Technosoft Insider

Heading to the Future

Happy Chinese New Year! Wishing you and your family abundant of happiness, good health and prosperity in the Year of the Monkey.

As you may heard, the simplest way to grow customer base is to keep your customers. Empowering employees at all level to enable them providing excellent customer service is the key to build a solid customer base. In this edition of Insider, we shared the significance of CRM in providing service differentiation, enforce on-brand experience that boost customer loyalty and propel your organization to leap through and compete beyond price.

As the cloud technology gets more mature, Software as a Service (SaaS) is increasingly become a no-brainer choice of businesses. However, another untapped advantage of cloud technology is for disaster recovery. Cloud technology enables easier, cheaper and faster way to provide redundancy for your on premise systems compared to setting up your own secondary data center. The second article we presented in this edition is about utilizing Azure as Disaster Recovery Service. Should you have any questions about Azure, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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Empowering All Employees to Serve the Customer

We've all heard the saying "customer service is the new marketing," but with 89% of companies expected to compete mostly on the basis of customer experience in 2016 (compared to just 36% in 2010)*, it's not just marketing where customer service makes an impact. For a consistently satisfying customer experience, customer service must be everyone's job.

In Microsoft's ten customer service trends to watch this year, general manager Bill Patterson makes the case that employee empowerment (especially around knowledge, insights and mobility) will create an even greater separation between the customer service and customer experience leaders and laggards in 2016.

Here's Patterson's guest post on this trend to watch, featured in CRM Magazine's 2016 Mega Trends in CRM.

"With customer service and customer experience beginning to overtake price and product as brand differentiators, big investments have been made over the past few years in empowering customers with more ways to engage, provide feedback and share their experiences. Yet most employees are trying to engage the empowered customer with the same siloed technologies and stagnant knowledge repositories they've used (or not used) for years. This is creating a customer service and customer experience divide that will further separate leaders from laggards in 2016.

Consider these statistics: 90% of consumers say they expect consistency and continuity from a brand across channels. Yet, according to Forrester Research, only 36% of contact

centers have implemented multichannel integration to provide consistent experiences; 70% do not train agents to support multiple channels, and 56% do not offer an agent-facing knowledge management solution. In addition, a third of Gen Y workers say their at home technology is better than what they have at work.

Most customers now update their personal technology every one to two years. Isn't it time we engage the empowered customer with equally empowered employees?

Organizations that will continue to struggle in customer service and customer experience cling to the perception of customer service as a single department and a cost center when nothing could be further from today's truth. Customer service should be made the responsibility of every employee, positioned as a value center, and invested in as such by brands that not only wish to survive, but to lead in profits and perception. According to Microsoft's Global State of Multichannel Customer Service Report, 97% of consumers say customer service is important in their choice of and loyalty to a brand, and 60% have higher customer service expectations than just one year ago.

Employee Empowerment: Where to Start

To improve employee empow-erment for customer service and engagement moving forward,knowledge must become a foundational investment. The benefits of all employees being empowered with knowledge are many but include increased first contact resolution, increased customer satisfaction and consistent responses across departments and channels. Currently, according to IDC research, 44% of the time employees can't find the answer or information they're looking for, and 61% currently have to access four or more systems when looking, resulting in frustration and dissatisfaction all around.

Beyond Knowledge: Insights

Beyond the basic knowledge to serve, customer-facing employees must also be empowered with customer and performance insights. Leaders in 2016 will give customer-facing employees access to key customer insights to drive more personalized, proactive and predictive engagement.

This will include not only a detailed profile of the customer and the products and services they use, but tools such as sentiment analysis, real-time feedback and above-the-queue insights showing what the customer has done to date in seeking resolution so that the customer never has to repeat himself.

Going a step further, customer service agents will be empowered with a real-time view of their workload, service desk activity, their performance and will be able to leverage peer-to-peer collaboration technology to give and get help. Machine learning will add speed and intelligence to detect both patterns and trends, improving productivity, response times and next best actions.

Beyond Insights: Mobility

Leaders will empower employees with the same mobility and real-time engagement capabilities that customers use to connect. From service desk operation on a tablet, to field service updates on a wearable device, to searching, finding and sharing knowledge via their smartphone, mobility will transform the siloed contact center of the past into the organizational-wide customer engagement center of the future.

Gartner Research notes that in 2016, 89% of companies will compete mostly on the basis of customer experience. Many brands and organizations will talk the talk, but those that empower employees, and invest in customer service, will be able to walk the walk."

Tricia Morris
Parature

"If you want 1 Year of Prosperity, grow grain, If you want 10 Years of Prosperity, grow tress. If your want 100 Years of Prosperity, Grow People."

Chinese Proverbs

Planning for Failure: Why to Consider Azure for Disaster Recovery as a Service

"Disaster recovery is one of those afterthoughts, typically, in organizations," says Tim Harris, vice president of strategy and solutions with Arbela Technologies. "I think it's because of the perceived complexity."

As Harris detailed in a recent webinar for the Dynamic Communities user groups, recent research suggests that just slightly more than half of organizations have a documented disaster recovery plan in place. Moreover, a similar percentage doesn't perform any of type of testing or preparation of their business continuity/disaster recovery plans. Of those that do test, only a quarter can confidently state their tests met the target recovery objectives defined by the business.

These findings are troubling, given the huge potential costs of even a few minutes of unplanned data center outages.

The benefits of the cloud versus a secondary data center

Azure, Microsoft's cloud platform, offers disaster recovery as a service, or DRaaS, called Azure Site Recovery. Essentially, it provides automated replication of a data center to the cloud, Harris said, and has some distinct advantages over other disaster recovery approaches.

Cloud-based disaster recovery is a less expensive and simpler alternative to operating a secondary data center, Harris said.

In fact, disaster recovery as a service can be one-third the cost of an on-premise disaster recovery approach. The reason? Rather than replicating a full data center, with all the hardware, maintenance fees and other cost that entails, DRaaS replicates just the storage of information and scales to full production just at fail-over. "You're not paying for full production service until you actually need it," Harris said. Azure DRaaS supports the recovery of VMWare, Hyper-V and physical servers.

Another key benefit, Harris said, is the recovery point objective (RPO) possible with DRaaS. RPO measures the period of time in which an organization will accept data loss. Azure Site Recovery allows companies to recover with as little as thirty seconds of data loss, Harris said. Trying to achieve this level through a secondary data center is both expensive and hard to manage, he added.

The wisdom of "planning to fail"

While Azure Site Recovery can automatically kick into gear, perhaps during an unforeseen disaster, it also allows for a planned, preemptive failover. Say a company's data center is located in the path of a coming hurricane. Management can proactively initiate a "failure" and move processing outside the hurricane zone, and then failback once the disaster has

passed. Azure support is available around the globe.

Azure Site Recovery consists of three major components, Harris said. These are: the virtual and physical machines, storage, and networking. "You need to consider all three," he said.

Establishing a DRaaS in Azure involves a series of fairly straightforward steps. One is setting up the Azure Site Recovery vault. Among other tasks, this requires determining which virtual machines (VMs) will be included in the site recovery process. Typically, these are assembled into groups, such as front-end capabilities, SQL Servers, and back-end capabilities.

A target recovery location in Azure needs to be configured for each VM. This also requires establishing the target frequency for synchronization, such as thirty seconds or five minutes.

A next step is determining the networks that will need to be synced, and establishing a map between them and Azure. For instance, if the company has one network for marketing and one for sales, both will need to be mapped.

Also key is properly setting up the recovery plan, or the order in which the systems will come back up. These "need to come up in the right order to connect properly," Harris said. For instance, it makes no sense to bring up the front-end application if the back-end operations that enable them to run aren't

brought up first.

It's also possible to include manual steps in the Azure process. An example would be notifying others in the company before a planned failover. The manual steps need to be completed before other failover steps can be completed.

Azure Site Recovery also provides the documentation requested by many auditors, Harris said. For instance, its reports can identify the jobs that failed over, their status, start time, and the duration. Much of this information can be exported to Excel, he added.

According to its website, Azure Site Recovery is priced as follows: After the first 31 days (which are free), the rate for Azure Site Recovery to customer-owned sites is $16 per month, per instance protected. For site recovery to Azure, the cost is $54 per month per instance protected. Additional costs can include storage, storage transactions, and outbound data transfer.

Rob Curls
Msdynamicsworld

4 Ways Managers Can Reduce Internal Inventory Fraud

Now we will shift our focus to an even more sensitive topic, internal inventory fraud. Managers do not like or want to think about employees committing any fraudulent activity. Managers spend a lot of time and resources hiring people they believe they can trust with not only their customers but also with their products.

Employees are a store's most valuable asset, but they can be faced with the temptation to steal at some point during their employment. Unfortunately, temptations prevail more often than you might think, so anything that can be done to discourage and prevent such actions can significantly benefit the success of your business. The good news is that there are some everyday actions that you can implement to discover and reduce unauthorized employee discounts.

Here are a few tips to reduce internal inventory fraud that are commonly used in the retail industry:

Check personal belongings before employees leave

When an employee leaves the store or office, another employee should check him or her out. If the employee has a bag, then the bag is checked to where you can see the bottom. Checking belongings only takes a few seconds to implement on a daily basis and since it is a store policy, no employee feels singled out.

2) Schedule multiple store openers and closers

When there are multiple store closers and openers, it is not only safer but also discourages internal fraud. Have two people that are accountable for the merchandise on the floor, opening or locking-up properly, and checking the other person's belongings.

3) Require non-related cash-outs for family and friends

Simply put, family and friends are not allowed to be cashed out together. Have a non-related employee do the transaction or a manager supervise the transaction. This way there is no added peer pressure for a favor: an additional discount, marking an item at a lower price, or not ringing up the items.

4) Utilize an anonymous fraud reporting hotline

Having an anonymous hotline to report internal theft or concerns removes the employee's fear of speaking up. When it comes to reporting internal inventory fraud, some employees are torn. Talking to their manager about a co-worker stealing puts the reporting employee between the manager and co-worker. Worse yet, if the employee speaks up and the theft cannot be proven or is denied, the employee that spoke up could be alienated or face retaliation

Here is an actual example of how reporting employee fraud without anonymity can have negative effects.

In one company, a co-worker reported check fraud that the accused employee denied, and it went unproven. The reporting co-worker was retaliated against and left the company shortly after. Unfortunately, the check fraud was caught several months later. Now that company was out a loyal employee and lots of cash. A hotline is a great idea because it decreases inventory fraud and keeps the information completely anonymous, offering your employees additional comfort in reporting fraudulent activity.

Securing employees is an extremely touchy subject, and no one wants to think poorly of another person. However, policies and procedures are necessary to discourage both internal and external fraud. When dealing with a company's most valuable assets, the Golden Rule applies: treat others as you want to be treated. With these tips in place, expect to see any internal inventory fraud in your business reduce significantly.

Todd McDaniel,
Dynavistics, Inc

Story about Personal Growth

There was a wise man Sviatozar. One day his nephew came to visit him. The young man was sad, gloomy and obviously upset with something. Sviatozar asked what happened to him. The nephew said that he suffered a serious setback and now he will never be able to achieve his goal.

The nephew asked an old man to give him advice what he should do next, but Sviatozar just asked to lead him to the hills. This road was difficult and long. But the nephew immediately agreed to help his uncle. When they reached the hills, Sviatozar said that he needed to go to the top of the highest hill. The young man was surprised, but decided to help his uncle, because the old man had never climbed there.

With great difficulty the nephew helped his uncle to climb to the hill, sometimes even dragged the old man on his back. On the top of the hill, sweating, he put his uncle on the ground and laughed happily. Do you remember that when you were a little boy sometimes you returned home with tears in your eyes? Sviatozar asked him. The boys teased you. Do you remember why? Exactly!

The young man looked around and nodded. He recalled that as a child he often played there with other boys. And they called this hill an Everest, because only few people could get to its top. — At that time I was unable to get there. This hill seemed an impregnable rock.

And today you not only climbed there, but dragged up me, too, an old man said and looked at his nephew. How could you do this? What do you think?

Perhaps I just grew up, the young man shrugged. I became stronger and fitter.

And the formidable Everest suddenly turned into a harmless mound said Sviatozar.
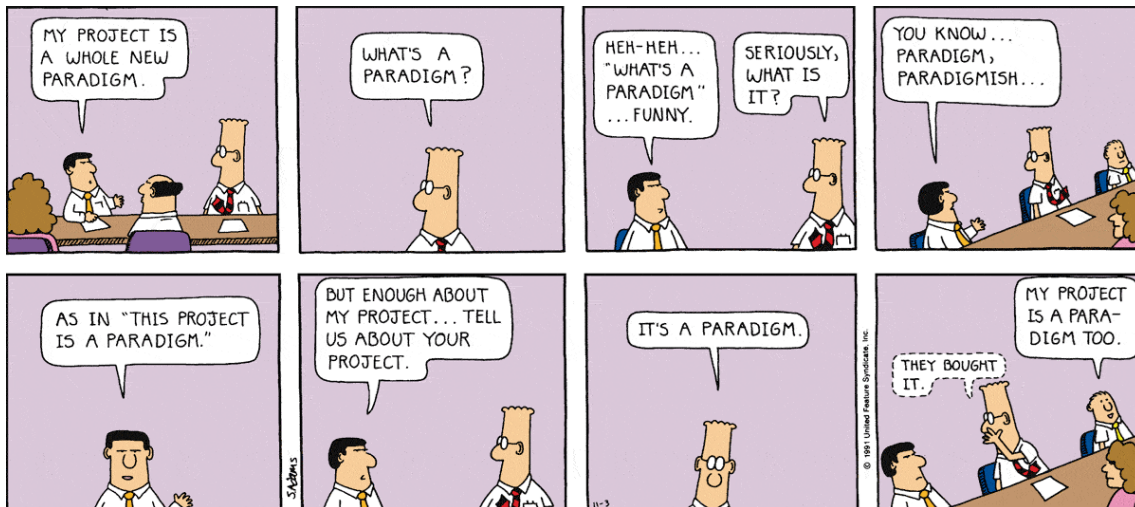
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C O N S U L T I N G

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In order to add value for customers satisfaction, we are open for any advice or article request according to our customer needs. Your request can be sent to our fax or email directly.

Mind Bender : Vision ahead

Lets get a vision ahead.

How many tigers in these picture?

January 2016 Quiz Answer : 20 Triangles

- Submit the answer, your name and company to Technosoft fax at +62-21-563-2078 or email to insider@technosoft.co.id

- Answer will need to be submitted by February 29[h], 2016

- A Lucky participant who submits the correct answer will be granted either shopping voucher. Winner will be announced on the following month of Technosoft Insider Edition.

- Only Technosoft Customers will be count on the participation

Congratulations to Mr. Tjiauw Ming PT. Daliatex for winning the shopping voucher, solving the Mind Bender in Jan 2016