

Gamification: improving service delivery in digital business

The term 'gamification' is the industry's latest buzzword. Used extensively as a marketing term, it has become part of the IT lexicon. These days, gamification is being used to persuade customers to buy more, improve service levels in call centres, and even improve management structures.



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According to Richard Firth, CEO of MIP Holdings, gamification is fast becoming the means through which companies are managing their service levels in a digital world. “Gamification is about far more than just collecting points or playing games. It is about using gaming dynamics to bridge the gap between people and technology.”

Progressive engagement

He explains that in a world where everything is increasingly automated, gamification is providing the means through which progressive organisations are engaging with their staff in order to better manage their workflows and improve service levels. “Gamification is all about using things like points, levels, badges, rewards, characters, stories and achievements to foster staff engagement, manage deliverables, and ultimately, improve the service customers get.”

Firth says that as technology increasingly allows businesses to gain greater efficiencies – and as it continues to change the way people communicate with companies – the human element in business is going to change and adapt. However, he points out that this will make the human element more important than ever.

“We are fast moving to a situation where the bulk of our interactions with businesses is done digitally. With websites and apps making day-to-day queries quick and easy, the only time speaking to a person is necessary is when the query is more complicated. This means that when a customer does require human assistance, the service and feedback they get should be of the highest level.”

Speedy turnaround times

In today's social-media driven society, customers expect to get one-to-one, personalised, real-time correspondence, Firth adds. “With the advent of the business app, the customer expectation for turnaround times has reduced to seconds. Therefore, gamification is key to enhance the speed of interaction when people need to be involved in an automated and

work flowed process between the customer on the app and staff resources managing processes in the background. Gamification is intended to measure and encourage human work turn around to meet the expectations of the customer.”

According to psychologists, gamification exploits our most basic human instincts. People like to interact with other people, but more than that, everyone wants to be recognised. Gamification changes motivational factors for people, moving away from traditional incentives like pay and promotion to elements like recognition.

“There are many gaming mechanics that can be applied to process-based gamification. Points and leader-boards are only the start. We have successfully implemented gamified processes at MIP as well as at customers, and have seen massive improvements in service levels. We are now experimenting with different ways to allocate real-world prizes in the virtual world in order to build on the gains have seen thus far,” Firth says.

“Any process-driven environment, and especially IT, is an ideal candidate for gamification. Gamification can’t work without the back-end in place to measure results, and it is how you marry the front and back-ends that provide the context for service improvement. The technology is already in place to turn existing processes into human-centred and engaging interactions. This is where all businesses must look to improve their service levels in today’s digital economy.”

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