



Transcendent Customer Experiences for Modern Retail

Deliver a transcendent customer experience with predictive insights, and omnichannel self-service.



Table of Contents

- 03 Executive Summary
- 04 Delivering an Enterprise Experience
for the Modern Digital Economy
- 05 Innovating with Governance via ITIL 4
- 06 Four Essential Elements of User-Centric
Service Management
- 08 Conclusion

Executive Summary

In the modern retail environment, users need IT experiences as innovative, intuitive, and automated as digital life itself. By meeting the expectation for a more customer-centric experience, I&O organizations can unlock the full productivity and creativity of the enterprise workforce to drive business agility, innovation, and digital transformation.

To deliver a fully modern customer experience for employees, and customers, IT must provide omnichannel experiences that let users move seamlessly across channels and devices as they interact with IT, as well as self-service tools that let them meet their own needs in natural and intuitive ways. Service desk agents need new ways to provide better, smarter, and faster service, from social collaboration to intelligent swarming and ChatOps approaches designed with the speed and agility of DevOps. And data from sources throughout the organization must be made available to users at the right time, in the right way, to provide insights and help people make the right decisions quickly and efficiently.

This white paper discusses four key elements for modernizing service management through engaging user experiences, including:

- Seamless omnichannel experiences across devices and locations
- Automated, customer-centric digital workplace experiences
- Collaborative knowledge and resolution
- Autonomous, data-driven experiences

Delivering an Enterprise Experience for the Modern Digital Economy

Innovation is ubiquitous and autonomous in today's world. New digital experiences appear every day, everywhere we look, as new capabilities emerge to help us do more, better and smarter. IT needs to be the same way. In the autonomous digital enterprise (ADE), services and experiences are interconnected and multichannel, letting users interact with IT across channels and devices seamlessly and consistently. People can access the tools they need easily, without having to worry about technical details like permissions and versions. New capabilities and value adds are introduced quickly, at high quality—just like they are in consumer life. And problems are fixed almost before they happen so people can stay productive.

As organizations evolve to an autonomous digital enterprise (ADE), they need to be able to deliver a transcendent customer experience that makes technology feel more human while giving employees what they need. Building blocks of this experience include:

- **Integrating customer data** on a secure big-data infrastructure.
- **Enabling a frictionless customer journey** by using an integrated, analytics-enriched ecosystem of customer experience tools.
- **Going mobile-first** and ensuring a great experience on any device people use.
- **Delivering a proactive customer experience** and anticipating the needs of specific use cases with AI and ML.
- **Supporting do-it-yourself** with digital customer solutions designed around customer preferences.
- **Blending human and technology engagement** by augmenting the expertise of frontline employees with digital tools and data insights.

Innovating with Governance via ITIL 4

As organizations drive transformation in the experience they provide, governance remains essential to maintain service management excellence, standards, and compliance. Given the incredible speed of modern innovation, automation has become essential to ensure that service management remains an effective partner, not a bureaucratic roadblock. The goal should be to achieve the best of both worlds: governance at the speed of innovation.

This principle is reflected in the ITIL 4 standard. The latest update of the definitive service management framework, ITIL 4 recognizes the focus of modern IT organizations on digital transformation, customer experience, and the drive for service excellence. By ensuring that the right things are done using the right structure, processes, tools, and people, organizations can allow an agile approach with flexibility across teams without increasing risk. At the same time, removing processes that are barriers or blockers to agility can improve speed, optimize operations, and automate processes for better digital performance.



Four Essential Elements of User-Centric Service Management

A key principal of modern IT service management is to design interactions around the perspective of the user—not IT. While a structured, ITIL-based approach to service management is essential for consistency and quality, this doesn't mean exposing these steps to the user or creating IT-centric experiences. Instead, a persona-based approach can tailor interactions according to the user's specific needs and purpose for a more intuitive, productive, and satisfying experience.

Omnichannel, customer-centric experiences, complemented by collaborative support and actionable insights, form the cornerstone of a modern platform to empower the workforce and drive employee productivity.

Seamless experiences across devices and locations

Omnichannel experiences are essential on both sides of the service desk. Users should be able to search, resolve, and request services of all types, across any type of device, using natural language. As users and agents move across devices, they can take advantage of specific device capabilities such as using built-in cameras to attach photos to incidents or scan bar codes to retrieve data; using voice recognition to enable hands-free annotation of tickets; or using GPS to provide location-aware self-service. Push notifications can keep consumers updated on relevant incidents, assets, changes, or other items of interest.

To help agents deliver better service, they should be able to enter incidents or service requests using natural language data entry instead of traditional form and field-based approach so they can simply type free-form text as they converse with customers. Cognitive technology can be used to automatically analyze the agent's description and proactively suggest relevant incident templates, service catalog items, knowledge articles, assets, user history, outages, similar incidents, and problem investigations for faster resolution.

Customer-centric digital workplace experiences

A modern digital workplace experience helps users become more productive and less reliant on IT. IT should offer a single place for employees to access all available enterprise services with the same consumer-oriented experiences they enjoy in their personal lives. To eliminate catalog sprawl, services from multiple business units including IT, HR, and facilities can be presented in a single catalog with a consumer-like shopping experience. Details such as ensuring that users are on the right versions, with the right permissions, should be handled automatically in the background.

As users request support, AI can provide intelligent analysis on email-submitted issues and respond with knowledge articles. While interactions can be initiated through a personalized chatbot, self-service users should be able to seamlessly switch and escalate their issue with a live agent.

Collaborative knowledge and resolution

Modern service desk technology can enable service desk analysts to invite other colleagues or subject matter experts into conversations to harness tribal knowledge and help resolve incidents faster. This allows agents to use intelligent swarming, an approach in which a single support staffer works on a trouble ticket from start to finish, without escalations. Along the way, the agent can seek the resources needed to work toward a resolution instead of escalating it to a higher level. Similarly, agents can use a ChatOps approach, inspired by DevOps collaboration models, in which chat clients, chatbots, and real-time communication tools facilitate the execution of support functions. The goal of both intelligent swarming and ChatOps is to remove tiers of support and call on the collective expertise of agents to solve a problem.

To support intelligent swarming and ChatOps, modern ITSM should provide agents with tools such as knowledge suggestion, similar ticket identification, natural language ticket update, and suggested people to work with based on cognitive analysis of similar incidents.

Autonomous, data-driven experiences

Users and agents throughout the organization, regardless of their role, should have the right data and analysis, at the right time, in the right place, for either an automated decision to be made, or to make their own best-informed decision—all through a single pane of glass. Organizations that are able to pull together and deliver all the relevant information, capabilities, and predictive insights whenever and however they're needed will be able to act more quickly and efficiently.

As organizations continue to increase the amount of data they leverage to make decisions for their business, AI and ML can uncover actionable insights across internal, ecosystem-owned, and third-party applications to enable better decisions, actions, and processes within the context of IT experiences and throughout the business.



Conclusion

Innovative IT service experiences can empower and inspire employees to drive innovation for the business and its customers. By providing a transcendent, data-enriched customer experience for users, IT can fulfill requests and provide support more efficiently while achieving higher levels of user satisfaction and productivity. Complemented with effective governance in keeping with ITIL 4, a modern, customer-centric approach to service management can advance the organization's evolution to an autonomous digital enterprise (ADE).



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