Forrester CXNYC 2018 Review

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By CRMXchange.com

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The curriculum at Forrester's CXNYC Forum explored the technologies to power initiatives and the strategies needed to achieve true CX excellence. Industry leaders had access to documented research in areas such as customer journey mapping, accelerating digital transformation, predictive and text analytics, strategic deployment of AI and chatbots. There was also guidance offered in the wake of the adaptation of the EU GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) and the possible ramifications in other nations.

As always, presenters included high-level Forrester analysts and industry-leading speakers from top b-to-b and b-to-c companies from a variety of business sectors. Speakers discussed strategic innovations now in progress at Etsy, Marcus by Goldman Sachs GM, Vanguard, USAA, and others. There were breakout presentations and partner presentations, some with end users describing the impact of technologies employed in CX initiatives as well as summits, workshops and invitation-only seminars.

CRMXchange spent time with sponsors in the exhibit hall to learn more about emerging solutions, recent releases and product upgrades:

AXIM According to a Gartner 2017 CX summit study, 80% of companies believe their CX is superior, but only 8% of their customers agree. While 62% of businesses see contact center CX as a competitive advantage, Dimension Data/Zendesk research reveals that 80% think their customer service systems are not ready for the future. One key factor in these discrepancies: many enterprise organizations haven't completely thought through what can presently be achieved now or the future directions to improve the customer experience. There is often a struggle with maintaining the viability of aging legacy technology vs the inconvenience and uncertainty of having to rip and replace.

Axim conducts comprehensive Enterprise Sustainability Audits (ESAs) with the goal of determining the effectiveness of a business's current architecture, business drivers affecting

Bold360 offers what they describe as a "platform made for business." It utilizes their patented Natural Language Understanding to enable real conversations with customers, where and when they want. Since the parent company's LogMeIn's 2017 purchase of Israeli chatbot and AI tool developer NanoRep, they have been expanding their capability to offer businesses the capability to develop bots with no need to write code.

While most AI solutions require months of setup or intensive data analysis before delivering true value, their Bold360 ai is a conversational chatbot and virtual customer assistant service that's easy to implement and can pinpoint customer pain points from the very first customer interaction. The solution enables businesses to conduct seamless transitions between bots and live agents with the agent having full access to service tickets and the ability to see everything that has transpired throughout the interaction. By bringing together the power of both agents and artificial intelligence, it gives companies the wherewithal to totally manage the digital experience.

Customerville "People will receive over 40 billion requests to take a survey this year," said Customerville CEO Max Israel. "To be successful, you have to reach through the static and connect." For more than ten years, Customerville has helped industry leaders create genuine connections between their customers, front-line employees and upper-level executives. According to Israel, the process of gaining customer insight about a company is more than simply getting someone to fill out a form. Their Design-driven Feedback software combines behavioral science with vivid art to to create surveys that deliver consistently high response rates. The goal is to provide unique perspective as to how CX professionals can change their outlook on best practices, strategies and innovation within their organization. In his book on Design Driven Feedback, Israel argues that CX innovators must think more like publishers and curate information to create stories about companies and their customers that inspire loyalty and motivate employees.

Helpshift is an AI-powered conversational platform designed to enable companies to deliver customer service that exceeds expectations. It incorporates built-in chatbots that can automate routine tasks and drive operational efficiency by seamlessly transitioning to human agents when needed. Paul Sebastien, CMO of Helpshift, explained that the solution employs predictive algorithms to analyze customer conversations, application data and historical

data to enable an automated and efficient way to triage, route and resolve issues. "It's been built from the ground up for customer service," he said. "It enables a company to integrate self-service right into digital channels to allow its customers to help themselves. In addition, the platform provides the best in-app help system to increase the efficiency of routing inquiries."

According to Sebastien, clients have reported up to a 95% ticket deflection rate with Helpshift's Answer Bots. These chatbots are designed work right out of the box without the need for developers or additional IT bandwidth. Companies can also create custom bot workflows to meet service and business goals using Helpshift's built-in Bot Builder "We started out in in mobile gaming, creating competitions between thousands of online users and have been battle-tested at scale," said Sebastien. Helpshift has an impressive roster of high-profile customers including Microsoft, News Corp, Supercell, Zynga and others.

Intouch Insight draws on over 25 years of experience collecting CX insights to help businesses go beyond what customers expect. President and CEO Cameron Watt cites their origins as a mystery shopping provider beginning in 1978 (an area in which they are still active) and also becoming a survey company in 1992. Watt noted a recent Forrester report that revealed that just 33% of CX professionals believed that their VoC is effective at driving action to improve customer experience.

The company's LiaCX platform (which stands for Listen, Interpret, Act) enables companies to easily collect and combine CX data from customer surveys, contact center interactions social media, mystery shopping, operational audits and limitless third-party integrations — all in one platform. It also combines data in customizable, easy to read dashboards. Customizable dashboards and customer journey maps allow everyone in an organization to filter the data points relevant to them.

As an example, Watt cited a situation where surveys indicated that customers were unhappy with the cleanliness of convenience store restrooms (the listening portion), yet mystery shopping numbers remained high, leading to discussion of whether it was a matter of whether operators weren't following specified procedures, they weren't being explained properly to front-line employees or if the procedures themselves were stringent enough (interpret). Fixing the problem (action) required investigating the situation to determine the cause and fine-tuning either the planning (were the prescribed procedures adequate or the operations (ensuring that employees were aware of what needed to be done). Intouch Insight's Action Campaign technology enables companies to proactively drive CX improvements across all locations and measure the impact of actions on business metrics in real-time.

Watt believes that in many companies, front line employees do not benefit from technologies being used and are unable to understand the impact of their actions on business results. LiaCX, which launched in in May, 2018 addresses this issue. The platform has generated considerable interest within both the SMB and enterprise sector.

PeopleMetrics

PeopleMetrics believes that focusing on the customer experience is a task for everyone within an organization. That's why its centralized customer experience management (CEM) platform is offered on an unlimited user model that promotes user engagement and helps to foster customer-centric cultures. According to Founder and CEO Sean McDade, some CX vendors make it economically and technically challenging for clients to integrate their CEM platforms to interoperate with other critical systems, often charging per user, which makes it cost prohibitive for organizations to get all necessary employees to take advantage of the solution. "Our pricing is based on the touchpoint--whether it's the contact center, in-store or other usage," says McDade. Unlike many other CX vendors, PeopleMetrics' platform complements other commonly used operational systems (such as CRMs) to provide a true holistic voice of the customer while integrating with clients' other existing technologies.

The platform provides tailored reporting experiences and workflows to meet the needs of every user and role. It is powered by robust AI that can find those needles of value within a haystack of data. Its native text analysis technology can make sense of comments and other unstructured feedback, enabling users to visualize topic themes, trends & sentiment. Another feature, Machine Insights, utilizes machine learning to identify specific areas of focus for improving NPS scores. PeopleMetrics' platform enables businesses to intelligently design a program to understand the voice of their customer across key touchpoints and interactions, capture omni-channel customer feedback via email invitations, SMS, digital and more; and design simple surveys optimized for any device. According to McDade, the company, which has been in existence since 2001, has users in both the B2B and B2C segments, with a higher concentration in the latter.