Three Key Strategies for Consistent Customer Experience

Liferay

The Problem and Potential
of Connectivity

Companies trying to thrive in the 21st century are faced
with an interesting paradox. Opportunities for business
have never been more available, with the rapid ascent and
ubiquity of the Internet allowing worlds to be connected
closer than ever before. Business presence could simply
mean having a website with eCommerce capabilities,
allowing a resident in Japan to purchase clay pots from a
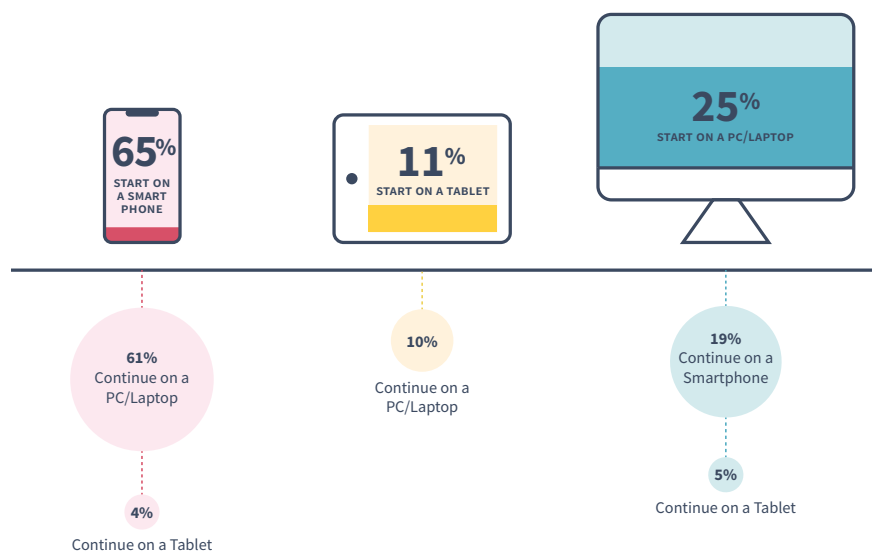retailer in Zimbabwe. This is the power of connectivity.

Yet demands from customers have never been greater, and competition to garner their attention more fierce. Consumers are now connecting with brands through various touchpoints. A study found that 67 percent of people switch between devices to shop online, and 46 percent of those managing finances online start on one device and finish on another. Customers can now use their mobile devices, smartwatches and even kiosks to interact with brands. They are looking for more than just a well-made product — they want a brand that will provide them with the most comprehensive experience from beginning to end regardless of what channel they use.

Increasingly, consumers want access to information and the ability to make purchasing decisions without being "tethered" (in the literal sense of the term). Users are asking for a "wherever, whenever" experience that will allow them to perform the same actions whether on their PCs or mobile. In essence, it is a call for a digital environment that provides the most convenience with the most relevance to where they are in their purchasing decision.

This means industries are being pressed to deliver a consistent user experience or risk falling behind. Unify customer experiences across multiple touchpoints for a seamless customer journey that will not only attract customers but also retain them for much longer. In this paper, we address three key strategies to creating a digital blueprint to engage your customers across their channels of interaction with you: (1) mobile-first design, (2) a single platform approach and (3) a single view of your customers.

Customers Take a Multi-Device Path to Purchase

65% START ON A SMART PHONE

11% START ON A TABLET

25% START ON A PC/LAPTOP

61% Continue on a PC/Laptop

4% Continue on a Tablet

10% Continue on a PC/Laptop

19% Continue on a Smartphone

5% Continue on a Tablet

Source: Contevo, The Multi-Device Path to Purchase

1. Mobile-First Design

Imagine it's winter season and you're getting ready to brave the harsh weather. You search for that perfect fleece jacket, scouring the depths of the web before coming across the one. Your phone rings; you have to head out for your meeting. As you board the subway, you resume the process on your phone and complete the purchase. Your jacket will now be delivered just in time for the weekend.

52%

are less likely to buy from a company via other purchasing channels if they experienced a problem conducting a mobile transaction.

This is shopping on the go. And this is where your customers are. For many of these consumers, their first interaction with your site will come through mobile. How you translate your customer experience onto the mobile platform might determine whether it will be their only interaction with you.

Since most web searches start on a mobile device, a high number of digital interactions now occur within a screen no bigger than 7.5 x 9.5 inches (iPad) and possibly as small as 2.3 x 4.5 inches (iPhone 4G). A mobile-first strategy guarantees that you are addressing the harshest environment first. No longer can sites just be mobile-responsive, but rather need to be specifically designed for mobile users in mind. If you are designing a site, begin by thinking about how your users would experience your content through mobile. By preparing your design for any screen, you can ensure that your website and web apps will function and appear the way they're intended on any device.

Consider this fact: 52 percent of survey respondents said they would be less likely to buy from a company via other purchasing channels if they experienced a problem conducting a mobile transaction.[1] Ultimately, the question boils down to this: can you afford to not delight your customers?

THE GIST OF IT

- Many first-time interactions with your brand occur through mobile.

- Address the harshest environment first.

- Prepare your design and content to be experienced on any screen.

---

1 What Users Want Most from Mobile Sites Today
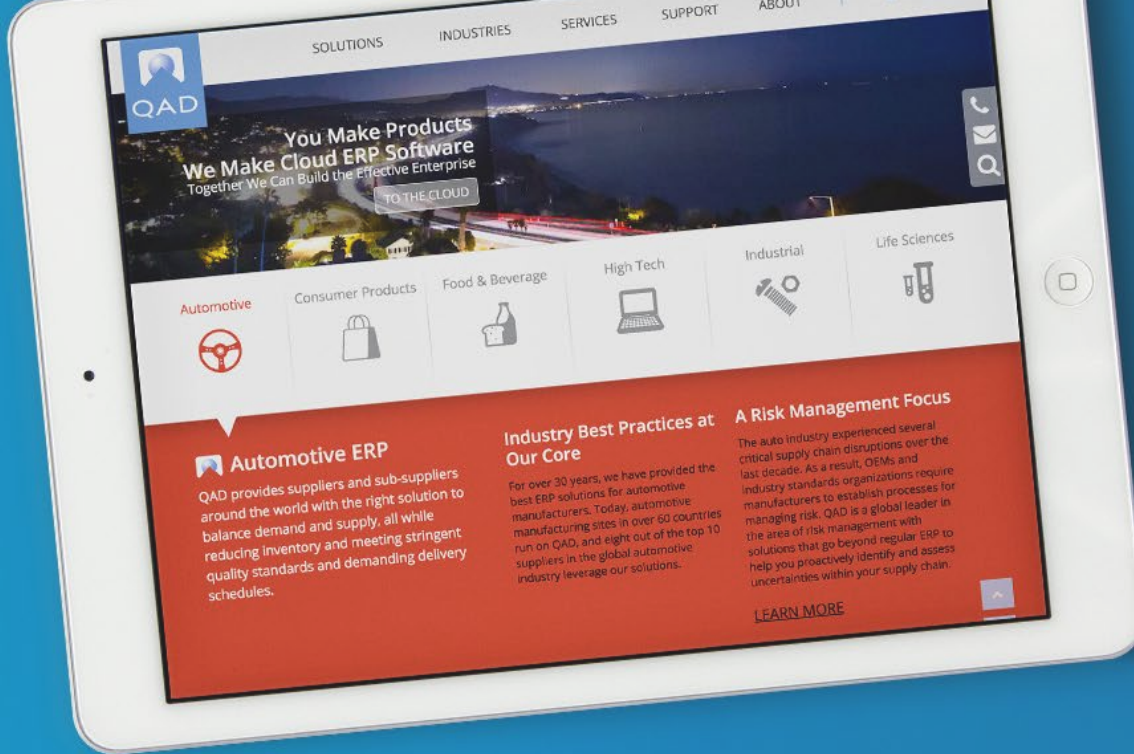
2. Single Platform Approach

Development teams would be wise to go one step further than planning for a "mobile-first" strategy. In order to meet the needs of the consumer whose experience with your brand is now spanning across various and diverse channels, you need to develop a dynamic interactive platform. It's good to offer mobile responsive websites and hybrid and native apps; it is even better if they learned to talk with one another. This is the hand-off that occurs from platform to platform, one in which customers will receive a consistent experience with your website whether they are on a tablet, phone or laptop.

86%

of marketing leaders are NOT delivering a personalized experience across all channels.

THE GIST OF IT

- Think about ways to offer an omnichannel experience with your brand.
- Your websites and apps should talk with one another.
- Users should be able to complete the same actions regardless of device.

This need is seen most clearly in the financial services sector. We are witnessing a dramatic change in how consumers are doing business with banks and insurance agencies. Based on a report by IBM, 51% of adults perform some type of financial transaction online.[2] Furthermore, it is common to start a loan application on desktop, continue the form on a smartphone or tablet, and drop into a local branch to talk to a representative to complete the process. This type of omnichannel experience allows customers to interact with a company through various channels simultaneously.

Organizations should look to push for ways to converge the entire user experience. "Divisions that have traditionally been working in silos need to start working together," says Kirsty Wilson, Multi-Channel Usability (UX) Manager of Santander UK, "to ensure that the information provided to customers is consistent, regardless of the channel that customer has chosen to interact with."[3]

Configuring a seamless digital experience would not only bolster the online experience for your customer, but it could also result in greater impact on your physical business. If you own a brick and mortar, imagine having customers begin the purchasing decision on their devices and arriving at your store to complete the process. This involves a level of depth and familiarity with your customers' buying patterns that will earn their loyalty in the long run.
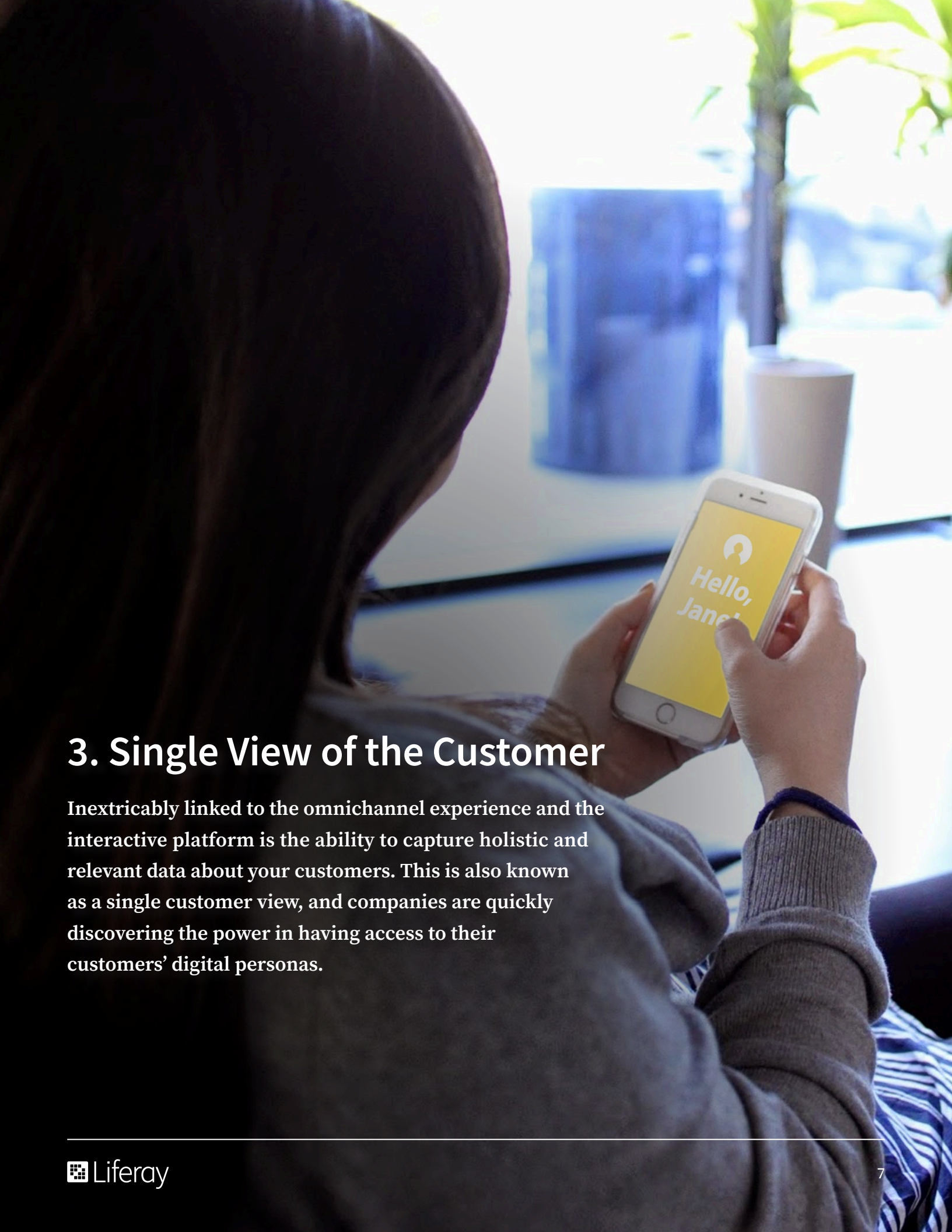
As it stands, only 14% of marketing leaders are presently delivering a personalized experience across all channels.[4] Strive to be the company that distinguishes itself from the rest of the pack. By offering the convenience and familiarity of the user experience to your prospects, you will be more likely to gain better brand recognition and opportunities for profitability.

---

2 Managing the Customer Experience
3 Meeting the Expectations of the Mobile Customer
4 Digital Marketing - What are the Top Goals and Challenges

3. Single View of the Customer

Inextricably linked to the omnichannel experience and the interactive platform is the ability to capture holistic and relevant data about your customers. This is also known as a single customer view, and companies are quickly discovering the power in having access to their customers' digital personas.

Behind every purchase should follow a meticulous trail of all website interactions leading up to the actual purchase.

The single customer view involves a progressive understanding of a shopper's preferences or purchasing history. Behind every purchase should follow a meticulous trail of all website interactions leading up to the actual purchase. The goal is to leverage data (or customer analytics) in order to make smarter and more informed decisions for your customers such as product preferences or pricing.

This is especially vital in the eCommerce realm. Let's say you happen to buy a pair of yellow sneakers on a site. A good system will log this information into their system and employ a learning algorithm to identify other related products in which you might be interested. In this case, you might be offered a pair of the same brand of sneakers in a different color the next time you enter their site.

Regardless of your product or industry, your web platform should feature (or at least be integrated with) a tracking system that will gather data about your users and help you to analyze their past behavior. This will, in turn, enable you to present more targeted and personalized calls-to-action upon future return visits.

Employing an effective single customer view will benefit both the organization and customer. For businesses, this could mean a reduction in operational costs, time management and higher sales; for customers, this would provide a more targeted and personalized interaction with your service reps, reduced obstacles to communication, and overall, a more satisfying experience with your brand. Simply put, it's a win-win.

THE GIST OF IT

- Single customer view allows you to make better decisions with customer data.

- Your web platform should feature a tracking system to collect user info.

- Each user should receive targeted and personalized content.

Where Should I Start?

Begin with an honest assessment of your web platform. Consider providing a catalog of your customer's experience across all your current channels. See how the content, layout, and web functionalities change when you access your site on different devices. Ensure your customers have seamless and excellent experiences that are consistent throughout every touchpoint.

A few questions that could help frame your discussion: Is your content mobile-friendly? Are you taking advantage of customer analytics? Do you have the capability of achieving an omnichannel experience with your current site offerings? If you are seeing issues in completing any of these goals, it might be time to consider new or additional solutions.

Certainly, the main operative principle involves the long-term relationship between you and your customers. As stated by McKinsey & Co., consistency of a person's journey is an important indicator of overall customer experience and loyalty.[5] If you are providing them a gratifying experience, chances are you'll earn their trust and keep them coming back for more.

Ready to Start Improving Your Customer Experience?

See how the Liferay platform helps businesses bring together multiple touchpoints for one cohesive, excellent customer journey.

See how Liferay does this at liferay.com/dxp.

---

5 The Three Cs of Customer Satisfaction

Liferay

Liferay makes software that helps companies create digital experiences on web, mobile and connected devices. Our platform is open source, which makes it more reliable, innovative and secure. We try to leave a positive mark on the world through business and technology. Hundreds of organizations in financial services, healthcare, government, insurance, retail, manufacturing and multiple other industries use Liferay. Visit us at liferay.com.