

How do you merge customer journeys, data and agile methods for effective systems delivery?

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To keep pace with rapidly changing customer needs, systems delivery approaches must evolve to ensure iterative, on time and on budget delivery of dynamic systems.

Historically, systems delivery was slow and linear. Organisations deployed fully functional systems, rather than rolling out features incrementally. This lengthy process was often initiated to address untested, perceived customer needs, without considering the pace of change or consulting the wealth of data available.

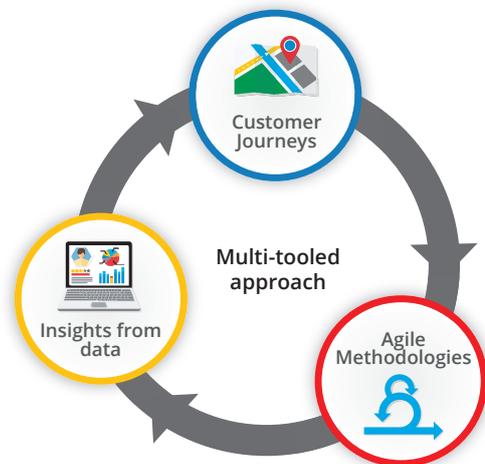
Systems delivery was slow and linear, rather than incremental and agile, but the times are changing

In today's fast-paced world, customer behaviour and technological needs are ever-changing, and customers expect that their changing needs will be met almost instantly. This requires organisations to almost intuitively deliver systems in response to rapidly changing servicing needs.

There is a plethora of information available on methodologies, tools and processes to enable delivery of adaptable, valuable and sustainable systems. However, practical approaches on how to effectively apply these tools collaboratively are in shorter supply.

Three of the most popular tools in the modern day "Systems Delivery Toolkit" are customer journeys, insights from data and the Agile delivery methodology. In our experience, by combining them, organisations can effectively deliver solutions that meet customer expectations, not just today but into the future as well.

Individually, these tools add immense value to the system implementation process, but the real power lies in deftly combining them to form a powerful, flexible and informed delivery approach.



Tool 1: Customer Journeys

Customers are more likely to engage and have positive experiences with systems that address their real (rather than perceived) needs and that have been designed with them in mind. By analysing the existing customer journey and collaboratively defining its future state, a holistic solution that addresses real customer needs can be built.

Customer journeys ensure genuine customer needs and pain points are being addressed

In a multi-tooled approach customer journeys can be used at the start of the delivery process to confirm suspected needs and pain points – or uncover new ones – for input into the analysis and design process. Used in combination with agile delivery, customer journeys guide decision-making and delivery, ensuring continued alignment to real

customer needs across iterations. By reviewing journeys with input from customers after each iteration, systems can be continuously refined, ensuring each iteration is closer to the ideal state and continues to respond to changing needs.

Tool 2: Insights from Data

Organisations generate a huge volumes of data in their day-to-day business. Until fairly recently, that data has gone largely unused due to disparate datasets, and challenges in processing and drawing insights from it. Only in recent years have organisations begun to consolidate, clean and interpret data, enabling everything from predicting future business trends and measuring the impact and success of initiatives, to making decisions on scope and prioritisation of system functionality.

Data provides a quantitative lens to compare against customer journeys to ensure real customer problems are being addressed

By using individual customer and interaction data to understand customer needs and pain points, personalised, proactive and empathetic servicing and systems can be developed.

In a multi-tooled approach, internal and external data should be used as input into both the as-is and the ideal future customer journey maps. This provides a quantitative lens to compare against the more subjective, qualitative insight obtained through customer interviews conducted as part of the customer journey mapping process. Data can also inform benefit estimates and enable better decision-making around feature prioritisation in iteration planning.

Some examples of how data can be used to improve the customer journeys are:

- Being able to match a customer to a consultant with the skillset and experience needed to assist them
- Understanding how the customer feels about an organisation when they make contact, to tailor responses (through sentiment and emotion modelling)
- Understanding a customer's key life events and preferences to enable proactive and empathetic responses



Unlocking potential ► Accelerating performance

Tool 3: Agile Methodology

Using agile and iterative systems delivery approaches enables continuous release of value to the business and customers. By combining that with customer journeys and insights from data as described above, it allows for regular and continuous solution adjustment, in response to changes in customer and / or market needs. Furthermore, incremental solution adjustment is substantially less expensive than implementing “big bang” changes retrospectively.

By merging these three tools into a single delivery approach, organisations can identify the most critical problems and the best solutions, enabling them to address real customer pain points. This means reduced implementation costs and increased time savings by ensuring the right solution is implemented at the right time.

Few organisations are able to do this alone, and when looking for a solutions delivery partner, it's important to find one who can seamlessly integrate customer strategy – encompassing journey mapping, customer interviews and ethnographic research – data analysis and agile solutions' delivery methodologies. At BSG, we are uniquely placed to combine customer and business data and insights with technology to iteratively deliver enterprise-level change that customers want and businesses need.

About BSG

As a homegrown South African Consulting and Technology company, BSG is uniquely positioned to deliver solutions tailored to the South African context.

We have more than 20 years' experience across the banking, specialised financial services, insurance, healthcare, telecommunications, and oil and gas sectors. By employing a multi-skilled approach, BSG effectively leverages our clients' data to create solutions that improve the experiences of their customers and solve enterprise-scale challenges.

We understand the dynamics of Business and Technology, which allows us to create flow between supply and demand, bridging the gap between business and IT. We work with our clients to drive out success, transforming their operational platforms and creating the customer experiences they need.

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