

# Issues in Customer Management

## Feedback from a Short Survey

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## Introduction

The HCCM developed a short survey focusing on issues in customer management that are presenting a challenge currently and also in the future. The survey included the following three questions:

1. Thinking about your current role, what presents you with the greatest challenge or keeps you awake at night?
2. From the following list (see Figure 1 for detail), please select up to 3 others that you feel are also a challenge.
3. Finally, can you rate the future impact of the following issues (see Figure 2 for detail) on your organisation (1=low, 5=high)?

The survey has initially been distributed to HCCM members and contacts as well as being featured on the Huntswood LinkedIn page. We will continue to circulate the survey but felt that we now had sufficient responses to provide feedback to current responders.

In total, 50 responses were received, and the findings are summarised on the following pages.

## What Presents You with the Greatest Challenge or Keeps You Awake at Night?

### Key Themes

The key themes emerging include aspects relating to:

- **Data issues** – data transparency; data security; joining up data and information effectively
- **Resource issues** – not enough staff; reduced budgets to deliver (putting customer service at risk)
- **People issues** – employee engagement; having the quality/skilled staff to effectively deliver
- **Cultural issues** – a customer-centric approach; capability to adapt/change and gain buy-in to a culture in a changing world
- **Business issues** - making the necessary improvements to enhance the customer experience; responding to change
- **Financial issues** – securing revenues; winning new business; growth
- **Customer issues** – keeping customers happy; turning feedback and data insights into realistic actions
- **Technology/innovation issues** – the development of; adoption; keeping up with the pace of change; impact on the service offering.

Note: See Appendix for detailed comments.

## Challenges Currently Being Faced in Customer Management

### Rank Order

The top four challenges in rank order are:

1. Changing/enhancing the culture and climate of the organisation to improve business performance (34% of responses)
2. Enhancing the digital experience for customers (32%)
3. Exploiting advantage through innovation and technology (28%)
4. Actioning insight from customer data (24%).

Figure 1



n=50

Note: 'Having an effective corporate social responsibility and reputation strategy' was not raised as an issue currently being faced.

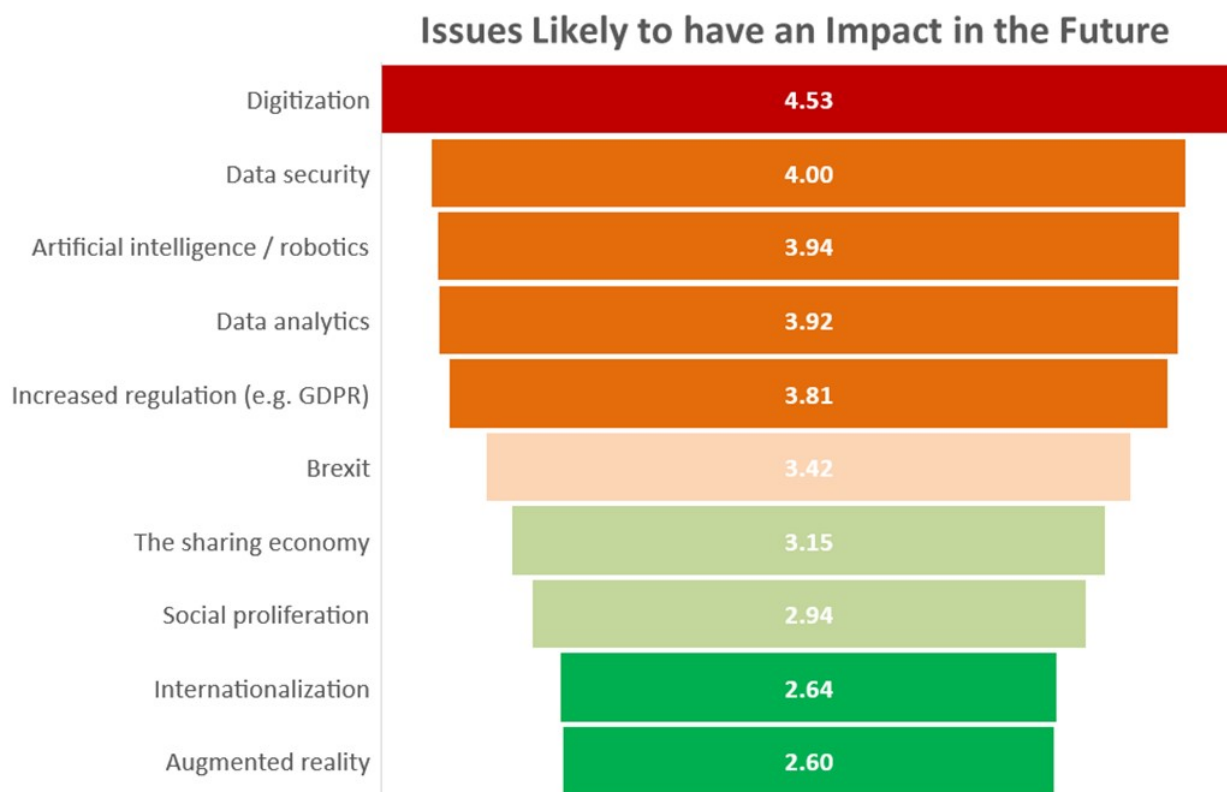
## Future Issues in Customer Management

### Rank Order

The top five key issues (in rank order) are:

1. Digitization
2. Data security
3. Artificial intelligence / robotics
4. Data analytics
5. Increased regulation (e.g. GDPR).

**Figure 2**



n=50

Based on average scores on a 1-5 scale (ranging from 1=Low impact to 5=High impact)

Others, where specified, include: Online learning; Freelance economy; Gig economy; Peer economy; Big Data; Blockchain; Healthy living; Family value; The reorientation of growth economies away from the west - the new emerging mindset of middle Africa, fast growth Asia, Middle East is pivoting away from known business norms of the west. - adopting and adapting to this mindset; Knowledge for both customer and colleague; and Government requirements for interoperability; Corruption; Access to skilled workers; and Forex unpredictability.

## **Appendix**

### **Comments from Respondents**

<b>Thinking about your current role, what presents you with the greatest challenge, or keeps you awake at night?</b>
Trade protectionism
Getting young people onboard to buy our products. Moving fast enough to keep up with technology. Keeping vulnerable customers
An ageing population and lack of digital skills. Little is done to support development in this area
Ensuring our services are market leading, including the increasing use of technology. Supporting firms within the business case for enhancing customer experience
Federated approach to CX. Lack of sustainability put into CX projects. Evidencing the impact of the hard work we do
Driving a truly customer-centric culture than can execute well on its intent
Changing skillsets to meet changing stakeholder needs, or changing budgets (e.g. MR to 'insight')
Culture as a Board level discussion
Turning insight into action, specifically. Fixing the issues of today vs. creating new functionality
Anticipating what our customers want ad when and whether they are ready to take on new technologies. How to make customers 'delighted' and what's the future CES
Keeping customers happy by providing excellent customer service that suits them with current technology
Service management buy-in to change strategy - putting the customer first. Multi-channel contact strategies changing customer expectation. Customer-focused self-service
Adoption of new technology including AI and Machine Learning and how this will shape our offering. Also, autonomous vehicles - implications for our service offering
Ensuring we can provide relevant solutions for our clients so that their levels of customer satisfaction are maintained and improved
Continuing to meet customer expectations and demand in an environment with significant focus on cost reduction
Colleague engagement and retention during period of change - impact on customer service and outcomes
Having to deal with unhappy and unreasonable customers
Business transformation, the ability to change the business including culture to be fighting fit for a new world
In the business of FCMG (biscuits in particular) health concerns and growth on own-label products are the biggest challenges by far
Hiring the best team and training and retaining them
Anticipate future challenges - our industry is in a state of a flux; our competitors are not necessarily our traditional competitors and it is anticipating the threats we are going to face next and in the future. How can we be faster and more agile to address these. Our products and business model might need to fundamentally change, and we need to be quick to respond to change
How to spend more time keeping in touch with our current customers
Export sales in the context of Brexit. Uncertainty abounds and lack of clarity on future relations between the UK and EU makes investment decisions challenging and a major worry
Getting new customers and keeping customers so happy that they will make positive referrals
"1. My current role involves interacting with different stakeholders in the business. Managing their expectations and maintaining business objectives possess a big challenge in delivering a project successfully.
2. What keeps me awake at night is strategising on the best way to resolving the challenge. Learning new skills and looking forward to getting the task done"
Uncertainty around getting projects signed off and started, closely followed by problems with clients paying
Securing ongoing revenues
So much interesting new tools to analyse customer data; how to prioritise
Shortage of resources (people) and heavy cost cutting initiatives which leave customer service at risk and the business potentially exposed

<b>Thinking about your current role, what presents you with the greatest challenge, or keeps you awake at night?</b>
The risk of not maximising return through a lack of personal efficiency
Winning new revenue
Aligning the planned reorganisation with our current responsibilities
Competition between traditional big company and agile new comers
Discovering real unmet needs
The voice of the customer is dominated by the opinionated few, those that bother to respond to questionnaires or tweet are the vocal minority and we accept that as the voice of the customer and respond accordingly, and therefore the silent majority are unheard and we divert our customer service response to the wrong issues and end up with average USPs
Truly turning customer insight/feedback into actions for the business, including ROI benefit
Not enough staff
How does digitization change the environment at our customers, how shall we adopt our solutions to these trends
Being able to consistently apply the difference between an exceptional Customer experience and mediocrity
Transparent data
Technology
Getting in front of the right prospects amidst a changing marketing environment
Joining up data and information. Internal communications not sufficient and effective
1. Working in a regulated industry the definition of a complaint is something that presents challenges. The danger is that we spend too much time debating the nuances instead of focusing on the question in front of us.
2. The other one is maximising customer feedback. It often feels on our terms rather than giving the customer the option that works best for them"
Data security
Getting other senior managers in our business to give customer management and customer experience the focus that it deserves and needs. To get them to appreciate that this vitally important for businesses today and a game changer is so important
Providing an engaging and joined up customer experience
Driving service improvements for the benefits of our customers within a reducing budget including digital transformation
Staff problems

