Foresight

How to anticipate behavior and create an actionable future

Sentinel Report Q1 2017 by Globant
The Sentinel Report is one of Globant's initiatives to stay relevant through observation of metrics, statements, market trends, insights, and industry updates on consumer behavior from all over the world.

This information is meant to inspire new thoughts and trigger new conversations about products, services, ideas, and opportunities in an effort to help us be more creative and innovative in our solutions.

Observation and action are at the core of any sustainable strategy and we believe that this is a great way to create a positive trend.

We encourage you to share this information with your colleagues and to deepen your understanding of the concepts and ideas that we present here.

Take a look and enjoy!
Opportunities are here to take for those who seek them.

A true digital organization is always looking for new opportunities to engage with the customer. It looks for opportunities to interact and solve the needs of its clients by putting forth a value proposition. Today we want to talk about the importance of anticipating the need and creating a framework that allows forward thinking.
How can we engage with my consumers? How can we grow? How can we stay relevant? How can we be in the consumer’s mind?

These are the recurrent questions in our quest to find better experiences and solutions. At this time, we would like to answer them not in a proactive manner, but rather in a more futuristic way. We are not just talking about science fiction, we want to be real and actionable about it and instead of operating in the past based on “things” that already happened, we want to create engagement based on things that are going to happen, treating them as if they were actionable items today”.

Treating the future as action and not just as a mystery will enable any organization to transform from within, eliminating visions that end up in no actions. This will be conducive for identifying moments of engagement, creating direct plans to anticipate those moments and ultimately creating relevant return of engagement.
"Hearing what consumers say will get you so far, observing how they behave will give you the hidden insight that can transform your business and their lives."

Fabrizio Freda, CEO of The Estée Lauder Companies Inc.
DEFINITION

Foresight is the ability of an organization to identify actionable moments in the future and build relevant return of engagement for each of those moments.

Why is it important to anticipate behavior?

We see it time after time, big or small organizations putting all their resources into creating big visions for the future and then everything ends up in a unused presentation. We don’t like that, we are tired of that. We know there is a much more actionable approach to the future.

We all have birthdays, weddings, buy a house, learn, invest, explore, take leisure activities, etc. We all share some common traits and at the same time we are all unique, our behavior is unique, and that uniqueness leaves clues to what is going to happen next. Our approach suggests that if we treat engagement as a fluid time-line we will be able to identify common instances of engagement in the life of our customers. This will give us the ability to craft products and services that truly behave and feel as if they were anticipating a real moment for the user.

This use of the future as an actionable item enables organizations to create meaningful action to engage users in a way that provides surprise and delight.

The return of engagement with the user is much more effective and the ability of the organization to capitalize in those moments grow with each interaction.
“80% of companies have knowledge of future moments of interaction with their user and create no interaction to improve engagement.”

FORGET WHAT YOU THINK YOU KNOW: LET ANTICIPATION HAPPEN.

How we anticipate what the customer wants is the key to keeping our customer happy, and that is our ultimate concern. There are different ways to anticipate the customer, or the market in general, and the best strategy is a combination of competitive analysis, closely watching trends and looking for opportunities when disruptive events converge with our strengths and we can improve our offering.

All of these are secondary to aligning with the customer’s strategic vision. We need to supplement that vision with strategies that solve the tactical problems and clear the runway for total success. To do this, we need to understand in the most simple, fundamental and primordial way the problem our customer want to solve. We need to listen. We need to take notes. We need to compare our notes with our customer to validate what we heard. We need to continuously improve our capacity to understand and empathize with the customer. We need to continuously improve our capacity to listen.

We also need to learn to control our technical intuition. The most common mistake technology providers make is to focus on the how, not the why. Technology facilitates the solution to a business problem, but if the problem is in process or organizational culture, technology is just a wrapper around the same problem. This is very challenging because our market strength is technical expertise. But we have to resist jumping to implementation without understanding the story first.

Combining better listening, root cause analysis of the real problems to solve and aligning closely to customer strategy will make our customers feel like we are anticipating their next move - because we are!
4 Enablers of an actionable future

1. Live data
2. Relevant experiences
3. Meaningful efficiency
4. Active technology
Enablers of anticipation

1. LIVE DATA
2. RELEVANT EXPERIENCES
3. MEANINGFUL EFFICIENCY
4. ACTIVE TECHNOLOGY
“Errors using inadequate data are much less than those using no data at all”

Charles Babbage in the Art of Data Mining
**Live Data** is a living platform for observing, analyzing and modeling consumer behavior based on an active and flexible system of data intelligence that allows detection of patterns.

The data strategy will be aligned with the design of the experience and centered in the final consumer, allowing the following:

- Behaviour tracking
- Automatic detection of final consumer’s profile
- **Unified enriched profile**
- Personalized experience
- Real time strategy success metrics

Platform Features:

- **Data Directory**
- Substantial addition of data sources
- Real time data services
- **Data governance**
- **Data federation**
- **Data quality**
Generating products and services based on real time data

- **Unified customer**
- **Dynamic and automatic customer segmentation**
- **Personalized experience engine**
- **Analytics: strategy, channels efficiency**
- **Automatic upgrades**

**TOUCH POINTS**
- e-Commerce
- CRM
- Payment
- Portal
- Social

**PLATFORM AND SERVICES**
- **OPEN DIGITAL DATA PLATFORM**
- **RAW DATA**
- Social data
- Analytics
- Partnerships
- SAP
- Transaction
- Testing

**Generating products and services based on real time data**

**Touch points**
- e-Commerce
- CRM
- Payment
- Portal
- Social

**Platform and services**
- Unified customer
- Dynamic and automatic customer segmentation
- Personalized experience engine
- Analytics: strategy, channels efficiency
- Automatic upgrades

**Raw data**
- Social data
- Analytics
- Partnerships
- SAP
- Transaction
- Testing
Detecting patterns

Objective
Detection of behavioral patterns through mathematical and statistical predictive techniques.

Requirements
Enhancement of the user profile by detecting final customers behavioral patterns (users clustering) regarding:

- Channels
- Touchpoints
- Moments of the experience
- Prototypes

Sentiment analysis on Social Channels

Defining opportunities

Objective
The behaviour patterns detected will help define relevant actions regarding the final customers.

Requirements
Define predictive actions that are relevant to each customer, allowing to personalize their experience regarding:

- When is the best time to contact them.
- How to assist them when they contact us.
- Show them content and products that are relevant to their profile and context.
- Understand in which stage of the “customer life cycle” the individuals are in order to anticipate their needs.
Healthcare NexT
Healthcare initiative diagnoses patients via AI
February 2017 saw Microsoft unveil Healthcare NexT, an initiative using technology to help doctors with outpatient care and inpatient triage. Chatbot technology is used to enable patients to discuss their symptoms, with the bot connecting to personal health accounts to view any medication they are taking. The bot can also view recent exercise – tracked via fitness wearables, plus any airplane trips or other activities via online calendars. Healthcare NexT can then diagnose conditions, connect users with a nurse, suggest doctors or answer any insurance questions.

Source: https://blogs.microsoft.com/blog/2017/02/16/microsoft-partners-combine-cloud-ai-research-industry-expertise-focus-transforming-health-care/

ARA
Smart toothbrush tracks oral hygiene via AI
Debuting at CES 2017 in Las Vegas, Kolibree’s Ara is an AI-powered smart toothbrush, designed in France. Costing USD 129, the toothbrush uses deep learning algorithms embedded in the device to give users feedback on their brushing habits, automatically syncing with a mobile app. Weekly reports are generated via email, including personalized feedback on oral hygiene and tips on how to improve dental health.

Source: https://www.kolibree.com/en/ara/
PROFESSIONAL OPINION

AMOL PATIL
Technical Director
at Mobile Studio

CLOSED LOOP - ANALYTICS, INSIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Popular brands spend millions of dollars every year to onboard new users and keep them engaged on applications. App analytics is crucial to measure market impact and truly understand customers full view to generate more business. Mobile application is the most saturated channel where people spend most of their digital time and it is very important for brands to:

- Engage users precisely
- Monetize app(s) effectively
- Attract, grow and retain users

Most applications in the market have multiple analytic tools integrated in them but none provide strategic actionable insights, in fact many times data reported by different tools are conflicting.

Brands heavily invest in strategic consultations from digital marketing specialist, user experience experts and technical architects to understand user data and provide meaningful solutions. The process involves closely analyzing global customer usage patterns data from different sources i.e., social channels, app analytics, user experience, performance data to provide meaningful relevant suggestions

Usability: TouchMap, hit to success ratio, discoverability, navigation funnel can be correlated with common UX heuristic evaluations and recommendations around affordance, tap target areas, theming, design language

Social: Sentiment analysis and user profiling can help in enriching personas and providing customized experience, offers in terms of size, content, timing and frequency and drive customer loyalty.

Demographics: Regional conditions like weather, news, policies, holidays, incidences can help in understanding user behaviors and problems to fine tune offerings and nail down problems in turn creating hyper contextual engagements.

Product Features: Feature roadmap, partner integration, marketing strategies can be analyzed and carved out based on application usage analytics, performance, usability.

Constantly refining application’s offering derived and predicted based on big data analytics of relevant data patterns to match user’s expectation will help in creating closed loop satisfactory customer journeys resulting in brand’s business growth.
Enablers of actionable future

1. Live Data
2. Relevant Experiences
3. Meaningful Efficiency
4. Active Technology
“My Starbucks’ loyalty program now has 10.4 million active member, up 28% from a year ago, and those shoppers now account for about 30% of business in North America.”

SOURCE: Fortune.com, "Starbucks wants your phone as much as it wants to sell you coffee" July 2015
With live data comes great opportunities, and those opportunities are to be taken seriously and, why not, with a little bit of playfulness, we can make those opportunities become relevant experiences.

The goal here is to identify moments of engagement, look around them for the moments before and after and see what data they have in common. With that data we can start drafting actionable moments of anticipation and create a relevant experience that results in better return of engagement.

These relevant experiences are not always easy to create, but are certainly always effective tools to create interaction and positive perception with our customers.
Enable your relevant experiences

Don't just think about the action or functionality that you are developing for your user, think about what comes before that action, and what is going to happen after. That will enable new products, new services, that engages your user in a more relevant and meaningful way, optimizing the return of engagement.

Each action can be predicted and enhanced by the moments before the action takes place and what happens right after.
If we pay attention to that, we can see that the user is actually not looking for an account, the user wants to achieve a goal, and that goal can be satisfied in many different ways.
Mapping opportunities

Mapping out all the opportunities of engagement throughout the journey of your users, allows you to bring to the forefront all those moments that are simply taking place in the flow of interaction with your user. The organization is not taking advantage and/or not capitalizing on those moments. Therefore, having a habit of mapping the user journey and keeping it updated with live data is crucial for the success of the creation of relevant experiences. Once you map them all, the backlog of initiatives that can provide effective return of engagement becomes alive and more aligned with the needs of the user and the potential of the business.
Unveiled in March 2017, the Netflix Personal Trainer enables people to hear motivational phrases from their favorite characters in popular Netflix shows as they work out. Part of the company’s Make It initiative which focuses on DIY tech projects, full details of how to make the device are available via the Netflix’s website. Tracking fitness activity, the digital trainer will offer motivational phrases should wearers slow down – and completely pause the Netflix show they’re watching if they stop.

Source: http://makeit.netflix.com/projects/personal-trainer

A bracelet designed to monitor the wearer’s emotions throughout the day was launched in January 2017. Created by US-based wearables company Sentio Solutions, Feel’s sensors measure, monitor and analyze blood volume pulses, skin temperature and changes in the electrical resistance of the skin. Available in a choice of four colors at $149 USD, a free companion app provides personalized recommendations and coaching to improve the user’s emotional wellbeing.

Source: http://www.myfeel.co/

Promoting the Masterpass digital wallet and payment platform, February 2017 saw MasterCard unveils a series of promotions linked to the Grammys. In the #ThankTheFans campaign, when an artist won an award, a new special offer became available to users of the Masterpass mobile app. Further items and deals were unlocked if any winners chose to thank their fans during their acceptance speech. In the run up to the awards show, MasterCard opened the Masterpass #ThankTheFans House in Hollywood. Visitors to the pop up could play with turntables and try out Gibson guitars.

THE POWER ENGINE OF ANTICIPATION

Many companies spend tons of resources reacting to unexpected changes, unpredicted trends and new late-detected tastes on their customers behavior. These situations push their efforts to try to "stay on the wave" when in fact they should be anticipating the wave, or even better, leading it. They could easily use the same resources on research, analysis and innovation to inspire and create new products. This simple action will avoid the companies a vicious cycle that will repeat when facing the same problem.

The first step to solve this problem at an organizational level is by following a simple practice called "strategic planning". This is an organization’s process to define, direct and control the strategy. It allows the creation of tools that measure and supervise the company’s processes and allocate resources to accomplish their objectives. The process involves designing tactics to know when they need to create value and how to do it, by focusing on the future, preventing possible risks, and going from reacting to anticipating.

The second step, as a fundamental thing, is to focus on customers. If companies do not manage information to meet the needs of omnichannel consumers, they are risking not only losing sales, but also getting “unexpected changes” that forces their innovation strategy to go into “catch up” mode.

Analyzing the consumer’s data compiled, and including customers during the product development process, ensures the company the creation of the right product while also gaining information on customer’s preferences and behaviour at the same time.

By monitoring environmental factors and market trends, and obtaining data from the customers to know how they approach a product, organizations can analyze lines of actions to try to stay ahead and know/predict the profile of the products they’re offering.

With this practice as a baseline, the company can start to draw a line of innovation, applying all of its expertise to add a layer of value (model of trends and insights analysis, brand strategies, environmental studies, etc), using first information to know the market needs and then adding value to inspire and create leading and innovative products.

If we create value and we add innovation, we’ll create the kind of leadership that customers will follow, staying a step ahead, and creating trends to anticipate, plan and build along with the customers, sustainable strategies and successful products.
Enablers of actionable future

1. Live Data
2. Relevant Experiences
3. Meaningful Efficiency
4. Active Technology
"In fact, in an agile project, technical excellence is measured by both capacity to deliver customer value today and create an adaptable product for tomorrow"

Author and Source: Jim Highsmith, Agile Project Management: Creating Innovative Products
To become **efficient** and agile will enable the organization to deliver relevant experiences while they are still **relevant**.

A major factor for success to become more efficient in creating relevant experiences that anticipate behavior, is to have an internal methodology that allows for quick delivery of initiatives, testing, prototyping and iterative evolution.

The old mentality of long definition processes and endless review meetings is not going to allow organizations to efficiently create return of engagements with their customers.

We need an agile way to create, empower or discard initiatives based on contextual evidence.

We need a common language to talk about the impact of initiatives.

That’s the beginning of a truly forward thinking organization.
Agile Methodologies

Objective

- Meet business goals
- Reduce uncertainty in an effective and efficient way
- Reduce risk of failure while increasing chances to achieve the right product-market fit
- Avoid extensive planning with no concrete results
- Be able to respond to change

Methodology

- High visibility to the entire process, and its outcomes
- Short term measurable and comparative results in order to learn and adapt
- Short feedback loops in order to learn and react, pursuing our business objectives
Evaluation & metrics

Common Language

It is extremely necessary for the organization to adopt a common language to evaluate and measure the impact of any initiative. This way, all areas will have a consolidated vision of the efforts involved in completing a task and what is the return on investment.

Framework

- **Priority**: the relevance of the solution over the segment
- **Simplicity**: how easy it is for the user to complete a task (metric: 3 stages)
- **Technical feasibility**: How quick we can develop the solution to launch to market (metric: 3 months)
- **Efficiency**: The company investment required to get the solution.
- **Cost effectiveness**: The investment return of the solution
Agility and Health Care
A Family Practice Transformation Based on Continual Learning and Adaptation

Just a few short years ago I began singing the praises of Agile to just about anyone who would give me the time of day. I would talk about the values associated with agility and dig deeply into the various Agile Manifesto principles that resonated with me the most. Having come from a fairly diverse background, I was convinced that Agile methods could be used in a multitude of business applications, not just software development. At the time, I was a Scrum practitioner and truly embraced the mindset of continual inspection and adaptation.

Source:

Extreme Sprints
Many Experienced Scrum Teams Complain When Sprints Are Shorter Than Two Weeks.

Many teams try to avoid short sprints (shorter than three weeks), because they don’t believe they will be able to achieve anything meaningful. This has been the case with many of the teams I have worked with in the past. They all believed that two-week sprints would result in a lot of planning and no meaningful implementation.

Source:

Transition from Agile-cum-Waterfall to Scrum Success Story

I was not a Certified ScrumMaster when this story began. I had about 13 years of experience in software services. However, I joined the Global Products team as a ScrumMaster. I attended the ScrumMaster training conducted by Pete Deemer at Bangalore and carried back a lot of enthusiasm for implementing Scrum at Global Products.

Source:
All organizations, when they adapt agile methodologies or frameworks, must learn how to achieve a balance between trying to anticipate their users’ needs, and how to adapt to new requirements. It can be said that “anticipation” is a feature of old fashioned development, given that it tries to produce the “final” version of what the user will need, by applying practices such as: full requirements, early planning, big initial design, plan-develop-test-deliver cycle. On the other hand, as the usually attributed to baseball player Yogi Berra or physicist Niels Bohr (among others) saying goes, “It’s tough to make predictions, especially about the future.” So, instead of going for revolutionary systems, agile organizations opt for an evolutionary pathway, and choose adaptation, which embraces other ways of doing things: “Just-in-time” requirements, real time planning, emerging design, develop and test at the same time, continuous delivery.

There’s even an oft-quoted acronym, YAGNI, “You Ain’t Gonna Need It”, that sums up the agile point of view: care for current needs, and don’t waste time in things that you won’t be using.

Of course, this is somewhat extreme; sometimes you may know that something isn’t needed now, but you could have a certainty about its future usage. Anticipating user needs will always be dodgy, because you cannot perfectly predict (if at all!) what users will need. This obviously will cause a possible important amount of rework. On the other hand, if you thrive on adaptation, you will possibly have lots of small changes along the way -- in terms of steering, instead of a few quite major direction changes, a quantity of minor adjustments.

These extremes, of course, are not what actually happens in development. All projects achieve some balance, depending on their specific characteristics. For example, for applications that could involve life danger (medical profession) or in highly regulated markets (finance, banking), you should probably lean to the anticipation side. Lean startups, on the other extreme, should probably opt to go hard on the adaptation side, in order to fully discover their best way forward.

Agile project management allows both conflicting points of view (adaptation and anticipation) to coexist, by realizing that even though some anticipation is always required, you shouldn’t worry about all future needs, and trust that your development methodology will be able to fully cope with all needs, as soon as they come up.
Enablers of actionable future

1. LIVE DATA
2. RELEVANT EXPERIENCES
3. MEANINGFUL MEASURE
4. ACTIVE TECHNOLOGY
“Once a new technology rolls over you, if you’re not part of the steamroller, you’re part of the road.”

Stewart Brand from The Main Use of Technology
Active technology is not a blocker, is an enabler, is a call for exploration, is a welcome sign for new opportunities.

We see it time after time, organizations that believe that because they bought certain platform and that platform has limitations, then they are stuck with that forever and will not be able to progress or create anything innovative. This is not true!

We can create an enabling layer of technology that co-exist with that same platform. This layer will enable the organization to test new technologies, and new ways of creating solutions, allowing for exploration, testing and most important, regaining the trust in the ability to deliver new and relevant experiences for their customers.

Active technology will take you from reactive to pro-active development.
Due to the volume of services that the organization has to provide, it is of vital importance to choose what to buy and what to build.

Our recommendation is to acquire solutions that are aligned with the organization core operations.

But from a strategic point of view, to aim for the maintenance of a line of services that will allow the development of a custom made experience.

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### Build vs. Acquire to differentiate us

**Objective**

To define what point during the customer’s experience we can make a different and simplified change versus in what stage is strategic to launch a developed product that will facilitate a faster reception in the market. We want to end with the usual, “all or nothing” of the experience and to be able to provide staggered delivery.

**Requirements**

- Define the available services directory
- To be in tune with relevant technologies.
Microservices

Define a flexible technology stack that creates unique user experiences.

New devices require flexible technologies to adapt to different needs

Aim to an APIs structure and exchangeable microservices

Netflix, Amazon and Facebook are currently tending towards a microservices model. An approach, where each service is managed and maintained by an independent and autonomous team.
Investigate emerging trends and technologies

To activate the change from within, the multidisciplinary team will need to conduct an emerging technologies research that will enhance the design process and anticipate the behaviour of different segments.

Requirements

- The interdisciplinary team will study emerging technologies trends that will align with the existent needs.
- Prioritize initiatives/technology trends
- Prototype
- Testing on final customers
- Measure results based on defined parameters
- Agile iteration
- Compare with other industry trends (gamification, IoT, eCommerce)
- Stay relevant regarding other open source trends to reduce costs
ACTIVE TECHNOLOGY EXAMPLES

SMARTUV
Cellphone attachment reveals sun-damaged skin

A cellphone attachment launched in January 2017 allows the user to see sun damage on the skin which is invisible to the naked eye. Nurugo SmartUV captures the world in UV light, displaying the image on the cellphone screen via a connected mobile app. Created by South Korean biometric solution company Union Community, the device – which also allows the user to check the efficacy of sunscreen application –

Source: https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/nurugo/nurugo-smartuv-the-smartest-uv-camera-for-your-pho/description

CLOVA
Japanese company’s virtual assistant rivals Google and Amazon

Japan-based messaging app, Line unveiled its artificial intelligence platform at the February 2017’s Mobile World Congress. The Clova app is accompanied by a smart speaker using voice and facial recognition to understand any questions people might ask, and make appropriate recommendations. Set to launch in Japan and South Korea during Q2 2017, the digital assistant works much like Amazon’s Alexa, Google Assistant and Microsoft’s Cortana.

Source: https://line.me/ja/

OMIUS
Robotic jacket regulates body temperature

Unveiled in the US during February 2017, The Omius is a jacket using air vents that open and close robotically to keep the wearer at the ideal temperature. Designed with athletes such as skiers in mind, the windproof and waterproof jacket is equipped with electronically operated vents that open or close to keep the wearer at a consistent temperature. The Omius works using sensors which monitor both the body and outside temperature and send the data to a processor that triggers the vents. Users can also operate the vents manually, allowing the Omius system to learn their personal preferences.

Source: http://www.omiustech.com/
So... what is the potential role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Data Science in enabling companies to anticipate customers needs and desires? Data is at the heart of AI, and currently we have tons of it, increasingly so, and deploying solutions that are backed by AI is an affordable and doable option, whether in terms of data and processing power. Alas, the current state of the art in terms of AI is unprecedented. Many breakthroughs in Machine Learning, is attracting talented engineers and data scientist to put focus on this matter.

What then? How can we leverage AI to anticipate what customers needs, desires, and even actions that surprises them?

First, by maximizing the emotional engagement through identity resonance. This means, adapting the customer’s journey to the specific individual by understanding what makes them feel like themselves through their patterns of behavior.

Second, minimizing the cognitive burden and the fatigue of decision making process, aiding a person understand the useful information and clearing the noise, and delegating low-value-added decisions or alert when a critical decision is needed. Does Google Maps or Waze ring a bell?

Third, using scientific knowledge about human mind to improve client interactions and adapt content to be processed more easily, giving a smooth and pleasant experience.

Let us not forget that reacting, however quick, it’s still an afterthought. What we interpret of what the user thinks they wanted for themselves. But the user can not “predict” some use cases or solutions before they exist! Anticipation is about uncovering the true desires and goals of our users, reaching for the “a-ha!” moments of delight.

That is the role of the intelligent organization. And there is where Data, Data Science and AI are remarkable tools for the future.
Enablers of actionable future

1. Live Data
2. Relevant Experiences
3. Meaningful Efficiency
4. Active Technology
Dare to create an actionable future. Start today.
There is **so much more** you can do with these insights!

We are a team of professional researchers, designers, and subject-matter experts that put knowledge into action. We create strategy reports and envision scenarios that help build a strategy for the future. Contact us at [sentinel@globant.com](mailto:sentinel@globant.com) and take the next step into a more insightful strategy.
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