

Have you digitally transformed your customer communications yet?

 By [Mike Wright](#)

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The customer communication management space, once dominated by document output software companies, has seriously embraced digital transformation.



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Customer Communications Management (CCM) is a loosely defined term to describe software solutions that deal with the creation, management, delivery and storage of high-volume, personalised customer communications.

In their earliest iterations, these solutions were focused on printed documents such as bank statements, accounts, and invoices.

Dynamic, personalised communications

Today's CCM market, worth more than \$400m in the US alone is focused more on providing customers with dynamic, personalised communications, and based on the recipient's preferences rather than the sender's.

While print-based communications are still necessary for certain scenarios, contemporary CCM requires a multi-channel

approach, sending out communications through a wide range of digital and analogue media, including mobile devices, email, SMS, web pages, and print.

The CCM providers which are best positioned to compete in this new world are those which have been rooted in digital from the start.

Evidence of this can be found on the Leaderboard for CCM Vendors published by analyst and research house, Aspire.

The newly launched 2018 Aspire Leaderboard shows how this market has changed considerably over the last five years, with digital providers making a mark in a world where document output providers dominated. The definition of CCM has had to shift from being document output related to encompass customer communications in their entirety, which means moving toward a digital view and approach.

How do you move toward a digital CCM strategy?

Knowing that customers want information on demand that is hyper-relevant, contextual and in the channel of their choice, it's worth evaluating your own levels of digital maturity. Are you providing what your customers want? If not, how far off are you from being able to do so?

By benchmarking yourself against the best in the business, you can get a sense of how digital your DNA is.

This is especially important when it comes to customer communications, which are key to the digital transformation process.

Remember, your customers are already digitally transformed. If you still think that sending out a PDF version of an invoice or account means that you're digitally transformed, then you've completely missed the potential of truly digital customer communications. That's the first step in a long journey on transforming documents digitally.

Interactive, hyper-relevant and contextual information

Digital is not a world where static documents need to reside. There are a whole host of digital tools available which enable you to provide interactive, hyper-relevant and contextual information to your customers as part of their essential billing document.

It's also worth stating that things aren't about to get any easier for companies which haven't fully embraced digital transformation. The world is moving at hyper speed when it comes to digital evolution and companies need to start embracing that change, which includes the ever-important documents.

It's therefore imperative that companies continually adjust their digital transformation efforts with one eye on the future.

Here is one way to go about doing that:

- Evaluate and understand where you sit in your digital maturity and where you need to get to
- Map out the current digital customer experience
- Define the steps to a digitally transformed, fully omnichannel experience with a single view of the customer
- Map the strategic changes to get there
- Break into mini-projects with reasonable timelines
- Measure progress along the way
- Consistently evaluate and promote change

No matter how digitally mature you think you are, you should hold strategic customer journey mapping sessions to determine how you can continue to progress and what the roadmap should look like in both the short and long terms.

Remember, this isn't a destination, it's a journey. What your customers want from your communications will change over time. Ideally, you should be ready and waiting for them when it does.

ABOUT MIKE WRIGHT

Michael Wright launched Striata in 1999. As Striata's CEO, Wright is responsible for the company's vision, mission and the business' global expansion. Wright specialises in customer communication management, email marketing, and secure document delivery.

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