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CUSTOMER CENTRICITY UNDERSTANDING THE CUSTOMER WITHIN THE CULTURE AND UNDERSTANDING THIS FIT INTO STRATEGY. UNDERSTANDING THE CUSTOMER BASE.

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INTRODUCTION

Africa is a point of inflection. In recent years, Africa has recorded significant improvements in access to formal and informal financial services. More people and small enterprises have access to financial services and more specifically credit. Until recent times, there has been little data about the extent to which Africans, particularly the youth, women and the poor, could access financial services. From the work carried out by Demirguc-Kunt et al (2012), there are systemic indicators contained in the Global Findex database, describing the use of financial services by Africans. The index shows that as at 2012 out of a population size of almost a billion people, only a quarter of the adult population had an account with a formal financial services institution. Many other adults accessed financial services through village banks, microcredit institutions and savings cooperatives, whilst borrowing from friends and family. Access to credit for Small and Medium Enterprises remains even more acute due to lack of credit appetite by formal financial services institutions and lack of depth in equity markets. It would be very tempting to accuse the formal financial institutions of being elitist and failing to become customer centric, but the underlying challenge is at the crux of the customer centricity challenge for formal financial services institutions.

The current service delivery model for formal financial services is archaic and has been a target for disruption by the smaller more nimble technology companies. The history of banking is instructive in explaining why the large financial services institutions have been slow is adapting to changes in customer needs. The first printed cheque, as an innovation was drawn by the Bank of England in 1717. It took the banking industry two hundred and forty nine years to produce its first Automated Teller Machine (ATM) on 27 June 1967, it took another twenty years before the debit card was produced as a payment mechanism in1987. It then takes another twelve years before Internet Banking as an innovation is introduced. The first mobile banking application was introduced in 2008, and yet for the most diversified universal financial services organisations, especially the ones that have been in existence for a long time, the only channel that can deliver all their products and services is still the branch. While there has been effort to move products and service delivery to the mobile channels, there are some obstacles that need to be overcome to achieve an end-to-end digital experience for the customer. The biggest challenge being the way in which the legacy systems were built. The predominant mind-set behind the design was that systems were designed for products, and the product within the bank that 'owned 'the customers.

As technology has developed and customer needs have evolved with time, these legacy systems and the consequent product-centric systems and processes has been found wanting. With the advent of the new technology companies, the so-called have an opportunity to disrupt the financial services industry by designing and delivering financial services solutions for customer convenience and lifestyles much faster than banks. With the concept of customer centricity, larger and older financial services organisations has become elusive as the Fintechs are innovating and disrupting their value chains faster than they can cope with. The Fintechs are using human centred design principles to design solutions that are relevant to the ever-changing needs of the customer. The need to understand and design for the ever-evolving needs of the customer of today and the future is at the heart of the customer centricity challenge for larger and older banks in Africa.

"Customer Centricity is the ability to get and stay ahead by giving long term value to and getting long term value from customers, in a way that makes it difficult for competitors to catch up"(Vandermerwe 2014 p.xvii). This essentially means long term value for the customer can never be viewed from a historical perspective, this view has to be futuristic and requires a shift in mind-set supported by an investment in relevant technologies designed with the customer at centre. Customer centricity is therefore not just a buzzword and it is not about a marketing, customer service department or call centre simply responding to a customer complaint.

Disruptive customer centricity as defined in (Vandermerwe 2014 p.xvii) includes overturning old market, sector or industry beliefs, convictions, assumptions and habits, creating a new industry standard, a different way of doing things and a breakthrough that brings something to the market that makes customers, organisations and others better off. As the financial services industry is being disrupted, other sectors and industries are also being disrupted, a deep understanding of each of the sectors and the disruption to their value chains has to be central to the design principles that are applied to achieving customer centricity. The global value chains that support the various sectors are also changing, pressure on commodity prices across the globe has also put substantial pressure on commodity dependent economies in Africa. African corporates are also trying to remain relevant within their sector and their global value chains.

The financial services industry operates in a regulated environment developed over decades in a fit for purpose environment. This environment evolved out of a mind-set supporting products supported by organisational design, technology, business models and enabling functions. The product life cycle approach realized increasing returns in the short term with decreasing returns overtime, until the launch of the revised product or service with the ongoing cycle. ***"Complex products, limited services, rigid processes, and cumbersome consumer interactions did not necessarily hamper business success. In the past decade, however, the rules of the game have changed."*** (McKinsey & Company, 2017)

Today's customers' reward transparency, speed, and flexibility, new competitors are looming on the horizon, and the low-interest-rate environment makes the traditional business model a thing of the past. Legacy business models, principles and assumptions need to be revisited as banks invest in relevance for the future. Product lifecycles have become shorter, in some cases disruptions are upon existing disruptions. The Fintechs have come up with business models that are nimble and significantly reduce time to market and the cost to serve customers.

In this paper we unpack how to create an organisation and system that supports customer centricity, focusing on how we move from a fragmented view of customer to an integrated view of customer, how we move from a product centric approach to a customer solutions focused approach and how we can leverage digitalisation to improve customer centricity and customer experience.

Services have been the fastest growing segment of the world economy, particularly in developing countries, creating many opportunities for different service-related firms (Malhotra, Ulgado, Agarwal, Shainesh & Wu, 2005). A critical service for the development of an economy is the provision of banking services. Many developing countries have well-established banking infrastructure and branch networks (Greenland, Coshall & Combe, 2006).

One bank, in one African country ran a Know Your Customer project over five years, with the primary objective of meeting the minimum compliance requirements for the regulator within the given deadline. This project was primarily focussed on obtaining customer identification documents, proof of income and proof of residential address. The project was focussed on getting the static data on customers up to date and compliant. In the process of doing this project, a unique opportunity was missed to obtain information about what customers' evolving and future needs are. Instead, this information on customer needs is obtained through customer satisfaction surveys. These surveys focus primarily on the experience of the customers with the banks over a period of time and usually ask the customers to advise the banks on what they could do better. These also compare the customer's experience from one bank to the other and based on this feedback, the banks are ranked. These rankings are a great source of satisfaction for the leading in customer satisfaction indices. The improvements proposed in these surveys are usually incremental in nature and usually result in what are referred to as continuous improvements projects aimed at improving customer satisfaction.

CURRENT CHALLENGES BANKS FACE

	The impact of the lack of a consolidated view of customers has resulted in significant delays in on boarding customers and responding to customers queries. Even the cross-selling of new products becomes an incredibly tedious process which creates friction in the relationship with the customer. Most banks are running what are referred to as 'Big Data" projects, whose primary aim is to harness the customer information residing on multiple systems to improve the customer experience
	One bank reported that in order to trace the changing transactional behaviour of the customer, they had to review the 'suspicious' reports submitted to the regulator by their Compliance Department to have a view of the changes in the operating model of the customer. This is a massive mind-set shift, which even in the world compliance, there is an opportunity to improve knowledge of the customer and creating solutions for the customer based on this transactional data.

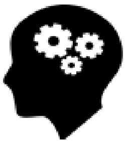
	One bank reported that it took over 180 days to start and close a long term infrastructure financing transaction and most of this time was lost in the collection data about the customer, the transaction and the operating conditions before all necessary approvals could be obtained. 180 days is roughly the amount it takes to summit Mt Everest on three separate expeditions. From the customer's perspective, this does not demonstrate knowledge of the customer, the sector within which they operate and all the attendant sector dynamics.
	Traditionally banks sold products and that worked, the need now is for banks to sell solutions. The focus on solutions implies there is a need to understand the customer problem.

Table 1. Challenges for Banks

The approach for this article was created given the review of a survey conducted in ten African countries, during the period January to June 2017. One thousand and sixty multibanked corporate customers interviewed. Key themes emerged based on common negative customer sentiments centered on the speed of delivery & execution, coupled with efficiency, reliability & automation of our processes & systems. This type of survey is conducted by most banks annually, the question is what actions are being taken to unpack the feedback to make a difference.

Know Your Customer is seen as a legislative requirement and a tick box to on-board a customer. The writers' are of the view that a truly customer centric organisation would be organisationally structured to collectively understand the customer based on the segment to unlock the potential in building a long term relationship giving and getting long term value. Although many organisations embarked on the journey to a single view of the customer this is based on static data with transaction views associated with products. What is missing here is how banks should use this data, customer insights, market and sector insights in collaboration with a deep understanding of the customer's eco system and future plans to deliver customer solutions.

Examples drawn from our journey on this programme into Africa include:

	In South Africa whilst out and about we engaged taxi drivers to understand the utilization of banking products. Our findings highlighted that overall banking knowledge was limited.
	In Zambia the trader we engaged at the local market had a bank account but was unable to reach the banks due to limited operating hours.
	In Senegal a company called WARI introduced disruptive customer centricity by overturning old market, sector or industry beliefs, creating a different way of doing things by enabling a payment solution for the mass unbanked population, similar to solutions in other parts of Africa.
	In Mauritius Omnicane a sugar company evolved to become an energy company. We ask ourselves how well the bankers' understood the customer's vision in providing solutions to facilitate the transition and be relevant in their new operating model. To become an energy company, investment in infrastructure was required. To enable this the bank would need to approve credit facility. Given the lack of a track record as an energy company we can only imagine the time it would take to get approval. No history, no collateral. My guess would be this would somewhere around 180 days.

Table 2: Africa Expansion learnings

Due to the slump in commodity prices globally over the last couple of years and the demand has dropped significantly over this period, this has resulted in acute shortages of foreign currency across various markets. The shortages of foreign currencies have resulted in the depreciation of the local currencies across a number of markets in Africa. The depreciation in local currency means that the cost of the imported raw materials to vertically integrate in-country in order to localise the supply chain in-so-far as is possible. Fintechs have found solutions for farmers that will participate in newly created value chains, which the banks are still trying to figure out how to extend financial services into remote areas across Africa.

How do we move from a fragmented view of customer to an integrated view of customer?

We look at integrated platforms, business models and operating models to enable an integrated view of the customer.

Integrated Platforms

Most banks run on legacy systems consisting of a core banking system and a legacy IT architecture pre-dating the digital era that is inflexible. The total cost of ownership is high and cost to serve is higher. For some, a history of mergers and acquisitions resulted in multiple, overlapping legacy systems across their business lines and countries of operation. They often have to deploy a number of peripheral systems to serve these needs. The integration of these systems provides product functionality but denies the bank a consolidated view of the customer's interaction with the bank.

The excessive integration of peripheral systems creates complexity in the technology infrastructure. These systems also distribute the information of customer interactions with the bank to many systems making it very difficult to collect, collate and integrate customer information.

"Batch accounting systems where designed to maintain end-of-day positions when bank branches opened during business hours only. The memo post systems that evolved later for same-day posting provided customers and bank employees with intra-day balance information. However, these memo systems did not track full information or trace to source e.g., provide a single view of the customer across all products, track orders before they became transactions, or service customer requests to drill into transaction detail straight through. The advent of always-on, anytime, anywhere internet and mobile banking, the consequent dramatic increase in the look-to-book ratio and the requirement for instant processing of payments made these legacy systems distressing. Even with the advent of the new age banking systems coming into the market, the mind-set that underpins the design principles is one that was formed in the era of batch processing. Customers are continuously seeking a real-time experience with the banks." (Anon, 2017)

Banking systems were built of mainframes with overnight batch processes, with customers having to live with specific product balances being available at the branch, some at the ATM and some online. As recent as 2016, in a survey conducted by one bank, corporate customers highlighted that balances on statements obtained from the online payment system were inaccurate, this required contacting the bank to request a more accurate statement.

In the age of the customer when banking systems going back decades meet smart phones it is clear there is no place for contentment. The resulting legacy-based complex IT architecture is not fit-for-purpose in today's world. Behind the ATMs, mobile apps and tellers, transactions continue to queue up behind others to be processed at a later time, with the temporary memo posts trying to hide this from the customer until the batch process completes. Worse, product-based banking services hard-wired into channels make it excessively expensive and time-consuming to reflect a change in product through all channels. Integrated core banking systems with more relevant software that is both agile and cost effective will enable an integrated customer view at the back of integrated platforms. This is going to be a cost intensive journey which needs to start at some point for Banks to remain relevant, more importantly though it cannot be executed at the pace Banks are accustomed to.

Sim Tshabalala recently noted "***South Africa's banks are highly innovative and creative. For instance, we're at the forefront of South Africa's economic expansion into the rest of Africa, growing rapidly in Africa ourselves, and helping our clients to do so, bringing home income and jobs. South Africa's banks are among the world's leaders in digital innovation, annually investing many billions in the most up-to-date technology and training staff to make the most of it. Standard Bank, for instance, spends close to R15 billion every year on IT and owns software valued at around R21 billion. Our***

competitors are similarly focused on digital innovation so Standard Bank is certainly not alone in making these large investments, which contribute to SA competitive advantage." (Blsa.org.za, 2017)

Business Models

A business model can be described as how an organisation creates, delivers and captures value. (Osterwalder & Pigneur, 2010) Disruption creates significant opportunity for the most agile and forward-looking companies willing to adapt, and even rethink, their fundamental business models.

The challenge for renowned banks is to embrace new business models to implement changes that have a compelling organisational wide impact on customer experience that are sustainable. Given engagement in the banking environment, it is clear that the South African Banks are making changes in this regard. This will ensure that improved experiences in one part of the organisation are not fleeted. Banks should be evaluating capabilities compared with competitors assessing strengths and weaknesses. In the universal bank business model, scale, cost and efficiency must be considered as these banks will offer a comprehensive product offering. With customer centricity in mind the aim is to have greater flexibility to meet the customer's needs offering products and services across the organisation. The challenge is managing the increased complexity efficiently.

The challenge for African banks is the traditional operating model, with its vertical asset classes and horizontal functional support lines is losing its relevance. It is a model drawn to reflect product priority and a business based on product innovation to drive the bottom line, a model unlikely to meet the future needs of the banking business. As we enter an era when customer service and customer needs must be king, inflexible business models that serve internal needs, rather than those of customers, have no place if banks are to survive. The challenge for banks is how to shift from being product-centric to being customer-centric while retaining the ability to innovate. Depending on the business model corporate banks face different challenges which do not contribute the client experiences and overall client centricity.

In choosing tactics to execute the strategy, three capabilities should be considered as table stakes in corporate and investment banking: strong regulatory management, risk and conduct, a customer-centric approach to offering solutions, taking into account digitalisation, and advanced technology management to support customer needs. Banks have to consider letting go of the notion that they need to own all the systems. Fintech have democratised delivery of financial services. Investment is securing information about needs and the solutions for those needs has already been disrupted by the Fintech. Banks will need to make tough choices regarding what other specific capabilities to invest in, ranging from derivatives trading teams and IT platforms to trade finance processing operations, and which they should avoid, outsource or serve through white label. A customer centric strategy to enable this model will require breaking down organisational silos and structure incentives to promote a customer centric culture, understand customer needs, behavioural drivers and profitability, deliver a consistently high-quality customer experience. Each of these elements requires sound customer analytics and an approach to process improvement that focuses on the customer. Organisational structures and the attendant cultures were formed during the era of product centricity.

Diagram 1 Customer engagement outcomes

The diagram above depicts the four outcomes from an effective customer engagement approach supporting customer centricity. By looking at the universe of the customer the organisation is able to build long term relationships to build and grow market share. Ways of working and culture incorporates well organised efforts. Returns will commensurate the financial resources allocated to customers, with a consolidated view of the cost of servicing the customer. The competitive advantage of implementing such a model includes the enablement of fostering customer relationships at a deeper level that are well co-ordinated across the organisation. By allocating the appropriate focus and people to service customers, there is an opportunity to develop deeper insight to ensure the appropriate solutions are provided. To deliver, an evaluation of the resource allocation is required to ensure it's fit for purpose, with the right structures and forums in place to orchestrate accordingly. The management information to measure the performance of the customer engagement is required. In the world of corporate and investment banking, it is critical to apply rigour in identifying the target customers within the target sectors, allocate the necessary resources and build the capabilities the customers today and into the future. Resources are limited and effective deployment of the available resources to target clients is critical to remaining relevant to the changing needs of the customer.

The customer experience should be defined interactions and touchpoints. Historically organisations define high level goals around products and the brand allowing the the experience to be defined seperately at the end of each touch point. The end result is an inconsistent customer experience, which is magnified by the number of touch points. Most banks have very bold vision statements that usually lack the detail which is necessary to ensure disciplined execution of the customer strategy.

Operating Models

To increase revenue, reduce costs and make a marked improvement on customer experiences, the internal review must be extended to encompass the operating model. In the article reference is made to ***"next-generation operating models, this operating model is a new way of running the organization that combines digital technologies and operations capabilities in an integrated, well-sequenced way to achieve step-change improvements in revenue, customer experience, and cost."*** (McKinsey & Company, 2017) This model is supported by two components. The first is a move from uncoordinated silo approaches to an integrated operational improvement program around customer journeys. The second component is the use of technology and operational capability across customer journeys in conjunction and in the correct sequence to achieve compound impact. The future design and architecture of banks in Africa has to be based on human-centred design principles, the silos mind-set is archaic and obsolete.

Concepts from ethnography and behavioural economics can be considered when redesigning the process. In the article reference is also made to a major European Bank which revamped the operating model to improve customer satisfaction and reduce overall costs by up to thirty five percent. By targeting the ten most important journeys, eighteen months in, operating costs are lower, the number of online customers is up nearly twenty percent, and the number using its mobile app has risen more than fifty percent.

Organizations typically use five key capabilities or approaches. The next generation banking operating model should include digitisation to improve the journey and experience, advanced analytics to provide intelligence to improve decision making, intelligent process automation to replace repetitive tasks, business process outsourcing and lean process redesign.

Digitization can be defined as the process of using tools and technology to improve journeys. Digital tools have the capacity to transform customer-facing journeys in powerful ways, often by creating the potential for self-service. ***"Digital can also reshape time-consuming transactional and manual tasks that are part of internal journeys, especially when multiple systems are involved."*** McKinsey & Company. (2017). Advanced analytics is the autonomous processing of data using sophisticated tools to discover insights and make recommendations. This would be hugely beneficial as it provides cleverness to improve decision making and can especially develop journeys where a roundabout thinking approach is required.

Intelligent process automation is an emerging set of new technologies that combines fundamental process redesign with robotic process automation and machine learning. Intelligent process automation can replace human effort in processes that involves aggregating data from multiple systems or taking a piece of information from a written document and entering it as a standardized data input. Examples include smart workflows (to track the status of the end-to-end process in real time, manage handoffs between different groups, and provide statistical data on bottlenecks), machine learning (to make predictions on their own based on inputs and provide insights on recognized patterns), and cognitive agents (technologies that combine machine learning and natural-language generation to build a virtual workforce capable of executing more sophisticated tasks).

Business process outsourcing uses resources outside of the main business to complete specific tasks or functions, to improve cost efficiency. This approach typically works best for processes that are manual, are not primarily customer facing, and do not influence or reflect key strategic choices or value propositions. The most common example is back-office processing of documents and correspondence. Lean process redesign helps companies streamline processes, eliminate waste, and foster a culture of continuous improvement. Create an organisational culture that embrace failing forward and failing quickly as part of the learning process. Continuous improvement can only be effective if there a corresponding improvement in the understanding of the customer experience.

As indicated in (Vandermerwe, 2014) it is ironic that while the importance of customer centricity is irrefutable, actually making it happen remains a conundrum for most executives and most implementations fail. Five percent of all organisations implement strategies successfully, seventy percent do not, and the remaining twenty five per cent have some success but never meet the potential of the vision. The writers concur with Vandermerwe in that strategy and implementation there of go together. Those charged with implementing the strategy will lack the deep, rational understanding as well as the emotional commitment to drive the energy that spurs people on.

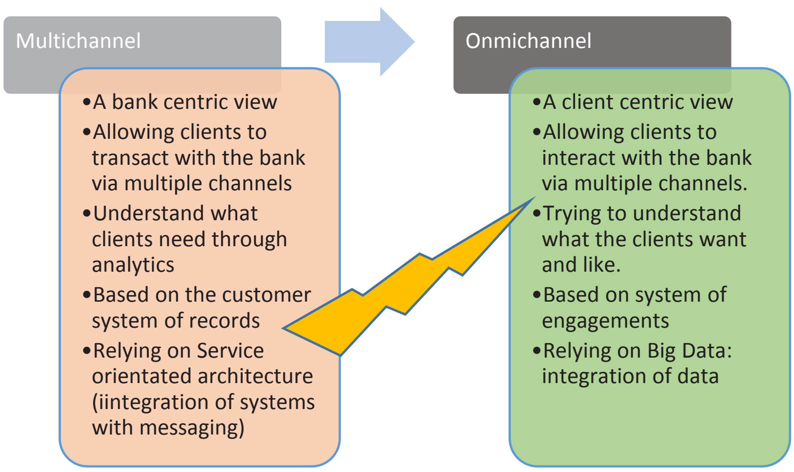
How we can leverage digitalisation to improve customer centricity and customer experience?

Social media has raised the bar in terms of managing customer expectations and experience. The days of providing feedback in twenty four to forty eight hours are long gone, the expectation in this day and age is less than four hours, and the answer lies in self-service with personal contact as just in case safety net. There is a high dependency on internal data to improve efficiency, satisfied customers and operational efficiencies. As the race to avoid being left out of the digital proliferation continues with the quick launch of apps, the design thinking methodology must be applied in ensuring that a channel silo is not created. To reiterate, to improve the experience focus on the journey, this is a paradigm shift in banking as the focus has largely been on transaction execution.

Self-service requires a platform that enables digital engagement and interaction. But adoption and digital savviness still lag among many organizations. How do banks open up the organisation to the customer to enable digital channels to log and receive updates relating to queries and requests by exploring capability including live chat, community portal to support current and future channels digitally?

As described by IBM in (IBM Omni channel Banking, 2017) ***"Omni channel enables interactions across multiple customer touch points where intents are captured, insights are derived and conversations are personalized and optimized. With Omni channel, banks can not only fulfil customers' explicit needs, but also anticipate their wants and likes."***

Diagram 2 Adapted from IBM: the transition to Omni channel banking changes the organisation focus from transactions to customers.



An omni channel view enables a deeper understanding of the customer. Historically banks are known for managing money and the accurate processing of transactions. Product development proceeded with the support process and customer experience being an afterthought. The approach has changed to understanding the product set the customer has across the bank, how frequently does the customer have to contact us, why is this customer contacting us, what is the preferred contact point, what are the other clicks, what opportunity is there for the customer and the bank given what we now know.

As the world is changing for employees and customers with the increased use of social media, the question arises as to what banks are doing to be relevant in the future with the introduction of digital transformation. As banks, two key gaps need to be addressed, the trust gap given the pressure for change and the innovation gap to be addressed with the burden of legacy. Customer sentiment is know me and guide me to help me achieve objectives, whilst employee sentiment is connect me and make me more productive to do my job better. Considerations to address the gap include a single consistent user experience, easy interaction, embracing new ways, accelerating digital execution, leveraging data and leveraging assets across the organisation. Digitalisation of all the customer touch points with the objective of a consolidated view of the customer will ultimately enable the relationship team to have a single view of customer's interaction across the organisation irrespective of location.

Let's put this into perspective for Bank ABC*, operating in twenty countries across the continent. As noted earlier, banks have been operating on different core banking systems and peripheral local systems which may have been inherited as part of mergers or acquisitions over time. Given the technology stack and infrastructure in each country the operations teams are faced with differing challenges during the processing month. If we limit the channels to calls and email from customers in each country with no standardisation, this means that the likelihood of twenty different approaches to logging of customer interactions exist. The banks objective is to bank the Multinational customers in as many countries as possible. To do this, the relationship team would have manual processes and manual dependencies to consolidate the customer view inclusive of sales and service across the continent. The relationship team may be unaware of customer pain points in the country in which they are maintaining the relationship and other countries, making it exceedingly difficult to have a comprehensive view of the customer from a central relationship management perspective. Multi-national customers would prefer banks to view them in the same manner they see themselves, as a portfolio of businesses operating in multiple geographies. The Group Treasurer wants a single view their portfolio of businesses on the same platform, with reliable information about their financial positions.

To achieve sales targets the relationship team does some investigation and analysis to prepare for a customer meeting to promote a new payment channel. The conversation starts off with challenges experienced by the customer with current products and services the customer has taken up in a specific business unit in the bank which the relationship team may not be aware of. This makes the task of working with the customer to achieve a greater wallet share extremely challenging. The risk of the customer leaving the bank becomes much higher, resulting a lot more effort to retain the customer.

To partner with the customer banks' need to enable employees to better understand the customer locally and across the geographic footprint to address macro-economic factors impacting the repatriation of funds for cross border payments, exchange rate volatility and fluctuations and macro-economic instability. Ease of banking, system challenges, high cost of banking, access to finance and access to reliable support and expertise account for the key factors impacting the customer's business in the corporate and investment banking landscape. In trying to assist customers to address these challenges to gain wallet share, the need to enable the deeper customer understanding in terms of dealings both with the bank and in terms of the customer vision and strategy is paramount.

Banks need to start laying the technological foundation to enable the consolidation of customer views across geographies to enable customer centricity. The benefits include extending the view of the customer by elevating customer transactional and query management data, improve the collaboration between the relationship and production teams, turn data into insights and actions and most importantly to enrich our customer conversations.

The diagram below is a conceptual model designed by the writers' which depicts the use of digitisation to bring together the single view of the customer, together with AI, technology, data to create a future view of the customer. The success of this type of initiative is determined by the corporate culture. The next question is what do banks need to do to get there what is needed to bring it all together to provide the insights from the vast amount of data on hand. Gartner defines dark data as ***"the information assets organizations collect, process and store during regular business activities, but generally fail to use for other purposes,"*** The insights can be obtained by gathering together, storing and analysing large amounts of structured and unstructured data.

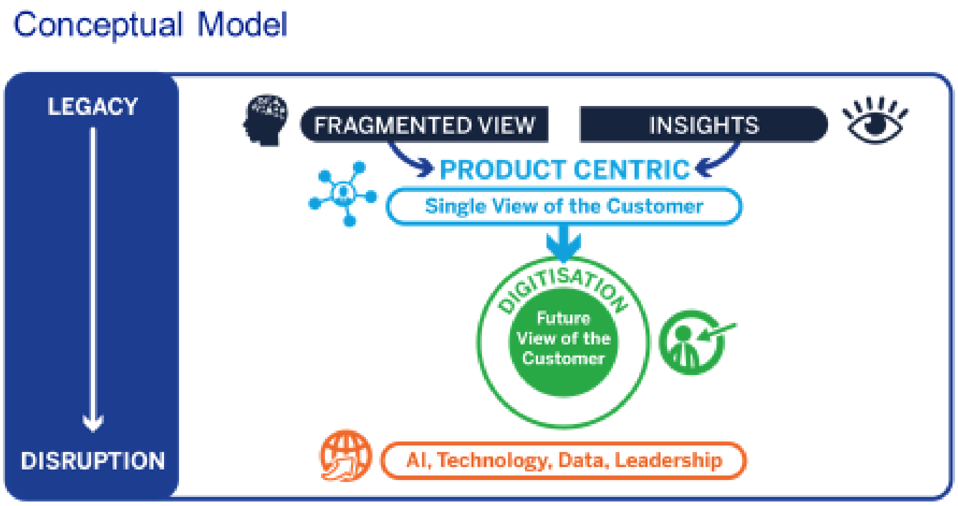


Diagram 4 Conceptual Model the Future View of the Customer

Given the legacy systems, organisational design, culture and leadership, what disruption do we need to enable us to have a future view of the customer? We then also ask ourselves how we can become a relevant partner to participate in our customer's growth, getting an eco-system view of the customer.

As described earlier, banks are left with fragmented customer views at the back of transactional data and insights supported by a product centric mind-set. Efforts to create a single view of the customer are at the back of static data. Given what we have, we can ask ourselves how do we organise ourselves to win in the 4th Industrial Revolution.

Behind this conceptual model is value chain, integrated big data and an analytics platform enabling real and potentially game changing insights.

The opportunity for banks is that they are now able to manage data at a reduced overall cost associated with a traditional data warehouse while intentionally utilising new analytical capabilities. An end-to-end, integrated big data and analytics platform unlocks the value of technology solutions, and paves the way for advanced analytics. Analytics and data that provide the basis for the forecasting of future events and behaviours of customers. This allows businesses the opportunity to perform 'what-if' analysis to predict the effects of potential changes in business strategies.

The step change is that when this is coupled with core and legacy business systems, leveraging leading practices and processes for the effective use of each in a collaborative way the integrated platform can offer key business advantages and insights to banks to address the issue of customer centricity for the future.

The race for digitalisation in corporate and investment banking has not rendered bankers obsolete. In an exercise conducted by Bain & Company, (Bain.com, 2017) which interviewed executives at banks' customers, they cited relationship management as the most dominant factor in recommending their "core bank." Customers value responsiveness, a proactive approach and stability of the bank's coverage. Fundamental to succeed in relationships, banks will need to invest in frontline talent, mobilize the right sector and product specialists in the right place at the right time, and embed the customer's perspective into the chosen strategy.

Banks that build high-quality relationships and earn their customers' advocacy benefit from superior economics. That's because customers who are promoters of a bank do more business with the bank and often cost less to serve. On average, they generate double the value of customers who are passives or detractors.

We know about insights, we know customers value relationships and we know that employees are fundamental in building relationships as having the insights empowers and sets the foundation to achieve significant benefits, however packaging and enabling employees to utilise these insights requires banks embracing and adopting human centred design. Design thinking incorporates emphasizing, defining, ideation, prototype and testing. Empathising is important because it is important to design something that will be used by people, to design something that people will use, it has to fill a need and fit into their lives in a meaningful way, to design something meaningful you need to understand their lives, their behaviour and their beliefs.

"Design thinking is a human-centered approach to innovation that draws from the designer's toolkit to integrate the needs of people, the possibilities of technology, and the requirements for business success." Tim Brown, CEO OF IDE.

"Human-centred design". "***Meeting people where they are and really taking their needs and feedback into account. When you let people participate in the design process, you find that they often have ingenious ideas about what would really help them. And it's not a onetime thing; it's an iterative process."*** – Melinda Gates

Operational and IT leaders are often tempted to take over the company's digital agenda, but this approach can easily backfire. ***"Digital and customer transformations stall if leaders cannot show how they deliver value. IT needs the business leaders to link the investment to a clear customer need (and business case). On the other hand, business leaders trying to bypass IT out of frustration with its speed or capabilities doesn't work either. This creates isolated, greenfield solutions that are hard to integrate back into the IT landscape."*** (McKinsey & Company, 2017)

There is a need to move to a more collaborative agile approach which delivers business value faster with self-motivated. This will allow for a faster response to the changing environment. Fundamental to success is the collaborative team keeping the customer pain points and experience in mind.

CONCLUSION

To achieve the end goal of being a strategic partner, corporate banks need to provide advice on products or tailored solutions. We recommend that Banks offer a unified bank approach across divisions, interact more frequently, respond quicker, improve the service culture and build on current relationships. This is a huge task that can be achieved by moving from a fragmented view of the customer to and integrated view.

To take this step there is a need to adopt integrated platforms to create a single view. To improve customer experience and customer centricity by providing solutions instead of products, banks need to use the digitization to leap frog using the single view and insights to create a future view; this must be done with the revised customer base.

Given the competitive environment, banks should be working closely with mobile network operators across Africa. Given the success of mobile payments in this region it is clear that the mobile network operators understand the mass markets and have been able to address the problem of payments. To extend the capability to include savings, banks are fundamental to mobile network operators and should in fact be taking the lead. The issue of customer ownership coupled with regulatory constraints must be addressed to improve the collaboration between mobile network operators and banks. The difference in culture between banks and mobile network operators must be addressed to ensure a successful collaborative relationship. Banks by default reside on being conservative and slower on the up take of new developments in technology, whilst for network operators this is not a challenge. With a balanced approach between the cultures, this can be a game changer to deliver on a greater, more relevant suite of financial service offering.

In our opinion the future of banking belongs to whoever owns the customer experience and the one who owns the customer data. Herein lies the strategic discomfort or excitement to wake banks up. The catalyst to drive the transformation is for leaders to see a sense of urgency to not miss out or be left behind. Our recommendation is there for a partnership between banks and Fintechs to create a customer experience using human centered design principles. This partnership must address digital initiatives to improve customer experience, reducing costs and transforming static data into knowledge that can be used to transform customer experience. This includes the future views addressed in the conceptual model.

The steps required to become truly customer centric, however, are anything but superficial; they are the building blocks for a full-scale transformation of a bank's operating model and the priorities on its agenda. Failing to execute this transformation will relegate banks to the sidelines, and many will fail rendering themselves irrelevant. Success hinges on progressing past platitudes to the real, substantial work of building a truly customer-centric organization, that will change humanity by altering social and business practices, driving inclusivity.

The journey to becoming a customer-centric organization is certainly within reach. It is not a walk in the park and it takes focus and dedication to overcome decades of doing things the way we always have.

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