



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE MANAGEMENT

The business mantra for 2016 and beyond: Customer-centric businesses win. Nearly 90% of business leaders today believe their competitive success depends on the experience they deliver to customers. That might sound obvious, but this belief fuels investment. Businesses spend nearly \$9 billion annually to improve customers' experience, from investing in CRM solutions, relentlessly training agents, or developing robust multi-contact centers.

Despite advances, there's so much left to do. Most of us have addressed just the thin veneer of the entire customer experience. We have gotten pretty good at streamlining incoming call routing or creating an SLA to respond quickly, but we are missing the larger context. Your critical competitive edge in customer service is to untangle the web of service challenges before an issue reaches your contact center and after it's handed off for resolution.

DOES THIS SOUND FAMILIAR?

One of Acorio's global software clients was improving its contact center response times, but their customer satisfaction scores kept declining. Digging a bit, it turned out that after a client reported a bug, they got a quick acknowledgement, but after that, they only saw sporadic or irrelevant communication. Customers were frustrated not knowing in which release their bug would be addressed and what the root cause was. Customer Service did their job passing the request off to the product group, but the firm did little proactive, coordinated communication back to the customer.

That's easier said than done – particularly in industries with complex products or intricate services, such as High Tech or Healthcare. Still, businesses that want to remain competitive must evolve to deal with a new expectation of customer excellence. This is where newer Customer Service Management (CSM) solutions, like ServiceNow, can be a revelation versus previous CRM solutions that only focused on the initial engagement.

This Insight Report will walk you through the steps you can take today to create an exceptional, customer-focused culture with the information already living in your engagement systems and datacenters.

- Learn what your customers expect
- Move from fire-fighting to customer delight
- Power-up your customer-first technology stack
- See Customer Service excellence in action

Read on to find out how to leverage ServiceNow to power your Customer Service transformation.



WHAT YOUR CUSTOMERS EXPECT

Quick quiz: How will your customer rate you if they submit five requests, and you answer four perfectly, but lose the fifth? You're going to be scored on your one miss! Whether you like it or not, if you don't respond quickly or consistently, customers will take off points.

If you're trying to deliver a stellar experience that works, here are a few key elements of exceptional service you don't want to mess up:

Respond quickly.

Response time has been on every contact center scorecard for the last decade or more. While most companies have optimized their ability to answer the phone, few have leveled up beyond that. What's a better path? A customer calls in to your contact center, your system recognizes their phone number, and sends a computer-generated text that reads, "Thank you we got your request, it is now with Betsy Johnson in Legal and she'll give you her take on the situation by 5pm today."

Deliver the right answer.

Finding the person within your organization to resolve the issues that are not resolved on first-contact can feel like a baton race taking place in a maze. By embracing the power of knowledge management, contact centers empower themselves to easily search for standardized solutions and remediation processes. Knowledge can also be leveraged to quickly triage the issue and get it off to the correct support group every time.

Communicate proactively.

Customer Service also means answering the questions your customers didn't know to ask. To do that, you need to ensure they have access to the right information – curated to tell the story you want to tell. This empowers functional groups to proactively communicate with the customer and gives them a stake in resolving those issues. Customers can also be easily “subscribed” to track product releases and enhancements without the need for manual follow-up.

Connect your front and back-end.

One of the largest problems we see with clients is a disconnect between the front-end, customer-facing systems and the services hosted on the back-end, data center systems or in the cloud. Effective customer service means that everyone who touches a customer issues needs access to the same, thoroughly-detailed information. Instead, by connecting the front and back-end systems, your firm can gain immense credibility, providing the front-line customer service agent with real time system and service health statuses.

“We need to track and manage customers and partner relationships... with customer centric communication channels. ServiceNow was a good fit... Less risky than a traditional CRM application.”

- **Director of Business Applications**

INCREDIBLE SHRINKING ATTENTION SPANS

Adding to these communication challenges is the fact that attention spans are shrinking. A recent study reports that a customer will spend 10 seconds or less deciding whether or not to stay on your website. Meanwhile, a human’s average attention span has dropped from 12 minutes in 1995 to just five minutes today.

How can this declining attention span hurt you?

Situation: A customer goes to your website, but can’t find their relevant information or easy DIY solutions.

Challenge: You have six to 30 seconds to deliver the right answer before they click away and don’t come back.

Situation: Your rep fields a call, but the customer spends the first part of the call on hold while the rep tracks down if he can support this customer at his current support level.

Challenge: If you spend 7 minutes tracking down the entitlements, you can lose a client for good.

Situation: You use email as the primary means of communicating with customers.

Challenge: Only 20% of all business emails are ever opened, which means that 80% of all your company communication is never read – and customers suffer.

All of these factors add fuel to the urgency of empowering your external customers and enabling support teams to communicate with customers in the format they want, and to get it right the first time.



MOVE FROM FIRE-FIGHTING TO CUSTOMER DELIGHT

Unfortunately, expectations of service are frequently disconnected from the technical and process reality of most businesses. While customer expectations have changed, the underlying business processes powering most enterprise-level customer support systems have not evolved as quickly – creating an extreme disconnect between what customers demand, and what well-meaning reps can deliver.

Some of these challenges and complexities come from data silos in companies, which challenge cross-functional communications, intra-organization processes, and disconnected legacy systems, and can stretch resolution times to weeks or months.

Another major concern to companies is what happens after your customer's first contact. For many, lack of workflows and the siloed data we mentioned above means that firms are left emailing each other on piece-meal resolutions, passing spreadsheets, or failing to communicate with the customer at all. These are the types of frustrating experiences that lead customers to submit lower net promoter and customer satisfaction scores.

TODAY'S (BROKEN) SERVICE PROCESS

Here's what we have heard as common customer service complaints from our clients. See if you can spot where it goes wrong:

- A Customer reports an issue with their software (a report is not functioning as expected).
- A Customer Service Rep (CSR) can't see entitlement information to see if they can even support this customer.
- The CSR emails the sales team to check if the customer has the right entitlements to receive support. The customer is told he'll receive an email resolution.
- The CSR waits.
- The Customer waits.
- The CSR gets an email confirming the issue is covered under their Service Agreement.
- The CSR fills out a Jira ticket to remediate the issue. which goes to the Product group.
- The CSR emails the customer to tell them they are working on the problem.
- The Customer waits.
- The Product group tags the resolution for a future release (date not known yet).
- The CSR gets a Jira notification via email with the info that it will be resolved in a future release.
- The CSR emails the Customer the info about being resolved in a future release.
- The Customer is frustrated that something they bought does not work.
- A few weeks to a few months later... A new release rolls out resolving the issue. Unfortunately, the CSR does not alert the Customer Account Executive, and the Customer is never notified that the issue was ever fixed.

Hopefully, you can see how this customer journey is wrought with waiting and frustration. Ultimately, for your customer, this process doesn't resolve the issue in a reasonable amount of time, and doesn't notify circle back with your users to let them know if the issue is ever resolved.



POWER-UP: YOUR CUSTOMER-FIRST TECHNOLOGY AND PROCESS STACK

If you are stuck thinking about what your legacy database or ticket system (such as Jira) is capable of, you are looking at the wrong end of the equation. We know some of the best Customer Service whiteboard sessions immediately run up against the brick wall of technologies intersection with process – but that doesn't need to be the case. To make Customer Service exclusively about serving the customer, it is imperative to dig deep and design the Customer Service Management (CSM) strategy with your customer in mind. Again, this seems like a simple concept, but one you might consider impossible with today's in-house technology.

The good news is, other firms have struggled with these same issues and used proven approaches for Service Management to address them, building on IT Service Management roots and tried and true process guidelines like ITIL.

“By having both the ITIL and case management functions on the same platform we are able to get to triaging and identifying the root cause, which we believe is very strategic for us.”

- SVP Business Transformation

Companies like ServiceNow have taken these successful ITSM frameworks and can now aggressively solve for Customer Service Management’s needs – ultimately devising elegant solutions via a new customer-first technology stack.

Here are some benefits you should consider when looking at a more holistic solution:

1. A system of engagement.

ServiceNow’s CSM application offers a single portal organized by customer need (vs. internal functional roles), allowing you to track customer data throughout your company. For example, financial credits given when customers report a service complaint will automatically show up on their bill.

This top-down, holistic information allows your team to look strategically across your organization, uncovering customer experience holes and managing challenges as they evolve. Leveraging Self-Service capabilities, you can also realize serious cost savings by funneling routine questions away from expensive support personal.

2. Automation.

Service Management technology allows you to develop traceable, interconnected workflows that extend across multiple processes, and improve the structure around how those processes get implemented. These workflows reduce the time it takes your team to execute expensive, productivity-draining manual processes (and, again, save you money)!

3. Faster, more accurate data.

Using back-end systems that connect data among different functional groups in real-time, Customer Service Management unifies your data by offering a single view of your customers. This perspective and data integrity allows you to better serve customers where they are, when they want.

4. Effective, flexible connections across your corporate ecosystem.

Companies often rely heavily on suppliers and partners to deliver for customers. Being able to share data and work steps is critical. More importantly that sharing has to happen quickly and cost-effectively for companies to meet their goals. Facilitating this data sharing with one unified system gets you on that path.

5. Transparent work processes.

The key lynchpin to help companies become customer centric is to give executives the ability to see business trends, and to automate strategic insight “intangibles,” allowing your team to make decisions based on real data, and connect issues and savings from one internal team to the other. Even better, these systems can frequently be implemented for a fraction of the cost and time required by ERP implementations.

DRIVERS OF CHANGE

It's rare that you'll wake up on Tuesday morning and decide to re-invest in your entire Customer Service Management Platform. Here are some common drivers behind a customer service upgrade:

Something Bad Happens. A major incident, such as a service outage or other major complaint, is the most common driver behind the decision to purchase a new Customer Service Management Platform. It's also the worst case scenario. Now, your company needs to deal with potential Operations and PR issues, as well as launching a brand new a technology deployment.

Antiquated Customer Service Systems. Most firms today have under-invested in their CSM back-end, continuing to work off one (or several) homegrown or customized CSM solutions – most of which are simply not working anymore. If you have a legacy system that is so slow and dog-eared, you may already know it's not effective for the modern business reality. Really – Address it now, before something blows up!

New Customer Experience Initiative. Sometimes it's the CEO or CXO that is looking to understand, streamline, and improve experiences for their customers. Customer Service will likely be a central component of that initiative, and benefit from the energy and budget that comes with an executive-led program.

Company Merger or Acquisition. Frequently, merger or post-merger integration programs need to justify the purchase by delivering cost efficiencies in the combined organizations. As most companies in these situations will have multiple customer service groups and systems, this becomes a time to rethink the entire program.



CUSTOMER SERVICE IN ACTION

“We chose service management as our preferred approach over using CRM as it provides a best practice framework that [we] will leverage to drive improvements in service quality & consistency for our complex products and positively influence our NPS results.”

– **VP, Service Strategy**

The best way to showcase the opportunity presented by Customer Service Management is through an example. Here’s how a large Software company implemented a new CSM platform to power-up their internal data and deliver more consistent service delivery:

THE CHALLENGE

A global software provider was growing quickly and required significant transformation at a strategic level, sponsored by the CIO. Through that growth, a major strategic priority emerged: to become a best-in-class customer service organization. They would measure their success by improving renewal rates, increasing follow-on product sales, and eliminating time-consuming issue escalations throughout the organization, which were draining team productivity.

THE SOLUTION

Executives at the firm rallied around the CIO's charge, and increased their focus on customer service. Examining all of their relevant business units – from service reps to finance and ops support - they uncovered challenges in process and technology impeding their ability to deliver the stellar experience they wanted to offer customers.

Team goals also included providing individual business units with the ability to share the same, unified customer data, and generate better reporting for executives to help the whole business make informed decisions on the anecdotal challenges they uncovered. Ultimately, the team decided to launch a trial effort of ServiceNow's unified Customer Service Management Platform, beginning with an urgent pain point at one of its U.S. software divisions.

THE RESULTS

The U.S. division is now working on a customer-facing portal that not only improves service, but also provides key insights to the company's internal IT resources. With these tools in place, the team can now detect trends and engage in early interception of emerging problems. In fact, the success of the U.S. trial has led to further service management automation throughout the Global organization.



PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER: A NEW TYPE OF EXPERIENCE

“With CSM we can close cases faster and we are very impressed with the ability to automate processes via the service catalog. Our C-level executives are excited to track our KPIs real time.”

– **Service Operations Director**

Don't let today's decisions leave your business behind the curve on Customer Service's next evolution. As customer expectations transform, your competitors are moving quickly to conquer this next Customer Service mountain – that means you need to think deeper and more strategically about your investments.

To realize the promise of full-power Customer Service, you need to go past your initial phone call to connect your entire customer experience. Connecting your Customer Service Management team (the people) with organized, automated workflows (processes) will ultimately allow you to make better product decisions, increase customer loyalty, and find new growth opportunities.

For most companies, this new reality requires a new technology backbone to manage and track customer requests, and follow them through the myriad of functions supporting your customer. ServiceNow has emerged as that backbone, with a strong foundation in service management played out in IT, HR and other functions. These applications power data and workflows across different departments, solving many of the common challenges facing internal CSM teams. You will get:

1. **Transparency** of a request as it migrates through different groups towards resolution.
2. **Insight** into your customers and what may be relevant to them, their products, or the overall account.
3. **Automation** of processes to boost your speed-to-resolution, increase self-service opportunities, and increase customer satisfaction.

You can't afford to let your technology be the reason your company falls behind. Providing your team with technology specifically designed to manage Customer Service and integrate data arms them with the tools they need to deliver the responsiveness and user experience we've come to expect in this App-driven world.

ABOUT ACORIO

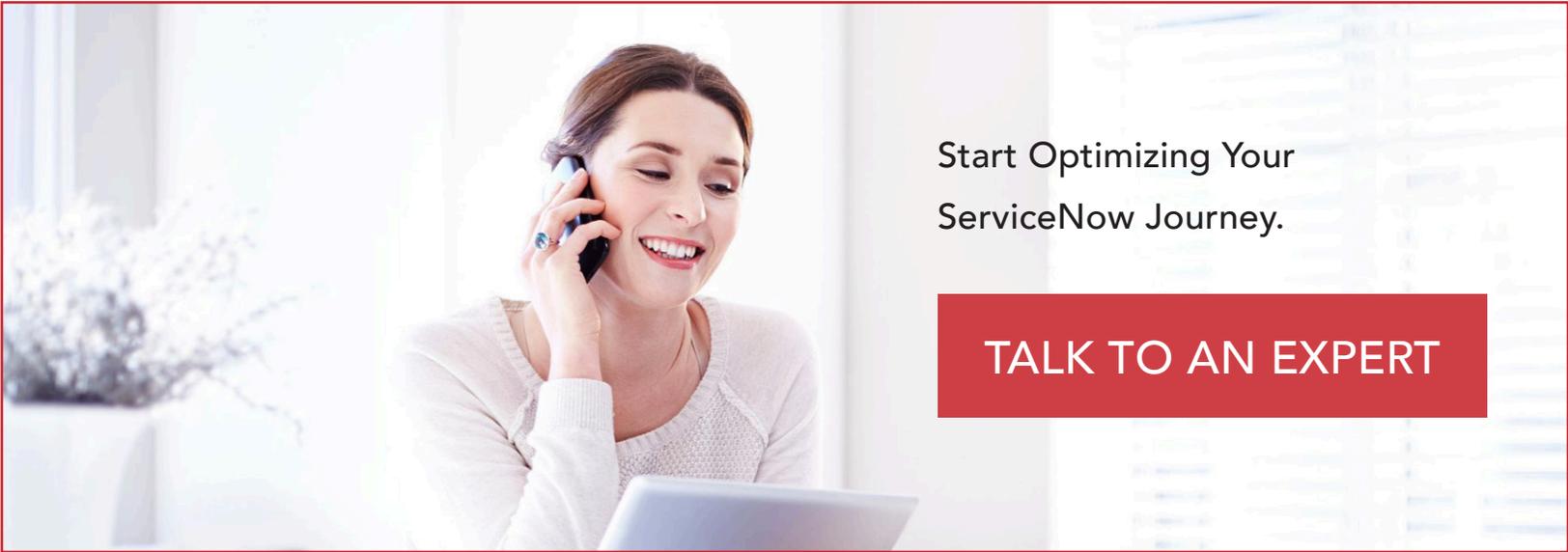
Acorio is an exclusive ServiceNow cloud consultancy on a mission: to deliver on ServiceNow's promise, with inspiration, guidance and unparalleled expertise throughout your entire customer journey.

We offer Big Five credibility with start-up agility, innovation and a relentless focus on customer excellence.

- **100%** year-over-year growth
- **130** Clients, **250+** implementations
- **70%** repeat business
- One of the **highest CSAT** scores in the ServiceNow ecosystem

"Acorio has a consistent and proven commitment to do the job well. They are able to keep the effort aligned to the underlying objective and purpose. When challenges happen, the Acorio team works in partnership with us to guide the project toward the right solution."
– Executive Sponsor, Global Bank

For further insights and answers, contact an Acorio ServiceNow expert for a free, no-obligation review of your service management concerns. Simply click the link below, email info@acorio.com or call 1-866-333-8768. We look forward to helping you take the next step ahead!



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ServiceNow Journey.

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