WNS

In Conversation with
Forrester and WNS

Delivering seamless next-gen digital customer experiences

About

Vasupradha Srinivasan
Senior Analyst, Forrester

Vasu serves application development and delivery (AD&D) professionals. Her research helps AD&D pros successfully navigate the challenges in building and orchestrating winning customer engagement across digital support channels and journey-based engagement. Vasu advises Forrester clients on how to transform the contact center and customer engagement, with practical insights into technology, platforms, data and analytics, defining strategy, and achieving operational excellence. Vasu's research helps clients understand the relevance and dynamics of customer and interaction analytics in contact centers.

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About

Jitender Mohan
Head of Customer Experience Services

Jitender Mohan is responsible for the strategy, growth initiatives and financial performance of the CIS practice. He has decades of experience in the IT sector in various roles ranging from transformation, process re-engineering, operations, sales and training.

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Introduction

Exciting yet complex, digital Customer Experience (CX) has been the new black for a while now – a trend the recent crisis has ensured is here to stay. As digital disruptors, channels and devices continue to rise – integrated and seamless digital CX has become a mission-critical differentiator for all brands.

Today, businesses must offer highly personalized, hassle-free and convenient end-to-end customer journeys – with fair, effective resolution – if they are to thrive in a digital-first world. This means finding novel ways to add value to the human experience, be it to win away customers from competition or build powerful loyalty among existing customers.

So how can organizations differentiate their digital CX strategy? What must be the key focus areas of their CX management approach? What new business models can they consider to deliver on their customer promise?

WNS hosted a virtual session on CX, featuring guest speaker **Vasupradha Srinivasan**, Senior Analyst with Forrester. As part of that engagement, we sat down with her and **Jitender Mohan**, WNS' Head of Customer Interaction Services, for a deep dive into how organizations can re-think their CX strategy and execution to thrive in a dynamic business landscape.

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A Human + Digital Approach is the Key

Customers don't need channels, they need resolution and to win, you want to build channels that are focused on resolution.

Whether customers are buying life insurance, renewing a healthcare policy or applying for a bank loan, an integrated CX model enables proactive, contextual and intelligent conversations while significantly reducing the cost-to-serve for companies.

As Customer Experience Management (CXM) is fast becoming a key differentiator, how can a business keep pace with changing customer expectations in today's "digital world" in terms of personalized channel preferences, seamless cross-channel journeys and industry-aligned skilled talent?

VASUPRADHA

Let's break this down into two parts:

a. Channel preferences and cross-channel journeys – Most businesses struggle to take these from strategies to actions. Customers need choice but with built-in strategy. They need to be guided to the "right channels" at the "right time," not be shown all available channels. Customers don't need channels, they need resolution and to win, you want to build channels that are focused on resolution.

b. Industry-aligned skilled talent – The skill requirements also tend to be evolving much like customer preferences. The need here is to simplify the agent skill matrix and focus on building desired skillsets as opposed to generic ones for customer service or sales. Given automation has taken away or will take away most of the "simple" queries, agent skill development also needs to evolve to include higher attention to empathy, rapport and problem-solving.

Given these requirements, the biggest win for digital CXM is pivoting to analytics, or rather insights. The ability to harness data – customer, channel and performance – to empower every customer and agent touchpoint will be the only sure way to succeed with digital.

JITENDER

Whether customers are buying life insurance, renewing a healthcare policy or applying for a bank loan, an integrated CX model enables proactive, contextual and intelligent conversations while significantly reducing the cost-to-serve for companies. In my recent blog, we have addressed this need for driving CX by integrating advanced analytics, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and intelligent automation with an agile team. We believe balancing the below 4-pronged strategy will help businesses stay relevant in the "digital world":

a. Omni-channel capabilities can enable the hyperpersonalization of experience to make CX seamless for the end customer.

b. Advanced cross-channel analytics and customer journey orchestration can provide deep insights into customer behavior, enabling companies to hone their digital strategies and engage more effectively with customers at the right time and on the preferred channel.

c. Effectively achieve a balance between the digital and human customer experience by incentivizing customers to use self-service automation options. At the same time, have a human backup ready (to answer complex queries) for all-digital self-service options (to answer simple to medium-complex queries).

d. Leverage agile, highly niche domain experts who are adept at managing conversations of high complexity and augmenting their skillsets with a higher order of cognitive skills for empathy and problem-solving.

WNS EXPIRIUS is precisely aimed at addressing the above.
It integrates human-assisted design and domain expertise with Artificial Intelligence-led conversational insights and consulting-led CX strategies to create a holistic digital experience. It also helps businesses manage volume fluctuations by integrating an on-demand gig workforce (Open Talent).

02

Expand the
Experience Business,
Drive Digital Agility

VASUPRADHA

M&As can and should help you fulfill two key objectives:

a. Strengthen the end-to-end digital CXM narrative

b. Deliver data and insights to continuously improve offerings

From this perspective, the most successful M&A ventures have been those that can blend seamlessly into an existing CXM offering. Solutions that bring incremental benefits, more often than not, don't shine. The second key component is the ability to co-innovate and build joint IP. The future of services is value orchestration, not task execution. Any partnership that allows you to build IP either for a domain or industry will deliver value at scale.

JITENDER

a. Businesses no longer view digital as the destination. It is the origin. In a digital-first, or rather, digital-only landscape, many a time, the imperative for businesses is to create innovative solutions that can help them transform and adapt at speed to the evolving needs of their industries, grow profitably and take-out market share.

b. In this regard, service providers are thus keen on bringing in the differentiation through mergers / acquisitions with the right-fit digital CXM providers.

c. Co-creating to innovate forms the core of any client engagement. At WNS, digital innovation hinges on an agile, focused and collaborative approach to developing and executing new strategies, design-thinking led, domain-focused transformation journeys.

d. WNS has set up co-creation innovation labs, built industry-specific solutions and partnered with leading organizations for digital accelerators, products and prototypes.

03

Don't Settle for Piecemeal, Go for End-to-End

Clients show a higher affinity to work with "thought" partners who can contribute to the entire transformation process starting from tech and strategic consulting to implementation and outcome management.

Clients are looking for solutions to enhance the entire customer journey. Skills like digital and consulting are no longer niche but core to our value proposition.

Emergence of end-to-end bundled offerings is paving a way for new digital business models as opposed to old conventional practices where IT companies would dominate IT outsourcing and BPS companies would traditionally go after BPM? Would we witness the dominance of end-to-end players, or would IT and BPS companies continue to strengthen their position in the old conventional way?

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Our research has seen a massive blurring of lines between traditional consulting, System Integrators (SI) and BPOs. We are seeing the emergence of hybrid houses that are vying for a seat at their client's transformation table rather than being a service delivery and execution partner. We are also seeing clients show a higher affinity to work with "thought" partners who can contribute to the entire transformation process starting from tech and strategic consulting to implementation and outcome management.

JITENDER

a. We are also seeing a lot of opportunities where clients are looking for solutions that can transform / create value across the entire customer journey. The skills which were earlier considered niche, like digital and consulting are now becoming a foundational part of our entire value proposition

b. Differentiation by creating innovative solutions and impacting business outcomes is fast becoming a norm in every deal that we now see from clients.

c. We participate across the entire value chain for our client engagements, right from designing a human-centered digital strategy to assessing readiness to re-designing and re-imagining operating models and ways of working. Our transformation programs bring digitally enabled innovation to life.

d. Having said that, players providing end-to-end bundled offerings will stand out and gain dominance in this highly commoditized market.
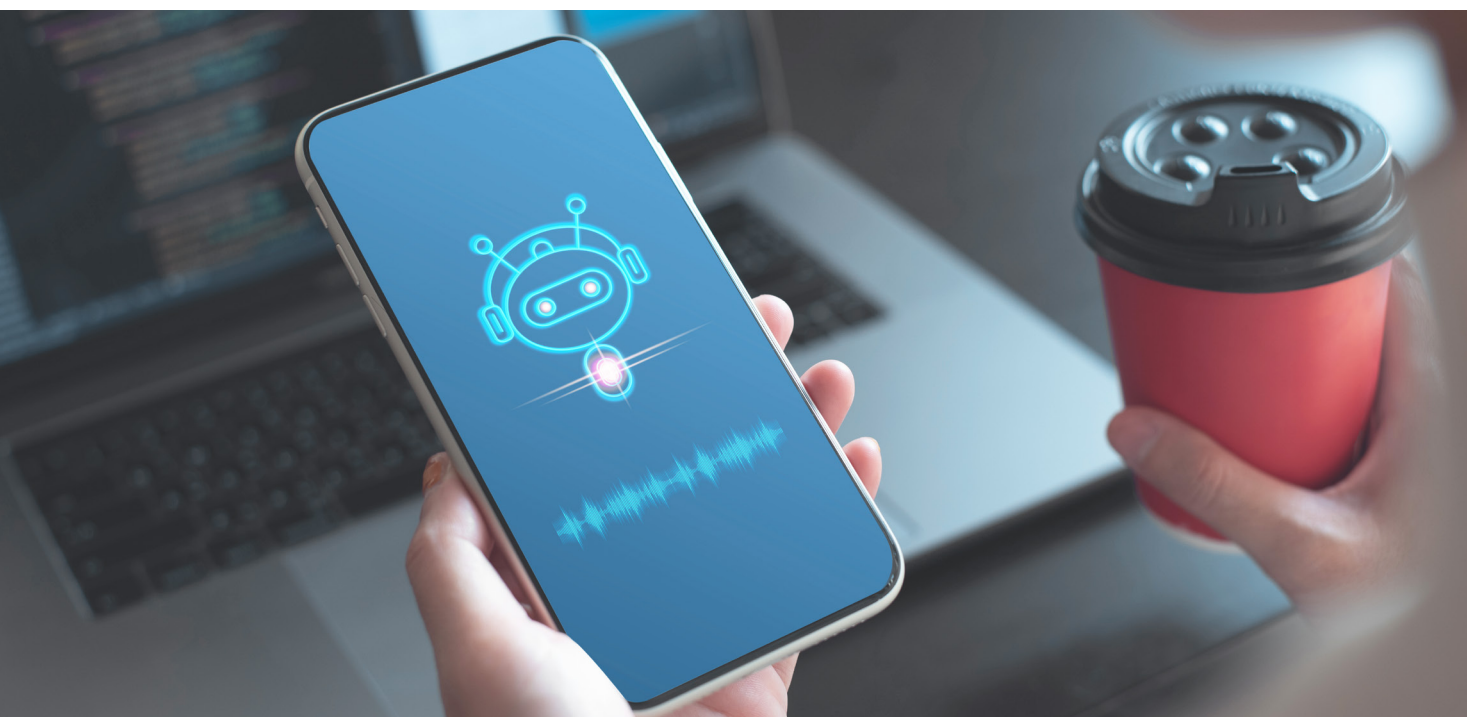
04

Invest in Skills, They Are Just as Important as Technology

What kind of investments and uptake are you witnessing in the CXM consulting domain? What are some futuristic and post-pandemic trends that are emerging in this space?

💬 VASUPRADHA

Companies focused on differentiating with CXM will:

a. Add CX management experts to the C-suite

b. Simplify operations around the customers and experiences that matter most

c. Force a revolution in business and technical education

d. Transform the regulatory environment

💬 JITENDER

Led by data and digital, leading companies have adopted an innovative approach to understanding customer behavior. They are seamlessly collating customer data across digital assets (website, apps, social media, etc.), creating a 360-degree view across multiple touchpoints, and gaining deep and real-time insights into customer behaviors and journeys. At the core of this ability lies domain-led contextualization that enables enterprises to evaluate end-to-end customer journeys.

At WNS, we leverage our domain expertise and consultative approach to re-imagine CX. We harness our domain expertise to focus on the right business outcomes and build customer trust.

Today, the need of the hour is to deliver new levels of digital and automation fueled by agile operations. We have taken a multifold approach by focusing on "talent" as a key lever to Consulting by investing in:

a. Domain experts through WNS' "Domain University"

b. Creating a future-ready workforce with "Digital Future (DiFU)" – a digital learning framework

c. Imparting immersive learning experiences on-demand through "GLINT" – WNS' proprietary AI-led digital learning and knowledge platform

05

Build an Insights Ecosystem, Manage Variability

Investment in insights helps businesses to proactively manage variance and seasonality and map services continuously to customer preferences.

WNS OpenTalent powered by WNS Expirius, enables our clients to tap into domain experts who can provide expert customer experience as part of a hybrid team, working flexibly and remotely.
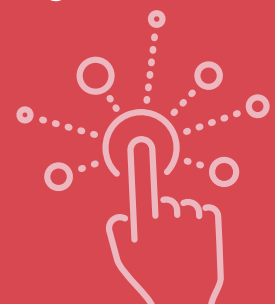
VASUPRADHA

This is the true value of businesses that are insight-led. Investment in insights helps businesses to proactively manage variance and seasonality and map services continuously to customer preferences. Investment in technology and platforms for analytics, journey management and strategic demand planning and forecasting for cross-channel environments will help build more proactive management strategies.

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a. Integrating new capabilities and creating a resilient value chain is critical to managing business variability effectively. To that effect, business agility, execution speed and real-time optimization, with the help of technology, analytics and process optimization tools, is an absolute must.

b. WNS has invested in EXPIRIUS-led technology and analytics solutions to effectively manage business variability at key stages across the business operations life cycle. These include demand forecasting and hiring, AI-led knowledge management solutions in training, digitally enabled operating model with self-service automation / bots, agent assist technology, and automated, advanced analytics-led quality and performance management solutions.

c. Our Open Talent model enables our clients to tap into domain experts who can provide expert customer experience as part of a hybrid team, working flexibly and remotely.

d. We pool our permanent employees and gig employees together across industries to provide faster speed-to-market, better first-time resolution and improved ROI.

e. Business outcomes include management of business variability of up to 300 percent, reduced cost of operations of over 30 percent, and improved productivity and employee experience.

In a nutshell, designing and delivering superior digital customer experiences require not only advanced analytics and technology capabilities but also investment in the right digital skills and strategies.
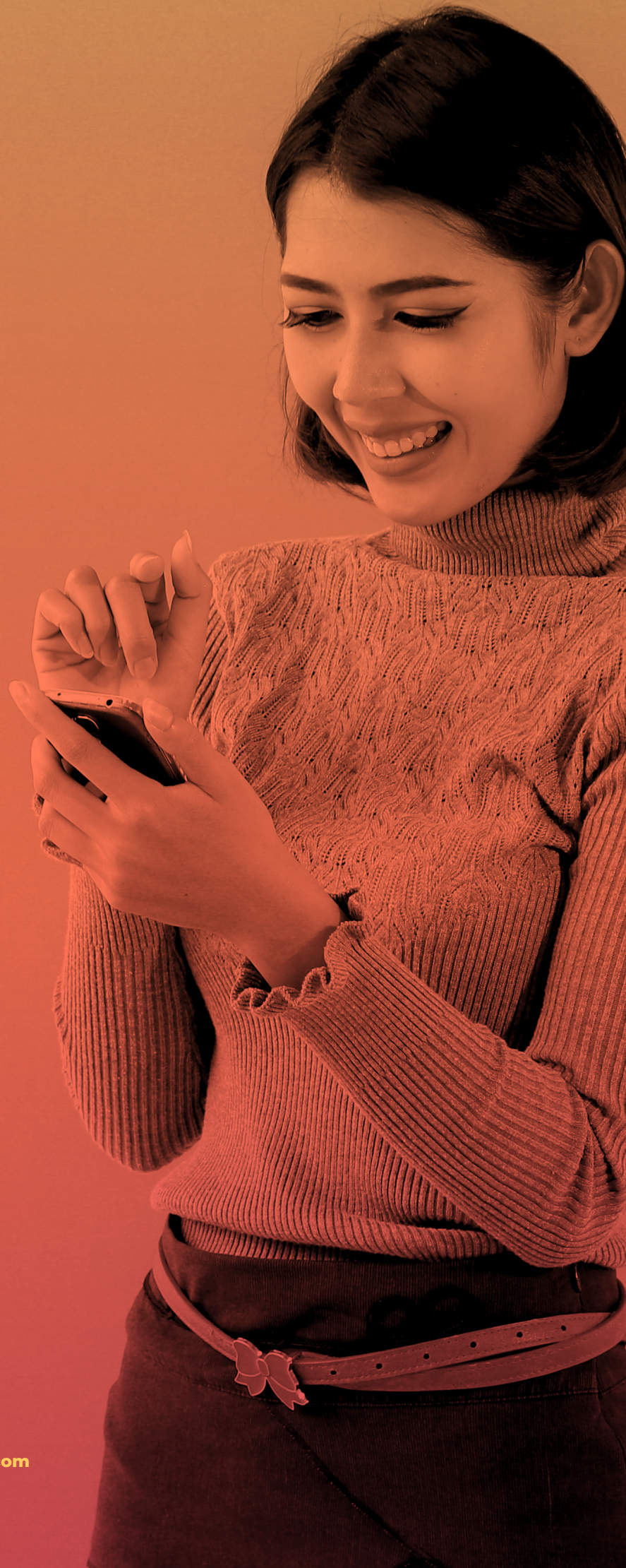
About WNS

WNS (Holdings) Limited (NYSE: WNS) is a leading Business Process Management (BPM) company. WNS combines deep industry knowledge with technology, analytics, and process expertise to co-create innovative, digitally led transformational solutions with over 400 clients across various industries. WNS delivers an entire spectrum of BPM solutions including industry-specific offerings, customer experience services, finance and accounting, human resources, procurement, and research and analytics to re-imagine the digital future of businesses. As of March 31, 2022, WNS had 52,081 professionals across 55 delivery centers worldwide including facilities in China, Costa Rica, India, the Philippines, Poland, Romania, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States.