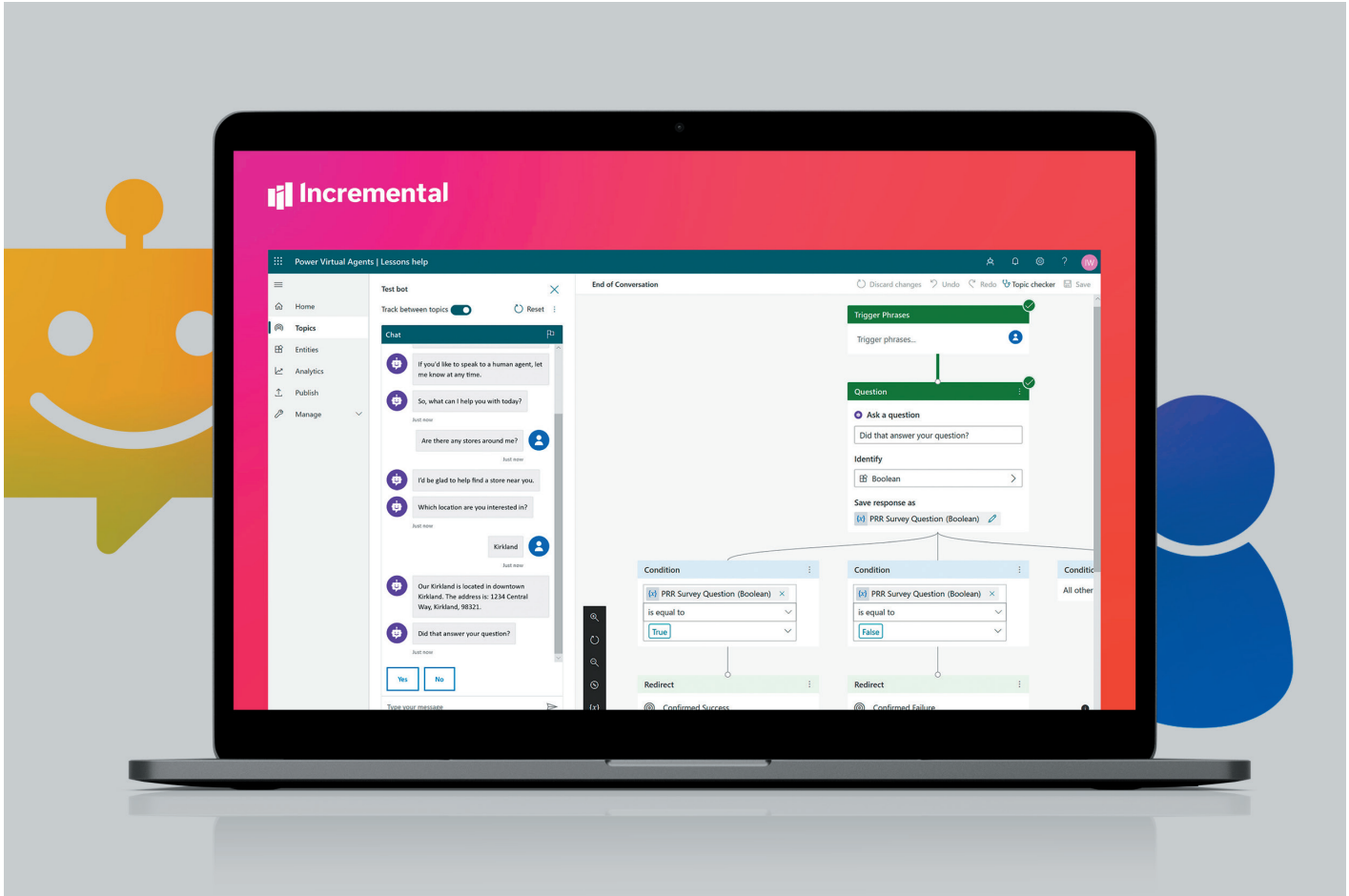
Customers are tired of frustratedly spending hours on hold when trying to speak to a service agent and this method of communication alone is considered outdated. Now, at the very least, the modern customer expects multiple service channel options, ideally with 24/7 service at their fingertips. According to a recent study, 88% of customers expect a response from a business within 60 minutes. With a high-volume of enquiries, this response time that would be virtually unattainable without the support of technology.



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Fortunately, there are solutions available that can elevate customer service and reduce pressure on human agents. Microsoft Power Virtual Agents is an intelligent chatbot solution that can transform customer service offerings. Chatbots are conversational interfaces that use AI to communicate with customers and respond to common queries. They are designed to interact with customers the way a human would, providing quick resolution to customer queries through human-like engagement.

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POWER AGENTS CHATBOT JOURNEY

To ensure customers are always provided with the right channel for their query, chatbot workflows can be designed to transfer the customer through to a human agent if the issue is too complex to be resolved by the bot. This transfer can be seamless, providing a smooth and consistent service journey for the customer. Having a chatbot as a first point of call, ensures human interaction is utilised effectively on cases that need it most. Better utilisation of resource improves the speed of customer delivery across channels.

Chatbots can be embedded across multiple channels, such as a website, Facebook Messenger and Microsoft Teams.

A huge benefit of Power Virtual Agents is its simplicity to use. Microsoft have taken the power of conversational AI and democratised it to be a widespread solution. Through low code/no code builds, anyone in your organisation is empowered to create chatbot workflows that will automate their workload, without input from IT resource. This makes Power Virtual Agents a highly flexible and accessible communication channel to embed within your organisation.



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Section 4

Listening to your customer

Customer feedback is an amazing resource for organisations, but obtaining quality, timely feedback can be challenging. Microsoft Dynamics 365 Customer Voice has been designed to augment customer interactions to help organisations deliver a truly omnichannel experience. Dynamics 365 Customer Voice is an end-to-end feedback management solution that provides cutting-edge capabilities when it comes to listening to, understanding and satisfying your customers.

By seamlessly integrating with the Microsoft ecosystem, Dynamics 365 Customer Voice makes it simpler to collect customer feedback across channels and easier for your organisation to form authentic customer relationships.

In an environment where automated surveys can be lost in the noise, Dynamics 365 Customer Voice gives you everything you need to create fully customisable and engaging surveys to optimise completion rates. The solution allows you to reach your customers and collect feedback from a variety of touchpoints, such as email, SMS, QR codes, web, social and apps. Surveys are then followed by detailed customer experience reports, allowing you to track customer satisfaction.

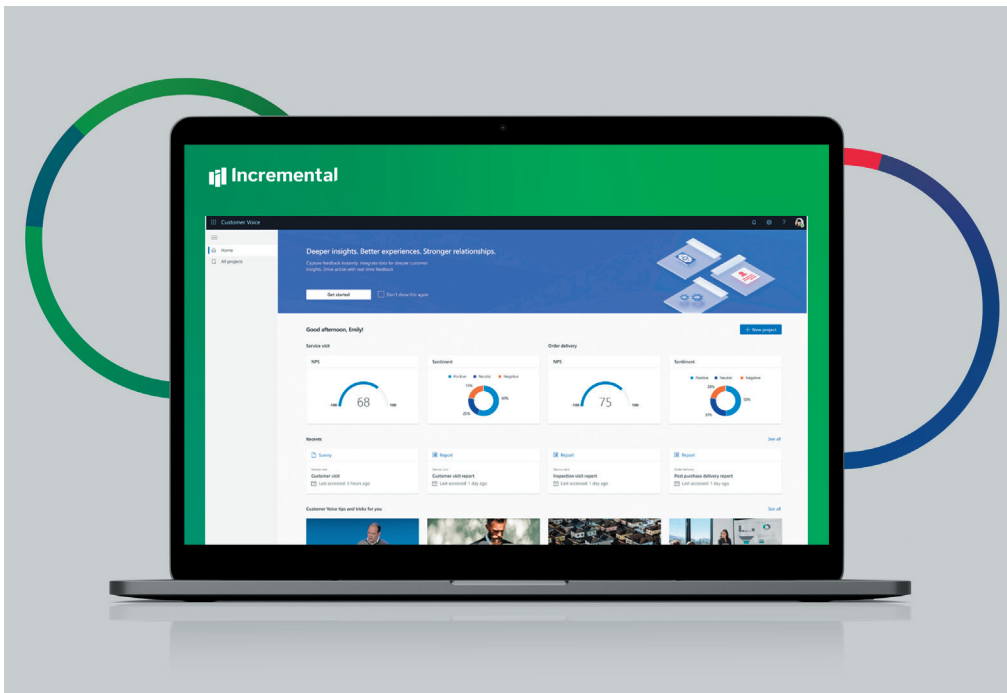
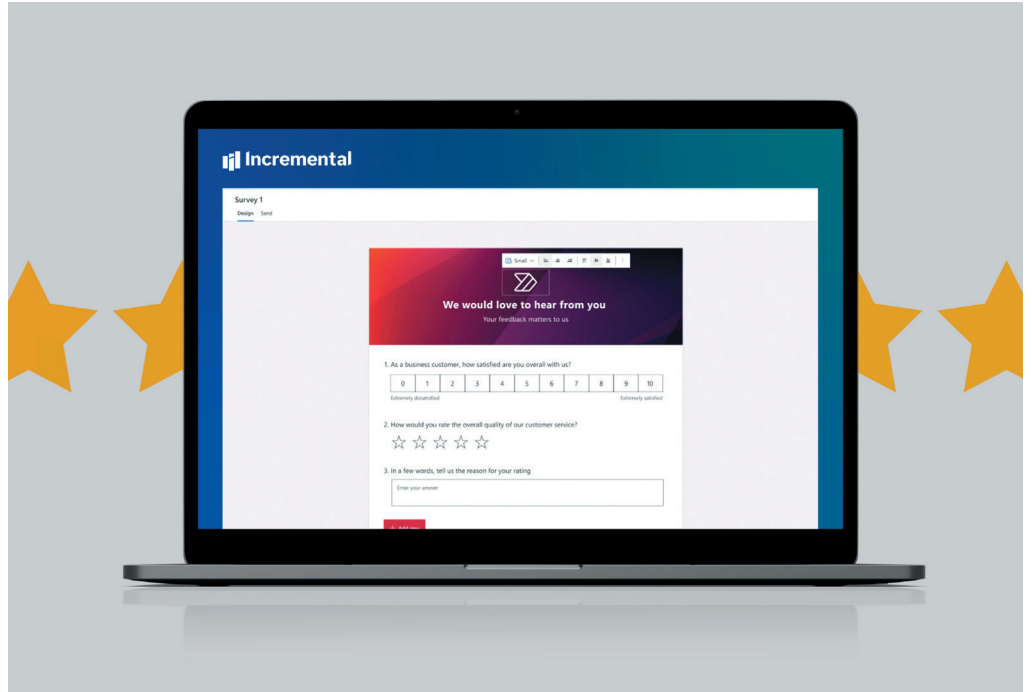


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DYNAMICS 365 CUSTOMER VOICE SURVEY

By using Dynamics 365 Customer Voice, you can uncover crucial insights such as Net Promoter Scores (NPS), customer satisfaction and satisfaction over time, then share these with your organisation through visual reports and dashboards.



DYNAMICS 365 CUSTOMER VOICE INSIGHTS

By gathering timely feedback across engagement channels and gaining insights across key satisfaction metrics, Dynamics 365 Customer Voice enables organisations to identify areas for improvement, understand the pain points in their customer journey and ultimately enhance the omnichannel customer experience.

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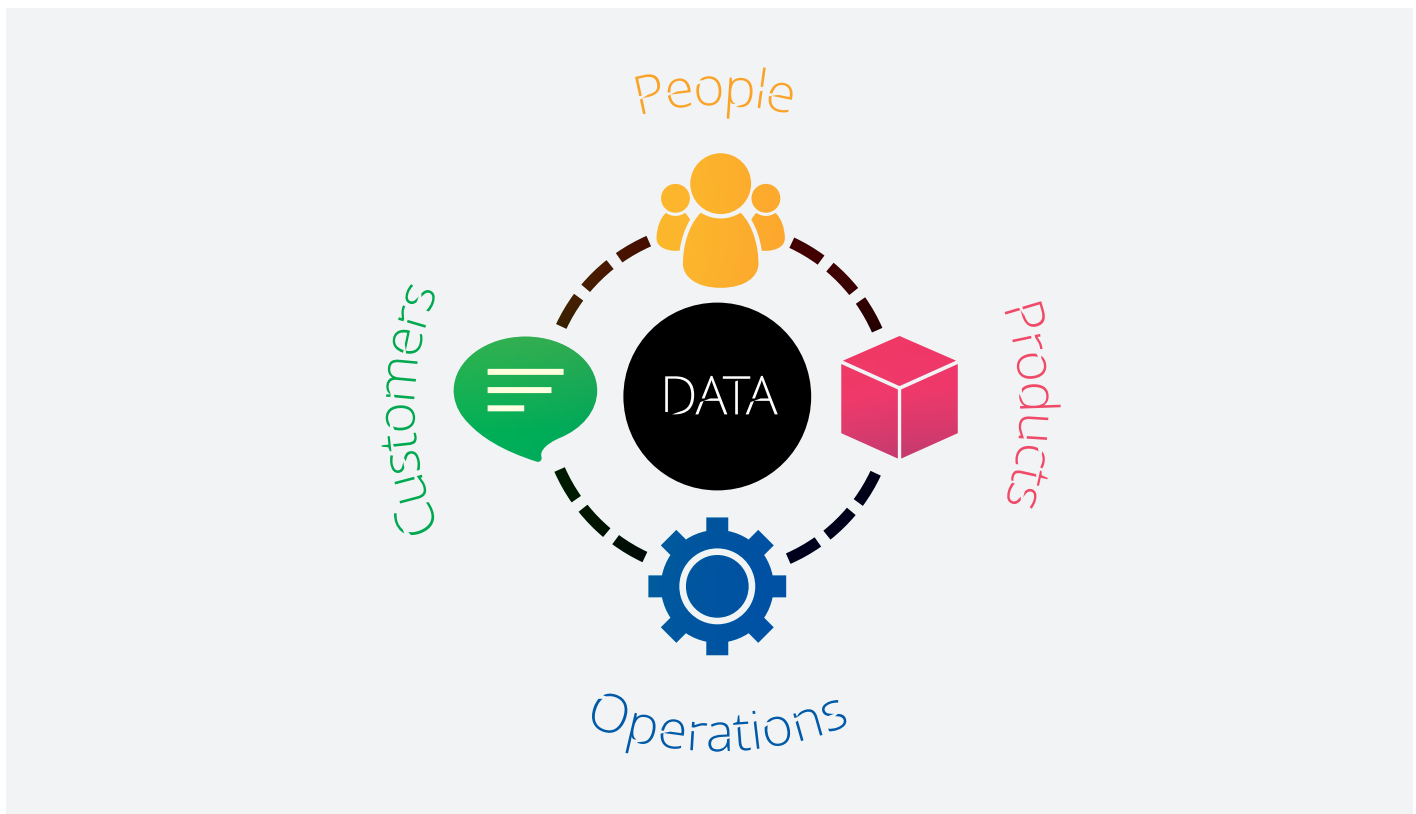


Section 5

Understanding your customer - turning data into intelligence

Underpinning good service is quality data. Crucially, data needs to be accurate, organised and useful. Deriving meaningful insights is not achieved by having vast amounts of data, which can often be unwieldy, it is achieved by having meaningful data in a useable format.

Data is at the core of an organisation:



OVERCOMING THE CHALLENGE OF MANAGING DATA

A pain point for many organisations is having under-utilised data. When information comes from a multitude of channels – across sales, marketing and customer service – it can be challenging to unify and gain a single source of truth. Additionally, having large volumes of collective data can be difficult to process and interpret. When processing data, organisation must also consider security and compliance, as its important these safeguards are in place. To overcome the challenges of managing data, organisations need a solution that can unify its data sources.

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CUSTOMER DATA PLATFORMS

Organisations can gain a 360-degree view of their customers with a customer data platform (CDP). CDP's help organisations to unify customer data across all sources to derive rich and powerful insights. Microsoft Customer Insights is a leading enterprise customer data platform which can turn data into intelligence by:

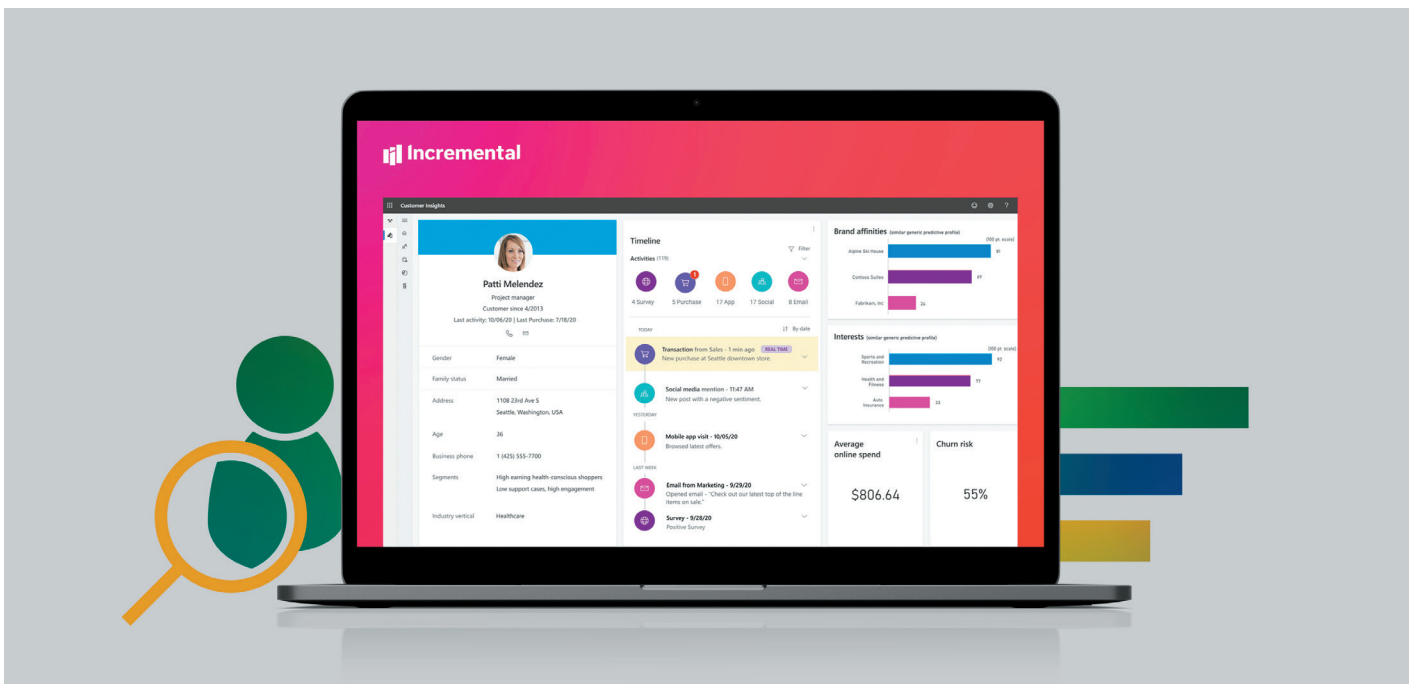
- » Uniting transactional, behavioural and demographic data in real-time
- » Enabling a 360-degree customer profiles with in-depth insights
- » Predicting customer needs with AI or custom build models.

Microsoft Customer Insights harnesses AI and machine-learning to pull data from your sources and transforms it into meaningful and concise insights which can be used by your organisation every day. The solution is supplier neutral, meaning it can connect with many data sources outside of the Microsoft ecosystem to build a holistic picture of collective customer interactions.

With audience insights, you can build a rich, single view of each customer. This can include key indicators such as propensity to churn and average spend. By combining a variety of data sources, the tool allows you to identify and segment high-value customers, information which can be shared with marketing or sales teams. Additionally, you can also augment customer sentiment and survey responses from Dynamics 365 Customer Voice into customer profiles, enriching your understanding of each customer even further.

Organisations that leverage their customer behaviour data to generate insights can outperform peers by 85% in sales growth.

Microsoft, Delivering Personalized Experiences in Times of Change.



The power of data should not be underestimated. Organisations that leverage their customer behaviour data to generate insights can outperform peers by 85% in sales growth. Delivering personalised experiences has the potential to dramatically enhance the profitability of an organisation, by truly maximising customer lifetime value.

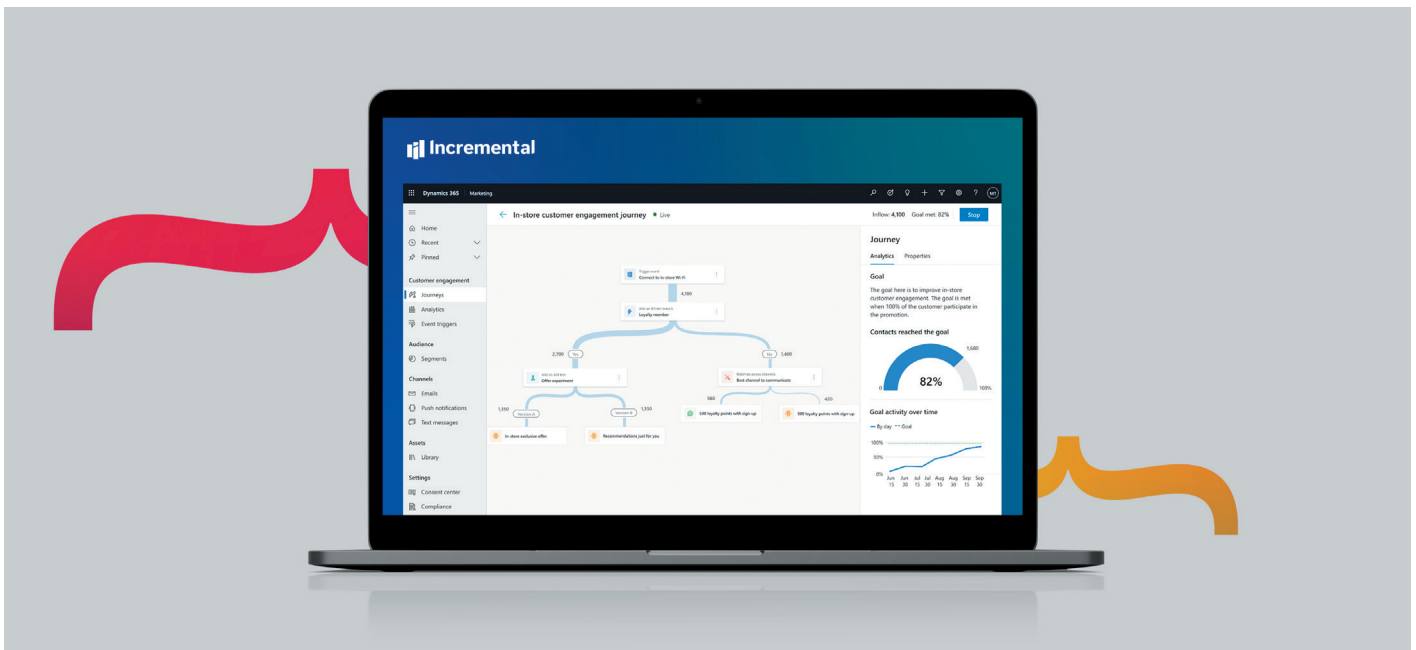


Section 6

Empower your people

Providing your people with the right tools helps you connect with your customers in a more valuable way. When solutions make people’s lives easier, your agents can focus their energy on what they do best – creating positive experiences for the customer. The Microsoft suite of solutions are fully integrated to allow seamless flow of data and communication, uniting customer-centric teams such as marketing, sales and customer service.

To elevate this further, Microsoft introduced real-time customer journey orchestration capabilities in the April 2021 release wave 1. Through Dynamics 365 Marketing, users can build end-to-end customer journey paths that unite customer experience and marketing automation. Customer journey orchestration enables personalised, holistic journeys to be created from moment-based interactions at touchpoints across marketing, sales, commerce and service.



The capability is designed to break down walls between teams and augment customer experience in digital and physical environments. The enhancement to Dynamics 365 Marketing allows you to:

- ✓ Engage customers in real-time
- ✓ Access AI-driven recommendations for communication channels
- ✓ Use in-built features to help protect customer data and meet compliance requirements.

Customer journey orchestration will help to drive meaningful interactions and build strong, loyal connections with customers.

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Partner with Incremental

To future-proof an organisation, it requires a robust and adaptable customer service solution, that truly utilises data. Partnering with Incremental will ensure your solution is fully configured and optimised to drive the most business value and transform your customer service offering. Incremental has over 20 years' experience delivering digital transformation projects, partnering with organisations across various industries. As an inner-circle partner, Incremental is in the top one percent of Microsoft Business Application partners globally, so you can trust your digital journey is in safe hands.

To find out more – [speak to a member of the team](#).