



SIMPLIFY CUSTOMER COMMUNICATIONS

INCREASE SATISFACTION AND REDUCE COSTS

A WHITE PAPER



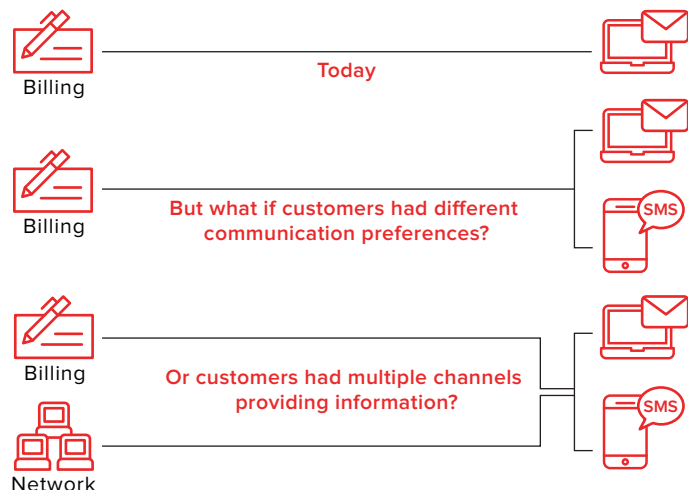
THE NEED TO SIMPLIFY

Your customers are being bombarded with information.

Customers want to understand new and changing service charges, bundled service offerings and regulations quickly, instead of reading the fine print. They want to understand what the best offer is for them, quickly and easily, rather than trying to negotiate competing messages from different departments in your company. They want to reach out to you in the way that's best for them—be it by mobile device, email, or SMS.

IN THIS AGE OF INFORMATION, CONSUMERS FACE A BARRAGE OF DATA ALL DAY, EVERY DAY. YOUR CUSTOMERS WANT REDUCED COMPLEXITY, CENTRALIZED COMMUNICATIONS, AND MORE CHANNELS TO REACH YOU—SO THAT THEY CAN USE THE CHANNELS THEY LIKE BEST.

THE BUSINESS CHALLENGE



Unfortunately, all too often, that's not possible for today's consumers because of the sheer amount of data coming at them.

This is a complex issue. When it comes to communicating with your customers, the pitfalls are many and the solutions are few. So we'd like to turn the spotlight on some of the most pressing issues facing our industry today and see if we can help point the way forward.



REDUCING COMPLEXITY FOR THE CUSTOMER

We live in an age of increasing regulation. Every year, new laws are passed that your customers need to know about. But how best to inform them without having them toss out another document filled with fine print?

Making new and changing regulations simple to understand for customers is a complex business. We can start by reducing the complexity in billing. Some companies have found success in being transparent about the costs to their customers: being crystal clear about how the changes will affect their customers and what the customers will need to do as a result, if anything.

Customization is a vital tool for demystifying these changes. Personalizing your communications to your customers helps you quickly and easily adapt messages in any way necessary—and not just for you. One benefit of customization is that your customers get to choose how they would like to consume content: via email, regular mail, SMS text message, or otherwise. When you give customers a say in how they receive information from you, you empower them—and that builds loyalty.

**THE NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS WHO
RECEIVE E-BILLS FROM THEIR ONLINE
BANKING CENTERS MORE THAN DOUBLED
BETWEEN 2007 AND 2011.
(BILLINGWORLD)**

The strategic use of color is another tool to use when clarifying changes to a customer's bill or service agreement. When used thoughtfully, color can call out key changes or highlight a call to action that might otherwise get lost in a sea of gray text.

Important details can get lost in the fine print that necessarily accompanies regulation changes, whereas the use of color can call out important details, such as payment due dates or changes in services.

Using color as a tool to enhance your communications is just another way to make it as easy as possible for the customer to do what you'd like them to do. And the statements will look the same whether in print or electronic form.

CENTRALIZING CUSTOMER COMMUNICATIONS

Decentralized communications gets in the way of clarity. Your customers are getting one thing in the mail, another thing in their email inboxes. They're awash in information—some of it contradictory. For example, if a company's messages aren't aligned, it's likely that one department is trying to sell them on something they've already signed up for. The more that happens, the more "communication fatigue" the customer is likely to experience—and the less attention they'll pay to communications from that company.

If the messages in those communications aren't aligned, you're risking two things: customer satisfaction and support calls. You're confusing customers with mixed messages, and that dilutes your brand and makes it hard for customers to do what they need to do.

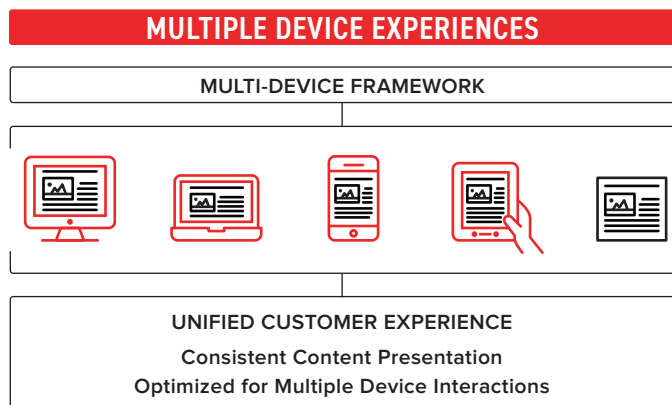


It's time to take control over which side of the business is sending which messages to which customers. Streamlining that works out for the customer, who no longer receives mixed messages, but it also works out for your organization in terms of greater sales, greater customer satisfaction, and fewer calls to your support center.

GIVING CUSTOMERS MORE CHANNELS TO REACH YOU

Technology is a blessing and a curse. Consumers have gotten used to having multiple channels to reach a company, but the enterprise has, in some cases, been slow to adopt some of the more cutting-edge tools. Internal staffs are not equipped or staffed to deal with customer care in new ways (like reaching out to customer concerns on Twitter or Facebook, for example). The problem may simply be that a company's IT department doesn't have the resources to move forward—or it may be more insidious. It may be an indicator that a company's communication process is an opportunity for improvement.

That can get in the way of building lifelong customer relationships. And that in turn will drive costs up: costs to keep a customer, costs to acquire new customers. Whereas companies that prioritize the customer experience generate 60 percent higher profits than their competitors, according to *Leading on the Edge of Chaos* by Emmett C. Murphy and Mark A. Murphy. Giving customers more channels to reach you—and aligning those channels in a concerted, thoughtful way—is a great way to boost customer satisfaction.



CSG'S POINT-OF-VIEW

Today's consumers are a sophisticated lot—not to say jaded. The fact is, customer loyalty is hard to come by; consumers are savvy to fluctuations in the marketplace and they will choose the best deal for them, rather than sticking with a company just because they've always been a customer.

We'd like to suggest a few best practices that might turn that around.

LOVE THE ONES YOU'RE WITH

The market is saturated. You could argue that there are no new customers—just dissatisfied customers looking for a better deal. Keep your customers happy and your profits are likely to go up. According to Lee Resource Inc., it costs five times as much to solicit a new customer as it does to keep an old one—so it makes better financial sense to court your existing customers.



The trick is to court the right customers. To increase your average revenue per customer, you want to drive as much revenue as you can out of each customer. But efforts toward improving your average revenue per customer usually end up backfiring. Companies go after customers indiscriminately, and end up attracting the lower-end customers who have a high cost of care, with questions around data and billing and details.

So first, define the customers who will do the most good to your bottom line—and then, free up resources by instituting customer self-care. Train your customers to take care of their issues themselves—by using an online application or tool. The goal, of course, is to reduce the number of calls to your support center—saving you money and empowering you customers. Customer satisfaction may well rise as a result.

CUT YOUR COSTS

We know: groundbreaking, right? But using new contact-center tools and leveraging electronic statements can yield savings in operating expenses.

Switching from print to electronic statements can also result in significant savings, particularly with the increase in postal rates. Moving from print to electronic eliminates printing costs, mailing costs, and the costs to handle statements that are undeliverable. Thanks to the proliferation of tablets and smartphones, electronic billing is catching on fast. The number of households who receive e-bills from their online banking centers more than doubled between 2007 and 2011, according to BillingWorld, who also predict that average penetration of e-billing will hit 20 percent in 2013—a three to five percent increase from 2012 levels.

Not only that, but you can generate revenue from your online statements, as well. New online advertising programs give you the ability to generate revenue from your statements by selling ad space, thereby offsetting your costs.

MAKE THEM LOVE YOU

What do customers love? Getting what they want, when they want it. That means being able to communicate with you how and when they want to—be it through email, regular mail, or SMS text message. Ease of use builds customer love—and there's something distinctly easy about paying your bill in your jammies at two in the morning. According to an Aberdeen Group study, 91 percent of best-in-class companies provide customers the ability to track issues over the web. Fifty-seven percent measure support center success across email, web, and voice.

DON'T SELL THEM WHAT THEY ALREADY HAVE

This gets back to unaligned communication channels. If your communications aren't synchronized, you don't know what your customer is getting in the mail. Are they being sent offers for products they already have? That's one sure way of getting customers to start ignoring your communications. Conversely, are delinquent customers still being sent offers for additional services?

What are these competing messages doing to your brand?

We recommend aligning your channels so that your customers get a clear set of offers and directives from you.



By knowing your customer, you are able to present them with offers specific to them by using data analytics - how better to know and communicate with your customers. Running all customer communications through one pipeline helps you optimize your customer management. Using customization helps you quickly and efficiently determine whether a customer should get a certain offer or not.

IN SUMMARY

The new channels and technologies that can be used to communicate with customers are a double-edged sword: used mindfully, they can enhance communications and build loyalty between an

organization and its customers. Used haphazardly, though, they can result in confusion on the customer's part, hiccups in the timely payment of bills and invoices, and even dips in customer satisfaction. The strategy we suggest is to simplify your customer communications. Offer them channels they prefer, but make sure to align those channels and the departments that feed content to them. Reduce complexity in your documentation by using tools like personalization and good design. Centralize your communications to avoid mixed messages and competing offers. Focus on customer retention to maximize your marketing dollars. And team with a trusted advisor to form a strategy that will see you into the next decade.

ABOUT CSG

CSG simplifies the complexity of business transformation in the digital age for the most respected communications, media and entertainment service providers worldwide. With over 35 years of experience, CSG delivers revenue management, customer experience and digital monetization solutions for every stage of the customer lifecycle. The company is the trusted partner driving digital transformation for leading global brands, including Arrow, AT&T, Bharti Airtel, Charter Communications, Comcast, DISH, Eastlink, iFlix, MTN, TalkTalk, Telefonica, Telstra and Verizon.

At CSG, we have one vision: flexible, seamless, limitless communications, information and content services for everyone. For more information, visit our website at csqi.com and follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).