



# **Fast track your digital transformation with content**

**DIGITAL JOURNEY**

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# Foreword

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It is the year 2020 and there is still a mismatch between what digital customers expect from companies, and what is delivered.

The new 'digital' normal and the proliferation of digital technologies such as social, mobility, analytics, cloud computing, IoT, etc. have made the old ways of working redundant and forcing organizations to transform.

However, despite copious amounts of investment in technology, the friction in digital customer journeys still exist. Think about the last time you went on a website and tried interacting with a chatbot that promised to answer all your queries but only ended up selling products to you. The main reason why broken customer journeys are still so common is because digital transformation is only complete if the right technology is complemented with the right content. Therefore, to leverage digital properly, you must undertake a comprehensive – Technology + Content - rather than a piecemeal approach.

Primary reasons why companies deploy such technologies is to improve customer satisfaction, and better customer acquisition. But open any social media channel and you will observe that poorly crafted automated responses to consumer complaints is still a norm. Rather than improving customer satisfaction this ends up infuriating customers further.

Similarly, thanks to smartphones, customers are always in purchase mode and their purchasing decisions are backed by research, comparison, and information. No longer is an offline store separate for a user from the online store. They expect their experience to be seamless as they move from one to the other channel. They expect companies to view them as one customer - to be aware of their current and past interactions and relationships and talk to them in a consistent fashion regardless of the platform. However, most brands fail to provide this experience even today. Their websites or social media channels are still not geared towards helping customers research better during their purchase journey. Only a handful of brands keep communication channels open in between purchases. And even though we all know that today's consumer is mobile first, we continue to communicate in fonts that are illegible on the mobile.

In this paper, we explore not just THE why, but THE how to create those amazing digital experiences using content: by aligning all the customer touchpoints. We discuss why personalisation is no longer the future but the present of digital journeys and how simple steps and more empathy can deliver better results for both businesses and customers alike.

**Garima Sharma,**  
Chief Product and Content Officer | Scatter

# Executive Summary

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## Fast-track your digital transformation with engaging content

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### How content can drive customers to digitally access your brand

The coronavirus pandemic has changed Indian consumer behaviour. If 47% of Indians were using a mobile app as a digital touchpoint in pre-COVID times, now 52% use it; [this trend will continue over the following 6-9 months with a projected 55% rise in usage.](#)

The pandemic has prompted rapid adoption of contactless payments – from online grocery stores to vegetable vendors to online pharmacies to virtual classes to recharges and bill payments. Across age groups, the [penetration of digital payments is currently at its highest, at 75%.](#)

This trend is likely to continue because digital touchpoints have helped the Indian consumer to:

- > **SAVE TIME**
- > **STAY SAFE**
- > **SHOP WITH CONVENIENCE**

So how do you, as a brand, build a connection with your virtual customer? How can you enhance customer delight and satisfaction without compromising on safety? Well, you could do the following:

- **Use content to give consumers digital access to the brand**
- **Deliver consistent experiences wherever and whenever they need it**
- **By thinking of marketing activities and platforms as opportunities for conversations**
- **By putting people and their experiences at the centre instead of pivoting around technology**

Take Amazon's A+ content feature, which allows a brand to describe product features in detail (including product information, robust FAQs, hi-res images, videos, comparison charts, etc.). A+ content is increasingly being perceived as a mode to increase traffic and conversion rates.

Or take American Express, which has a rich content-led website. Its collaborative [Open Forum](#) (replete with guest authors offering invaluable insights and industry trends) has set a gold standard on how to use content to market without spending money.

The pandemic has opened brands to intense scrutiny. How you respond to changing customer sentiment and behaviour will define your brand in the days to come.

**By leaning back on content and by using the right content, you can ensure uninterrupted customer journeys and better customer experiences.**

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# Introduction

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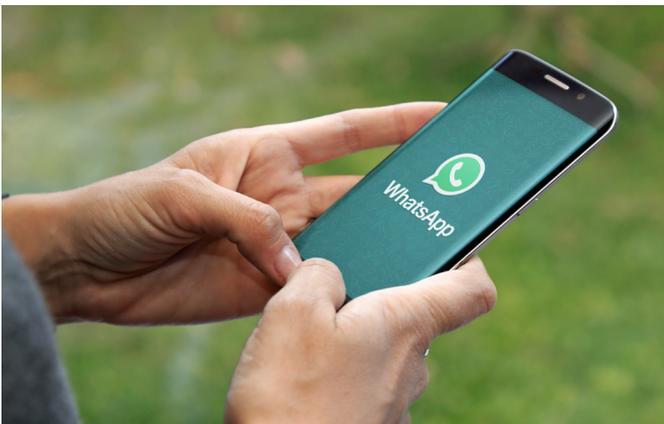
Would your organisation be able to sustain 24 hours in a digital-only mode? From engaging with partners to interacting with customers, will your teams struggle or succeed in this 'new normal'?

We already got a taste of this when a nationwide lockdown was announced overnight. Customer behaviour changed in unexpected ways, with rapid adoption of digital payments, remote working, and even online access to healthcare and [education](#).

This behavioural change also resulted in an increased scrutiny of brands as any break in the customer journey quickly resulted in irate customers.

Consider the example of bus aggregator redBus, which saw a loss of 15 million tickets in 60 days of the lockdown. During lockdown 1.0, it had to deal with a spike in customer escalations as passengers cancelled tickets and sought quick refunds. Not only did redBus use technology to resolve customer queries faster, but it also turned to content. The company created a set of robust FAQs that addressed frequent queries unique to the pandemic-induced lockdown.

Compare this with a well-known travel aggregator, which wasn't as quick to rework its customer journey and engagement. For passengers who cancelled their tickets due to the ongoing crisis, the portal was unable to provide an option that let them apply for a refund citing the pandemic as a reason.



**Customer journeys are no longer simple. They straddle multiple touchpoints at once, and this will only get more complex in the future.**

They have also rapidly emerged as an important tool in managing customer experiences. Indeed, they have become increasingly crucial for a business as they tell you stories of your customers' experiences with your brand across all touchpoints, both online and offline.

Every interaction with the user plays an important role in building that chain which ultimately leads to a great customer experience. As customers use more and more channels to engage with your brand, this chain becomes progressively more intricate.

**Strategically using content at each point of this customer journey can help you create uninterrupted, happy experiences.**

Consider this scenario: you may have decided it's time for you get fit and this may include losing weight, the right diet, probably do yoga. But nowhere during this process have you equated getting healthy to taking up running.

Now shoe brands such as Nike and Reebok realised that their customer's journey doesn't begin with a search for shoes, but much before that. Their fitness apps (don't necessarily promote running alone) but certainly help you stay disciplined; track your steps; provide information on diet regimes; and offer various workout options; celebrities and experts share their secrets, etc... Overall using content these brands have built communities that amplify their reach.

**What's their magnet? CONTENT.**

Content that hooks and engages the customer at every step of this journey towards health and logically leads them to the shoe store (online or offline but the footprint does go there).

**By using the right content and playing out several possible scenarios, you can become an integral part of the customer journey, build deeper engagement, and offer better customer experiences.**

# Digital transformation:

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## Moving from customer experience to human experience

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Companies that have embarked on digital transformation have created highly engaged customers. And studies have shown that these customers are:

**6x** more likely to try a new product or service from the brand

**4x** more likely to refer your brand to friends, family, and acquaintances

**2x** likely to make a purchase with the brand, even in the face of a better product or price

Your customer is the new, digitally conscious individual with transformed habits. With mobile devices and apps powered by AI and predictive analysis, your digital native customer is empowered to get what they want – right when they need it.

According to a [Salesforce](#) survey, 85% of consumers conduct research before they make a purchase online, and among the channels most used for this are websites (74%) and social media (38%). This makes a case for having website content that is always current to enable better engagement and not rely on social platforms alone to stay relevant to the customer.

## Highly engaged customers

Before the internet and the explosion of digital technology, brands sought prospects through newspaper ads or billboards. Today, control has shifted to customers, who seek brands through digital media. Your digital native customer has tools galore – websites, social media, peer reviews, blogs, testimonials, apps, etc. – to find information easily; at times even before a brand is aware of these customers.

Your consumers are online. In 2019 alone, [3.8 million Google searches](#) were carried out every minute, many of which were for local businesses. Regardless of your current digital standing, it is an opportunity for your brand to widen its reach and connect with audiences on a larger scale.

According to Salesforce research, [80% of customers](#) deem their experience with a brand to be as important as the actual product. Consumers today expect a brand to have a digital presence, and a whopping [30%](#) actually prefer to communicate with brands digitally.

## Content is key

It's a no-brainer that cultivating a digital brand can get you visibility when customers, both existing and new, go looking for your product. But how?

Your website, social media channels, and other digital media are platforms that you can use to engage, educate, and delight your audience. Consumers can learn about you as a company and engage more closely with your brand.

Advanced marketers use each digital customer touchpoint to hook a prospect: carousels on Instagram, stories on Facebook, gamified experiences, appealing UI, interactive UX, robust FAQs, etc. [Your content objective should be to turn that click into a corner kick, scoring a goal every time.](#)

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## Personalised customer experiences

Buyers today want you to treat them as unique individuals. They expect you to know their personal preferences and purchase history. According to Accenture, 75% of customers say they are more likely to buy from a company that:

- **Recognises them by their name**
- **Knows their purchase history**
- **Recommends products based on their past purchases**

And the best part? They're happy for you to use that data if it means better and more personalised service.

Another factor in favour of brands having a digital-first approach is that consumers expect brands to be responsive on their digital platforms. Indeed, 60% believe they've had a bad customer experience if they don't hear from a brand after reaching out on a social network, and 84% expect a response within 24 hours.

Here's a point to ponder: if your customers are using digital platforms to reach out to you with a problem and you don't respond quickly, it is unlikely that they will do business with you again.



## Time to reimagine and reinvent content

Social distancing and concern for safety are likely to prevent customers from moving back to offline engagements. But this shouldn't prevent you from staying connected and providing excellent service that doesn't require your physical presence. So, explore opportunities where you can influence and drive your customers to reach you digitally. This can help you create more avenues for meaningful engagement and help you free resources strategically to use where they are most required.

For instance, you could have a robust online self-help section that addresses all commonly asked queries. It could be a knowledge repository that curates the latest industry information and provides actionable insights. The former can help you reduce contact centre costs by putting commonly asked queries online, thereby freeing up your agents, who become an extension of your sales team to cross-sell or upsell products and services. The latter can be a new engagement opportunity, and if done right, even a means of additional revenue. Perhaps you can increase your digital presence by directing customers to your online store for all their needs.

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# 7 Ways to digitise your customer's engagement with your brand

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## #1

### Understand and fulfil your customers' needs

Be proactive. Have real conversations with your customers (over a call) to understand what they expect from you. Leading with empathy in these conversations will help you get a better perspective instead of merely selling or marketing your services.

Listen to your customers online. Find out what they are doing and saying. You may quite possibly uncover a new problem that your business can solve.

Customers have an endless array of virtual options at their disposal, and they expect to be able to reach you 24x7. This is the time to ramp up your digital channels and chatbots. WhatsApp messaging and social media channels are good platforms to offer uninterrupted customer service.

Use mobile apps to engage more meaningfully with your customers. Don't make this only about promoting offers and discounts. Given the ongoing pandemic situation, free contactless delivery and returns – plus super-speedy customer redressals – are a sure way of embedding yourself in your customer's psyche.

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## #2

### Change the conversation

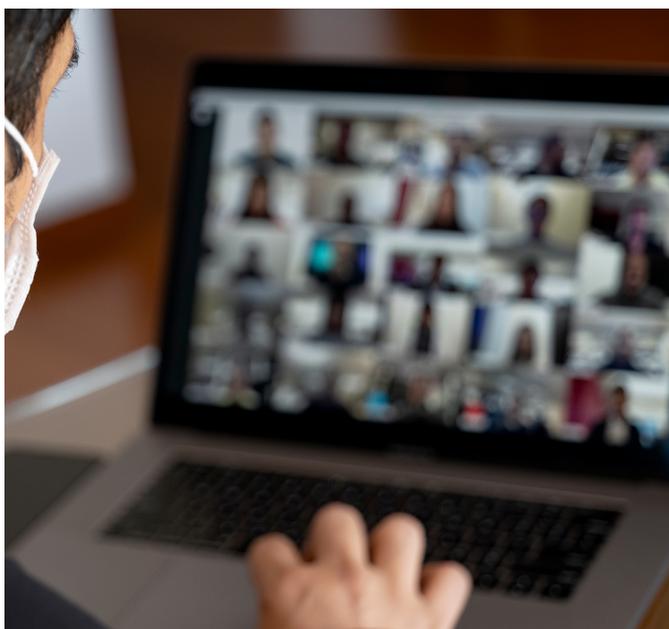
What you say shouldn't always be about you. More than ever before, keep the customer at the heart of all you do and say. Being empathetic and not tone-deaf will get you more customers. Don't be too serious, but don't be flippant either. Focus on creating helpful content to educate, entertain, and inspire your customers. It is crucial to keep the purpose of your communication in mind.

Dairy brand Amul, for instance, has always aced contextual communication through its tongue-in-cheek content. And it continues to do so with the Utterly Butterly girl washing her hands to the caption of 'Better saaf than sorry'; one in a series of messages to encourage Indians to wash their hands, greet with a namaste, and stay home as much as possible.

While the pandemic does offer your brand numerous opportunities to connect with contextual messaging – what with work-from-home, more family time, home-cooked meals, gardening, pets, e-learning, and so on – your brand's moment marketing shouldn't ever be tone deaf.

It would be good to pause and reflect how your brand fits into this new reality. When you put your audience first and let your messages be sensitive, relevant, and compassionate, you are telling your customers that their needs and concerns take priority over your brand's message.

Take the example of Shapermint, a direct-to-consumer shapewear company, which has changed its virtual interactions with its customers. While the brand had a strong digital presence even before the pandemic, with live try-on sessions and coupons on offer; during the COVID-induced lockdown it started livestreaming yoga sessions and home exercises.



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## #3

### Engage face-to-face, virtually

Physical interactions are unlikely to resume anytime soon. Virtual events, workshops, and webinars have become popular ways to continue customer engagement. Well-designed content across each of these formats can help your brand deliver value to your audiences. Making the presentations available after the programmes conclude or converting the webinars into snackable assets such as blog posts and downloadable e-books, can help you connect with a larger number of prospective customers in real time.

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## #4

### Overcommunicate — and make sure it adds value

We spoke about **communication earlier too. Make sure it is centred on the value that your product or service provides to your customers.** Is there any benefit to the content that can assist them when they are ready to purchase your product? Always keep your focus centred on the customer.

It could be simple things like keeping customers updated about your business operations, store timings, or COVID policy updates. Nature's Basket, for instance, sends its customers regular text messages on store timings and delivery options. These messages also contain special deals and offers for the day as per store locations, which is a great convenience for customers looking to place orders.

Online food ordering and delivery platform Swiggy has added new layers of information sharing with its customers. This includes sharing the 'last-mile' delivery partner's contact details and even body temperature in a bid to assure customers that safety is taken seriously.

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## #5

### Join the conversation

Be where your customers are.

Become a member of social groups, forums, and other online communities to be able to connect with your customer speedily. Use these platforms to provide useful insights and share helpful tips to establish your brand as a valuable resource and to counter misinformation.

Bengaluru International Airport, for instance, proactively engages with customers across social media channels such as LinkedIn and Instagram to provide up-to-date travel information and changing government norms related to air travel. During the COVID-induced lockdown, it published videos of airport sanitisation measures and exhaustive FAQs that allayed customer concerns around travel.

Now that travel restrictions are being eased, it continues to use content strategically to disseminate information about its Digi Yatra initiatives (which include biometrics and digital kiosks) to demonstrate that social distancing and hygiene practices are being stringently followed at the airport.



You can post resources, e-books, and have detailed FAQs on your website to help customers with self-service when they look for solutions to their problems. As a customer, what would you prefer to do – wait while an agent gets free to answer your query, or look in a forum for the answer?

United Parcel Service (UPS) is the world's leading courier company. Based in the US, it has customers across the globe, including several Fortune 500 companies. But despite the geographical spread of its customer base, UPS has created an app that caters to every need. The app focuses on tracking timely shipments and deliveries, and keeps customers updated about their package status. Customers can also find the nearest UPS outlets, get quotes, initiate shipments, and plan deliveries – all this without any human interaction.

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## #6

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### Go omnichannel

Multichannel is good, but omnichannel is even better. Put the control in your customers' hands and allow them to choose how and through which channel they wish to interact. Omnichannel engagement fixes disjointed systems within the organisation and reduces interaction silos between various departments.

As we saw, redBus deployed its non-voice service channels to deal with escalating customer complaints during the lockdown. It then launched redBuddy, an in-house self-help module that leveraged omnichannel support redirecting customer calls to non-voice channels such as email, WhatsApp, and chat. The result was an increase in non-voice customer interactions, leading to swift and efficient addressal of customer queries.

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## #7

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### Let your customers help themselves with self-service

You may believe that your brand always needs to hover around your customers like a worried mother hen. Truth is that your digital native customers prefer to help themselves. According to [CRM Magazine](#), 45% of brands that offered web or mobile self-service options saw a marked increase in site traffic and reduced phone inquiries.

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## Conclusion

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### Content can convince, convert, and compound your customer's digital engagement with your brand

It cannot be stated enough: Content is crucial to build a loyal digital base and establish a stronger, deeper relationship. While good content can engage your customers and set a firm foundation for success, killer content can thrust you to a different level altogether.

To sum up: Revisit your customer's footprint and see how content is being used at each touchpoint. Use a data-driven approach to understand the places of high and low engagements; places where the conversation trails off and places with zero engagement.

Scatter has collaborated with hundreds of brands to create that sweet spot between the customer's needs and brand values and expertise. We have created content that becomes a bridge between customer expectations and reality, providing clarity in a dissonant world.

# About the author

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**Preeti Mishra** is Managing Editor at Scatter.

She drives all content efforts for B2B and Enterprise Tech bringing her extensive journalistic and marketing communications experience to help brands leverage the power of content. A former financial journalist, she last worked as Storyteller at Walmart Labs.

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