Oracle launches significant upgrade in customer experience

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Omdia view

Summary

The events of 2020 and beyond have changed the way that many organizations do business. Flexibility and agility are in high demand as organizations continue to evolve engagement with their customers, clients, and citizens. Technology buyers are no longer prepared to take software and services and struggle with them; quite rightly, they demand good customer service and experience. Oracle recognizes this and its stated aims for achieving desired business outcomes include the ability for its customers to make informed decisions and move faster, staying ahead of change.

Continuing the innovations begun with its Redwood Project, Oracle has launched a significant upgrade in overall customer experience, providing closer engagement between the technology and services delivered to its customers alongside all touchpoints in the relationship. However, focusing on customer experience does not mean that there has been a let-up in technology development, and Oracle is focusing on a more "rounded" experience for its customers and prospects inclusive of the technology.

Customer experience upgrade is an evolution in approach

Over the years, technology vendors have been guilty of focusing on what they do best—technology—to the detriment of almost everything else. In the past, Oracle was no exception to this rule, building, developing, rearchitecting its software for its clients and using its technology reputation to bring more customers into the fold.

But Oracle recognized that this was no longer enough. A few years ago, it started out on its Redwood project and one of the guiding principles was that every interaction—whether with a customer, a partner, a prospect, or an employee—contributes to overall user experience with Oracle. As such, the Redwood project included improving the customer experience in its technology products and services, but also included all interactions with customers and prospects. This evolution continues, and today Oracle is very much focused on delivering an "exceptional customer experience from end to end," partnering with its customers. Its own success is defined by the success of its customers and continuous improvement is the name of the game.

In general, there has been a shift over the past couple of years or so to hearing technology vendors and service providers talk about delivering customer outcomes. However, the discussion then generally moves straight to technology—the applications and services that the vendor can provide—missing the connective layer that translates these applications and services to the customer's desired business outcomes (see **Figure 1**).

1. Figure 1: Applying technology vendor capabilities to customer business outcomes
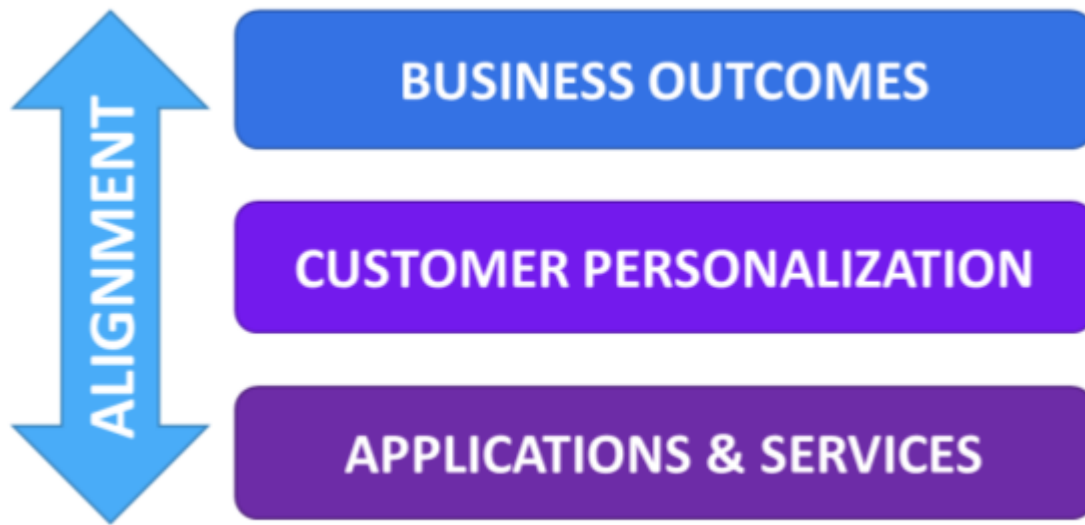
Source: Omdia

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Oracle is addressing this by explicitly personalizing the experience to individual customers, being clear about how the applications and services apply to specific business outcomes. Oracle isn't alone here—vendors and service providers alike are trying to do this—but it does give Oracle's clients and prospects more direction to challenge the vendor about achieving business outcomes and clearly identify the specifics in the customer personalization layer.

Without doubt, Oracle's desired business outcomes for improved customer experience will not be achieved overnight, but neither was it only started yesterday. Oracle is a huge corporation with a strong reputation in business technology and emphasizing the continued evolution of customer experience, and effectively customer service, without de-emphasizing the value of the technology, is no straightforward task, but it is certainly heading in the right direction.

Focusing on customer experience does not mean there's a let-up on technology development

As would be expected from a vendor with a broad and deep portfolio of technology, the focus on customer experience does not mean that Oracle has dropped focus on its technological developments. It works hard to maintain its reputation as a vendor that delivers strong and effective software and services. It has invested considerably in rearchitecting its solutions for the cloud and developing its public cloud—Oracle Cloud Infrastructure (OCI)—enabling its customers to run their applications (Oracle or otherwise) on OCI.

One case in point is the Oracle Autonomous Database service, applying artificial intelligence (AI) to problems such as applying security patches rapidly or optimizing SQL queries, with potential notable reductions in management costs. Oracle's extensive applications portfolio, on-premises and architected for the cloud, continue to be developed and improved.

Another example is partnerships, such as the Oracle and Microsoft alliance announced in June 2019, enabling customers to deploy mission-critical enterprise workloads that span their respective Microsoft Azure and Oracle Cloud environments. Not only does OCI expansion demonstrate Oracle's commitment to the cloud market, which will reassure enterprises that are considering the Oracle proposition, it also demonstrates that it listens to its customers to develop the features needed for digital transformation journeys. Omdia believes this is an important aspect of any cloud provider because all organizations are at some stage of digital transformation and need their supplier to understand where they are on that journey and provide the solutions they need to progress.

Oracle's overall approach to customer experience incorporates its technology, with continuous improvement to the applications and services that it offers through customer feedback and feedback from its own employees working with customers.

Appendix

Further reading

"A softer, gentler, more human Oracle: Who would have thought it?" (December 2019)

SWOT Assessment: Oracle Cloud Infrastructure (May 2020)

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Citation policy

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