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Customer and Network Insights are the Foundation of Successful CEM

Offering outstanding customer experience is widely recognized as one of the most effective ways for a company to attract and retain its customers. For mobile operators, Customer Experience Management (CEM) is an opportunity to gain competitive advantage and increase revenue at a time when competition is fierce and smartphone and data usage have increased subscribers' demand for bandwidth as well as their expectations of service quality and performance.

CEM is a huge domain. It requires best of breed vendors who can each play their part, starting from the capture of network information, all the way to the change management needed to make use of it all. Choosing the best vendors for the relevant links in the value chain will enable better overall opportunities to provide outstanding customer experience. However, it is particularly important to select the best supplier of Network Intelligence and Analytics, since all other parts of CEM depend upon the customer and network insights delivered being of the highest quality. To be successful in CEM, operators have to manage all customer touch points, across all channels throughout the entire customer lifecycle, from customer acquisition to customer retention. In order to deliver consistently outstanding customer experience many, if not all, departments in an operator's organisation need to be engaged in CEM.

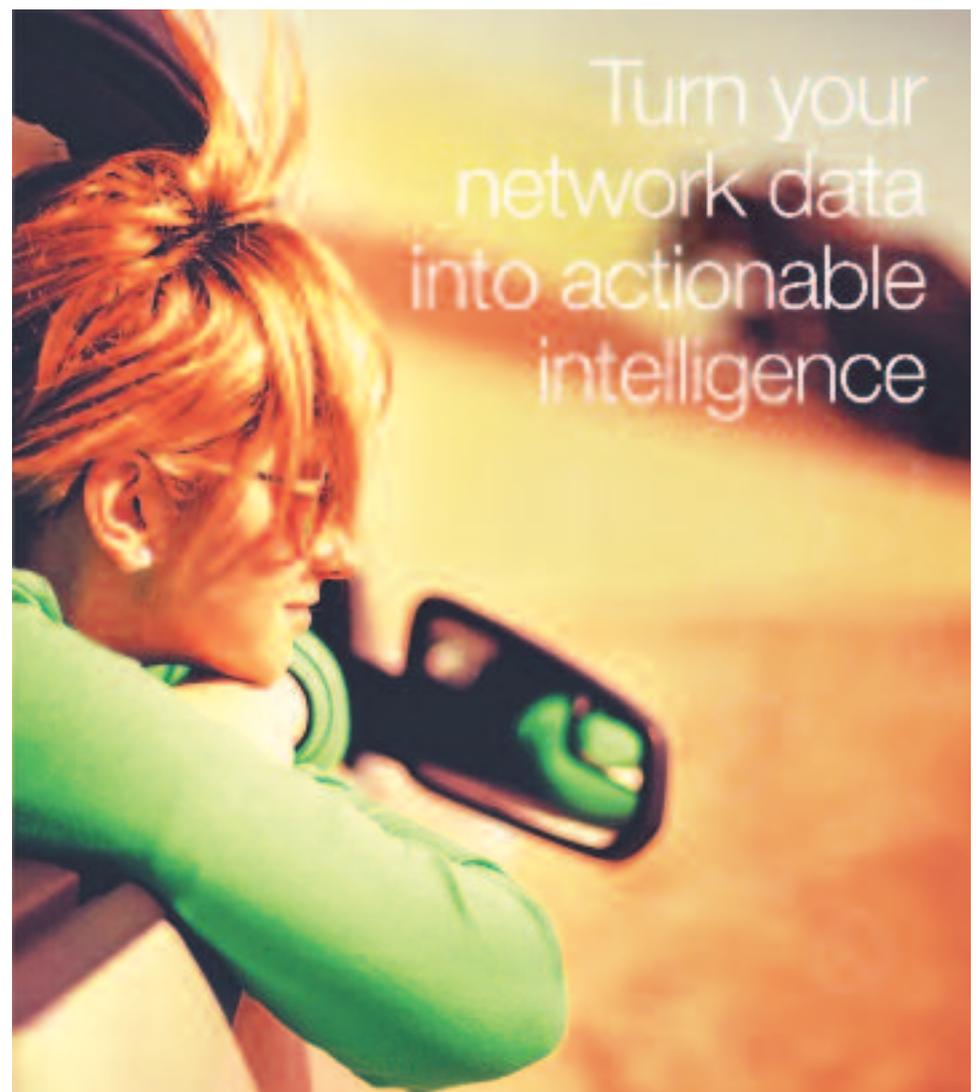
Customer and network insights are the foundation of any approach to CEM. All activities designed to give better customer experience and create loyalty to the brand must start with understanding the customer and the network they use. In order to provide outstanding customer experiences, it is imperative to know what the subscriber wants to use the network for and what expectations they have – for example, how they use the network, where, when and with what level of quality – both experienced and required. This knowledge can be obtained in two ways. First, from subjective measurements, such as, customer surveys (“how likely are you to recommend...”). Second, from objective data

captured from the network. Both approaches yield important customer information and play a role in building CEM excellence. Surveys are generally performed periodically and provide “soft” information regarding customer loyalty, while “hard” information captured from networks includes real-time data from all customers. The key is to extract intelligence from such data and convert this into insight.

Working systematically with such insights enables operators to design offers and business models that are adapted to verified customer needs. It helps operators deliver excellent customer support and create the right marketing message, for the right customers, in the right channels. Customer behaviour is changing rapidly and varies considerably across customer segments. In this context, it is imperative to have systems in place that provide customer and network insights in real-time, by capturing objective data from the network.

Perhaps the most important thing to know about customers is the quality level they expect from the network. Poor network quality is the most common reason for churn. To reduce this, the network must be monitored to confirm that it delivers the expected quality at all times and so that action can be taken to address issues that arise. This doesn't mean that all areas of the network need to be optimised for the same quality levels – that would be prohibitively expensive. Instead, the network should be monitored and managed so that efforts to raise quality and proactively correct problems are directed to the parts of the network where most customers are affected. This means maximising the customer network experience while minimising cost.

In order to collect the necessary customer and network insights, operators need a supplier of Network Intelligence and Analytics that not only collects data from the network, but also performs intelligent analysis that is made available to people throughout an operator's organisation. The insights must be presented in a way that enables each user for example, from customer support teams, network operations, product management or marketing, to utilise it for their purposes without effort.



It is also important to choose a Network Intelligence and Analytics provider that listens to its customers, since needs vary between operators. There isn't a one size fits all approach: a more agile player can often offer more insight and responsiveness, sharing its experiences and supporting an evolving and adaptive CEM strategy.

Big Data is another important pillar of CEM. It requires customer and network information to be integrated with other systems. Network data can then be used in conjunction with other types of data, such as, for example, subjective information from surveys. A strategy by which operators purchase solutions from agile vendors that also have an integration focus

means that CEM can quickly fit into existing systems, sharing information from different sources, while minimising long-term risk.

Business decisions based on key customer and network data will enable better customer experience to be delivered which, in turn, leads to enhanced competitive advantage. Ultimately, this will increase revenue and shareholder value. In selecting vendors to realise CEM, care should be taken to choose those that excel in their own domain, with the flexibility to meet evolving customer requirements. These suppliers must also use an open architecture, compliant with industry standards, to allow their systems to be easily integrated with other systems and equipment vendors.