ENHANCING CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE FROM THE INSIDE OUT

> **UTILITIES MUST IDENTIFY THE ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS THEY NEED TO COUNT WITH TO EMBARK ON A CX TRANSFORMATION**

The changes currently reshaping the utility industry are driven by the need to provide customers with a great experience. To face this reality, utilities must undertake a digitalization strategy to turn into a successful Customer Experience (CX) organization. To begin, utilities must identify the essential components needed to embark on a CX transformation:

• Key Customer Journey Focus
• Process Automation and Synchronization
• Omnichannel management
• Voice of the Customer
• Data and Analytics
• Quality Assurance

The next step is to determine what is the appropriate architecture that delivers on this value proposition. Some industry players argue that integrating best-of-breed solutions is the way to enhance CX; however, there are two main flaws to this approach:

COST OF COMPLEXITY

For sake of conversation, let's focus on 5 key software solutions that are needed for an effective operation inside a utility: CIS, CSS, CRM, MDM, MWM, and Analytics. Regardless of the integration methodologies (i.e. Point to Point or Integration Platforms), as soon as you add a solution you will be increasing the number of connections to monitor (up to 15 with only 5 solutions) which need to be supported to maintain a healthy environment. This erodes the utility's focus in delivering the best CX to their customers, not to mention the strains that a software upgrade on any system would impact the entire architecture.

LACK OF FLEXIBILITY

There is a belief in the industry that bolt-on CRM solutions are good enough to enhance CX. This poses a great threat to utilities overall. The industry has been told that there is no need to replace a rigid CIS and that a modern CRM will suffice. However, when facing the challenges of configuring new products and services, utilities will quickly understand that the lack of a utility specialized CRM and an inflexible CIS will hurt their customers.

Utilities needs to be able to work with a solution that can resolve the tradeoffs from highly complex systems to boost innovation at the same time**.**

THE SOLUTION: A "HOLISTIC" CIS

A "Holistic Approach" is a concept widely known and used by many other industries, deriving from holism, which believes that the whole is better than the sum of its parts. In the IT industry, holism is concerned with viewing and treating a complex system as a single, interdependent entity. According to TMG, the CIS of the future "should be aiming towards expansion instead of integration". [1]A holistic solution allows utilities to simply build their enterprise application ecosystem on stable grounds that supports a complete business domain and do not require bridges or hubs. If you eliminate the costs of integration, you are well equipped to transform your business without unnecessary duplication or disruption.

New business models, products, and services need to be configured from the inside out so that utilities can guarantee that any value that wants to be delivered to their customers does not fall short because of a lack of technology. The smart route for Utilities is clearly a holistic solution that allows them to have their most important applications related to customer domain, CIS, MWM, CSS/CRM, MDM, and operational ANALYTICS all in one homogeneous product that empowers utilities to achieve enhanced CX.

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1   TMG Consulting. (2018). Utility Industry Disruption: 5 Profound Trends Impacting IT Modernization Projects. http://www.csforms.org/Conference42/Workshop%20pdfs/TMG.pdf; p. 6

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