These top emerging technologies are core topics at the Gartner Customer Experience & Strategies Summit, and will have the biggest impact on your customer experience projects.

Use this research to inform your strategic plans for CX. For the latest research, one-on-one time with Gartner’s leading experts and numerous networking opportunities with CX leaders across all industries, register for Gartner Customer Experience & Strategies Summit today.

1 **Artificial Intelligence**

**Impact on CX:**
- The speed and precision of AI technologies and analytics, in addition to human insight, will provide the continuous intelligence needed for the customer experience of the future.
- AI technologies will enhance text, sentiment, voice, interaction, IoT and even traditional survey analysis.
- Rather than attempt multiple high-risk initiatives, you should leverage existing or new systems driven by AI capabilities to assist with making better decisions with less wasted effort.

**Recommendations:**
- Determine the desired CX outcomes. AI is a broad collection of technologies, so identify the moments of truth or pain points in your customer’s journey that couldn’t be solved by traditional technologies but could potentially be addressed with AI technology.
- Another important way to determine the desired CX outcomes would be to create a customer journey map for your key journeys.
- Deploy augmented analytics capabilities. Organizations can use augmented analytics to automate data discovery, analysis and insights using machine learning and natural language generation.

2 **Virtual Customer Assistants and Chatbots**

**Impact on CX:**
- Making the experience more human, not less. Role-based assistants can significantly improve interactions with employees, customers and partners, whilst allowing humans to focus on more complex and higher-value tasks that customers value.
- Reducing customer effort. VCAs enable better customer experiences on company websites and can be utilized in multiple ways to accomplish different objectives.

**Recommendations:**
- To start, focus on simple, repetitive, factual interactions where customer needs are well understood, and data and rules are not complex. Conduct co-creation sessions with your business counterparts and customers to find the use cases and personas where the VCA will have the maximum impact.
- Determine the capabilities you need from a conversational platform, such as a VCA, in the short term. You need to scan the vendor landscape and rank the importance of the conversational platform components and the associated functionality.

3 **Omnichannel Customer Engagement**

**Impact on CX:**
- Meeting customers when and where they want to be engaged. Customers use many channels when they interact with organizations. It will be impossible to deliver a personalized customer experience without understanding how customers use and experience the different channels.
- Educating the organization on customer behaviors. Improving customer understanding across the organization is essential to developing a customer-centric culture. Something like a multichannel customer engagement center can provide a single source of truth about customer behaviors.

**Recommendations:**
- Determine where the customer service and support operation can take advantage of the potential of artificial intelligence. Evaluate the available data to understand the need for AI technologies in engagement channels and the role of intelligent augmentation of existing functions.
- Analyze and improve customer-facing processes and touchpoints to create a solid foundation for starting your organization’s personalization journey.
4 Real-Time Event-Driven Application Architecture

Impact on CX:
- Providing in-the-moment guidance and help to users based on their current situation. Basic functions like the next-best action or location-based recommendations are examples of this. Increasingly personalized mobile application experiences are expected to drive all forms of customer engagement.
- Detecting and discovering business moments. A digital business monitors event streams to stay aware of the current context and thereby make more intelligent decisions. In a competitive market, more intelligent decisions translate into better customer service and greater success for the business.
- Sensing business moments and responding to them in “business real time” is central to a digital business’s commitment to its customers and ecosystem partners.

Recommendations:
- Work with business teams to identify the key business events, opportunistic business moments, and associated business decisions and outcomes that define your customer experience.
- Adopt EDA to identify and spread the required business events and business moments to your decision-enabled customer-facing processes and services.
- Engage business analysts to understand the actual and potential roles that real-time business event awareness can play in advancing the organization’s customer experience.
- Work with business leaders, customer-facing employees, data scientists, solution architects and implementation leaders to hypothesize where business moments can unlock additional value or create new experiences for your customers.

5 Internet of Things

Impact on CX:
- Engaging customers through everyday things and places. Internet-connected devices and places, backed up by intelligent systems, will provide additional touchpoints for customers along their journeys to engage and for organizations to learn.
- Expect robots to steadily improve and drive engagement in more settings such as retail, healthcare and transportation hubs.
- Engaging customers who may not be human. How do you sell to a thing or machine? What will get a machine to buy from you when its decisions are based on algorithms, not emotion? What does “customer experience” even mean for a machine?

Recommendations:
- Identify internet-connected devices that may be present along the customer journey. Understand the role of the device, how it can influence the decision-making process, and what adjustments to customer engagement are needed to ensure the device can help you deliver a good customer experience.
- Identify how traditional customer experience processes and solutions will need to evolve to engage nonhuman customers.
- Create a cross-functional team of architects, data scientists and business decision makers in customer marketing that will determine assessment requirements, profiles, recommendations and action plans for engaging things as customers.

*To understand which customer experience technologies organizations were focused on, Gartner’s 2019 Customer Experience Innovation Survey asked 244 customer experience leaders which emerging technologies respondents expected to have the biggest impact on CX projects in next three years.