What Every Telco CMO Should Know About Their BSS

CMOs and marketing teams have the hardest jobs in telecom. Working in a business that has a wide-reaching and diverse customer base, the CMO faces three almost insurmountable challenges every day, in everything they do.

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SOFTWARE

## 1 The fortune-teller challenge

Most C-suite executives are primarily focused on quarterly execution, analyzing performance and results to meet (and exceed) their numbers. While CMOs have these same responsibilities, their jobs include an additional dimension, which is to be a future-focused, fortune-teller for the business. Not only are they expected to meet today's business demands, but they are also expected to be capable of predicting where new revenue will come from, how customer behavior will change, what services customers will value and, most importantly, how the business needs to evolve to drive growth and profitability. As a result, when standing next to data-driven departments such as finance, sales and network operations, the CMO is highly dependent on the trust placed in their ability to correctly predict the future.

2 The customer experience challenge

Even though CMOs are ultimately responsible for customer satisfaction, loyalty and churn, most have very little control or direct influence over customer experience. While pricing, promotions and brand awareness are in their jurisdiction, they most likely have little contact with the end consumer. In fact, of all the people in the company that contribute to how the customer perceives the brand — call center operations, network performance, retail — very few of those people, if any, actually report to the CMO. CMOs know only too well the imbalance of power with respect to the KPIs they own, and their ability to affect them.
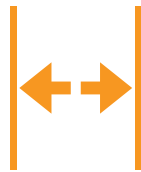
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The skills gap challenge

With the fast-moving change in 5G, cloud, edge computing and artificial intelligence, CMOs constantly face a skills gap in their organizations. In fact, because telecoms networks are so complicated, the CMO is almost always dependent upon their networks and IT colleagues to analyze, approve and implement the leading-edge products and services that the marketing department conceives. Thus, when it comes to new products and services, marketing has neither the technical expertise to undertake the development on its own, nor alternatives such as another supplier, to do the work for them.

CMOs frequently find themselves caught between the imperative to keep the organization ahead of competitors and the reality of the marketing organization's inability to deliver that capability on its own.

The BSS Platform's Impact on Marketing and the CMO

Unlike their counterparts, the telecoms CMO must contend with the BSS, a legacy technology unique to their industry. How does the billing support system impact a CMO's ability to deliver success for their company?

Forcing big bets on the future

Because launching new products, services, brands and promotions requires long BSS development and testing cycles, CMOs have traditionally been forced to make big bets on the future. Unfortunately, along with those big IT investment bets comes big risk, with business agility as the first casualty. In hopes of de-risking their decisions, the CMO wisely spends sizable amounts of money on focus groups and market studies to validate their predictions of customer interest. Following the focus groups comes a significant investment of time and money on the BSS implementation itself to bring a new product to market. Frequently, this results in another round of market and focus group testing, with yet more development time. All too often, this test-develop-test loop consumes so much time that the market has moved on (or worse, a competitor has launched a better product) by the time the product is ready. In a scenario like this, where one of these big bets fails, it is probably the end of the road for the CMO.
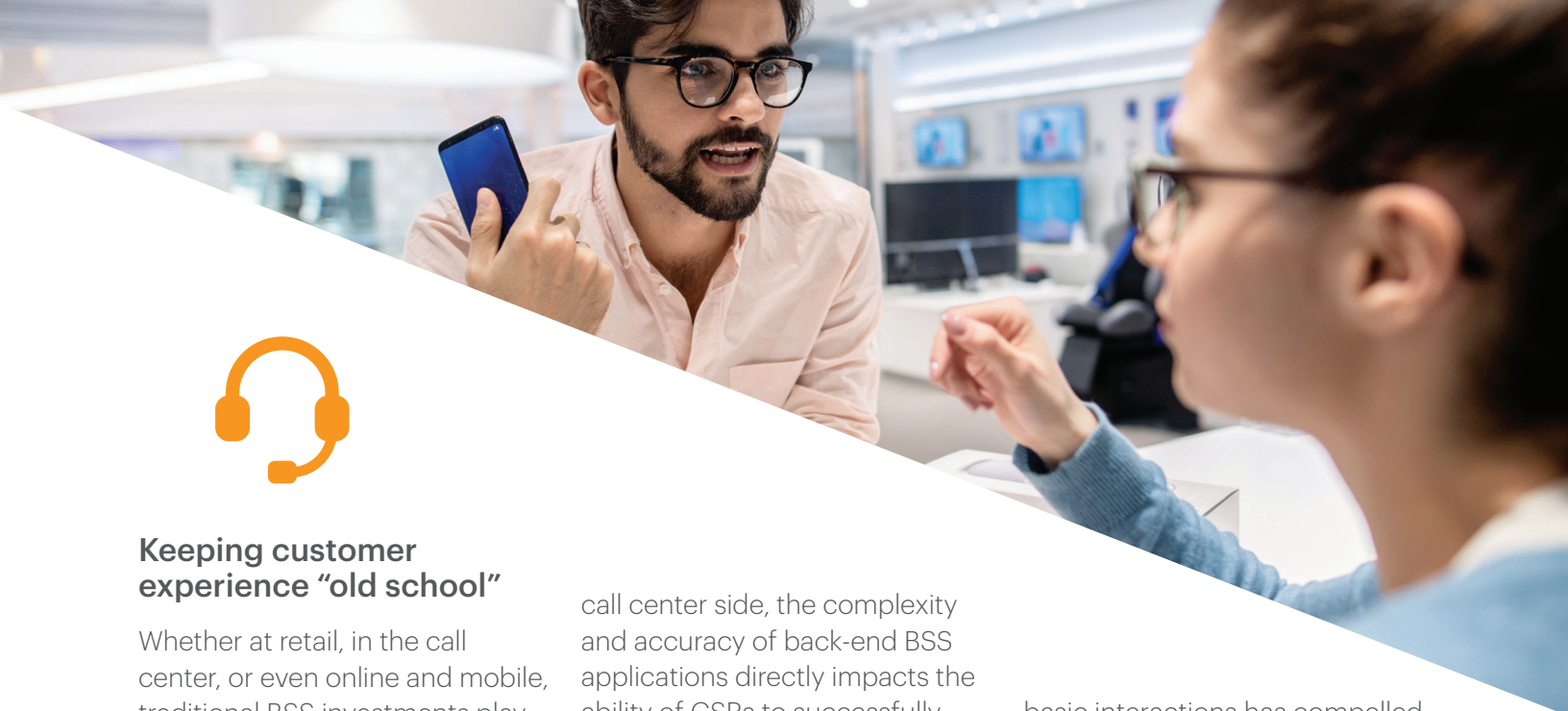
Keeping customer experience "old school"

Whether at retail, in the call center, or even online and mobile, traditional BSS investments play an outsized role in preventing CMOs from positively impacting customer experience. For example, the speed and ease of retail onboarding of new customer accounts is entirely dependent on the simplicity and responsiveness of the BSS. On the call center side, the complexity and accuracy of back-end BSS applications directly impacts the ability of CSRs to successfully investigate, analyze and resolve customer issues. If the CSR can't easily, or correctly, solve a customer issue, the operator suffers. As for online and mobile apps, the multitude of BSS support systems required to perform even the most basic interactions has compelled operators to introduce static (and often clumsy) customer journeys that result in even more customer dissatisfaction. Once again, these CMOs tasked with influencing customers have very little influence over traditional customer experiences.

Despite being tasked with influencing customers, CMOs have very little influence over traditional customer experiences.

Slowing the pace of innovation

With traditional BSS systems requiring every use case associated with a new product or service to be custom-coded, the CMO's ability to drive new market opportunities and grow revenue is substantially impeded. This dependence on systems developers, which are frequently external vendors, impacts the business in several ways. The most obvious challenge is that marketers have little control over the product and service definitions as things must get handed over to IT and engineers to develop, test, and deploy. More significantly, the complexity of development within the constraints of legacy BSS applications bring significant challenges for the CMO. Beyond the oversight burden of ensuring that new projects accurately realize the original vision and haven't been watered down or corrupted, the large number of personnel dependencies result in outsized financial risk associated with innovation. Despite being responsible for creating new growth opportunities, CMOs all too often lack the infrastructure necessary to make that happen.

How Can a Modern BSS Solve Fundamental CMO Challenges?

In today's world, a new generation of cloud platforms have become the norm across many areas of the telecoms business; but, until now, there has been no such option to improve and replace existing BSS platforms. With technology provided by MATRIXX Software, CMOs now have access to a modern, digital platform that has the power to dramatically impact their organization's key challenges.

MATRIXX
Digital Commerce Platform

Digital Grade · Cloud Native · 5G READY

Place all the bets you want

Unlike other BSS systems, MATRIXX enables business agility through a product-first approach that eliminates the need for system development or operator-specific customizations to support new commercial offerings. By reducing the costs and resources needed to build, test and deploy new offers, the CMO is no longer forced to make big bets on the future. Instead, enabled by a BSS platform that supports 90% of use cases out of the box, marketing can accelerate product and service innovation from a handful of new offers a year to a handful a week (or day). Eliminating custom coding also means that marketing can experiment quickly and cost-effectively in order to become market leaders. The result is that the CMO no longer has to make a few big bets or convince the rest of the organization that they can see the future. Rather, they can try everything and then invest in scaling up only those services that are successful.

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Take control of customer experience

Whereas legacy BSS platforms were built for back-office billing purposes, MATRIXX is designed to enable a modern digital experience. The result is a powerful strategic weapon for the CMO to significantly impact experience across the entire customer lifecycle. Want to encourage onboarding without ever visiting a retail store or talking to a call center? Change plans? Add devices? Share data? Foster ongoing engagement through the mobile app? It's all possible. Empowered by a streamlined digital path that eliminates redundant and siloed systems, CMOs can leverage the accuracy of the information available to customers to transform digital experience while boosting customer satisfaction.

More importantly, with a high-performance, ultra-low latency BSS at the heart of the IT, marketing will gain the ability to foster ongoing engagement with each and every customer.

Visible eliminated dependency on call center and retail sign-up with their innovative phone service in an app.
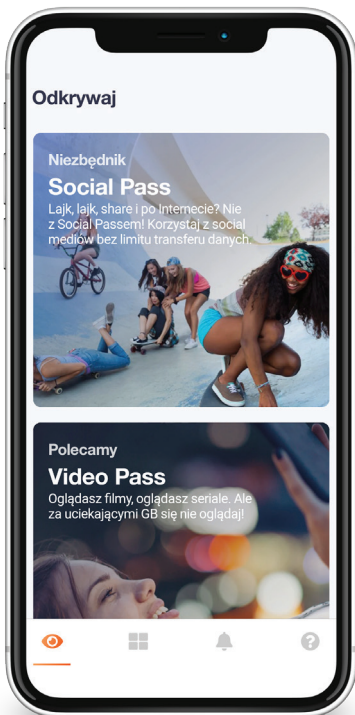
Orange Poland customers use one-click purchases of products and services to tailor experience, on-demand.

Move beyond technical roadblocks

With its modern, cloud native BSS, MATRIXX empowers the CMO to quickly and cost-effectively take new products and services from concept to market without being impeded by technical complexities. Benefitting from a click-not-code approach to product and service configuration, the CMO's organization can better respond to, and even lead, the market by implementing changes themselves to pricing or other types of policies, rules and service parameters. By eliminating dependence on external technical and engineering resources, marketing will gain more control over the essentials of the product lifecycle and customer experience.

New Digital BSS Is Delivering for Marketing Leaders

Today's telcos must be digital-first organizations if they are to succeed. While digital transformation frequently begins as an IT exercise, marketing must take a larger and more active role in its evolution due to its critical role in brand perception.

MATRIXX Software provides a modern, configurable BSS platform that helps CMOs gain more control and power over their product portfolios and customer engagement. With the help of an agile rating and charging platform, telco CMOs no longer have to be fortune-tellers that are dependent on one or two big bets, can take control over experiences at every stage of the customer lifecycle and can use IT to innovate more quickly and cost-effectively. Thus, while simplifying IT architecture may seem like solely a system upgrade, it offers the potential of a game-changing marketing upgrade, one that goes beyond brand perception and right to the heart of business success.

ABOUT MATRIXX

MATRIXX Software provides next-generation, cloud native digital commerce solutions that transform how companies do business. Serving many of the world's largest communications companies, IoT players and emerging digital service providers, MATRIXX is committed to delivering a modern commerce platform that easily scales to support global marketplaces and consumption-based services. Through its relentless commitment to product excellence and customer success, MATRIXX empowers businesses to reinvent themselves and succeed as digital leaders.

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