

Raise your expectations of the B2B digital customer experience

By Joe Lim, Director, Australia & New Zealand, at [Avention OneSource Solutions](#)

Digital customer experience is one of the big topics in the B2B space at the moment. And while many businesses are investing heavily in customer experience by appointing CXOs, a lingering belief that B2B lags B2C in this issue is holding many organizations back.

A quick glance at any jobs website will reveal a whole host of job titles that didn't exist ten or even five years ago. One we see more and more is CXO – Chief Experience Officer, a role that oversees the customer experience throughout the entire sales life-cycle and is deemed so critical to an organization's success that he or she sits at C-suite level.

Most still believe B2B lags B2C

CXOs are now commonplace at a majority of big banks, utilities and telcos – organizations that primarily work in the B2C space with huge customer portfolios.

The hiring of a CXO demonstrates a company's digital maturity and their commitment to putting strategic use of technology at the centre of their engagement with customers – to improve every single transaction at every stage of the purchasing journey and, over time, develop deeper, long-term and value-rich relationships.

But most agree the B2B digital experience lags that of the B2C segment – in a recent Econsultancy survey, [only 16 percent of senior leaders said the B2B customer experience they provided was as good as that offered by the best B2C experiences.](#)

What concerns me most about this finding is that it is often accompanied by a resignation that this is just how things have to be.

Outstanding digital customer experience is no quick win

But, as I wrote in my recent blog about mythbusting, the belief that B2B must always follow B2C is not just wrong – it's dangerous. It means many businesses are limiting their potential ability to use digital to improve the customer experience and so build better, more profitable relationships with them.

Of course, I understand where the misconception comes from. It's true that the B2B customer journey is usually more complex than that of the relatively straightforward B2C segment. B2B is characterized by multiple touchpoints, a diverse community of buyers, a longer and more demanding journey to purchase and often a need for ongoing support after the sale.

Getting the digital experience right at each of these stages is difficult – but it's not impossible. Achieving outstanding B2B digital customer experience highlights the need for a multi-layered and data-driven customer strategy.

Set your strategy, build a team and use your data

Often that strategy will include the appointment of a CXO – but it must extend far beyond it.

Companies that aim to build a better digital customer experience in B2B need to:

- **Create or adjust a strategy:** Improvements to the digital customer experience must be holistic and company-wide. Set a strategy and ensure all initiatives map back to this.
- **Build a team:** An effective CXO needs a strong team. For some organizations, this means recruiting new staff with the digital skills capable of delivering on your strategy.
- **Use data to drive the digital experience:** Whatever the strategy, a successful customer experience team needs insights about customers to build the digital experience that suits their individual needs. The challenge most companies are faced with is that their customer data is vast and often fragmented,

hindering their organization's ability to develop the 360-degree view of a customer's behaviour and preferences that drive a better experience and add value to the attribution process.

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