



Can the Cloud Close the Gap for a Better Customer Experience?

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There are two things going on here. The Cloud. And the Customer Experience. It seems that everyone is on the cloud nowadays. Is that a good thing? Maybe. But the most important thing here is your customer's experience. So if cloud is such a good thing, then can it help you provide a better customer experience?

For starters, we all know there is a gap between what customers want, and what a large B2B business can actually give them. That's the gap we are talking about here. Let's say a customer wants to make his own appointment for a cable installation when he is in the grocery store. Does your company offer mobile appointment booking? How fast can you implement it if your customers wanted it today? Or if you have a new product to offer customers, can your field techs both offer the product and install quickly and easily while still on site? Probably not. Unless you have the flexibility of an agile infrastructure: an infrastructure that will allow you to add software easily - when you need it, for as long as you need it. And when you have this type of infrastructure, only then will you be able

to close the gap between what you have, and what the customer wants.

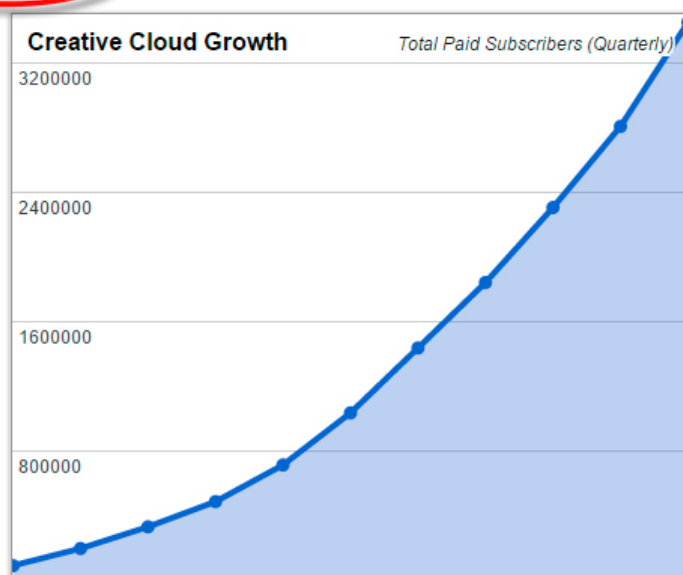
We think that the answer lies within a cloud infrastructure. And here's why:

The Cloud Offers Variety

There is no end to the variety of software and apps that are available out there on the cloud for download. When Adobe Creative Cloud was launched, customers thought it was just another way to charge a monthly fee. But after a while, the real benefits started to surface.

For starters, there's access to just about every product Adobe produces, from Photoshop to Typekit. There's something liberating about this, knowing you can start using any of their apps without dropping hundreds of dollars on a boxed software, while gaining access to other paid services from Adobe like Dreamweaver and Edge.

[UPDATE (June 2015)] - Adobe just updated the total number of subscribers to **over 4.6 million!**



Adobe's **Creative Cloud** has been available for 2½ years now and continues to gain strong adoption in the marketplace, the **latest published figures** show.

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QUESTIONS AND LEARN ALL ABOUT THE
LATEST PRODUCT UPGRADES



The Adobe Creative Cloud has become one of the highest-rated products to date with over 4.6 million subscribers because it gives access to almost everything they make, all for one easy price with no steep upfront costs.

This is a perfect example of what the cloud is all about. Allowing the users access to the full range of products and services with a minimum investment of time, resources and money.

The Cloud Allows Social Validation

Over 71 % of people are more likely to buy a product because of social media references. Even before they purchase the software, your customers are referencing social media channels in order to determine if your product really does what it says it is going to do and if your customers are satisfied. In fact, 67% said that they use social media content to help them in the earliest stages of the sales process, with 51% using Facebook to find information. That means, as a service company, you need to make every service moment count. Show up on time, fix it the first time, and leave with a smile.

Then let your customer be your best brand ambassador by raving about your product and services on social media.

Another popular social channel created from the cloud is the community of users. For B2B products, social communities of users can help bring more value to the product. By connecting with a group of experts in a community, you can exchange best-practices that will save time and money. With a community of power users, outreach for a technical issue to community members who have faced the same problem instead of a support center can help solve the issue within minutes or hours instead of days or weeks.

Our Expert family of products on Salesforce.com have this type of community available. Customers can log on at any time to find answers to questions, watch demo videos or join forums to share best practices and request future features.



The Cloud Let's You Experiment

The cloud is disrupting the business landscape of adopting new technologies. By offering SaaS (Software as a Service) applications that you will be able consume on-demand and pay as you go, the cloud allows you to experiment with tools you may not have had the ability to use before.

By moving to a subscription base, you can start off with a few licenses and test out the new software (like mobile appointment booking for instance) with a small number of users. Talk about ideal. If you are a large service company with thousands of field techs, then starting with an experimental group is fantastic for you. Start by choosing up a small group of users, like a small geographical area, and allow these users to test the software. The really good news with the cloud is that these small experiments need almost no up-front capital investment allowing your IT resources to grow at the same pace that your business grows. If your customers like the new service, then you can easily buy more licenses and roll it out as little or as much as needed, company-wide. If it doesn't work, you only loose the money for a few licenses and the time you have spent trying it out. Small peanuts for the price of improving the customer experience.

The Cloud Adds Agility

The cloud is very agile. What does that mean? Adaption and freedom. Forrester defines it as the ability to change as a matter of routine. We call it adapting fast to meet your service needs. One of the

biggest advantages is the computing power that can be called up on-demand. For instance, seasonal sales cycles can require large amounts of computing power and additional manpower, but only for a short amount of time.

In this article from Mindtools, they refer to the seasonal amount of change for the Holiday season in retail:

- The U.S. Census Bureau records that sales increased by an estimated 39.3 percent in U.S. department stores over the holiday season, from \$18.6 billion in November to \$25.9 billion in December 2012.
- The U.S. National Retail Federation states that the busy season can represent up to 40 percent of annual sales for some organizations.
- And, retailers hired 720,500 extra seasonal employees during the 2012 holiday period, which was a 13 percent increase from the previous year.

When business is booming for the retail sector during the Holidays, it is more than likely booming for service companies as well. New appliance installs, more gas and electricity is needed for all -- and cable, well, who doesn't watch more TV during the Holidays? And if it becomes necessary to hire more contractors to help out, then the cloud allows the agility needed to get these third party contractors up and running in no time. With the cloud, it is possible to equip these technicians with the necessary software by purchasing licenses for a short period of time with no further infrastructure costs.



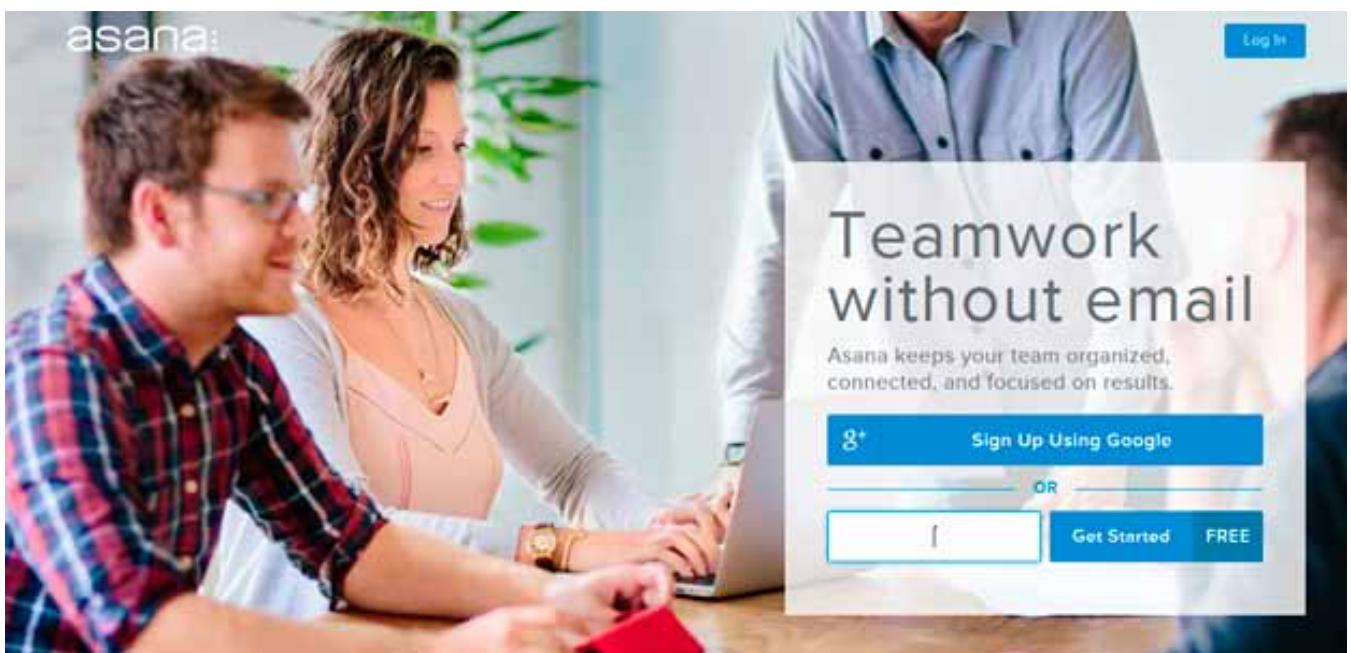
The Cloud Let's You Share

Communications between business units becomes more and more of a challenge as the company grows. This is especially true for service organizations with technicians in the field. If you want to create a better customer experience, it is imperative to break down the silos of communication in your organization and allow all employees to communicate freely no matter what the position or location.

To Eliminate Silos You Must Bring People Across The Organization Together.

According to Forbes, one of the most important things you can do to break down these silos is share data with one another.

Technology can help, especially in cases where physical distance presents obstacles. Cloud based communications tool Asana did just that. Asana is collaboration software in the cloud that is available everywhere your team works--on the web, iOS, and Android. Add your work, communicate with your team, and get more done - together. Conversations and tasks are in one place, so everything is actionable and transparent. Once your team is communicating freely, customers will enjoy the results without any effort from their end.





Let's take a field tech on his way to a customer for an example. If the field tech has access to the recorded conversation of the customer with the call center, the field tech can come prepared to greet the customer accordingly. Is the customer happy? Angry? Frustrated because his cable box is causing trouble?

Imagine the surprise of the unhappy customer when he is presented with a box of chocolates and an apology for all the trouble caused from a faulty cable box. Being in the loop of the entire customer journey from call center to dispatch to billing to field tech will help the whole company give a personal customer experience from end to end.

The Cloud is Here

The cloud is a top strategic technology trend that will significantly impact enterprise IT for the foreseeable future. This trend is impacting service companies across the globe with mobile workforce management solutions on the cloud. We have seen the change coming and are preparing our customers and service businesses to meet the challenge.

There is no doubt that the market is moving to the cloud. And with all the benefits that the cloud brings, it can truly transform customer experience.

Are you ready to make the move to the cloud?



About us

ClickSoftware (NasdaqGS: CKSW) is the leading provider of automated mobile workforce management and service optimization solutions for the enterprise, both for mobile and in-house resources. As pioneers of the “service chain optimization” concept, our solutions provide organizations with end-to-end visibility and control of the entire service management chain by optimizing forecasting, planning, shift and task scheduling, mobility, and real-time management of resource and customer communication.

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ClickSoftware is the essential choice for delivering superb business performance to service sector organizations of all sizes. The company is headquartered in the United States and Israel, with offices across Europe, and Asia Pacific. For more information, please visit www.clicksoftware.com. Follow us on Twitter.

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