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2019 Global Customer Experience Benchmarking Report

Executive Guide

Bridging the artificial reality

Insights
driven by data

Contents

1. Foreword

With the customer now unquestionably at the centre of organisational strategy, the spotlight is on customer experience (CX). Yet, the findings from this year's Global CX Benchmarking Report reveal something of an artificial reality: a gap between CX ambitions and truly customer-focused change. The bridge? An integrated CX strategy that's built from the outside in.

CX strategies: integration or fragmentation?

CX is recognised as the number one driver of digital transformation and the top strategic measurement for organisational performance.

The right CX approach can help organisations stand out from the competition and contribute to their commercial success. But those whose strategy and operating model are aligned to optimising CX are still in the minority.

There are several reasons for this. In many organisations, business units still manage their own CX efforts independently, so it's difficult to get that all-important single view of the customer and deliver a consistent experience.

At the same time, challenging operating conditions and legacy technology get in the way of making the leap of faith to true digital transformation. Without a cohesive CX strategy, organisations risk getting lost in the belief that having more channels is synonymous with superior customer engagement, instead of understanding the value of CX-driven channel integration. In this case, the addition of new digital channels will create more problems than solutions.

The relatively high levels of collaboration reported this year suggest that organisations recognise this and are moving in the right direction.

Building CX from the outside in

Successful CX strategies need fundamental CX design thinking. An interconnected strategy that reaches all areas of the organisation will go a long way to bridging the gap between where organisations think they are and what customers actually experience.

CX can work only if it's built from the outside in. First, design something that's relevant to customers. Then get everyone in the organisation on board.

This is what we're seeing among disruptors: those organisations revolutionising customer engagement. They're doing more than just revising their processes and points of contact - they're transforming their thinking and culture. They're displacing old ways of working and their associated inefficiencies. They're also recognising and incorporating the value of traditional customer interactions. While service, fulfilment, and marketing processes are largely digital, human interaction is brought in at the point where it's most valuable.

In this Executive Guide to the 2019 Global CX Benchmarking Report, we look at some of the key themes emerging from the findings and the questions they raise about bridging the artificial reality between 'saying' and 'doing'.

Customer analytics, artificial intelligence (AI), and digital integration were identified as the top factors that will reshape CX capabilities in the next five years. Right now, it seems organisations are pausing to take stock, and that's a good thing. More introspection and well-considered action can take CX from a perceived digital-only strategy to a company-wide approach to any level of customer engagement.

It may not be easy. But considering what's at stake, it will definitely be worth it.

Rob Allman
Group Senior Vice President, CX at Dimension Data

Rob is a global practitioner and thought leader in CX. For over 20 years, he's enabled organisations to transform and grow the value of their customer relationships.

7 key insights into the global CX landscape

Findings reveal a gap between CX ambitions and CX capabilities, from strategy to implementation. For many, progress has stalled as they pause and take stock before taking the next step.
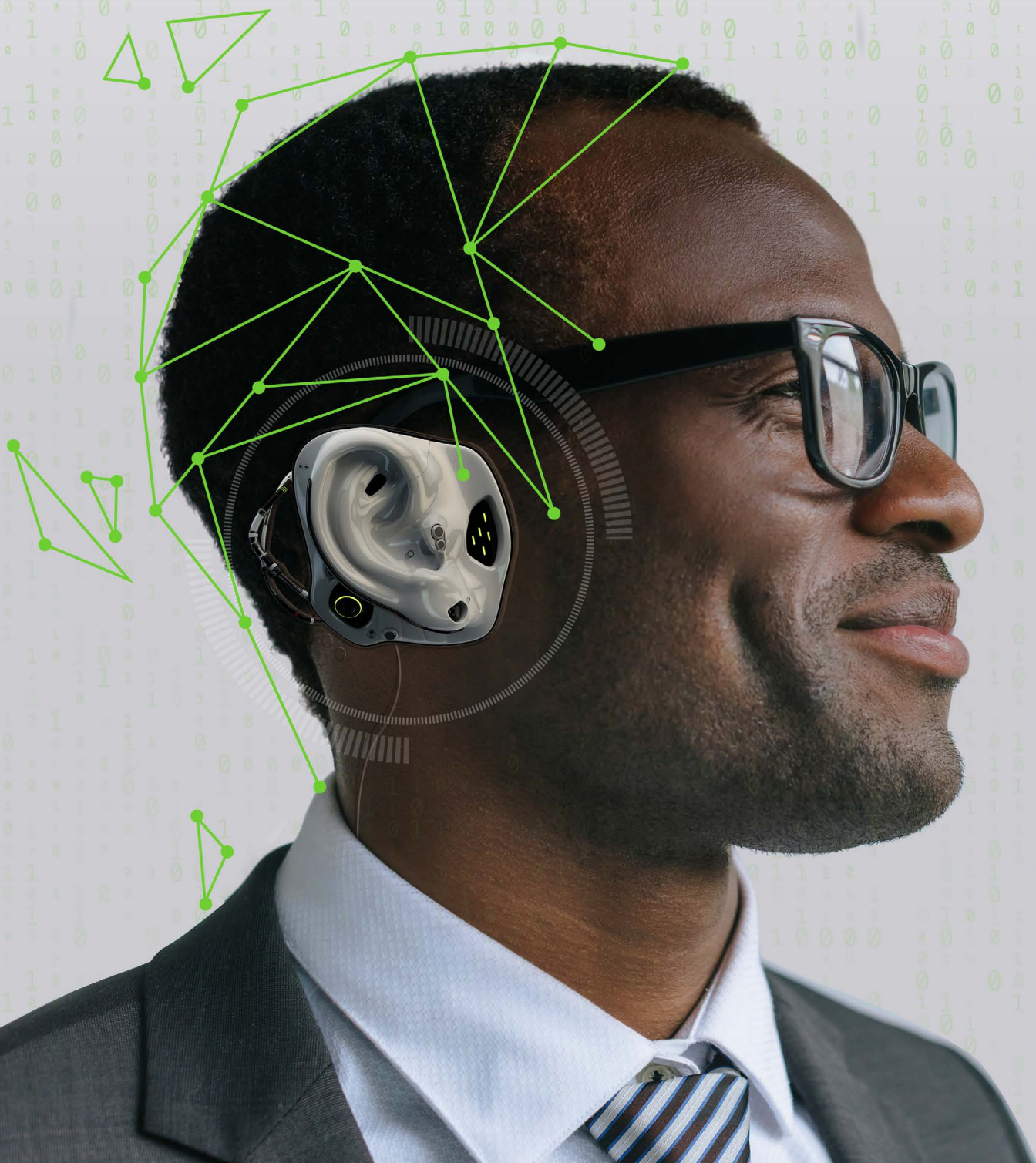
1. CX transformation

Top 3 factors that impact customer satisfaction:

1. **ease of resolution (customer effort)**
2. **agent knowledge**
3. **ease of contact (choice and accessibility)**

CX recognised as important but not delivering expected returns:

- Almost 9/10 see CX as a competitive differentiator.
- Only 10.9% have promoter-level CX rating.

From boardrooms to meeting rooms, there's an overwhelming recognition of the **importance of CX** – particularly when it comes to building **customer loyalty**, which 87.2% of organisations agree can be directly linked to **commercial success**. CX is still the number one measure of **strategic performance**.

Yet, only 30.4% of organisations have an **executive** on the board **accountable** for CX. Most are still managing CX solutions at a **business unit level** and many are not seeing an improvement in commercial performance following their investment in new channels – most likely because of **poor design and implementation**.

We are seeing an increase in **collaboration** when defining and designing CX strategies across the organisation. And while 37.6% of organisations seem to have no immediate plans to transform, 62.4% see the **opportunity** in evolving their CX transformation strategies to really stand out from their competitors.

Moving from this artificial reality will require organisations to **embrace change and stop doing business as usual**. Developing a CX-centric, market-relevant strategy that's driven from the boardroom will help to create more value for customers and the business.

2. Connected CX journeys

> **Top 3 challenges to omnichannel:**
>
> 1. **channels managed in silos**
> 2. **too expensive** − **business case not proven**
> 3. **too difficult** − **no consistency in how channels are configured**

Huge intent but limited integration of channels:

- Omnichannel strategy/connected customer journey was a top 3 trend for empowering CX delivery in 2017.
- Only 8.4% have all channels connected.

For the first time in five years the average **number of channels has dropped** (from 9 to 7). It seems organisations are **pausing to reflect** on the performance of new or evolving channels.

Despite the best intentions to develop a **connected customer journey**, organisations are still struggling to overcome the challenges of systems integration issues and inconsistent data formats. Issues here are that channels are managed separately and tracking is done by **individual channel owners**, so for most there's **limited to no visibility** of the CX journey across channels. As a result, CX delivery is hugely **inconsistent**: a problem that's compounded by not having defined and integrated customer journey strategies.

Again, we're seeing **greater cooperation**: business units are increasingly **sharing intelligence** and **configuring data consistently** so they can be transferred across groups.

To create a connected customer journey that has a positive, lasting impact, organisations will need to better **understand** their **user channels** and **integrate** their customer **strategies**.

3. Digitalisation

> **Top 3 factors driving digital business transformation:**
> 1. **improve customer experience**
> 2. **customer demand for digital**
> 3. **cost reduction**

Desired benefits obstructed by limited adoption of digital channels:

- CX and customer demand main reasons for drive to digital channels.
- Digital uptake has stalled.

With digitalisation promising to improve CX, reduce costs, and drives sales and growth, the significant increase in **digital strategies** already in place or in development is unsurprising. It's also encouraging, given that the **uptake of digital channels** is currently **well below desired levels**.

IT resources, budgets, and legacy systems are the usual suspects behind this, but the **poor design and management** of digital channels also plays a role. With each new channel added, these problems will only escalate, which is why it's so important to have a **clear strategy** and **cohesive approach** across business units and channels. It's encouraging to see the majority of organisations reporting alignment and collaboration here.

It's also interesting to note that many **customers are unaware** that digital channels exist – something a well-devised marketing campaign could help rectify.

To exceed on-demand customer expectations, collaboration efforts should focus on designing and consolidating a clear strategy across the organisation.

4. Robotics and AI

Top 3 benefits of robotics and AI:

1. **improve customer experience**

2. **cost reduction**

3. **customer analytics — detailed data capture**

Costs, cybersecurity, and customer feedback are big concerns:

- Service automation forecast to be a huge focus in next two years.
- Concerns about security vulnerabilities and negative customer feedback holding back development.

Organisations are looking to automation technologies to **improve** their **CX**, **customer analytics and business intelligence**. They also anticipate a better **employee experience**, as automation reduces the mundane tasks agents must perform.

It makes sense, then, that most organisations expect digital transformation efforts to intensify in the next two years. **Greater investment** in agent-assisted digital channels and robotics will see a **rapid change in the digital mix**, increasing the average number of channels from 7 to 12.

But first, they will need to address their **concerns** about **costs**, **cybersecurity vulnerabilities**, and possible negative **customer feedback**. They'll also need ways to **measure** their **return on investment**. With budgets under pressure, organisations will require a strong business case to develop automation capabilities.

In exploring robotics and AI as part of an **overall CX strategy,** CX teams should use **data analytics** to understand the business case for **automation**, and how it can contribute to **CX transformation.**

5. Customer analytics

> ## Top 3 types of customer data collected:
>
> 1. **voice of the customer feedback (incl. complaints)**
> 2. **customer journey data/transaction**
> 3. **demographic**

No shortage of intelligence, but still no single view of the customer:

- Analytics named top factor to reshape CX industry for fourth year running.
- Only 13.5% say current analytics capability is optimised.

Analytics promises to transform data into **market intelligence** that will help organisations offer **personalised services** to customers and set themselves apart from competitors. At this point, most organisations are still **evaluating and building** their data analytics capabilities.

They're collecting more data than ever, from a widening range of channels, and that's part of the problem. **Too much data**, from **different sources**, configured in **different formats** and managed by **individual business units** makes it difficult to track customer journeys across channels and get a **single view of the customer**.

There's also **limited tracking of sales conversions** or lead generation, especially on digital channels. Organisations will need to develop this capability if they want to build successful **customer management strategies** and understand how **transaction costs** impact on commercial performance.

By transforming **big data** into **customer and market intelligence**, they'll be able to align their analytics strategy with their business strategy and **design personalised experiences** that proactively address customers' needs – using self-service and automation at the right time in the customer journey.

6. Technology enablement

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Top 3 technology trends prioritised by CX team:

1. **analytics**

2. **self-service (including web, mobile, interactive voice response (IVR))**

3. **omnichannel – integration of technologies**

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Gap between risk and readiness widens:

- Analytics the top technology trend prioritised by CX team.
- Only 15.3% say analytics systems will meet future needs.

Analytics for CX is both the top business and technology trend, indicating a **closer alignment** of strategy between the two. It's critical that organisations also invest in their **self-service robotics capabilities** – not doing so is a material risk.

There's compelling evidence for the benefits of cloud and **cloud infrastructure** deployments are set to more than double in the next year.

The diminishing involvement of CX teams in the design of their own technology solutions is disconcerting. So is the **drop in** the use of technology systems for **workplace productivity**, and a decline in **agent analytics**. As agent enquiries become more complex, these areas will become more critical.

Security concerns are high, with 81.2% saying their cybersecurity systems won't meet their needs. Several new questions introduced this year give further insights into cybersecurity management. See our spotlight on cybersecurity on page 12.

With the current focus on **integrating** selected, core channels, **full omnichannel** seems more of a **long-term** goal.

7. Employee experience and workforce optimisation

> **Top 3 metrics for measuring operational performance:**
> 1. **first contact resolution (FCR)**
> 2. **customer satisfaction (CSAT)/CX performance**
> 3. **Net Promoter Score (including positive referrals/feedback)**

Customer satisfaction levels way below optimal:

- CX-centric metrics take top three spots for measuring operational performance.
- Most organisations are failing to meet CSAT targets and CSAT is at a record low.

With many routine services being performed by digital channels, agents now focus more on escalations and exceptions to standard services.

Agents are recognised as **difference-makers** in creating meaningful customer interactions and agent knowledge is seen as a key differentiator in CX. There's a progressive shift to **multiskilling** agents across channels and accommodating **new working practices**.

Analytics and revised operating models are the top contributors to improving workforce optimisation, and 58.9% of organisations have some form of **knowledge management technology**. AI and automation aren't widespread yet but certainly have potential to positively influence employee experience.

CX process reviews are simply not frequent enough, particularly on automated channels. Regular, automated reviews could help identify areas of improvement and close the gap between targeted and actual customer satisfaction outcomes , in real time, or near-real time.

Cultural and workforce optimisation is critical if organisations wish to remain relevant to their customers in an ever-changing industry. Implementing **industry best practice,** such as **improved operating models** to drive productivity through **proactive automation** and **advanced workflow,** will assist in improving employee experience and workforce optimisation.

Spotlight on cybersecurity

We included several new questions this year to gauge how organisations are perceiving and responding to cybersecurity issues. This overview of the findings reveals something of a trade-off for organisations investing in further digital solutions: while most agree this will increase the risk of cybersecurity threats, the same automated systems may also help mitigate other risks.
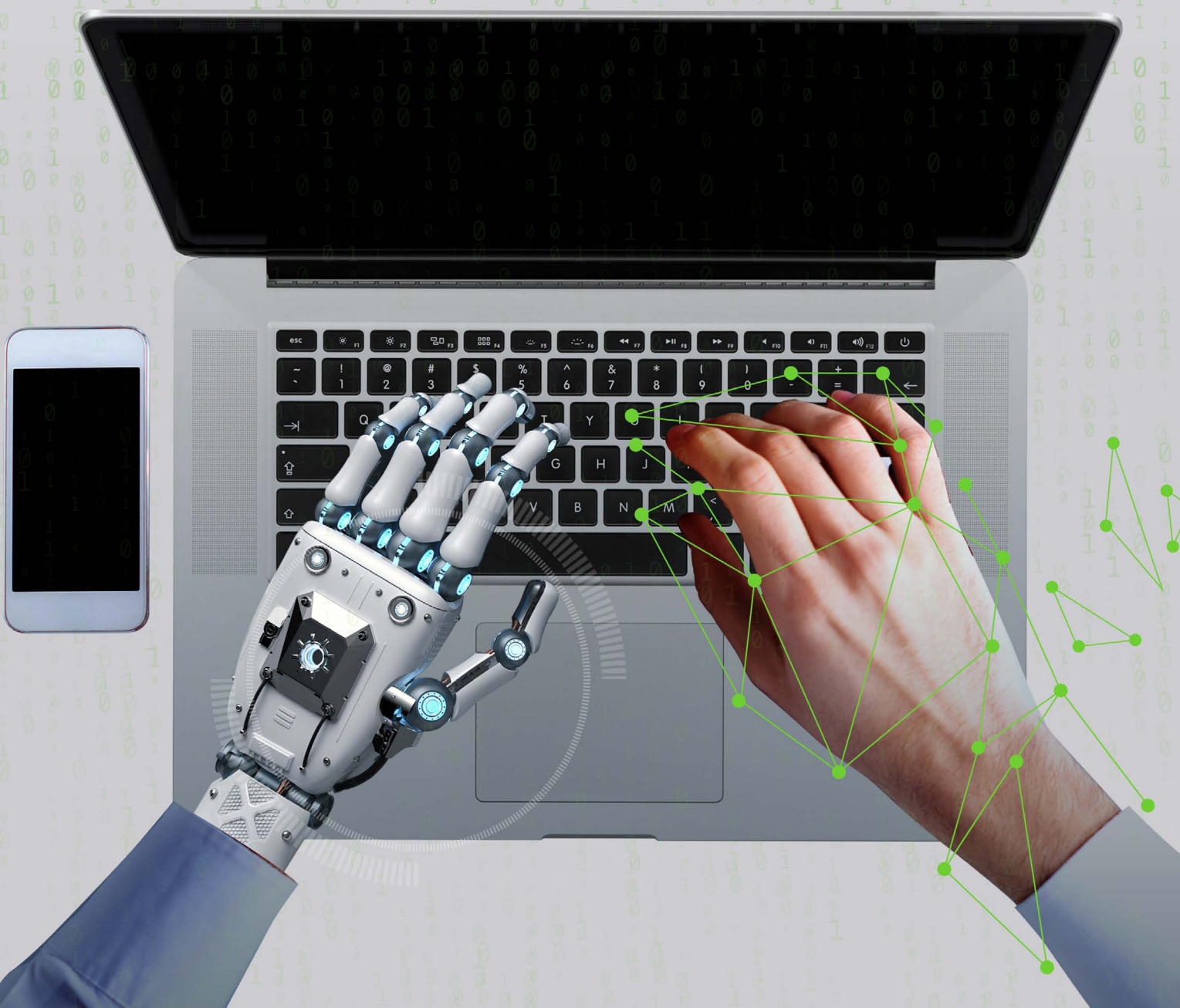
Spotlight on cybersecurity

Top 3 cybersecurity threats:

1. **ransomware, viruses, and trojans**
2. **phishing and social engineering fraud**
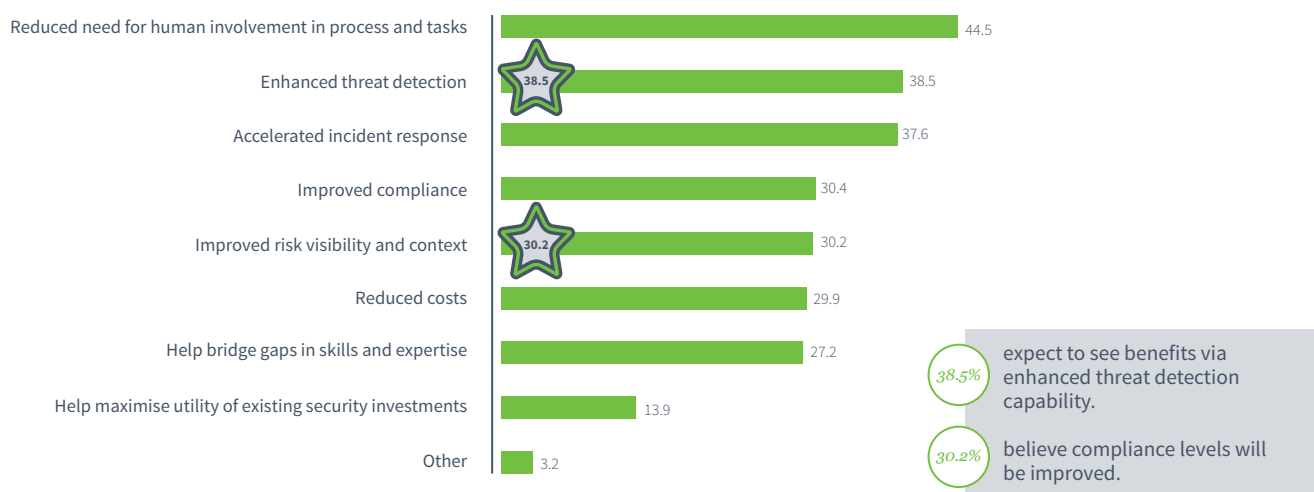3. **identity theft**

Trade-off between introducing new threats and opportunity to improve risk management.

With robotic automation and AI set to surge by 2020, almost half (45.4%) of the organisations surveyed are concerned about the attendant cybersecurity risks. Nearly one in four (22.3%) say cybersecurity threats associated with new digital channels are a key challenge and could slow down digital transformation.

That said, the findings do reveal a 'give-and-take' scenario: while cybersecurity is seen as a core risk for organisations that want to introduce new AI and service automation technologies, the trade-off is that they also expect those same systems to mitigate certain risks by reducing or eradicating human intervention.

In addition, over a third (38.5%) anticipate that automation will help improve their threat-detection proficiency and compliance, give them greater visibility of where risks may occur, and accelerate incident response times (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Anticipated impact of AI and machine learning on cybersecurity

Reduced need for human involvement in process and tasks	44.5
Enhanced threat detection	38.5
Accelerated incident response	37.6
Improved compliance	30.4
Improved risk visibility and context	30.2
Reduced costs	29.9
Help bridge gaps in skills and expertise	27.2
Help maximise utility of existing security investments	13.9
Other	3.2

38.5% expect to see benefits via enhanced threat detection capability.

30.2% believe compliance levels will be improved.

What do you think will be the main impact of AI and/or machine learning on cybersecurity?
n= 789

A limited understanding of the organisation's risk profile is cited as the most common barrier to deploying better security systems, followed by poor alignment between business and security strategies, and being unable to articulate cybersecurity risk in commercial terms.

Current technology systems adequate but won't meet future needs

For now, 79.2% are comfortable that they have adequate cybersecurity technology systems in place. Looking ahead, though, 81.2% say these systems will fail to meet future needs.

A limited understanding of the organisation's risk profile is cited as the most common barrier to deploying better security systems, followed by poor alignment between business and security strategies, and being unable to articulate cybersecurity risk in commercial terms. But 12.7% have made a calculated business decision to accept an element of risk in order to accelerate innovation and market opportunities (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Primary barriers to deploying better security systems

Lack of effective understanding of current risk profile	24.0
Lack of alignment between business and security strategy	23.2
Unable to articulate risk in business and financial terms (incl. ROI)	16.6
No dedicated security personnel	15.3
Lack of executive buy-in and stakeholder engagement	15.2
Calculated business decision to drive innovation in acceptance of security risk, to accelerate speed to market	12.7
Other	7.9

15.3% of organisations operate without dedicated cybersecurity personnel.

12.7% are willing to accept an element of risk in order to accelerate business opportunities.

What are the primary barriers to your organisation's ability to deploy better security systems?
n= 717

Network-level countermeasures dominate threat-prevention practices. Over half of the organisations surveyed believe that implementing new or upgraded authentication and access controls will help improve their cybersecurity protection.

However, 21.2% see a need for next-generation antivirus software and 28.0% believe they require better encryption systems.

Unless it's well managed, cybersecurity will be a high-profile showstopper for digital transformation

Organisations seem to view cybersecurity and threat management more as a prerequisite than a challenge. With General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliance receiving significant attention this year, organisations will need stringent controls in place to ensure that innovation and digital transformation don't take place at the expense of security and the customer's right to privacy.

Regional hotspots

Having looked at the trends and insights in this year's report, we present a narrow sample of regional variations in some of the key themes.
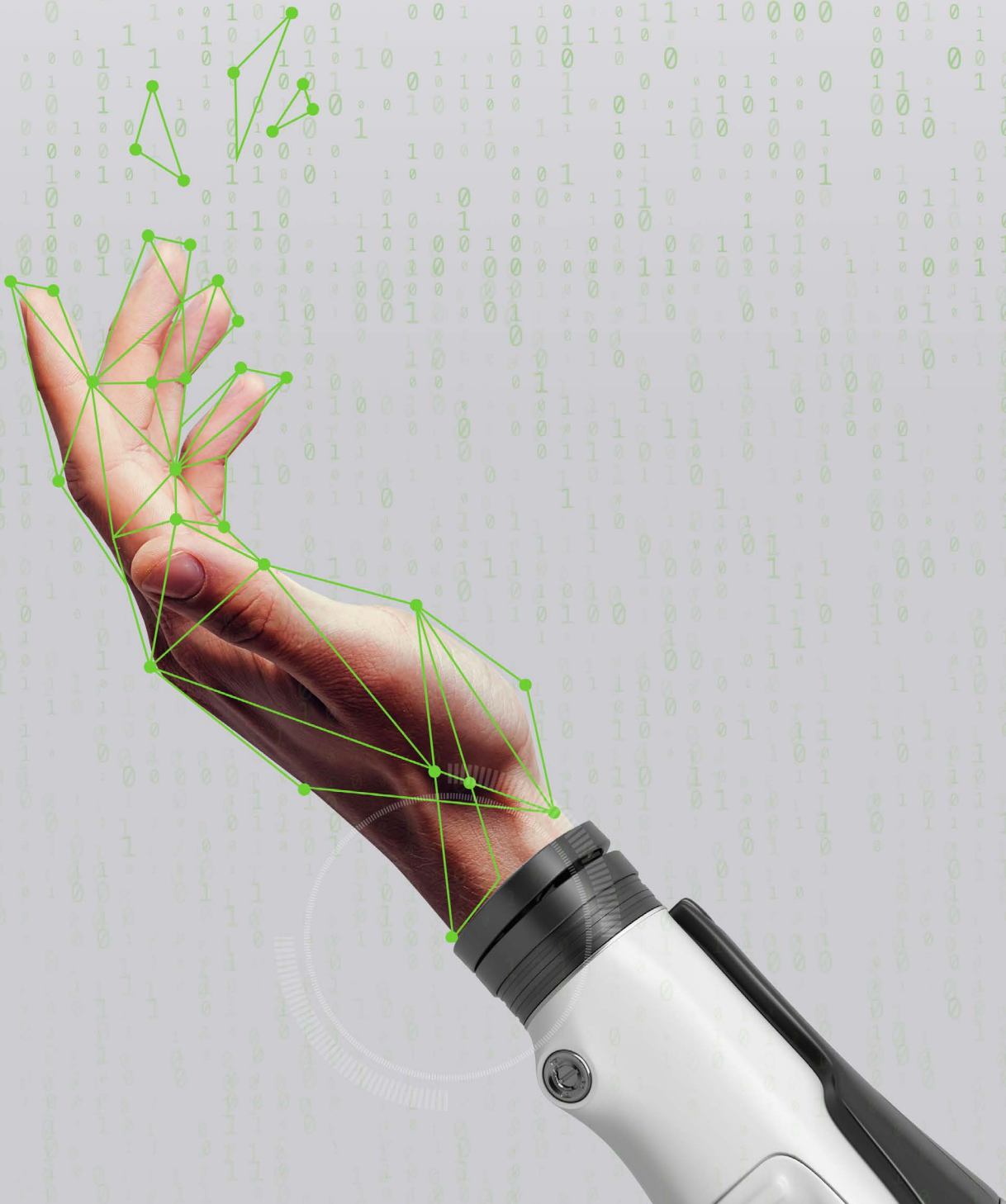
Accountability for CX

Australia and New Zealand prioritising review of operating models.

56.4%

Today, 56.4% of organisations globally say they have a single person accountable for CX – down from 63.9% in 2017.

48.7%

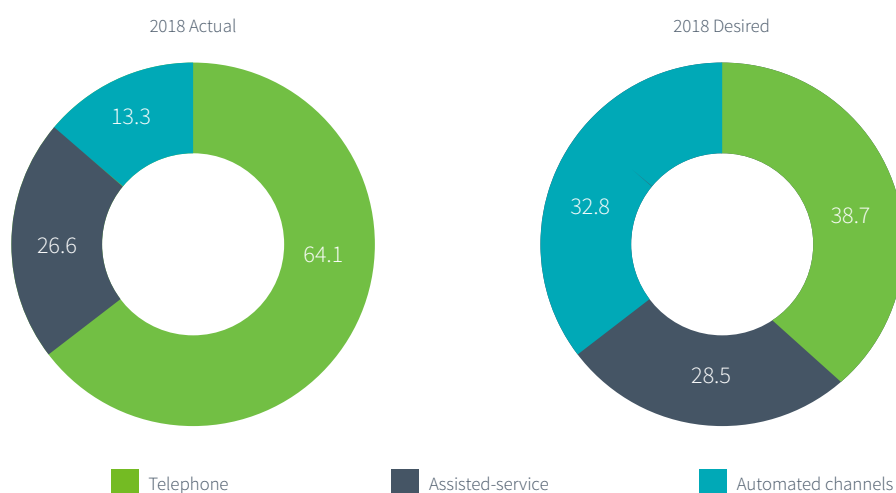In Australia and New Zealand, that figure is 48.7% (65.4% in 2017).

More than a quarter (25.3%) have a separate manager for each channel and a significant 20.4% (just 12.6% globally) say ownership for CX is unclear.

This **'siloed' approach hinders both digital and workforce optimisation,** making it difficult to execute the strategic desire to transform.

Encouragingly, organisations in the region are placing more emphasis on reinventing their operating model than those in other parts of the world, in order to reshape their CX capability (ranking it a top-five focus area that will reshape CX in the next five years): a step in the right direction, as **operating models will need to be reviewed as organisations transform digitally.**

CX transformation reality

Europe adjusting channel interaction targets.

2018 Actual — Telephone 64.1, Assisted-service 26.6, Automated channels 13.3

2018 Desired — Telephone 38.7, Assisted-service 28.5, Automated channels 32.8

Legend: Telephone | Assisted-service | Automated channels

What is your actual versus desired split of interactions? (Europe data shown as percentage)

There's clear evidence that **organisations in Europe are pausing to reconsider CX strategies and the effectiveness of certain digital channel contact options.** From 2017, the percentage split of assisted-service interactions have fallen from 27.3% to 22.6%, and automated channels dropped from 17.7% to 13.3%. Organisations in Europe are adjusting their views on

what's achievable. The most significant change here is the target to drive a more realistic 32.8% of interactions through fully automated channels, down from 35.4% in our 2017 report. This has resulted in a 16.8% increase in the volumes organisations would like to see handled over assisted-service channels, but just a 3.7% decrease for telephone volumes.

Employee engagement in delivering CX

Middle East Africa (MEA) more reactive than proactive when delivering CX services.

50.2

Employee engagement in CX is reactive, driven by an organisation-wide culture framework.

14.1

Minimal employee engagement in CX - it's not a focus of corporate culture.

27.0

Employee engagement in CX is proactive - there's a focused culture and employees actively 'live the brand', voice of employee is recognised and measured.

While the pattern of employee engagement levels in CX is generally consistent globally, there are some distinctions. **In the MEA region, employee engagement in CX is primarily reactive,** with only 35.7% (42.4% globally) of organisations adopting a proactive approach where employees actively (some enthusiastically) live the brand as they deliver CX services.
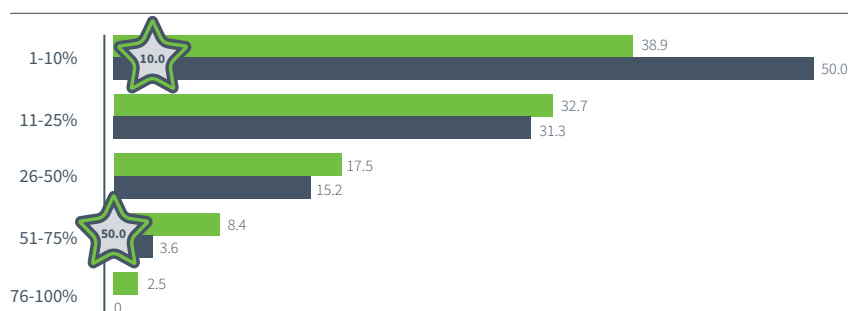
Overall, employee engagement levels in the delivery of CX are at their highest at physical site CX operations, such as retail outlets and high street offices, where emotional involvement in the solution (and likely also its design) is at its most obvious.

Conversely, **companies in MEA buck a global trend, as their in-house operations tend to perform better than outsourcers** on driving CX through employee engagement.

Automation of agent-led CX activity

Americas taking a more conservative view on automation.

1-10%	38.9 (green) / 50.0 (dark)	★ 10.0
11-25%	32.7 (green) / 31.3 (dark)	
26-50%	17.5 (green) / 15.2 (dark)	
51-75%	8.4 (green) / 3.6 (dark)	★ 50.0
76-100%	2.5 (green) / 0 (dark)	

10% Half say up to 10% automation in 2 years.

50% are willing to accept an element of risk in order to accelerate business opportunities.

What percentage of your CX activity, currently supported by live agents, do you realistically believe will be fully automated within the next two years? (Americas data)

88.3%

Robotics and AI are two of the areas organisations in the Americas region say will **grow most** during next year, with 88.3% of organisations (88.0% globally) projecting increases in these channels.

For many, the key question is **how much CX activity currently supported** by live agents will realistically **become fully automated** once AI or robotics are implemented. The answer for half of organisations in the Americas already planning these solutions, is 1% to 10% in the next two years.

Around one-third believe that 11% to 25% is possible.

Globally, 8.4% say between 51% and 75% is possible by mid-2020, a figure that drops to 3.6% in the Americas but rises to 18.1% in Asia Pacific.

Channel choice

Asia Pacific customers have broader choice of channels.

Channel	Now	Within one year	No plans
Telephone	94.4	4.2	1.4
Email	93.1	3.7	3.2
Website	86.3	6.6	7.1
IVR (touch-tone/speech)	72.6	10.1	17.3
Social media	70.6	16.8	12.6
Back-office admin support (incl. white mail)	52.9	13.7	33.3
Mobile (smart) application	58.2	22.1	19.7
Physical location (incl. service kiosks)	50.5	8.7	40.8
Instant messaging (incl. WhatsApp, SMS)	54.8	25.5	19.7
Web chat (incl. co-browse)	44.5	33.6	21.8
Proactive automation (incl. forms of robotic process automation)	24.4	41.5	34.1
Internet of Things	25.4	27.9	46.8
Virtual assistant (AI, chatbots)	23.9	43.9	32.2
Video chat	15.1	20.5	64.4

Now · Within one year · No plans

Please select the service channels you provide now, or have planned. (Asia Pacific data)

The average number of service channels offered by CX providers has levelled out for the first time since 2013. This year, the majority of customers in **Asia Pacific can still expect to engage across combinations of nine channel types** (against seven globally).

Many organisations will resume broadening their channel spread from the second half of 2019. The majority in Asia Pacific say they plan to offer 13 channels (12 globally).

The top growth areas for Asia Pacific in 2019 are AI - through virtual assistants and chatbots - proactive automation, and web chat. Implementations of Internet of Things are set to double, and video chat is forecast to increase by 135.8%.

Challenges and issues

Bridging the artificial reality gap starts with bridging gaps within the organisation: between strategy and operations, investment and implemenation, and, most importantly, between people.

Organisations struggling to secure a return on their investment in new digital channels

Despite significant investment in new digital channels, many organisations aren't seeing a corresponding improvement in commercial performance. The poor design and implementation of these channels has resulted in shortcomings in functionality and what customers perceive to be a sub-par experience – certainly one that's inconsistent when compared with traditional channels.

While there are many examples of effective digital applications, our findings show that, often, the digital solution has not been effective enough to replace interacting with a person.

Channels operated in silos and tracked independently

As the number of channels grows, many organisations are falling into the trap of silo management: 33.4% continue to manage their CX solutions in individual business units and 32.8% say separate business units collaborate to design a common CX across interaction types and touchpoints.

33.8%

A further 33.8% have centralised decision making for CX.

Almost one in five are operating without a formal CX strategy and over half say overall accountability and ownership for CX is unclear.

56.4%

While 56.4% have a single person accountable for CX in the organisation (down from 63.9% in 2017), just 30.4% say accountability for CX resides in the C-suite (down from 35.6%).

The result is the fragmented and disjointed tracking of customer journeys, user behaviour and channel performance: a situation that's made worse by systems integration issues and trying to make sense of data coming from different sources, in different formats.

All this combines to make it extremely difficult to get a single view of the CX journey across all engagement channels – a view that's vital to developing that all-important CX strategy.

Limited review and measurement limits progress and improvement

Resources and budgets are over-stretched as the drive towards digital business transformation intensifies, yet inefficiencies created by poor channel design and management affect both customer effort and the cost to serve.

With very little process review taking place, organisations are unable to identify process blockages, quick wins and ways to improve ease of resolution.

They also find it difficult to measure costs per transaction: information that's critical to devising contact management strategies that incorporate the business value and service user benefits of each transaction type, by channel.

CX-centric strategies still not quite at the centre

As we noted in our e-book, The Evolution of CX: A Look Ahead to 2020, 'successful CX is less about technology, and more about adopting new business strategies and customer-centric attitudes.'

It seems there's still some work to be done in shifting attitudes and operating models to being truly CX-focused.

Despite significant attention being given to CX-related performance metrics at board and executive level, commercial performance factors such as cost savings and return on investment tend to dominate the criteria used to evaluate the effectiveness of new technology systems.

Even measures of CX itself – customer satisfaction and quality scores – are often based on internal scoring criteria. While these are useful, they need to be balanced with what the customer deems to be a successful experience.

Being able to demonstrate improvements in customer satisfaction and loyalty will also assist in proving a return on investment and securing executive sponsorship and funding for future projects.

Where to start bridging the gap

In many organisations, the level of influence CX stakeholders have on technology systems isn't where it should be. Operations are hindered by an organisational approach that sees CX teams having little or no involvement in the design of CX technology solutions – and even fewer involved in approving these.
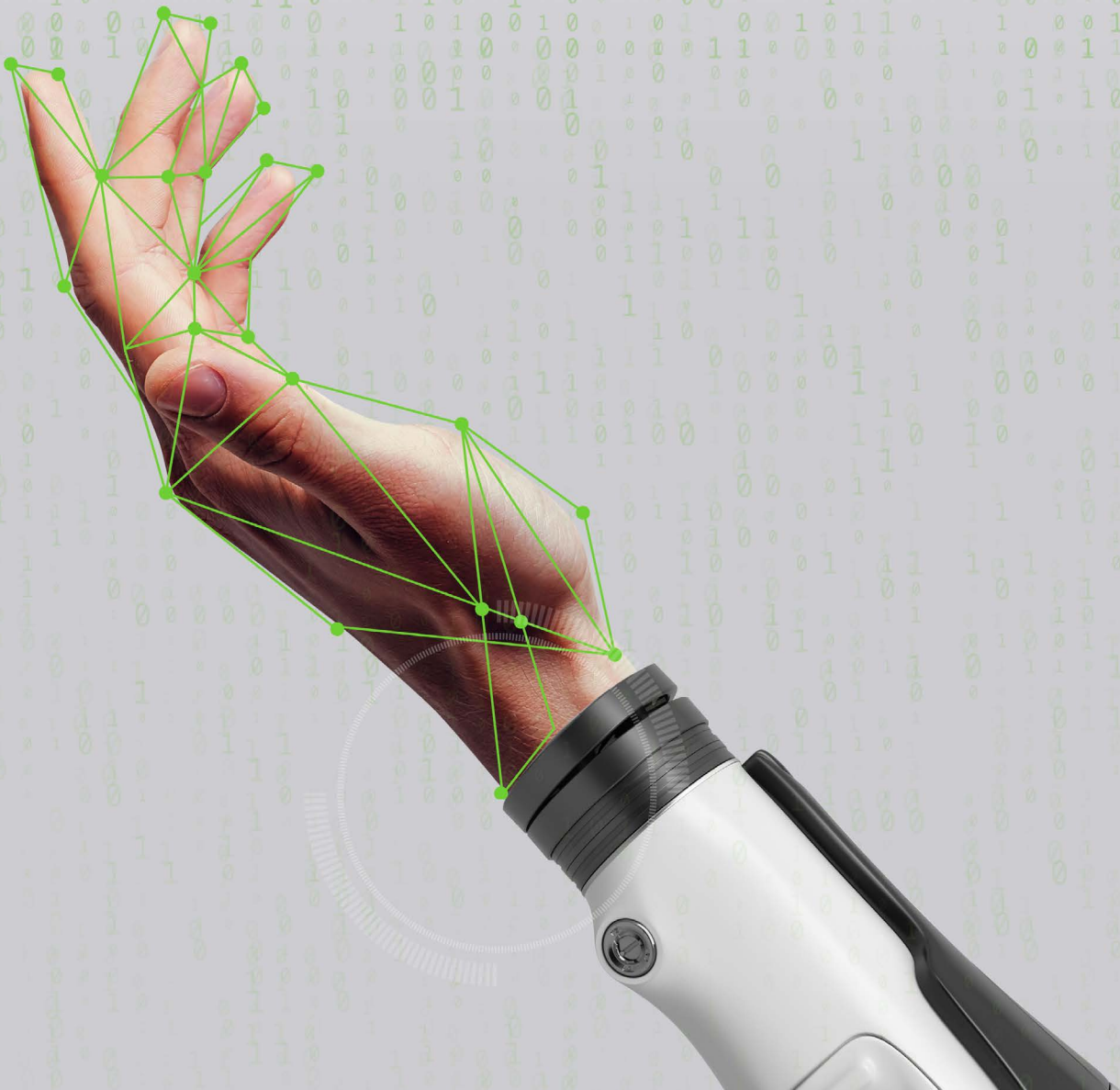
In our experience, aligning all CX stakeholders and key IT teams is often the biggest challenge to CX transformation.
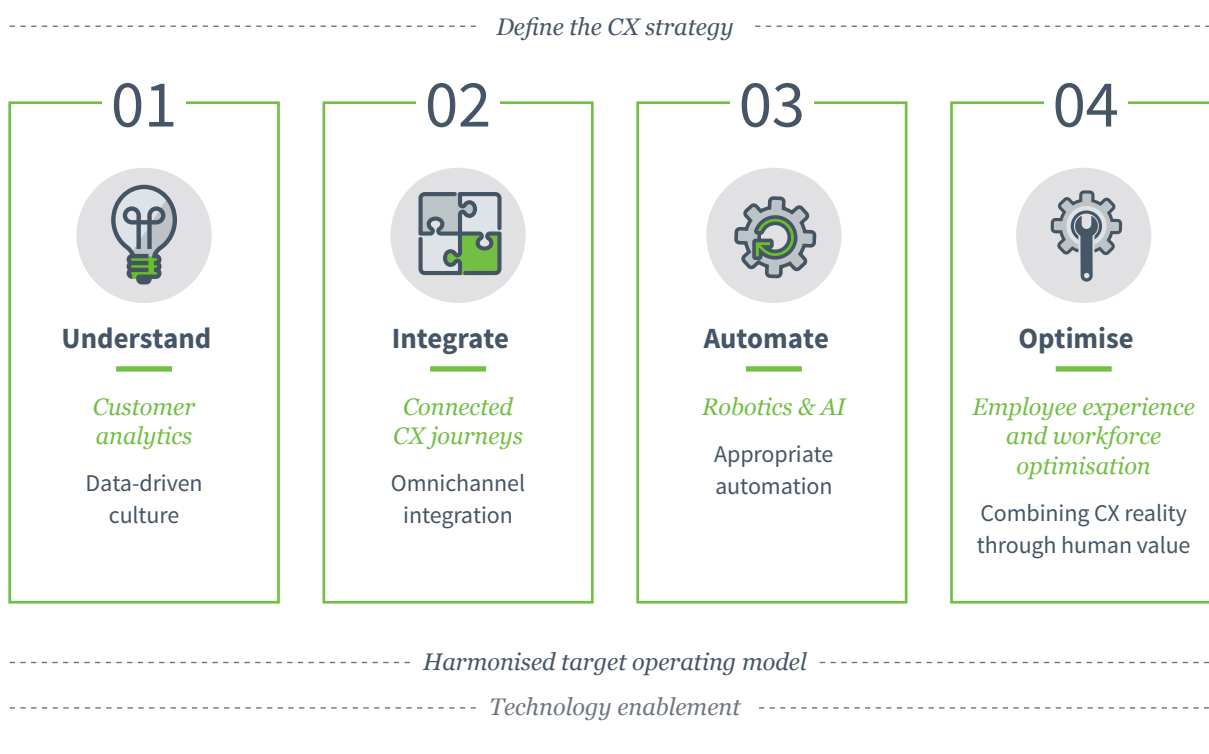
Bridging the artificial reality gap may well start with bridging the gap between these teams, so there can be agreement on the best way forward and a single CX strategy that reaches into every area of the organisation.

Steps to success

With budgets under strain and pressure to show a clear return on investment in CX initiatives, many organisations are pausing to reflect before taking the next step. Here, we look at three critical success factors to bridging the artificial reality: the CX strategy, target operating model, and technology enablement. We then identify four steps to success that will help organisations do more with what they already have – budget, resources, technology, data, or all of the above – to obtain a clearer view of where to invest their efforts as they work towards closing the gaps.

Conclusion – 4 key steps to success

- *Define the CX strategy* -

01

Understand

*Customer
analytics*

Data-driven
culture

02

Integrate

*Connected
CX journeys*

Omnichannel
integration

03

Automate

Robotics & AI

Appropriate
automation

04

Optimise

*Employee experience
and workforce
optimisation*

Combining CX reality
through human value

- *Harmonised target operating model* -
- *Technology enablement* -

CX success factors

Top-performing organisations are optimising their existing resources by combining technology and empowered agents to best effect to improve average handle times and reduce the cost to serve.

CX strategy

We've made this point before but it's worth repeating because this really is the crux of successful CX: it's less about the technology you implement and more about fostering customer-centric business strategies and attitudes.

This year's survey results show there's still some way to go in having every area of the organisation aligned with a clear, coherent CX strategy that's truly focused on the customer.

This starts with bringing all areas of the business into the same room (metaphorically speaking) so they can collaborate on defining and designing a CX strategy that can be applied in every area of the organisation.
For this exercise to yield the best results, having both IT and CX, or operational teams, in the room is a must.

Harmonised operating model

Organisations are being compelled to reinvent their target operating models in order to optimise the workforce around implementing the CX strategy. Rethinking the operating model and organisational structure is considered the second-most important factor that will have a positive impact on workforce optimisation … yet, less than half say their strategy and operating models are aligned to optimising CX.

New operating models will see clear organisational ownership of CX – for example, appointing a single person to be accountable for CX across the organisation, and ensuring the right structure and processes for delivery. This will help to create an organisation-wide view of CX and a coherent CX strategy.

In addition, mapping and regularly reviewing customer journey maps will help deliver a consistent CX across business areas and contact channels and highlight organisational and system challenges.

Technology enablement

Legacy systems and integration issues remain the top challenge affecting CX technology. Another challenge here is being able to secure budget for technology systems.

Having a clear digital strategy that shows how technology solutions will meet user needs, and therefore encourage the uptake of digital channels, will help to allay fears of making poor decisions or going down the wrong path. Involving CX teams in the design of technology solutions will assist here.

Regular post-implementation reviews will help to determine whether all project objectives have been met. It's just as important to include customer satisfaction metrics as it is to use cost savings and return on investment as a measure of success in these reviews.

4 steps to success

1. Customer analytics

The importance of analytics to CX has been a recurring theme in this year's findings. Analytics promises to transform data into market intelligence that organisations can use to differentiate themselves from competitors. It's also the means to offering personalised services to customers and delivering highly customised interactions. 'Proactive' and 'predictive' are the keywords here.

To gain an in-depth understanding of the big data available, tracking systems should be implemented across channels and customer touchpoints, rather than in silos. This will help to generate intelligence that can be shared across the organisation to effect change.

2. Connected CX journeys

A full omnichannel strategy is a reality for just 7.2% of organisations – those who say they have a clear value proposition that includes investment and return criteria – and just 8.4% have all channels connected. Consistency rather than connectedness seems to be the focus now, with most looking to evolve their multichannel plans.

Whatever the solution chosen for the organisation, it's vital to have a formal channel strategy in place that's regularly measured and reviewed to ensure progress towards a consistent CX. Being able to track and map the customer journey across channels is critical.

3. Robotics and AI

The impact of automation can have profound effects on productivity and CX. We've noted how costs, cybersecurity, and potential negative customer feedback are big areas of concern for organisations when it comes to AI and robotics. Yet, if implemented and managed well, these technologies can help to address some of these risks and deliver the promised benefits of improved CX, customer analytics and business intelligence.

Having a clear business case for AI, robotics and automation will help organisations evaluate and deal with areas of exposure.

4. Employee experience and workforce optimisation

The top drivers of new working practices and organisational change relate to the human element – and right at the top of the list is the impact of employee satisfaction on CX. Recognising the importance of agents as difference-makers, most organisations are now open to new, employee-centric operating models.

Being able to measure employee engagement will help organisations better understand the relationship between employee experience (EX) and CX, so they can adapt workforce design and working practices to enhance both.

About the Global CX Benchmarking Report

The report is an annual research study encapsulating more than 20 years of CX insights and trends. Frequently cited by industry analysts and quoted by the media, it's widely acknowledged as the most useful, authoritative, and comprehensive report of its kind. It's designed to provide a single point of reference on key aspects affecting customer interaction management within today's CX industry. We believe it's the most extensive global overview of its type.

'The annual release of the Dimension Data Global CX Benchmarking Report is a highly anticipated event in the customer experience world. For over 20 years now, it has offered the definitive global view of how technology is changing CX for both customers and companies. With the current explosion of devices and interaction channels, its insights are more valuable than ever for companies seeking to understand how to plan their next CX moves.'
- Sheila McGee-Smith (Analyst)

Throughout its 21 years, the report has provided data that the industry has used to:

- support business planning (and build strategy)
- pinpoint problems using data insights and spot areas that are falling below competitor levels (and close the gaps)
- identify best practices and benchmark company performance against top quartile results (and set targets aligned to the company's vision on performance)
- validate performance, trends and directions taken by peers and develop objective yardsticks (and compare results)
- get buy-in for change by using relevant reference data to validate a business case, new spend, and/or transformation to a CX capability (support change)

About the CX Benchmarking Portal

Typically presented as global statistics, all of the data in the 2019 Global CX Benchmarking Report can be accessed interactively on our online Benchmarking Results Portal for a more customised view. The Portal enables multidimensional filtering of the data, for example, by region, sector, and size, or at any time, by a single filter.

Our exclusive Benchmarking Results Portal allows data to be filtered at 10 different levels including: geography, sector, brand positioning, services provided, operation type, and against historic data trends.

About Dimension Data Customer Experience

Create valuable relationships with customer experience (CX)

Dimension Data helps you deliver an experience-centric CX strategy that understands, integrates, automates, and optimises your customer experience to create more value for your customers and business.

Investment in CX
750 dedicated CX experts around the world

Market citizens
34 years of leadership transformation and innovation

Trusted delivery capability
700 clients globally with over 100,000 seats

Leading multi-vendor partnerships
Highest levels of certifications with the industry's leading technology partners

We believe in the possibilities of the digital world. We accelerate your ambition. We help you do great things through the use and adoption of technology. We're Dimension Data, a leading global systems integrator and managed services provider for hybrid IT.

Contact our advisory services team to develop your CX strategy, enabled by the right technology, that works for your customers and delivers business results.