



## NEW NORMAL OF THE CLOUD AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SAAS CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE (CX) SYSTEMS

## Enterprises contend with multi-faceted challenges

Global enterprises today are living through an unprecedentedly turbulent period rife with uncertainties, including economic slumps, fluctuating prices, increasing globalization, increasing competition, supply chain complexities and product recalls. As a result, enterprises struggle with unreliable customer service, the ability to fulfill demands on time and negative vibes in the social circles. In addition, the relentless pressure to deliver excellent business results has not eased and, in fact, increased.

CX technology is expected to play a massive role in solving many of these issues. However, the existing enterprise technology landscape often hinders an enterprise's efforts to forge ahead.

Today's business environment entails boundaryless enterprises so that

collaboration can thrive. However, large data volumes that are complex and unstructured pose a huge problem for enterprises desirous of extracting useful information. A chief reason for this is that business units and knowledge repositories historically operate in silos. Consequently, the data is fragmented and not connected. Research shows that almost a whopping 90% of enterprise data is unstructured and growing at over 50% annually<sup>1</sup>. As a result, collaboration remained restricted within the enterprise and private networks.

This situation is despite a constant evolution in the CX technology landscape from container-based applications to SaaS solutions. The transition to cloud was inevitable given its ability to lower IT operating costs and enhance enterprise

collaboration, agility, and flexibility. Global research firm IDC states that almost 70% of businesses are using cloud technology in some form or other<sup>2</sup>. As capabilities such as integration, security, and personalization were added to SaaS solutions, they morphed into full-fledged, sophisticated platforms with a superset of capabilities. In addition, APIs made customization simple as enterprises sought answers for their complex operations.

The enterprise technology landscape is now exceedingly intricate. Furthermore, CRM SaaS platforms tended to cater to horizontal functions like sales, marketing, and service organizations. As a result, they were less beneficial for specific lines of business such as Product Engineering Group, Field Service or Operations.

## Ongoing development in the SaaS CX products space

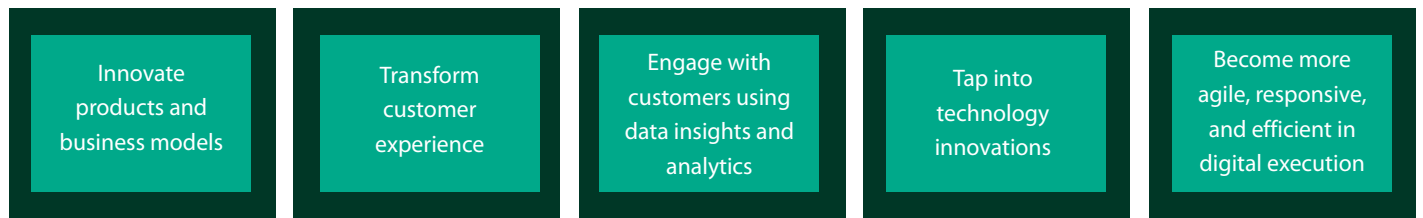
However, SaaS CX products continue to evolve due to advanced technologies and demanding enterprise needs in no small measure. They contributed heavily towards building next-gen intelligent digital ecosystems on a foundation of industry clouds, AI and embedded analytics, voice technology and automation to deliver a superior customer experience. As a result, CRM products are now equipped to support complex integrations like mergers and acquisitions and deliver consistent experiences through a single, open, and collaborative platform. There were 130 mega deals of value over \$5 B in 2021 globally, an all-time high<sup>3</sup>. M&As are forecast to maintain a hectic pace in the coming years, underscoring the criticality of seamless integrations.

Therefore, enterprises must look to SaaS solutions to build CX foundational pillars and strengthen vertical differentiations, provide hyper personalized human experiences, and establish a sentient digital first customer-centric organization. In addition, they must minimize customization to ensure easy management of these solutions.



## Trends in the SaaS CX space that hold significant import for enterprises

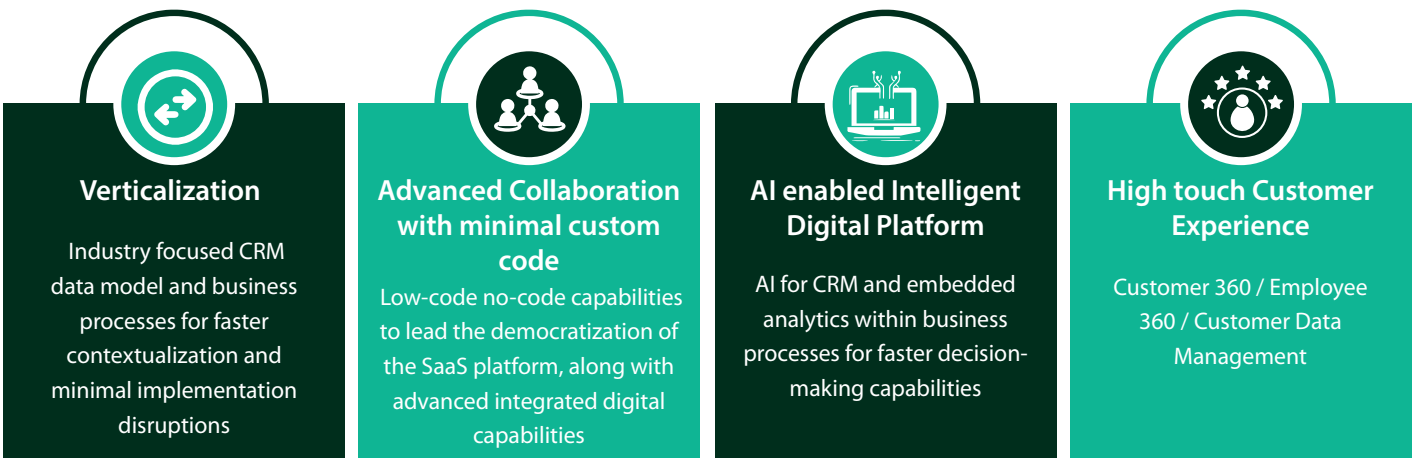
Global events have established the need for organizations to evolve constantly to ably tackle the changes. As a result, the world over businesses aim to:



Technology solutions, long-established as a critical contributor, must respond in these ways to be able to address growing business needs -

- **Transform data into insights** for businesses to improve, even reimagining, both their processes and experiences
- Create industry specific templates making clients **Industry 4.0** ready
- **Enable extreme automation of processes via Next Gen DevOps** for organizational agility
- Launch hyper personalized marketing campaigns to **meet the ROI needs of digital campaigns**
- Foster **innovation** and meet **market agility** requirements via low-code no-code (LC/NC) solutions

SaaS CX products took the cue. Standalone CX applications and system of records that supported basic operations, user productivity and business support functions enhanced to now offer a comprehensive set of functionalities to operate as a **holistic Digital Experience Transformation Platform**. The new features and capabilities available in SaaS products as a Customer Engagement Platform include:



## Spotlight on industry-cloud

SaaS companies are successfully making the shift from cloud applications to purpose-built '**Industry cloud**' solutions through organic and inorganic expansions. The user interface and data model of these products are reimagined and tailored for industry segments.

Industry vertical data models and reference data libraries help synergize business functions. In addition, SaaS companies are investing in building process libraries and

low-code platforms that deliver business outcomes in shorter timeframes.

Technology advances such as 5G, Blockchain, IoT, AI, Metaverse can be harnessed to enhance throughput and performance necessary for niche functional areas like commerce, field service, CPQ and order management that are unique for each industry vertical. As a result, niche SaaS industry solutions catering to Patient Management services, Clinical trials,

Auto Dealer Management, NextGen Communication services, Retail and Banking solutions and many more are available. Organizations must groom talent, upskill, and reskill cloud practitioners to prepare them for these new growth areas. Furthermore, partnerships with product vendors and liaising with them for continuous enablement of practitioners is necessary for scaling and staying abreast with new product features and roadmap.

## Final thoughts

The road ahead undoubtedly shows that enterprises must adopt industry clouds and Low Code/No Code solutions for their core business functions. As always, any new program cannot succeed without senior leadership sponsorship and establishing a core execution team with clear ownership and responsibilities

defined for the IT team, third parties and business owners. In addition, businesses must make certain that these SaaS solutions provide the required data security and privacy. Businesses must continually monitor spending on SaaS licenses, launch cost takeout, license optimizations, and

automation initiatives at an operational level. It is necessary to evaluate and prioritize features to prevent budget overruns. Finally, relevant stakeholders must be educated through continuous training and enablement programs to boost and sustain the adoption of SaaS solutions.

## About the Author



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She has experience of over 20 years and presently heads the Salesforce center of excellence. She designs resonating industry messages, devises sales strategies, and guides the practice on how to operate in alignment with the latest industry trends. She has been one of the founding members of the Salesforce practice at Infosys and donned multiple roles such as Program Manager, Solution Architect, Functional Architect, Advisory Board member across several Salesforce implementations. Anjali is an avid speaker, and her flair for communication can be witnessed in everything she does.

## References

- 1 What Is Unstructured Data and Why Is It So Important To Businesses? An Easy Explanation for Anyone (forbes.com)
- 2 12 Benefits of Cloud Computing and Its Advantages - Salesforce India
- 3 Global M&A Industry Trends (pwc.com)

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