Amdocs is ahead of the low-code trend in telecoms with Experience360 launch

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Summary

Finding the balance between customer experience and customer engagement is becoming table stakes for the telecoms industry as consumers churn to those providers that best meet their needs. To help communications service providers (CSPs) transform customer experience and engagement, Amdocs launched Experience360, a low-/no-code digital customer engagement platform.

Customer experience is a make-or-break operation for CSPs

CSPs have long overlooked and under-invested in the customer experience; instead, relying on market dominance or low levels of competition. This has laid the groundwork for the telecoms industry to be disrupted by internet content providers (ICPs) like Facebook, Google, and others who pride themselves on curating and personalizing the experience for each of their customers.

The success of ICPs has had a monumental impact on customer needs and expectations. Consumers expect an experience that is personalized to their specific tastes. They expect that as they move from channel to channel, the experience will remain consistent. They also expect that as their needs evolve, their service provider will seamlessly adapt to them. What's more, is that consumers are now empowered by the abundance of affordable options on the market and are willing to churn, as frequently as needed, to the provider that best fits their needs.

With ICPs threatening to overtake CSPs as the majority player in the telecoms industry, the stakes are higher than ever for CSPs to get the customer experience right. CSPs need to know what their customers want and how, when, and where to deliver it while two separate operations—customer engagement and experience—are inextricably linked. CSPs must provide customers with the tools and support they need to have the best experience with the service, while also knowing when to reach out and in which channels to do it. When executed well, customer engagement can be the gateway to customer satisfaction, loyalty, and even monetization via opportune upselling and cross-selling.

Understanding the importance of managing and personalizing the customer experience and improving customer engagement, CSPs have increased their investments in these areas in recent years. The Omdia *2021 ICT Enterprise Insights Survey* found that 96% of CSPs see personalizing the customer experience as an important business challenge. More than 50% of CSPs plan to increase their spending on customer engagement systems in 2021 and 67% plan to upgrade their engagement systems.

Focus has also turned to incorporate data and automation to improve customer engagement. The same survey found that more than 97% of CSPs plan to invest in intelligent end-to-end customer engagement. As the industry continues to roll out 5G and begins to identify monetization strategies to generate a return on investment (ROI), finding the right balance between managing the customer experience and customer engagement will become table stakes for CSPs.

Amdocs launches Experience360 low-code solution to transform customer engagement and experience

Early in May, Amdocs announced the launch of Experience360, a cloud-native low-code-based digital engagement platform aimed at helping CSPs rapidly design and transform the customer experience. Experience360, part of Amdocs DigitalONE engagement suite, offers a cross-channel user interface (UI) design with journey mapping capabilities and is embedded with analytics to facilitate a personalized customer experience across engagement channels and the customer lifecycle. The core features of the platform include:

- **UI element gallery** is a library of UI components that CSPs can use to redesign customer engagement channels. Components in this tool are pre-integrated and can be embedded in any channel. For CSPs who wish to add their flavor, the tool enables CSPs to develop their components and connect them to DigitalONE with a low-code data-binder. Amdocs has opted to use an open source standard tool—Storybook—for this capability.

- **View Manager** uses the UI components and empowers business users to create and design customer engagement channels. Using a no-code, drag-and-drop graphical user interface (GUI), CSPs can quickly design self-service apps, e-commerce pages, help portals, and any other assisted or unassisted engagement channels. CSPs can also incorporate metadata to personalize engagement across channels, for example, by customizing welcome messages with the customer's name or displaying the customer's bill total. In addition to designing external channels, CSPs can use the View Manager to transform applications used by customer-facing business users, such as applications used by retailers or customer service representatives (CSRs).

- **Journey Manager** is a customer journey mapping tool that enables CSPs to personalize and contextualize the experience across engagement channels. Journey Manager integrates with internal and external data sources to drive the business logic of the customer journey. It uses artificial intelligence (AI) to suggest modifications to the design of the customer journey and can be used to provide the next-best offer suggestions to customer-facing users such as CSRs. Journeys can be customized for different user personas and to create a consistent omnichannel user experience.

- **Dynamic integration points** enable CSPs to integrate with specific data sources on an ad-hoc basis to retrieve the specific data needed to personalize, add context to, and improve the customer experience.

Experience360 is the latest in low-/no-code offerings from Amdocs. The vendor previously launched Microservices360, a microservices development accelerator that leverages low-code functionality to help CSPs speed up the development time for cloud-native applications. The digital experience platform is an interesting move from the software and services vendor. The suite's capabilities compete well against the incumbent, horizontal customer experience and UI design solutions on the market. Where Experience360 differs, however, is in the delivery of a telecoms-grade solution in a single end-to-end suite for CSPs.

Will low-code be the next big trend in telecoms?

Low- and no-code solutions have become the hottest new thing in the technology industry over the last year. No-code development tools appeal to the average business user who may have an idea or problem that needs to be solved, but little to no coding skills. Low-code solutions, on the other hand, appeal to

developers that have limited development skills in a particular area or for developers looking to reduce development times. Although the adoption of low-code tools has taken off for horizontal applications, will low-code be the next big trend for the telecoms industry?

The Omdia *Service Provider Digital Transformation Strategies Survey – 2021* suggests that while the current adoption of low-/no-code solutions is nominal, there is a seemingly growing appetite for easy-to-use tools. Nearly 45% of the surveyed CSPs stated that they had already implemented some form of a low-/no-code solution in their organizations. Another 32% of CSPs indicated they had plans to implement low-/no-code in the future. So, where do the opportunities lie for vendors?

The lowest hanging fruit is solutions—like Experience360—that enable CSPs to quickly make improvements to customer-facing aspects of the business such as engagement, sales, and marketing systems. Other areas of opportunity for vendors are aspects of the business that require specialized skills or knowledge. Recently, for example, several vendors have developed low-code microservices solutions that aim to speed up the development time of cloud-native applications. These low-code solutions are targeted at CSPs who have minimal development resources in-house and help lower the barrier to entry to cloud-native.

Low- and no-code solutions that help CSPs address pressing business challenges (e.g., creating new revenue streams) and barriers to transformation (e.g., IT skills, IT complexity) are likely to see the most traction within the industry. For now, however, it is yet to be seen if low-/no-code solutions will become the telecoms industry's next big buzzword.

Appendix

Further reading

Digital Consumer Insights 2020: 5G, Mobile-only, and Bundling (March 2021)

Service Provider Digital Transformation Strategies Survey – 2021 (December 2020)

ICT Enterprise Insights 2020/21 – Global Survey: Telecoms Survey (November 2020)

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