

That, in turn, is a recipe for customer frustration and business inefficiency. For example, what happens when service reps on social media don't understand how the technical support team works or make promises on which logistics cannot deliver? Disciplines such as logistics management, pricing and even customer service must all be aligned with marketing channels if brands are to deliver on their digital promises.

Brands must, from their top levels, accept that digital technology and an empowered mobile consumer have changed the way that business works. Rather than simply reacting to this changing world - as many large consumer brands are doing - leading businesses should be transforming their businesses so that they can drive digital disruption.

CEOs must lead the change

It's up to CEOs to lead digital change. They need to look at their businesses and find ways that they can use digital technology to change their industries. It is CEOs who have the complete view of the business and the ability to rally all of its resources under the banner of digital transformation.

Without strong leadership, digital projects will become ineffectual silos rather than helping drive a whole new strategy and operating model for the business.

Data is the core

A preoccupation with the customer is the core of digital transformation, and it is here where data has an important role to play. Data and the insights it yields allow companies to align the organisation to the customer experience, decision journey and brand touch points. It gives organisations a more holistic view of their customers so that they can understand their needs and respond to them in real or near-real time.

Smarter is better than bigger

Though many marketers become nervous when the term "big data" is mentioned, they should be thinking about "smart data" instead. Look at a dozen or so data points that will give you real insight into your customers and help you engage with them at a deeper level. Don't measure Facebook 'likes' because everyone else is - look at the data which reveals their behaviours, needs, desires, and other insights that you can act upon.

Innovation - for the customer's sake

Every brand can and should be using digital technologies to revitalise its business, but the aim should not be to innovate for the sake of it. Instead, it's about using new digital channels and technologies to bring new levels of immediacy, accountability and customer-centricity to marketing. The customer experience is what matters - the digital toolset is the means rather than the end.

ABOUT RICHARD MULLINS

Richard Mullins is the director at Acceleration. He opened Acceleration's Johannesburg office in 2000 and has played an instrumental role in the growth of Acceleration in South Africa.

- Omnichannel - Chasing the marketing Holy Grail - 25 Jan 2021
- The war for the digital customer moves to the first mile as voice interfaces begin to mature - 5 Feb 2020
- To build a better customer experience, start with the architecture - 1 Dec 2017
- Data visualisation tools provide a view of the customer journey beyond marketing - 13 Nov 2017

▀ Digital transformation must be driven from the top to ensure success - 10 Aug 2017

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>