

The composable enterprise and IT democratization

The competitive advantage CX and IT leaders need

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Executive summary

With ever-mounting pressure on brands to deliver exceptional customer experiences above and beyond competitors, traditional systems and processes threaten to derail even the best-laid plans.

As digital transformation and customer demands converge and accelerate, offering flawless digital interactions and exceptional customer experiences (CX) is no longer “nice to have”. It is an operational necessity.

Many enterprises recognize the importance of great CX, with 45% of companies citing CX as a top-three priority over the next year¹. And the link between CX and organizational success is also becoming more apparent: 63% of high-growth organizations say they proactively engage with customers to ensure the best experiences compared with 37% of low-growth businesses².

Yet not every business is achieving its CX ambitions. Just 31% of executives strongly agree that customers have satisfying experiences with their organization most of the time³. And across the board, CX quality declined for nearly 20% of brands in 2022⁴.

The challenge facing CX and IT leaders is that today’s technologies, systems, and processes aren’t equipped to keep up with rapid changes in modern communications platforms and customer preferences. With so much change arriving over the last few years, customer experience teams need levels of flexibility never seen before, to the point where agility is no longer a discretionary advantage – it’s mission-critical.

Unfortunately, few organizations have the agility, collaboration, and speed of delivery needed to power amazing customer interactions:

This whitepaper explores how organizations can create seamless customer experiences at scale and speed by becoming composable enterprises and democratizing IT.

49%

of executives say they need faster software/ systems delivery to create great CX

46%

say they need to promote collaboration among technical teams

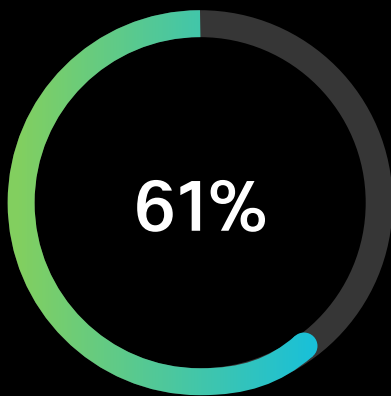
45%

say they need to promote collaboration across business teams⁵

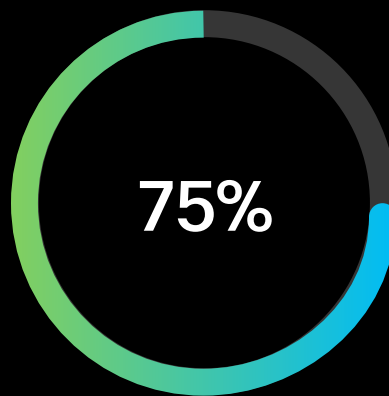
The importance of great CX

If brands can't offer great experiences, customers will go to a competitor that can. And with new customers costing up to five times more to acquire than retaining existing ones⁶, it pays to keep customers coming back for more.

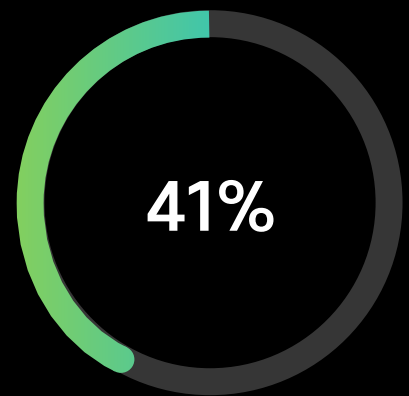
Beyond customer loyalty, great CX also impacts the bottom line:



of customers are willing to pay more for goods and services if they think they'll receive a higher standard of customer service⁷



say they'd definitely return to a company in the future if it resolved their issues promptly⁸



of executives say their CX success helps reduce costs⁹

While leaders are taking action, they risk compounding the problem

It's no secret that CX leaders have been finding ways to deliver seamless customer experiences for years – with the most successful brands taking the bulk of market share.

But recent events have escalated expectations from customers and business users about the pace of change. Geopolitical shifts, supply chain shocks, and other market pressures have forced brands to make rapid, repeated changes to their services and experiences, and customers now see rapid responses as the norm.

Now, enterprises can't maintain this expected cadence of change. Whether its new features in an app or more regular digital communications, many organizations can't continue to deliver at this rapid speed due to fragmented legacy systems and complex environments that limit agility. And traditional enterprises can be risk averse, holding back the pace of change even further.

When organizations can't deliver new features, products, and processes fast enough, CX suffers. But for some businesses, their tools lack the three pillars that support modern, agile customer experiences and interactions:

- Support for digital channels so you can offer convenient, fast experiences on customers' preferred platforms
- Automation across conversations and back-office processes related to customer service and communications
- Integration with existing back-end processes and systems to enable personalized experiences

The average organization will have hundreds of customer use cases across their products, geographies, and business units. Organizations may be able to deliver these three CX pillars across some of these use cases. But very few enterprises can deliver them in every situation at every time.

While some businesses have invested in new CX platforms to support these pillars across a wider range of use cases, these firms aren't always able to make the most of their solutions and tools. Only by improving collaboration between IT and lines of business can enterprises get maximum value from their CX investments, drive innovation, and meet modern customer demands.

Enacting change on the fly: three common mistakes

While attempting to deliver better experiences and respond to competitive disruption, businesses are likely to make three mistakes:



**They don't design
end-to-end
journeys**

leading to poor data flow
across interactions and
disconnected customer
experiences



**They focus on
making existing
tasks more
efficient**

instead of designing new
processes or reimagining
old ones to deliver
better experiences for
customers and employees



**They maintain
hard walls
between front
and back office,
and different
departments**

instead of building
experiences that break
down silos

Composable enterprises and democratized IT can transform CX

To realize rapid digital and CX transformation, enterprises need to embrace becoming composable and democratizing IT.

Composable enterprise

A composable enterprise assembles its offerings from modular, packaged business capabilities to improve agility, time to market and innovation.

They're designed to rapidly build, test and learn in a way that helps deliver unique and customized application experiences to users. But delivering a composable enterprise isn't possible unless you build deep collaboration between stakeholders and blur the lines between business and IT.

To make a composable enterprise a success, IT, business technologists, and digital teams must work together. That's the only way to innovate, drive growth, and deliver newfound digital and business agility.

IT democratization

The democratization of IT has two purposes: providing more people with technology and increasing the capabilities of non-technical workers. Both help an organization prototype new ideas, test them, and bring them to market faster. And crucially, both can be done in a way that maintains security policies and other IT-mandated controls.

It's necessary because many technology acquisition and management decisions are now driven from business units and employees that sit outside of IT.

In fact, according to Gartner, by 2024, 80% of all successful emerging technology solutions will be delivered to non-traditional buyers within enterprises.¹⁰

This group of non-traditional technology buyers will only grow over time. With technology now readily available to companies of all sizes and even private individuals, it's little wonder that a generation of "digital natives" has grown up "technologically fluent" (41% of the workforce can be categorized as a "business technologist"¹¹).

The popularity of smartphones, entertainment apps, and casual games is serving as a catalyst for the democratization of technology. And the need for businesses to become more adaptable, flexible, and resilient to meet growing consumer expectations has further accelerated technology democratization and made the shift permanent.

Enterprise transformation is easier said than done

Democratized IT offers significant opportunities to deliver more change, faster and more efficiently than ever before. And by providing technology to a broader group, IT can promote more diverse ideas and opinions. But democratization can also present challenges – most notably, losing control of digital estates.

Technology – particularly cloud – has simplified the digital enterprise. But it's also created a patchwork of vendors, services, and APIs that need to work seamlessly. IT doesn't always have complete visibility over every application in the organization, meaning security can suffer.

This lack of alignment between IT and other teams can put significant pressure on IT departments, leaving little time for innovation.

By balancing autonomy and control, IT can offer teams greater freedom and technologies that meet their needs while maintaining overall availability, security, and resilience.

But to do this, IT leaders need to look at applications in a holistic sense, rather than just focusing on the infrastructure powering them. With an application-centric approach, IT can assert its role as a critical business enabler – working with cross-functional teams to create greater value.



Checklist:

Six key recommendations to build a composable, democratized approach

Take an ecosystem perspective

- Assess your entire IT estate to ensure it's working well and able to power applications across the whole business.
- Ensure your technology ecosystem allows individual parts of your business to easily interact and collaborate.
- Avoid opaque, complex designs and ensure all parts of your ecosystem are transparent and easily understood.

Create a core team to drive your ecosystem transformation

- Work in a matrix structure to understand and empower all business units.
- Drive cultural and technological change to build more agile processes in your organization.
- Coach, mentor, and support everyone working in your ecosystem.

Embrace technology democratization

- Find business units with technology skills and look for opportunities to build out the tools available to them.
- Avoid "one size fits all" engagements across the business—every team will have unique needs.
- Offer tools for non-IT teams (e.g., scheduling, analytics, and reporting solutions).

Invest in people and technology knowledge

- Invest in new talent to bring different ideas and perspectives to your business.
- Support employees to reskill, upskill, and take training to stay up to date with best practices.
- Give employees greater control of their career trajectory and chances to get involved in new technology and CX projects.

Assume a digitally native workforce as standard

- Ensure high levels of technology skills and investment across the business.
- Prepare for shifts in service provider relationships and technology platforms.
- Meet your consumers on the channels and platforms they prefer.

Prioritize low-code to improve accessibility

- Get consensus across teams for preferred low-code tools.
- Document all the tasks that currently require professional IT support.
- Use low-code techniques to streamline these tasks, and other workflows where possible.

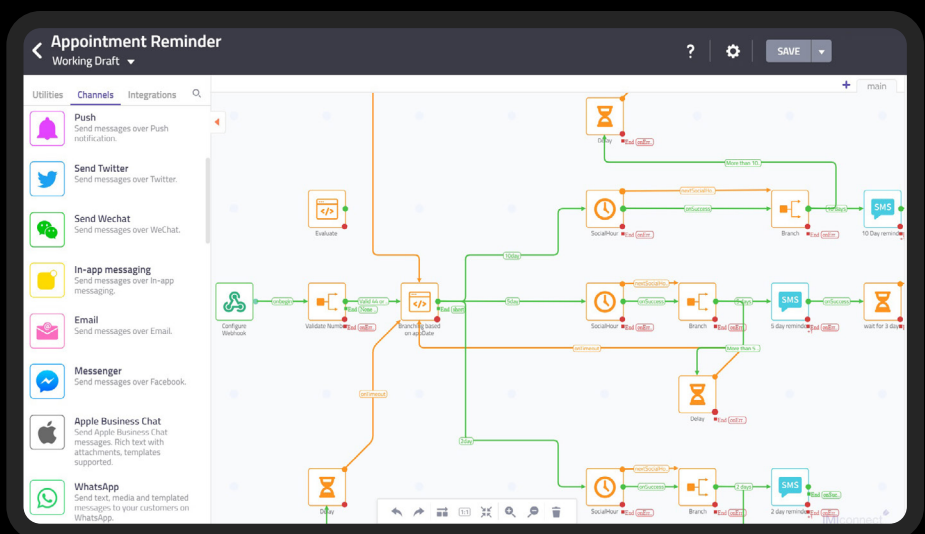
CX transformation: buy or build?

Delivering a composable, democratized IT estate that powers agile CX is far from easy. You could build your own communications-enabled applications that deliver end-to-end journeys (or have a partner make them for you). But you'd still have to contend with the expense and the potential security and scalability challenges of this type of solution, and maintaining, analyzing and iterating versions across the entire application lifecycle.

Buying an enterprise-grade cloud communications platform sidesteps many of these issues. But even the best platforms can only offer the speed and agility CX, and IT leaders need if they're designed with the key elements of composability in mind:

- Low-code features and pre-built modules that allow technical and non-technical staff alike to quickly build new customer journeys, orchestrate journeys and automate conversations through a drag-and-drop interface
- Flexibility and extensibility, including support for many types of use cases, and the ability to start with a single use case and then expand incrementally as required
- Interoperability so teams can adopt digital channels and integrate them with existing systems, whether they're proprietary, homegrown applications or modern SaaS solutions
- Tools for lines of business such as reporting capabilities, templates, and scheduling features for multiple user personas so businesses can empower different teams and functions to create and manage CX applications quickly in response to changes in business needs

**Automate
conversations
through a
drag-and-drop
interface**



Webex Connect: everything you need to deliver modern CX

Webex Connect offers an easy-to-use cloud communications platform that transforms your customer journeys. It reduces the time, cost, and complexity of delivering outstanding customer and employee experiences at scale.



Enterprise-grade CPaaS

Webex Connect offers a Communications Platform-as-a-Service (CPaaS) that comes with built-in security and compliance features as standard. Take advantage of robust controls to manage customer preferences and consent, and simplify compliance with data privacy regulations.



Empowered IT and non-technical users

Pre-made building blocks enable IT and line of business users to rapidly create, test, deploy, and manage customer journeys. Low-code functionality lets users test new channels and journeys faster to accelerate time to market, and flow builders and visual message editing help all teams maintain their focus on delivering great CX.

And it's designed to offer everything you need to build a composable, democratized approach to digital customer interactions.



Rapid deployment and integration

Programmable APIs and SDKs, message queues, and webhooks can integrate a wide array of systems over various interfaces. From legacy apps to modern cloud solutions, you can connect processes and data to empower CX and IT teams and deliver future-proofed customer experiences while extending the value of existing technology investments.



Support for automated interactions across channels

Use conversational AI to automate routine, high-frequency interactions and quickly transfer to live agents for more complex tasks. With support for 16 channels, and a platform that puts everything in one place, you can meet customers on their preferred platforms - while saving valuable agent time.

A composable enterprise driven by democratized IT is just a step away

CX continues to cement its importance as a strategic imperative. And by shifting to a composable enterprise driven by democratized IT, organizations can create a unique opportunity to radically deliver amazing customer experiences faster—while transforming their operations.

While a composable, democratized approach to technology is a long-term, enterprise-wide initiative, the right solutions can help you kickstart the journey and fast track the benefits.

Webex Connect is one solution that can help you improve agility across your CX function while helping technical and non-technical teams deliver modern customer journeys from end to end.

To learn more about how Webex Connect can help you deliver amazing customer experiences at scale and speed, download our whitepaper **'Make every interaction count: How Enterprise CPaaS orchestrates and automates end-to-end journeys.'**

[Download whitepaper](#)



Sources

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