

IDC MarketScape

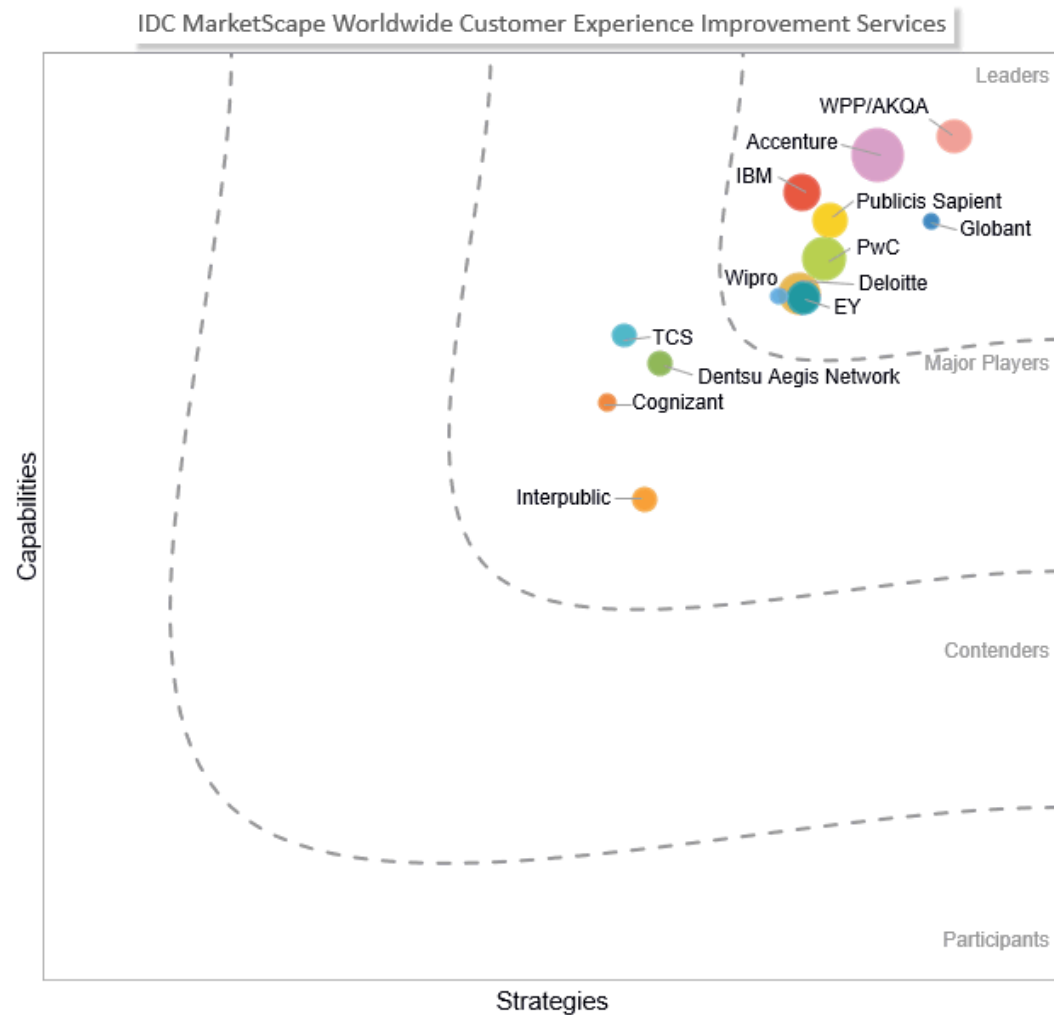
IDC MarketScape: Worldwide Customer Experience Improvement Services 2020 Vendor Assessment

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IDC MARKETSCAPE FIGURE

FIGURE 1

IDC MarketScape Worldwide Customer Experience Improvement Services Vendor Assessment



Source: IDC, 2020

Please see the Appendix for detailed methodology, market definition, and scoring criteria.

IDC OPINION

This study represents the vendor assessment model called IDC MarketScape. This research is a quantitative and qualitative assessment of the characteristics that explain a vendor's current and future success in the customer experience (CX) improvement services marketplace. This study assesses the capabilities and business strategies of 13 prominent CX improvement services vendors. This evaluation is based on a comprehensive framework and a set of parameters expected to be most conducive to success in providing CX improvement services during both the short term and the long term. A significant component of this evaluation is the inclusion of CX improvement services buyers' perception of both the key characteristics and the capabilities of these providers, both directly from the vendors' clients and through a survey. Key findings include:

- Overall, clients that IDC talked to were most impressed by the level of empathy and commitment shown by their CX improvement services partner, by the level of understanding and insight that their vendor had into their organization and its needs, and by the quality of the vendor's people. This is good to see, as it indicates that the leading vendors in this market are focusing strongly on understanding and supporting their clients.
- The areas where CX improvement services vendors on average were weakest in the perception of clients that IDC talked to were in organizational transformation, in differentiation from other vendors and, most of all, in challenging the client. Even clients that said their vendor regularly challenged them to accept new ideas or technologies often reported that they wanted to be challenged more strongly. This may seem surprising, but it probably reflects a feeling at a time of immense business and social change that enterprises and public bodies need to rethink their whole approach to customers and citizens.
- Above all, organizations want a mix of vision and action from suppliers. Creating and sustaining a great customer or citizen experience is more important than ever for enterprises and public bodies in 2020. They are faced with new and potentially existential challenges in the post-COVID-19 world where consumer and business behavior (and spend) has been radically disrupted. One of the vendor characteristics most appreciated by clients that IDC talked to was the ability to take an evidence-based and forward-looking view of the client's needs and translate its actionable vision into end-to-end CX transformation services that deliver measurable results for the client.

IDC MARKETSCAPE VENDOR INCLUSION CRITERIA

This research includes analysis of offerings from services providers with customer experience improvement offerings worldwide, including those with broad portfolios and specialty services spanning IDC's research coverage.

This assessment is designed to evaluate the characteristics and buyer perceptions of each vendor, as opposed to its size or the breadth of its services:

- The first entry criterion for inclusion in this assessment was that a vendor appeared in at least one of four supplier categories laid out in *IDC Market Glance: Digital Agency Services, 3Q19* (IDC #US44954519, July 2019). Specifically, these four categories are ICT services providers, business consultancies, holding companies, and network agencies.

- The scope of this assessment is global and end-to-end services. Two of the vendor categories in the Market Glance, design houses and independent digital agencies, were not used because the scope of this assessment goes beyond the range of services typically provided by design houses and independent agencies.
- Within the remaining four categories listed previously, the vendors selected for inclusion in this assessment were those that IDC considered to supply a broad and deep range of CX improvement services globally. Those vendors finally selected had what in IDC's view were robust end-to-end global capabilities in key areas including technology change, product, facility and service design (SD), content creation and management, end-customer engagement, and organizational and business transformation services.

Other vendors in the market with less comprehensive services portfolios and/or with narrower geographic reach may be capable of providing the breadth and the quality of CX improvement services required by clients, depending on the scope of the engagement. In addition, an organization's specific objectives and requirements will play a significant role in determining which firm should be considered as potential candidates for any engagement. As such, this evaluation should therefore not be considered a "final judgment" on the vendors to consider for an engagement.

ADVICE FOR TECHNOLOGY BUYERS

2020 will be remembered as the year of the COVID-19 pandemic, which brought deep and possibly long-lived changes to consumer and business behavior and created both challenges and opportunities for buyers of CX improvement services.

IDC has the following overall advice to buyers of CX improvement services in late 2020:

- **Look to differentiate your organization with better experience.** After the initial economic and cultural shock of the pandemic, including "lockdowns" and the accelerated shift to home working and e-commerce, you will need to create differentiated and compelling online experiences – through virtualized products, services, and events – in order to survive and grow in the near future. Merely reproducing traditional offerings online with little or no changes will lead to a degraded experience that will hurt your brand. Look for a CX improvement services vendors that can help you to rethink the experience you want for existing and prospective customers and to imagine and design new products and services.
- **Keep demanding fast payback times and high measurable return on investment.** Many organizations will likely continue to be challenged with cashflow, and even more will understandably be hesitant to spend significant sums on investments seen as discretionary, including marketing and branding-related projects. Ensure that your CX improvement services providers focus on your operational agility and resiliency and on offering you measurably fast payback, high return on investment, and low execution risk. This financial pragmatism was a big focus for many organizations when the pandemic first struck in early 2020, but it should remain important for the foreseeable future.
- **Stay optimistic and ambitious – and push your vendors for their vision of the future.** While cost and efficiency are important drivers, you should not focus only on the "cost agenda." You should also draw up evidence-based plans for investment in growth. Ask your CX improvement vendor for practical ideas for going beyond successful firefighting: How can it help you take market share while doing the right thing? Where will the demand of the future be? What will customer behavior look like in the so-called "new normal"?

- **Remember that business transformation is first about your people and only second about technology, design, and customer engagement.** People are your most important assets: to make your organization more customer centric, your employees may need to change their work patterns and maybe even their behavior – for example, becoming much more proactive and agile and/or thinking more from the perspective of the customer. Successful transformation almost always involves a strong focus on shaping and channeling people's behaviors and ideas. But remember that for this to work at ground level, it needs to be done sympathetically and respectfully, in alignment with your organization's purpose and with genuine agreement and buy-in from all your employees.

Specifically, IDC has the following advice for enterprises and public bodies when they are selecting CX improvement services vendors:

- **Look for evidence of strong client empathy.** One of the characteristics most associated with vendors that perform strongly in the eyes of their clients is their personal and organizational commitment to the client. By "personal" commitment, we mean a client-first mindset where the vendor's people constantly strive to help you in all ways possible, often going the extra mile in their support, and sometimes even keeping in touch with you even after the engagement has formally ended. By "organizational" commitment, we mean vendors aligning their commercial interest with yours (e.g., by sharing upside and downside risk and being paid partly or only by business outcomes).
- **Look for vendors that will challenge you and tell you the truth – even when it's painful.** Enterprises and public bodies don't want to be patronized, but they do want to have their eyes opened to new ideas and best practices, and they want to be told when they are going wrong, even when the news can be difficult to receive. One of the vendor characteristics most appreciated by reference clients is the willingness to diplomatically but firmly challenge the client. This willingness to continually push the client is actually the area in which reference clients IDC talked to were least satisfied with vendors, indicating an appetite for more assertive challenging. Even where they were being successfully challenged, many clients said they wanted to take the level up a notch or two.
- **Look for vendors that can help you transform your culture as well as transform your technology and your business processes.** As mentioned previously, people change is often as important as – or more important than – technology and business process change. With economic conditions likely to remain difficult in the near future, and with consumer and citizen behaviors and needs in a state of change, you need to be ever more agile and customer centric if you are to survive and succeed. CX improvement services vendors can play an important role in helping you to evolve your behaviors and ways of thinking, notably in helping you adopt agile and collaborative work patterns and to embrace customer-centric behaviors and attitudes through techniques such as design thinking.
- **For larger engagements and for longer-term relationships, look for vendors with broad expertise that can be deployed quickly to help you.** Bigger is not necessarily better, and specialist boutiques have an important role to play for enterprises and public bodies looking to provide better experiences to their customers and citizens. But one of the vendor characteristics most appreciated by reference clients was the ability to quickly connect the client to a highly specialized expert or thought leader for advice, particularly for niche and "hot" technologies. Clients particularly liked vendors that provided initial access to specialist advice quickly and for reasonable rates (or of course for free), rather than "nickel-and-diming" them. And clients naturally also like vendors to quickly deploy follow-through implementation and management services linked to their specialist advice. When talking to a potential vendor's references, you should them ask about how fast, easy, and cheap it will be to get advice and subsequent support across a broad range of areas.

VENDOR SUMMARY PROFILES

This section briefly explains IDC's key observations resulting in a vendor's position in the IDC MarketScape. While every vendor is evaluated against each of the criteria outlined in the Appendix, the description here provides a summary of each vendor's strengths and challenges.

Accenture

According to IDC analysis and buyer perception, Accenture is positioned in the Leaders category in the worldwide 2020 IDC MarketScape for customer experience improvement services.

Accenture has around 505,000 employees and operations in more than 200 cities in 51 countries, making the company one of the world's largest services companies. Clients include 91 of the Fortune Global 100 and more than three-quarters of the Fortune Global 500.

Accenture has four key global service areas: Strategy and Consulting, which helps clients transform their organizations; Interactive, which helps client reinvent the front office and the experiences of customers, employees, patients, and citizens; Technology, which provides IT consulting and implementation services; and Operations, which provides managed services including business process outsourcing (BPO).

Accenture's key capabilities in the CX improvement space include:

- **Service design:** Accenture has a service design practice whose capabilities include customer and employee strategy design, growth and business model design, new product and service design, "total experience design," culture and organizational design, and experience impact management.
- **Product and facility design:** Accenture has a "connected products and spaces" team with skills in industrial design and architecture. The practice helps clients "create new customer and employee experiences that live at the intersection of the physical world, new technology, and business requirements."
- **Personalization:** Accenture offers personalization services in the CX space, including customer data orchestration; "living profiles and segmentation;" strategy and development; content, media, and marketing strategy and development; campaign orchestration; media and programmatic services; and creative production and content services.
- **Data/analytics:** Accenture has a data/analytics that spans data science, data collection, and advanced analytics and artificial intelligence (AI) talent and methodologies. Proprietary tools include its customer data architecture (CDA), Accenture personalization suite (APS), and SynOps, a human-machine operating "engine" that optimizes people, technology, data, and intelligence. Teams comprising more than 8,000 strategists and 3,000 data scientists help clients develop new strategies as well as their own data and analytics capabilities.
- **End-customer engagement:** Accenture offers consulting services to drive improvements in client's customer care operations and also offers customer care outsourcing services. Assets include SynOps and its ACE+ (Applied Customer Engagement) tool.

Accenture's network of digital and innovation labs includes 13 Nano Labs and nearly 400 innovation centers, studios, and centers of excellence in 92 cities across 35 countries. These collaborate with the 8 Accenture Labs (the company's primary R&D facilities), which conduct research and incubate new concepts through applied R&D projects that have a near-term impact on clients' businesses. Its innovation centers include content design and creative studios, experience activation centers, innovation labs, production hubs, and "Liquid Studios."

Accenture has expertise across more than 40 industries, including automotive, banking, capital markets, chemicals, communications/media, consumer goods, energy, food and beverage, freight and logistics, health, industrial equipment/manufacturing, insurance, life sciences, metals and mining, pharmaceuticals, retail, software/technology, travel, and utilities.

Key Accenture clients in the CX improvement space include Marriott, FanDuel, Maserati, Illy, Subway, Telefónica, Telstra, and Vodafone.

Accenture has a wide range of global tier 1 relationships with key CX technology players, including Adobe, Salesforce, SAP, Oracle, Microsoft, Google, and Amazon. Its Avanade joint venture, co-owned with Microsoft, delivers services around Microsoft technology. Accenture also has global tier 1 relationships with smaller specialist CX technology platforms such as Sitecore and with newer emerging platforms such as Sprinklr and Optimizely.

Over the past two years, Accenture has made 17 key acquisitions globally that have expanded its CX capabilities, including Germany-based Mackevision, a producer of 3D-enabled and immersive product content, and Droga5, a global advertising agency.

Accenture says that its mission in the CX improvement space is: "Helping leading brands create promises not to just shareholders but to customers, employees, and societies. 2020 has changed the structure of pretty much every experience: how and what we buy, how and where we work, how we interact with other people. Inevitably, this translates to immense pressure and a sharp focus on the experience of products, services, and brands in this new context – and their purpose for customers and employees."

Strengths

On average, Accenture customers commended the firm for client empathy, content innovation and creativity, and people quality. Comments from Accenture reference clients included:

- "I will often go to Accenture and ask for guidance and I'll get a really good quality response. I rate them very highly."
- "They look to mature the relationship beyond being just a schedule of work – they turn it into something more meaningful."
- "Their creativity is good and they are very agile – they've got the right mix between agility and creativity."

Challenges

Accenture could improve its perception among clients by increasing its differentiation from its immediate competitors and by drawing more on its insight into clients' end customers.

Consider Accenture When

Accenture is a good choice for organizations requiring end-to-end transformation involving broad business and technology change. As one Accenture client said, "They've got the front to back of running a modern organization covered, with the ability to start and finish any engagement end to end. With the aggressive acquisitions they've made over the past few years, they've filled gaps that we didn't even know existed."

Cognizant

According to IDC analysis and buyer perception, Cognizant is positioned in the Major Players category in the worldwide 2020 IDC MarketScape for customer experience improvement services.

Cognizant is a global business engineering organization with more than 290,000 employees. Cognizant has 16 service lines arranged into three main groups:

- Digital Business (artificial intelligence, digital engineering, Internet of Things [IoT], and Cognizant Interactive)
- Digital Operations (enterprise services, industry and platform solutions, and intelligent process automation)
- Digital Systems & Technology (application services, cloud enablement, infrastructure services, security, core modernization, digital engineering, enterprise application services, and quality engineering and assurance)

Cognizant goes to market through four business segments: financial services, healthcare, products and resources, and communications, media, and technology.

Key capabilities in the CX improvement space include:

- **Service design:** Cognizant provides service design services as part of a global digital design practice that includes more than 1,000 service designers, user experience (UX) designers, researchers, and strategists, plus more than 3,500 creative technologists, engineers, data scientists, and analysts. Service design is Cognizant's foundational methodology to reimagine the service experience. Service design tools include personas, experience principles, current-state blueprinting, and future-state blueprinting/concepting. Areas of expertise include business and context immersion and strategic foresight, user research, experience mapping, concepts development, and prototyping.
- **Product and facility design:** Cognizant provides product and physical facility design services as part of its Customer and Employee Experience Transformation offerings. The company employs multidisciplinary teams of anthropologists, behavioral scientists, experience strategists, design researchers, and foresight strategists help leading organizations understand, empathize with, and design for their customers and employees.
- **Personalization:** Cognizant Customer Intelligence combines the quantitative observations from data with the qualitative human behavior insights derived from social sciences to give clients actionable consumer insights. Building blocks of the offering include client central and pristine, customer journey AI, NBA/NBO engine for personalization, real-time engagement, single view of customer data, persona-based targeted promotions, real-time promotion based on proximity, and campaign management.
- **Data/analytics:** Cognizant has a global dedicated Data and Intelligence practice with 48,000+ data, analytics, and AI consultants working across data management, analytics, and AI solutions. The company applies an advisory-led, AI-first, and platform-based approach. Offerings include Data Modernization (including Cognizant Data Modernization Method and Cognizant Data Modernization Platform), Intelligence Offerings (including Customer Intelligence and Operations Intelligence), and AI Capabilities and Intellectual Property (including Evolutionary AI, Conversational AI, and Managed Services).
- **End-customer engagement:** Cognizant provides both managed and consulting/implementation services in the customer care space. In customer care operations, the company has more than 15,000 employees globally providing omni-channel contact center support. Its global Insight

and Strategy capabilities comprise social scientists, design researchers, UX researchers, and experience, foresight, and business strategists with expertise in ethnographic research, influencer insights, market signal analysis, competitive analyses, customer journey drivers, and break points.

Cognizant has a global network of "Collaboratories," which are collaborative spaces where the company brings together technology experts and specialists in areas such as design thinking and user experience to conceptualize and design digital solutions, using rapid prototyping techniques. Cognizant also has client-facing Digital Studios, where it partners with start-ups, universities, and clients to drive digital-enabled transformation, and "Digital Makerspaces," where it explores "the art of the possible" with new digital technologies to drive improvements in customer experiences.

Key Cognizant clients in the CX improvement space include CVS, Jack in the Box, and Sidewalk Labs.

Cognizant is a global tier 1 partner of leading CX technology vendors including Adobe, Salesforce, Oracle, and SAP. Cognizant is also a Silver partner of Sitecore and has partnership with a number of smaller players and with newer emerging platforms such as AR/VR platforms Unity and Vuforia.

Cognizant says that its mission in the CX improvement space is: "To help our clients win by imagining and enabling exceptional experiences. Winning on experience requires an understanding of the drivers of consumer preference and the ability to meet them across channels, time, and contexts. This is what we call 'marrying intimacy with industrialization.' Leveraging the largest digital support services of their kind, we bring insight and foresight, strategy, research, and design together to deliver tomorrow's experiences today."

Strengths

On average, Cognizant customers commended the firm for client understanding and insight, differentiation, and content creation. Comments from Cognizant reference clients included:

- "They are the closest vendor to us. We have multiple agencies and vendors, but Cognizant understands our business the most."
- "I would say the differentiation is Cognizant itself and not just its people."
- "They really understood where the customer might get confused, so they layered into the app multiple assets like pop-ups to help the customers – they're good at how to guide and educate new users."

Challenges

Cognizant has the opportunity to improve its perception among clients in end-customer insight and in customer journey innovation.

Consider Cognizant When

Cognizant is a good choice for organizations looking for a vendor with a strong understanding of how both new and legacy technologies can drive better CX. As one Cognizant client said, "They are strongest around understanding both our technology challenges and our overall strategy. They think outside the box, and their ability to create and develop a mobile app that made a difference to our business."

Deloitte

According to IDC analysis and buyer perception, Deloitte is positioned in the Leaders category in the worldwide 2020 IDC MarketScape for customer experience improvement services.

Key capabilities defined by IDC in the CX improvement space include:

- **Service, product, and facility design:** Within its global Customer and Marketing portfolio, Deloitte has offerings for service, product, and facility design. Drawing from across the firm's capabilities, it supports all solutions, in the form of digital and physical products, physical spaces, immersive experiences, and services.
- **Personalization:** Within its global Customer and Marketing portfolio's digital experience offering, Deloitte offers personalization services that help clients provide a more cohesive and consistent experience to customers across all channels, with the goal to drive more frequent, valuable transactions. These services are enabled by proprietary assets and tools such as Hux, which combined together with industry and consumer insights enable Deloitte to create end-to-end experiences that are personalized, contextualized, and meaningful, at scale.
- **Data/analytics:** Within its global Strategy, Analytics and M&A offering, Deloitte offers data and analytics services that enhance and complement its customer experience offering. These capabilities leverage the power of analytics, robotics, and AI to uncover hidden relationships from vast troves of data, create and manage large-scale organizational intelligence, and generate customer insights that catalyze growth and efficiencies.
- **End-customer engagement:** Within its global Customer and Marketing portfolio, Deloitte offers experience management services that bring together leadership and delivery teams that understand the strategic priorities of their clients and work with them to translate their key initiatives into "Imagine," "Deliver," and "Run" programs. These programs leverage platforms such as Hux that combine advertising, marketing technology, and analytics services to manage experiences on behalf of clients.

Deloitte has customer experience capabilities in all regions and operates in more than 150 countries, allowing it to deliver services to clients in local languages.

Deloitte has a global innovation network of 62 digital studios in 29 countries to help clients develop and execute on their digital ambitions. The firm also has 80+ innovation labs as part of the global Deloitte ecosystem and has more than 58 Deloitte Greenhouse facilities globally. These are locations that allow clients to ideate, innovate, and tackle their biggest challenges through interactive workshops in specially designed environments. Other R&D labs include Blockchain Labs, the Deloitte Catalyst network connecting clients to innovative start-ups, an MIT Media Lab partnership, a Center for Consumer Insights, and the Deloitte Neuroscience Institute.

Deloitte serves six industries: consumer, energy, resources and industrials, financial services, government and public services, life sciences and healthcare and technology, and media and telecommunications.

Key Deloitte clients for CX improvement services include American Express, Casey's General Store, Caterpillar, Chipotle, CYBG, Enterprise Holdings, KC Chiefs, Network Rail, Qantas, and Verizon.

Deloitte has a wide range of global tier 1 relationships with key CX technology players, including Adobe, Salesforce, SAP, and Google. Deloitte also has global tier 1 relationships with midsize CX technology platforms such as Medallia and with newer emerging platforms such as Sprinklr.

Deloitte uses an "Imagine, Deliver, and Run" framework in client engagements. The Imagine phase is about setting ambitions and charting a road map to success for the client. The Deliver phase is about building an empathetic understanding of user needs and behaviors; this includes designing, testing, and learning by launching minimum viable offerings (MVOs). The "Run" phase evolves the MVO and scales the solution.

Deloitte says that its mission in the CX improvement space is: "To elevate the humanity present in every organization by crafting new experiences that connect us. We believe great experiences build connections, that strong connections create loyalty and loyalty drives business results. We look beyond the customer to the human, shaping offerings around real lives to create sustainable business futures. We call this 'Elevating the Human Experience.'"

Strengths

On average, Deloitte customers commended the firm for client empathy, business value delivery, and people quality. Comments from Deloitte reference clients included:

- "They are 100% a business partner – I never had to look at the contract even once."
- "They are clear and action oriented in what they implement in times of crisis, and this is something that is really valuable to us."
- "Their team is very proactive and highly skilled. What I like most is that they think in terms of business needs and not just the advertising and marketing dimension."

Challenges

Deloitte has the opportunity to improve its perception among clients in content innovation and creativity and in customer journey innovation.

Consider Deloitte When

Deloitte is a good choice for organizations needing a proactive partner with broad and deep business and technology skills and an emphasis on helping client create a more customer-centric work culture. As one of Deloitte's clients said, "One of the things I like most about Deloitte is that they come up with good ideas and they approach us in a very proactive way – they aren't waiting for the brief from us."

Dentsu (Represented by Dentsu Aegis Network)

According to IDC analysis and buyer perception, Dentsu Aegis Network is positioned in the Major Players category in the worldwide 2020 IDC MarketScape for customer experience improvement services.

The Dentsu Group is one of the four main "holding companies" in the advertising, marketing, and communications industry. The group of companies consists of around 126 advertising, marketing, and communication companies in Japan and approximately 900 companies outside of Japan. Globally, the Dentsu Group currently has more than 66,000 staff serving more than 11,000 clients in more than 145 countries and regions.

In Japan, the group uses the Dentsu Japan Network brand. Outside Japan, the group uses the Dentsu Aegis Network brand, which is headquartered in London, England. This IDC MarketScape used Dentsu Aegis Network as the basis of its assessment.

Dentsu Aegis Network has 10 main networks agencies: Carat, Dentsu, Dentsu X, dentsumcgarrybowen, iProspect, Isobar, Merkle, MKTG, Posterscope, and Vizeum. Dentsu Aegis Network has 48,000 employees.

For the purposes of this IDC MarketScape vendor assessment, three Dentsu Aegis Network agencies were assessed:

- Isobar, a digital agency focused on experience-led business and brand transformation, with 6,500 employees in 45 geographies
- iProspect, a digital performance improvement agency
- Merkle, a data-driven, technology-enabled customer relationship management (CRM) and performance marketing agency

Key Dentsu Aegis Network capabilities in the CX improvement space include:

- **Service, product, and facility design:** Dentsu has design capabilities in several of its agencies, including Isobar and iProspect. These capabilities include Netherlands-based Studio Kraftwerk, part of Isobar, which delivers strategy, concept, and design for digital products and services.
- **Personalization:** Dentsu provides personalization service through a number of its agencies. These include Merkle, whose M1 identity and data platform provides consumer data across markets worldwide.
- **Data/analytics:** Dentsu supplies data/analytics focused professional and managed services chiefly through its Merkle agency, which employs 2,500 data scientists and maintains more than 55,000 models.
- **End-customer engagement:** Dentsu helps clients improve their customer engagement through performance-improvement services provided by agencies such as Isobar and iProspect and via data and technology-empowered CRM improvement services provided by Merkle.

Dentsu's customer-facing innovation network includes Isobar's network of NowLab accelerators operating in North America, South America, Europe, and Asia. Isobar describes NowLab as its "space to make, hack, experiment, prototype, and workshop innovative business solutions."

With diverse businesses globally, Dentsu Aegis Network has clients in most market sectors and industry groups. Categories with deepest focus include agriculture, automotive, CPG, energy, financial services, food and beverage, health, media and entertainment, pharmaceutical, retail, technology, travel, and tourism.

Key Dentsu Aegis Network clients include AB InBev, American Express, Beiersdorf, Burberry, Coca-Cola, Dell, GM, Heineken, Honda, IKEA, Land Rover Jaguar, Kellogg's, Mastercard, Microsoft, Panasonic, Phillips, P&G, Shiseido, Total, and Toyota. The company serves clients in 143 countries across the Americas; Europe, the Middle East, and Africa (EMEA); and Asia/Pacific (APAC).

Dentsu Aegis Network is a tier 1 partner of leading CX technology vendors including Adobe, Salesforce, Google, and Oracle. The group also has global tier 1 relationships with smaller specialist CX technology platforms such as Sitecore and with newer emerging platforms such as Contentsquare.

Proprietary Dentsu assets include:

- Merkury, which enables brands to own, build, and control a cookie-less private identity graph using an organization's first-party CRM data and valuable interactions such as log-ins, outbound email campaigns, and media reach to create and grow a universe of person-based IDs for cross-channel targeting, personalization, measurement, and more
- DataSource, a proprietary data set that fuels omni-channel, people-based marketing across the entire consumer journey
- Rapid Audience Layer, a cloud-based data management solution that allows analysis, insights, and visualization of client data
- Content Symphony, a global content solution that delivers next-generation content at scale workflows driving global consistency and localized variation
- Dentsu Tracking, an offering to help clients transform their supply chain, with end-to-end visibility and efficiency in supply chain regulation and digitization
- FastTrack Commerce, a solution to launch a fully integrated commerce site on Adobe Commerce or Salesforce Commerce in six weeks or less
- Curbside Pickup and Shopping Appointment, a SaaS solution add-on that integrated with any commerce or order management platform and can be stood up, including a mobile SDK, in under four weeks

Dentsu Aegis Network described its mission as: "Today, brands are built from the experience up, and Dentsu's role as a strategic partner is to help brands transform their behavior in order to align with the interests, needs, passions, and habits of their target audiences. Dentsu helps global brands win, keep, and grow their best customers. We turn brand potential into business performance by making the total customer experience smarter. We help brands treat their customers as unique individuals, creating contextually relevant and more intelligent and connected experiences, content, and media."

Strengths

On average, Dentsu customers commended the firm for business value delivery, differentiation, and content innovation and creativity. Comments from Dentsu clients included:

- "Working with Dentsu agencies, we've seen real-world results in revenue, conversion rates, and other KPIs."
- "Dentsu's differentiator is that they have very diverse capabilities, but they still have that boutique feeling that allows them to be agile and to retain those specialist skills."
- "They understand not just the customer, but us too – that is what makes them innovative."

Challenges

Dentsu has the opportunity to improve its perception among clients in organizational transformation and drawing more on its end-customer insights.

Consider Dentsu Aegis Network When

Dentsu's network of agencies is a good fit for organizations needing a blend of creative and technology services, particularly in business-to-consumer industries. As one Dentsu client said, "They understand not just the customer, but us too. That's what makes them innovative; being faced with those challenges and coming up with solutions that are tailored to our organization."

EY

According to IDC analysis and buyer perception, EY is positioned in the Leaders category in the worldwide 2020 IDC MarketScape for customer experience improvement services.

EY is a multidisciplinary professional firm present in over 150 countries globally. EY does not have a separate "digital" brand or organization but rather embeds digital transformation capabilities across its four global service lines:

- **Advisory:** Providing consulting services around strategy, customer experience, operations, technology including alliance relationships and emerging technology, analytics, risk and cyber, and people advisory services
- **Assurance:** Providing services to clients around Digital Trust (e.g., around audit, fraud investigation, risk assurance, and cybersecurity)
- **Tax:** Providing services relating to the tax implications of a digital transformation (e.g., changes to tax legislation resulting from the digital economy)
- **Transaction Advisory Services:** Providing services around mergers and acquisitions and capital allocation related to digital transformation

EY's key capabilities in the CX improvement space include:

- **Service design:** EY has a series of service design teams in multiple regions across the world, with over 500 dedicated professionals across offices in London; Dubai, UAE; Stockholm, Sweden; Oslo, Norway; Dublin, Ireland; Johannesburg, South Africa; Lisbon, Portugal; Paris; Mexico City; New York; Philadelphia; Portland, Oregon; Hong Kong and Greater China; Japan; Malaysia; and Singapore.
- **Product and facility design:** EY's capabilities and offerings for designing products span the life cycle of a product from strategy, design, organization, management, and delivery. For designing physical spaces, it offers strategy, branding, interior design, technology integration, and implementation services. Its product and physical space designer capabilities sit within its overall digital CX practice and span all geographies and sectors, with around 600 professionals worldwide.
- **Personalization:** EY offers personalization services through its Customer, Digital Product and Strategy, Digital Marketing, and Data and Analytics practices. Services offered include Omni-Channel Personalization, Journey Orchestration and Analytics, Technology Enablement, and Next Best Action Program, which used technology from Adobe and Pegasystems. Proprietary assets include Nexus for Banking and the Smart Experience Brain, which help enable clients better understand customers and provide unique experiences.
- **Data/analytics:** EY's data/analytics practice is centered on three main areas: information management, business intelligence and reporting (IA and RPA included), and data science and AI. Specific offerings include enterprise data and analytics strategy, AI/machine learning (ML) and other emerging tech, data fabric/IoT, advanced analytics, data governance and master data management, enterprise performance management, BI, and domain analytics. EY also offers analytics as a service, based on Synapse, its analytics cloud platform. The firm has around 22,000 professionals in the data/analytics space.
- **End-customer engagement:** EY offers advisory and implementation services to help clients improve their customer care and service operations. EY services include Digital/Channel Strategy, Process Automation, Self-Service and Assisted-Service Enablement, and Strategic Workforce Planning. EY has four core offerings in the customer service improvement space:

Customer Service Delivery Model, Automation and Call Demand Management, People and Knowledge, and Customer Service Technology and Analytics. Globally, EY has about 500 professionals help clients drive improvement in customer service and customer care.

EY has a global network of 44 "wavespace" branded innovation spaces where the firm works with clients to innovate and cocreate new offerings and CX-related assets. Each wavespace has a distinct environment oriented around design, technology demonstration, data and incubation labs, and interactive workshop facilities. The network is composed of 25 "flagship" wavespaces and 19 "satellite" centers globally, and the firm also builds "pop-up" wavespace facilities for clients. In early 2020, the firm developed a suite of virtualized wavespace services to allow clients to experience wavespace-based innovation remotely.

Industries served by EY include financial services, healthcare, travel and hospitality, technology, media and entertainment, consumer products/retail, chemicals, and public sector services.

Key EY clients for CX improvement services include Belfius, YuMe, Cigna, Corteva, Discovery Bank, Dow Chemical, Eastspring Investment, the Estonian Government, Fannie Mae, GSK, Lloyds Banking Group General Insurance, Miami Heat, Royal Caribbean, Sky Italia, United Healthcare (UHG), UPS, Velon, Westpac, and Zung Fu.

EY has top-tier global partnerships with major key CX technology vendors including Adobe, IBM, Microsoft, Pegasystems, SAP, and ServiceNow. In total, EY has alliances and partnerships with over 30 digitally focused technology companies and institutions.

EY says that its mission in the CX improvement space is: "To help organizations reimagine growth and seek to build a better working world by solving problems that impact both companies and consumers. We do this by putting humans first and assembling multidisciplinary teams that draw on design, technology, and innovation skills to drive continuous and sustainable change."

Strengths

On average, EY customers commended the firm for end-customer insight, client empathy, and content innovation and creativity. Comments from EY clients included:

- "EY have gone 'above and beyond' to understand our customers' needs and to synthesize their requirements."
- "Not only are they aligned with us, but they are invested in the success of our programs. It's great to see someone really take that care and consideration as a partner."
- "They bring a lot of innovation and a lot of great ideas, not all of which we can use in the near term, but they are definitely very innovative."

Challenges

EY has the opportunity to improve its perception among clients in customer journey innovation and in challenging its clients to accept new approaches.

Consider EY When

EY is a good fit for organizations looking for a wide range of capabilities and a strong understanding of both business and new technologies. As one EY client said, "What really knocks it out of the park is their ability to grasp so fast and efficiently the complexities of what we are doing. I feel that I could ask them for help with any of my initiatives."

Globant

According to IDC analysis and buyer perception, Globant is positioned in the Leaders category in the worldwide 2020 IDC MarketScape for customer experience improvement services.

Globant is a global digital services company founded in Argentina in 2003, with offices in the Americas, Europe, and Asia/Pacific. It went public in 2014 and is listed on the New York Stock Exchange. In early 2020, the firm had more than 12,500 employees (known as "Globers") spread across 52 offices in 34 cities in 16 countries.

Key industries served by Globant include media and entertainment, banking and financial services, insurance, technology and telecommunications, consumer goods, retail, manufacturing, travel and hospitality, professional services, and healthcare.

The bulk of Globant's clients are located in North America, followed by Europe, Latin America, and others. The company's development centers are located in Latin America, North America, Asia, and Europe.

Globant has traditionally organized itself in Studios, which are deep pockets of expertise on the latest technologies and trends. Studios have vertical industry knowledge and aim to combine this with a disruptive approach that clients are looking for. Each Studio cross-pollinates insights from different industries to create disruptive ideas as the company believes that industries benefit from incorporating strategies and practices from one another. The company stays relevant by creating new practices and Studios as trends emerge.

Globant uses a lean method for organizing its teams, known as the "Agile Pod" model. Pods are interdisciplinary teams that include engineering, design, innovation, strategy, consulting, and management capabilities. The "podular" and autonomous structure of Globant is designed to encourage innovation, entrepreneurship, and agility and to drive efficiency to help clients during their digital and cognitive evolution.

Globant's key capabilities in the CX improvement space include:

- **Service design:** Globant has a global dedicated team of service designers who operate as a practice within their Design Studio.
- **Product and facility design:** Globant has a team of dedicated engineers and designers who have worked on multiple projects. The company has an Internet of Things Studio that works with the industrial design practice of its Design Studio to create physical products and digital integration. The Design Studio has the experience design practice, which centers itself on designing for physical spaces and environments.
- **Personalization:** Globant has a dedicated team of designers, marketing specialists, data scientists, and AI engineers who provide personalization services to our clients to improve customer service experiences.
- **Data/analytics:** As part of its Digital Marketing Studio, Globant has a dedicated analytics practice that specializes in a number of tools, most notably Google Analytics and Adobe Analytics.
- **End-customer engagement:** Globant provides design and implementation services to help clients improve the experience they provide to their customers.

The company has Globant Labs, which are groups of both creative and tech-centered Globers working on new technology projects. It also offers clients Innovation Spaces in many of its locations, which focus on different technologies. Each Innovation Space has a main technology or vertical of focus, and they are all used both separately and in collaboration to meet different needs. Elements include research labs for examining consumer behavior; "maker spaces" to explore technologies such as sensors and 3D printing and to create physical intelligent products; "music rooms" to get Globers to express their creativity; codesign rooms to facilitate brainstorming sessions, team sessions, and product strategy sessions; and workshop arenas to facilitate larger activities. Globant also has a "Playground" facility, which helps catalyze clients' digital planning by exposing them to the latest technologies and trends.

Globant's key clients in the CX improvement space include LATAM Airlines, the Metropolitan Police Service, OpenBank, Prisma Medios de Pago, and Rockwell Automation.

Globant is a Platinum Consulting Partner of Salesforce, through its Avanxo unit. Globant is a Bronze partner of Adobe, and a Premier Google Cloud partner with infrastructure and data analytics specializations. The company is a Microsoft Gold Cloud Platform (Azure) competency partner, a Sitecore Silver partner, and an IBM Silver partner.

Globant says that its mission in the CX improvement space is: "To humanize customer experience. That starts with bringing organizations to the realization that customers experience is the key to their business and providing them with the right knowledge, dynamics, and technology to enhance it. The ultimate goal is to help them build a relationship with long-lasting customer and employee satisfaction that reflects in revenue generation, innovation, and business expansion."

Strengths

On average, Globant customers commended the firm for customer journey innovation, client understanding and insight, and business value delivery. Comments from Globant clients included:

- "They are very innovative in the way they think about the customer journey. They really challenge the status quo, and they back this up with research."
- "They really understand how things work in our organization from an operational and political perspective, I feel very comfortable about including them in meetings with my senior leadership."
- "The good thing about talking with them is that there is no limit to their ideas. There is always a way to work it out – there's never 'no' as an answer with Globant."

Challenges

Globant has the opportunity to improve its perception among clients in content innovation and creativity and in challenging its clients.

Consider Globant When

Globant is a good fit for organizations looking for an agile and creative partner that is proactive and takes a broad view of the client's needs. As one Globant client said, "Their strength is the clear connection from strategy to design to delivery. Globant have a broad perspective, with the knowledge and expertise to connect the dots. They pick up the mandate and make it actionable and specific."

IBM

According to IDC analysis and buyer perception, IBM is positioned in the Leaders category in the worldwide 2020 IDC MarketScape for customer experience improvement services.

IBM goes to market across four main regions: Americas, EMEA, APAC, and Japan. Overall, IBM operates in 100+ countries.

IBM serves 13 industries aligned within 5 key sectors: communications (telco, media and entertainment, and energy and utilities), distribution (consumer/retail and travel and transportation), financial services (banking/financial markets and insurance), industrial (electronics, industrial products, chemicals and petroleum, and auto, aerospace, and defense), and the public sector (government and healthcare/life sciences).

IBM's key capabilities in the CX Improvement space include:

- **Service design:** IBM iX has service design capabilities spread across its organization, notably within its Customer Engagement and Design practice, which has 3,000+ personnel globally. Practitioners work with clients to research areas of opportunity in their enterprise experience journeys and design new services and products using design thinking methods. This work is often done in multiday workshops or in IBM Garages that combine Design Thinking, Agile, and DevOps to rapidly design and scale MVPs as part of a broader digital transformation engagement.
- **Product and facility design:** IBM iX has a global offering called Placemaking that focuses on designing consumer and employee experiences in the physical world such as stadiums, airports, banks, malls, offices, campuses, districts, buildings, entertainment parks, transit hubs, museums, and corporate experience centers. The company uses its IBM Garage model for product design engagements, applying industry best practices and using methodologies such as IBM Enterprise Design Thinking, Agile, and DevOps and leveraging proprietary assets, accelerators, and cognitive tools.
- **Personalization:** IBM's personalization process consists of three interactive steps: "Listen" (collect and store), which involves capturing data directly from customers and third-party sources with their permission; "Understand" (analyze and interpret), which involves analyzing data to more fully understand customer needs and intent; and "Augment" (design and experiment), a combination of strategic design and technology services to design the experience to fit the needs of individual customers.
- **Data/analytics:** IBM has a dedicated organization focused on data and AI services called Cognitive Business Decision Support (CBDS). Its value proposition is centered on four key entry points: data strategy and monetization, advanced analytics/machine learning, enterprise-ready AI, and data platform services. IBM offers managed services in the data/analytics space, via IBM Services for Data Platforms offering. Rather than building generic cross-industry solutions, IBM has focused on mission-critical workloads in the customer experience, operations, finance, HR, procurement, and supply chain solution domains as its launchpad for enterprise-driven innovation. Globally, IBM has more than 22,000 employees dedicated to data/analytics services.
- **End-customer engagement:** IBM offers both customer care business process outsourcing and consulting and implementation services around CX improvement. IBM has a strong focus on the design and management of intelligent workflows that use AI to empower human agents and on creating proactive contact strategies using predictive analytics. The company also focuses on taking integrating individual processes – such as campaign management, sales and commerce, and voice of the customer programs – across enterprise business functions, from front office to back office.

IBM has a network of 57 IBM iX studios around the world. These are facilities that are dedicated to collaboration, ideation, and development and are staffed with designers, researchers, and developers working closely with the Digital Strategy team to solve client's strategic issues.

Key IBM clients in the CX space include AmerisourceBergen, Frito-Lay, Volkswagen, Vodafone, Atlanta Falcons, Hertz, Lufthansa, Heineken, Doka Group, Henkel, and USAA.

IBM has a wide range of global tier 1 relationships with key CX technology vendors including Adobe, Salesforce, and SAP. It also has global tier 1 relationships with smaller specialist CX technology platforms such as Sitecore and with newer emerging platforms such as Acquia and Optimizely.

IBM has several key accelerators in the CX improvement space. IBM's official design system, Carbon, is used by designers and developers within IBM, as well as across the industry, to improve UI and UX consistency and quality and to make design and development more efficient and productive. The design system in conjunction with the IBM iX Experience Orchestrator gives developers a library of smart components that connect to multiple back-end technologies.

IBM says that its mission in the CX improvement space is: "Faced with digital disruption, clients often begin the transformation journey with CX. IBM iX partners with clients to design businesses. Our holistic view – from strategy and ideation through design, prototype, implementation, change management, and solution management – delivers greater outcomes and enhanced customer engagement, satisfaction, and loyalty."

Strengths

On average, IBM customers commended the firm for client understanding and insight, client empathy, and customer journey innovation. Comments from IBM clients included:

- "IBM have demonstrated that they have a long-term interest in a partnering relationship with us, and they understand us. They bring ideas to the table and they appreciate the challenges that we face."
- "Even though the project is over, we still meet them professionally and socially, and they are always presenting new ideas – even if they aren't IBM technologies. We trust them."
- "They have done a really good job of getting to the depth of our customer needs and coming up with solutions, they really understand the customer we're going after."

Challenges

IBM has the opportunity to improve its perception among clients in differentiating itself further from its peers and in organizational transformation.

Consider IBM When

IBM is a good fit for organizations looking for a partner to drive both technology and business change – particularly where this involves enterprise-grade product or service design and software development. As one IBM client said, "They have really helped us with strategy, product development, and running full DevOps. The best part of IBM is their positive attitude: how they throw away the badge, they stop operating as consultants, and they become part of my team."

Interpublic

According to IDC analysis and buyer perception, Interpublic is positioned in the Major Players category in the worldwide 2020 IDC MarketScape for customer experience improvement services.

Interpublic is one of the four main "holding companies" in the advertising, marketing, and communications industry. The group is based in New York and has 54,000 employees working in more than 90 operating units. Interpublic's traditional core business is composed of three large global advertising and marketing networks: McCann Worldgroup, Foote, Cone & Belding (FCB), and MullenLowe Group. The group also has a collection of media, data, and technology companies, which include Acxiom, the group's specialist marketing data agency. A third collection of Interpublic of companies includes global digital agencies such as R/GA and Huge.

For the purposes of this IDC MarketScape vendor assessment, three Interpublic agencies were assessed:

- R/GA, a digital agency that provides what it calls "transformation at speed," with a Ventures arm that invests in CX-focused start-ups
- Huge, a sister agency of R/GA, which provides consulting and experience design services
- Acxiom, a data and technology-focused agency

Key Interpublic capabilities in the CX improvement space include:

- **Service, product, and facility design:** Interpublic has product and service design capabilities spread across the group, most notably within R/GA and Huge. R/GA has a Ventures unit whose remit includes developing new products and services with clients and start-ups.
- **Personalization:** Interpublic provides a range of personalization services, most notably through its Acxiom agency, which offers platforms and assets such as Personix and Infobase.
- **Data/analytics:** Interpublic's Acxiom agency offers clients both professional and managed services around data and analytics. The group's digital agencies, including R/G and Huge, also offer clients data and analytics-focused services as part of customer experience engagements.
- **End-customer engagement:** Interpublic agencies offer a range of services to help clients improve their customer care and better engage with customers, including advertising improvement and experiential marketing services.

Interpublic agencies have client-facing facilities in multiple territories, including R/GA's network of venture "studios" built around strategic themes such as commerce, marketing technology, and the Internet of Things.

Industries served by Interpublic include healthcare, technology and telecommunications, automotive and transport, food and beverage, consumer goods, financial services, and retail.

Key Interpublic clients include Banana Republic, Canada Goose, DuPont, Google, Home Depot, Lego, LG, McDonald's, Mercedes-Benz, Nike, Pfizer, Procter & Gamble, Quaker, and Samsung.

Interpublic is a global tier 1 partner of Adobe and is a Silver-level partner of Salesforce. The group also has global tier 1 relationships with smaller specialist CX technology platforms such as Contentful.

Interpublic describes itself as "the holding company that is transforming marketing by connecting with individuals in a more meaningful way by delivering marketing at the speed and with the scale needed

to accelerate business performance." It adds that "we believe that each and every consumer is unique, with a finely tuned set of passions, behaviors, and motivations. We turn these disparate data points into human understanding and create more relevant and effective marketing. We call this approach human-centered marketing."

Strengths

On average, Interpublic clients surveyed by IDC commended the services firm for customer journey innovation, content innovation and creativity, and differentiation.

Challenges

Interpublic has the opportunity to improve its perception among clients in understanding clients' culture and needs and in organizational transformation.

Consider Interpublic When

Interpublic is a good fit for organizations looking for a combination of traditional creative and communication services, along with newer experience design and data-enabled marketing services.

Publicis (Represented by Publicis Sapient)

According to IDC analysis and buyer perception, Publicis Sapient, representing its parent company Publicis Groupe, is positioned in the Leaders category in the worldwide 2020 IDC MarketScape for customer experience improvement services.

Publicis Sapient has more than 20,000 employees distributed across 53 offices globally. While it has an overall strong presence across North America, Europe, and APAC, it is increasingly servicing clients and expanding in Middle East.

Publicis Sapient goes to market through a series of industry-focused groups that are pegged within countries. Its industries are consumer products, energy and commodities, financial services, health, public sector, retail, telecommunications, media and technology, transportation and mobility, and travel and hospitality.

Global Capability Groups are responsible for talent development and creating methodologies that enable them to seamlessly work as connected, multidisciplinary teams. Intellectual property and industry benchmark data is stored in the company's Knowledge Management function to facilitate synergies across all levels and time zones. Practices are small teams assembled to incubate new high-growth, cross-industry propositions in collaboration with industry teams and to build the skills/crafts needed to deliver and maintain strategic alliances. Current practices include AI and Data, Consumer Data Platforms, Cloud Strategy, Customer Experience Platforms, Marketing Transformation Platforms, Salesforce, and Engineering Transformation.

Key capabilities in the CX improvement space include:

- **Service design:** Publicis Sapient does not have a large dedicated service design practice – instead service design is a core methodology within Publicis Sapient's HOW, the company's global ways of working. Its service design approach combines business strategy and consumer insights with an emphasis on accelerating paths to action and implementation while simultaneously improving consumer experience and business value. The practice is centered in larger and growing markets such as London, New York, and Sydney, although Publicis Sapient estimates that service design method and tools are now being used across 18,000 people globally.

- **Product and facility design:** As with service design, Publicis Sapient approaches product and physical facility design as a natural outcome of its emphasis on scaled execution instead of just ideation. So although it does not have a discrete product/physical facility practice, it draws on a range of competencies including consumer research, product design, data science, ethnographic research, content design, creative technology, and architectural design led by a team of experts.
- **Personalization:** Publicis Sapient has a dedicated global personalization practice that works with and sits with sister company Publicis Epsilon. The practice uses a five-stage maturity client model going from database marketing (stage 1) to journey-centric personalization (stage 5), and organizationally, it draws on capabilities across experience, data science, technology, strategy, and management consulting.
- **Data/analytics:** Publicis Sapient has a global Data and Analytics practice organized across industries and propositions. Capabilities include data engineering, statistics and AI/machine learning, and intelligent automation. The practice has three key focus areas: optimization through experimentation, enterprise-scale machine learning, and customer data platforms (CDPs). The global data practice has six key disciplines: data engagement, quantitative research, data strategy, data science and machine learning, data engineering, and data analytics.
- **End-customer engagement:** Publicis provides services to improve its clients' ongoing engagement with end customers through its experience, consulting, and Salesforce practices. The company does not provide customer care outsourcing services but rather partners with outsourcing players where appropriate.

Publicis Sapient has a global network of client-facing innovation facilities, which include incubator/partner spaces (dedicated incubators and spaces where start-ups and clients' new ventures can collaborate), mobile centers of excellence, emerging experience labs, and digital design labs.

Key CX-related clients of Publicis Sapient include Carrefour, Bang & Olufsen, Nissan, Finnair, Carnival Corp., Walmart, Anglo-Gulf Trade Bank, Pilot Flying J, British Gas, and Loblaw.

Publicis Sapient has a wide range of global tier 1 relationships with key CX technology players, including Adobe, Salesforce, SAP, IBM, and Oracle. It also has global tier 1 relationships with smaller specialist CX technology platforms such as Sitecore and with newer emerging platforms such as Bloomreach and Acquia. In addition, it maintains deep competencies with the three cloud majors.

Publicis Sapient has a broad range of proprietary assets including Identity Applied Platform, a proprietary platform that leverages data from Publicis Epsilon to help clients connect first-, second-, and third-party data to support rich customer and critical for growth prospect understanding. In addition, through its parent company Publicis' Power of One, it leverages Marcel, a proprietary AI-powered personal assistant for practitioners that combines research, intelligence, and proprietary knowledge with the ability to find expertise and build connections across the firm and to connect people to new role opportunities.

Publicis Sapient says that its mission in the CX space is to create experiences that are computationally aware through its LEAD framework. LEAD means a technology-based, customer-facing experience that has been engineered and designed to be Light (faster than expected), Ethical (aligned to customer and employee values), Accessible (surprisingly easy to use), and Dataful (leverages and assimilates customer data).

Strengths

On average, Publicis Sapiient customers commended the firm for people quality, business value delivery, and client empathy. Comments from Publicis Sapiient clients included:

- "The reason we picked them is the quality of their people. We want the best user experience, and we want the best cutting-edge minds working for us."
- "The value we got was immediately recognizable and measurable. We have a long-term relationship with Sapiient, and there's a reason for that."
- "They have a strong sense of responsibility toward me as a client. Even when an issue isn't their responsibility, they help us solve it the fastest and best way – they are very supportive."

Challenges

Publicis Sapiient has the opportunity to improve its perception among clients in challenging its clients and in further differentiating itself from its peers.

Consider Publicis Sapiient When

Publicis Sapiient is a good fit for organizations looking for a partner combining the creativity of a holding company agency with the design and enterprise-grade technology capabilities of an IT and business consultancy. As one Publicis Sapiient client said, "They are good at technology as well as creativity. They push us to look at innovation not just as a source of increased speed but as a way to service customers better because their needs have changed."

PwC

According to IDC analysis and buyer perception, PwC is positioned in the Leaders category in the worldwide 2020 IDC MarketScape for customer experience improvement services.

Overall, the global network has more than 276,000 people in 158 countries. PwC services clients across the Americas, EMEA, and Asia/Pacific. PwC has 22 industry sectors, including financial services, industrial manufacturing, and transport and logistics.

PwC's key capabilities in the CX improvement space include:

- **Service design:** PwC Digital Experience Center (DEC) is a global PwC practice with approximately 3,000 experts in product and service design. DEC envisions and creates human-centered experiences that aim to impact the bottom line, open new revenue streams, and help companies be more essential through activities including design research, ethnography blueprints and visualization, and digital and physical product creation (creative, brand, legal, pricing, etc.).
- **Product and facility design:** PwC employs a proprietary digital products process to bring essential ideas to life in six to eight weeks. Weeks one to two include research, personas, and journeys, creating digital architecture blueprints. Weeks three to four include market and competitive assessment, audience definition, ethnographic research, big ideas generation and technical feature assessments, and gap analysis. Weeks five to six include product vision and value proposition definition, revenue/KPI metrics creation, experience concept and UX/flows creation, and formalization of technical requirements, architecture, and UI patterns. Weeks seven to eight wrap up with iteration, refinement, and finalization of the functional proof of concept. The result is to bring a product from idea to execution ready in eight weeks or less.

- **Personalization:** PwC has a global personalization practice and also offers Customer Link, a managed service around personalization. Customer Link is an integrated front-office product connecting data analytics and marketing. It delivers customer insights to give clients visibility on trends at high speed. Key features include data management, orchestrations, actions, and customer insights.
- **Data/analytics:** PwC manages and maintains an integrated consumer data model for the United States and for selected global markets. This data model integrates public, private, and proprietary data sources to provide a highly granular view of households, individuals, and geographies. This synthesized model allows PwC to analyze thousands of demographic, psychographic, and behavioral variables at the segment, geographic (e.g., ZIP Code), household, and even individual level. PwC's Workbench toolset, which is integrated with the Insights Platform, provides a collaborative space for consulting teams to work with clients to build and share data-driven insights and visualizations.
- **End-customer engagement:** PwC provides end-customer capabilities to clients across the life cycle of customer experience, including enhancements to customer operations offerings and customer enablement. These offerings bridge the traditional customer engagement channel (call center, self-service, etc.) with the resolution of those customer issues or concerns (billing, claims, service calls, etc.). PwC's service capability includes enhanced agent desktop solution, increased efforts in field service, and growing partnership with CX tech vendors.

PwC uses a global network of nearly 40 Experience Centers and accompanying Emerging Tech Labs, Innovation Centers, and Impact Centers. These are dedicated physical locations at the firm's facilities, but the experts who work in them are also able to work and deliver virtually.

PwC's key CX-related clients include Barclays, Celanese, Fifth Third Bank, Health Care Service Corporation (HCSC), Heineken, Marriott, OUMI, and Snapsheet.

PwC is a global tier 1 partner of leading CX technology vendors including Adobe, Salesforce, and Oracle. Other CX tech vendors include Medallia, Sitecore, ServiceNow, AWS, Pendo, Azure, and WalkMe.

PwC member firms use the global proprietary "BXT" (business, experience, technology) framework. BXT aims to drive business transformation by bringing Business strategy, "eXperience" expertise, and Technology perspectives together to change how people work, think, and engage. Doing so helps build enterprise agility, drive better business outcomes, and reduce risk of failure from sequential handoffs or missed perspectives. The firm's BXT way of working brings these three lenses together to achieve a single purpose and solution. The aim is to address the right problems at the right time and give clients the tools and techniques they need to follow through on their visions.

PwC says that its mission in the CX improvement space is: "At PwC, we want to make our clients essential. Building experiences that are not just wanted but needed. Human-centered experiences that create meaningful connections, first time, every time. Establishing long-term relationships with both customers and employees. Enabling our clients to evolve and grow, today and tomorrow."

Strengths

On average, PwC customers commended the firm for people quality, end-customer insight, and client understanding. Comments from PwC clients included:

- "The difference with PwC was the strategic level of thought, the extensive end-to-end understanding, and the exceptional talent they brought to the table."
- "Customer insight was a really big strength for PwC. They came in and told us we had to know the human being at the other end, that we had to do the research, and we had to develop a vision. That's the discipline they brought us."
- "Once PwC got in here, I really felt I had a partner who understood who we were and who knew how to get things done."

Challenges

PwC has the opportunity to improve its perception among clients in differentiating itself more strongly differentiated from its immediate peers and in content innovation and creativity.

Consider PwC When

PwC is a good fit for organizations looking for a partner combining the business strategy and human-centric design capabilities of a leading business consultancy with a strong understanding of end-to-end IT architecture. As one PwC client said, "I have a lot of agencies that can do digital well, but they have no idea of the back end and of the tools that we need to use. PwC have extensive expertise here, because they take an end-to-end strategic approach."

TCS

According to IDC analysis and buyer perception, TCS is positioned in the Major Players category in the worldwide 2020 IDC MarketScape for customer experience improvement services.

TCS goes to market by vertical market, with 14 core global markets: banking, financial services, insurance services, communications, media, information services, retail, travel, consumer products, life sciences, healthcare, public services, manufacturing, and utilities.

Key TCS CX-related service lines include TCS Interactive, Analytics and Insights (A&I), Automation & AI, Cognitive Business Operations, Consulting and Service Integration, and Conversational Experiences. Other groupwide service lines include Cyber Security, Engineering & Industrial Services, Internet of Things, Blockchain, Cloud Apps, Microservices & API, Cloud Infrastructure, Enterprise Applications, the Microsoft Business Unit, and Quality Engineering.

Key capabilities in the CX improvement space include:

- **Service design:** TCS has around 2,500 service designers working across the company. Service design has a dedicated focus within TCS Interactive's global team, and the company has certified service designers as part of its Design Thinking practice. In addition, service designers are embedded across TCS in client-facing industry-focused units.
- **Product and facility design:** TCS Interactive has dedicated teams for digital product and experience design in the United States, Europe, and India. Its core capability is rooted in digital product and experience design. For physical facility design, TCS works with architectural and engineering firms such as Tata Elxsi. TCS' London-based design house W12 and TCS Interactive studios have won several awards including the Red Dot (in 2017 and 2019) for design work.

- **Personalization:** TCS has around 12,000 people working in the personalization space, including consultants, designers, data scientists and engineers, developers, and CRM and CX consultants. The TCS CRM/CX practice houses platform skills and capabilities on SAP, Oracle, Salesforce, and Adobe. Solutions around personalization include TCS Adaptive Analytics Engine, TCS A&I Customer Analytics, B2B Omnichannel Commerce, Servitization, Student Experience, BFS Loss Mitigation, Digital Virtual Assistants, and Connected Intelligence and Platforms.
- **Data/analytics:** TCS Analytics and Insights is the dedicated practice in charge of the company's data and analytics portfolio. TCS' A&I unit provides a range of analytics services including business analytics services, data services, business intelligence, and consulting. TCS also offers data/analytics as a managed service for clients. In total, TCS has around 40,000 employees working in the data/analytics space.
- **End-customer engagement:** TCS has a Customer Experience Management (CEM) unit that offers customer care BPO services to clients. Its customer engagement services cover the customer life cycle from acquisition, growth, and servicing to retention. TCS operates through three core practices: Digital Care, Smart Collections, and Digital Service Desk. Some of the core offerings within these practices are technical support, order management, billing, credit management, sales, cash apps, and nonvoice channels. Along with managed services, TCS offers customer experience transformation services, through its CXT practice, helping CMOs to solve strategic challenges. In total, TCS has about 35,000 employees in the customer care space.

TCS has a global network of innovation facilities, including more than 30 Innovation Labs, made up of both corporate and industry group research and Innovation Labs. TCS also hosts client-facing Innovation Showcase Labs, where clients can see live demonstrations of emerging technologies, and has a global network of Customer Executive Centers, where clients can hold innovation workshops that include rapid prototyping of ideas and creation of innovation road maps. TCS is also building a global network of Pace Port innovation and collaboration centers, with the first two (Tokyo and New York) operational to be followed by others including Amsterdam and Toronto. TCS has about 3,000 employees dedicated to its innovation centers.

Key TCS clients in the CX improvement space include Bpost, Citibank, New York Road Runners, Viacom, and Vistara.

TCS has a wide range of global tier 1 relationships with key CX technology players, including Adobe, Salesforce, SAP, Oracle, Microsoft, and Salesforce. TCS is also a global Silver partner of Sitecore.

TCS says that its mission in the CX improvement space is "TCS Interactive helps brands embrace the potential of digital transformation. We harmonize the worlds of design, content, and technology for our clients to offer delightful and memorable experiences for their prospects, customers, employees, and other stakeholders. We humanize the journey at every stage as we strive toward the goal of engaging and inspiring everyone through powerful, iconic experiences."

Strengths

On average, TCS customers commended the firm for client understanding and insight, business value delivery, and content innovation and creativity. Comments from TCS clients included:

- "The biggest difference about TCS is that they really listen our feedback and do something with it. With TCS, I know something will happen."
- "I like the fact that they have tremendous resources and they have expertise in any technology that's out there. If there's a new thing we want to try, we can go to them for expertise."
- "They really helped us to improve the CX with the app – we're very pleased with the results so far. They brought it to a higher level."

Challenges

TCS has the opportunity to improve its perception in customer journey innovation and in challenging its clients.

Consider TCS When

TCS is a good fit for organizations looking for a tier 1 IT services partner with a broad and deep portfolio of technology capabilities and a growing focus on human-centric design services. As one TCS client said, "They have been very innovative in helping us think of new ways to apply technology. If we want to talk to someone about a specific technology – like facial recognition – they are so large that they have it all covered."

Wipro

According to IDC analysis and buyer perception, Wipro is positioned in the Leaders category in the worldwide 2020 IDC MarketScape for customer experience improvement services.

Wipro has more than 25,000 FTEs focused on CX improvement services. Key capabilities in the CX improvement space include:

- **Service design:** Designit, a strategic design firm that has been part of Wipro since 2015, leads Wipro's service design capabilities. Designit uses industry-standard as well as in-house innovations in empirical research methods, interaction design, brand design, and product design techniques. The firm has capabilities in advanced methods such as Circular and Transition Design, which focus on designing sustainable, zero-waste, and circular companies and industrial ecosystems. In addition to over 500+ globally situated designers at Designit, Wipro also has 450+ designers and 400+ digital consultants.
- **Product and facility design:** Wipro has product and physical facility design capabilities via Designit's heritage in product and industrial design. This was supplemented in 2020 by the acquisition of CX agency Rational Interaction, which created combined Wipro/Rational practice dedicated to designing, fitting, and activating physical spaces and experiences for clients.
- **Personalization:** Wipro offers consulting and transformation capabilities around customer journey analytics, helping client identify gaps in customer experience. Wipro offers specific solutions including experience journey orchestration, next best action, decisioning engines, A/B testing, and AI/ML to test and scale personalization. It uses its "Marketing Science Labs" as a vehicle to define CX personalization use cases, run rapid iteration through microjourney experiments, and automate and operationalize to deliver personalization at scale. Its Digital Experience Platform is a customer experience management platform offering clients the ability

to create and deliver personalized content, campaigns, and recommendations to their customers.

- **Data/analytics:** Wipro has a global community of practice for CX data analytics and artificial intelligence, bringing combined resources from its Data, Analytics & AI service line; its digital experience team; and Wipro HOLMES asset team. Designit and Rational augment this core capability with additional market research and voice-of-the-customer capabilities. Wipro uses a "5S" methodology in the data/analytics space, made up of "speed" (DataOps and automation); "scale" (modernization through cloud migration), "strong" (robust cloud-native platforms), "smart" (machine learning, etc.), and "secure" (governance and compliance). It works with leading customer data platforms and leverages its Data Discovery Platform, an exploratory analytics platform with prebuilt industry CX use cases, offered in an "insights-as-a-service" model to accelerate the data to decisions value chain.
- **End-customer engagement:** Wipro Digital Operations and Platforms service line creates end-to-end solutions for clients that include improving end-customer engagement with content, experiences, and life-cycle/relationship/loyalty marketing. Wipro's latest acquisition, Rational Interaction, has a Customer Lifecycle Practice dedicated to end-customer engagement that leads Wipro's global community of practice in this space.

Wipro serves clients globally in the Americas, Europe, Africa, India, the Middle East, and APAC.

Wipro has network of innovation centers and 26 "digital pods" globally. Innovation centers are spaces for co-innovation and cocreation with clients, bringing together ideas, technologies, and agile teams. Digital pods are places where Wipro and clients assess, brainstorm, and experiment to create MVPs and prototypes.

Wipro's global service lines are Digital; Applications; Cloud; Cybersecurity and Risk Services, Consulting; Data, Analytics & AI; Digital Operations and Platforms; Infrastructure Services; and EngineeringNXT.

The company goes to market through 26 industries, including automotive, banking, communications, healthcare, insurance, natural resources, oil and gas, pharmaceutical and life sciences, industrial and process manufacturing, public sector, retail, travel and transportation, and utilities.

Wipro's key clients in the CX improvement space include BMW, BP, Lloyds Banking Group, Lufthansa, and Qantas Airways.

Wipro has a wide range of global tier 1 relationships with key CX technology players, including Adobe, Salesforce, SAP, Oracle, Microsoft, and Salesforce. Wipro also has global tier 1 relationships with smaller specialist CX technology platforms such as Pegasystems and with newer emerging platforms such as Sprinklr, Affinio, Sitecore, and Aprimo.

Wipro says that its mission in the CX improvement space is "To create sustainable business impact for our clients by driving value at the intersection of strategy, design, and technology. We deliver customer experience improvement throughout the entire value chain – from customer acquisition to customer service and is amplified by our capabilities on process and workplace transformation to improve business agility. We future-proof platform engineering with our focus on cloud, API, microservices, headless architecture, and modernization, which is delivered through an asset-based approach, by highly skilled talent and High-Performance Experience Cell model."

Strengths

On average, Wipro customers commended the firm for client empathy, organizational transformation, and client understanding and insight. Comments from Wipro clients included:

- "Compared with the other consultants we work with, both Wipro Digital and Designit are exemplary partners."
- "Our people are now higher motivated and are higher performing after working with Wipro. They definitely helped shape the culture of our teams."
- "Because the length of the relationship and the success we've have, Wipro understand us very well. They accept our culture, our objectives, and our mission as theirs."

Challenges

Wipro has the opportunity to improve its perception among clients in content innovation and creativity and in challenging its clients.

Consider Wipro When

Wipro is a good fit for organizations looking for a partner that combines traditional IT services with innovative and human-centric design capabilities. As one Wipro/Designit client said, "Their vision is human centric. They listen very well, and they always think about the human. That differentiates them in the way they behave, and the way they design their solutions."

WPP (Represented by AKQA)

According to IDC analysis and buyer perception, WPP, represented in this assessment primarily by its design and innovation agency AKQA, is positioned in the Leaders category in the worldwide 2020 IDC MarketScape for customer experience improvement services.

For the most part, the WPP capabilities referred to in this IDC assessment are those of AKQA. However, the agency is able to draw on support from sister agencies in the WPP. Specifically, WPP agencies can draw on WPP offerings across four categories:

- Experience (branding and design, service design, platforms, and applications)
- Commerce (omni-channel services, including creating direct-to-consumer platforms and helping clients navigate marketplaces such as Amazon and Alibaba)
- Technology (data management, marketing technology consulting, and systems integration services)
- Communications (advertising, content, media investment, public relations, and public affairs)

AKQA itself has 2,200 employees distributed globally across 29 "studios" in 17 countries across the Americas, Asia/Pacific, and EMEA. AKQA describes its people as "the architects of future brand experiences," and the agency draws on capabilities in brand and marketing services, architecture, data and decision science, experience-led business transformation, and product and service design.

Key capabilities in the CX improvement space include:

- **Service design:** AKQA has 29 studios globally, and each has service design capabilities and work within regions to bring together resources covering CX design, ecosystem planning, UX, data science, and creative technology.

- **Product and facility design:** On May 2018, the architecture and interior design practice, Universal Design Studio, and the industrial design consultancy, Map Project Office, joined AKQA to form a multidisciplinary experience design practice jointly staffed by employees of the three organizations.
- **Personalization:** AKQA does not have a separate personalization practice; instead, the agency had made personalization an area on which all AKQA studios focus. AKQA Data and Analytics are responsible for gathering and processing the data and sharing the resulting insights. The agency offers personalization services on a project basis and as a managed service, via retainer agreements.
- **Data/analytics:** AKQA has a dedicated data and analytics team. The agency has expertise in leading marketing and cloud data platforms, including Adobe Analytics and Target, Google Analytics and Optimize, Optimizely, AWS, DoubleClick, Facebook Ads, Google Cloud Platform, Bitbucket, Firebase, Salesforce, and Sitecore. The agency offers a data and analytics managed service in three key areas: data strategy and analytics (data consulting, analytics implementation, platform management, and tool configuration), marketing intelligence and visualization (data cloud management, data automation, real-time data visualization, interactive dashboards, and business intelligence and insights), and AI products (custom algorithms, personalization systems, clustering and segmentation, forecasting and prediction, and propensity scoring).
- **End-customer engagement:** AKQA has a dedicated consulting transformation team, which is spread throughout its 29 studios but operates virtually as a single global team. It spans the customer experience journey of clients' operations, with a focus on increasing customer satisfaction alongside driving business results.

AKQA goes to market through a network of 29 "studios" where AKQA employees work with colleagues and with clients.

Key clients of AKQA in the CX improvement space include Bunnings Warehouse, HESTA, H&M, ITOCHU, LVMH, MINI LIVING, Nike, NRG, Rolls-Royce Motor Cars, Science Museum (London), Siemens, Verizon, Virgin Atlantic, Visa, and Volvo Cars.

AKQA is a Business Plus Adobe Partner and a Platinum partner for Adobe Experience Manager (AEM). The agency is a Sitecore Platinum Partner and has 200+ certified Sitecore developers. AKQA is an Acquia Preferred Partner and a Contentful Power Partner.

AKQA draws on proprietary software assets from across the WPP group. For example, in personalization, AKQA's sister agency Wunderman Thompson has developed a CDP solution known as Wunderman Commerce Cloud. Wunderman Thompson also has a methodology and approach called Maven for enabling clients to better understand the motivation of individuals to enable messaging to be more effectively tailored.

AKQA describes its mission in the CX improvement space as: "We partner with companies to create the future faster by clarifying a distinct and ownable vision for the future, by identifying high-value customer insights, and ultimately by empowering our clients to rapidly realize, adapt, and scale that vision and value within their market."

Strengths

On average, WPP/AKQA customers commended the firm for end-customer insight, customer journey innovation, and people quality. Comments specifically from AKQA clients included:

- "AKQA have a very strong understanding of the business that we're in. They've grown with us and they really understand us, but they've never pigeonholed themselves."
- "They are creative in coming up with ideas for each moment of the journey – it's one of the things they're known for. They are always helping us to move faster."
- "I look for a team I know will help me win for the company. I have confidence in everything about AKQA, from the leadership to the creative teams. They've delivered great results."

Challenges

WPP/AKQA has the opportunity to improve its perception among clients in organizational transformation and in challenging the client.

Consider WPP/AKQA When

AKQA, backed by the wider WPP network of agencies, is a good fit for organizations looking for a partner that combines the creativity of a boutique advertising/marketing agency with the design and innovation capabilities of a business consultancy. As one AKQA client said, "Although they are part of a large group of companies, it still feels like they have the dynamism and focus on the client of a small agency. They make me feel like I'm their only customer."

APPENDIX

Reading an IDC MarketScape Graph

For the purposes of this analysis, IDC divided potential key measures for success into two primary categories: capabilities and strategies.

Positioning on the y-axis reflects the vendor's current capabilities and menu of services and how well aligned the vendor is to customer needs. The capabilities category focuses on the capabilities of the company and product today, here and now. Under this category, IDC analysts will look at how well a vendor is building/delivering capabilities that enable it to execute its chosen strategy in the market.

Positioning on the x-axis, or strategies axis, indicates how well the vendor's future strategy aligns with what customers will require in three to five years. The strategies category focuses on high-level decisions and underlying assumptions about offerings, customer segments, and business and go-to-market plans for the next three to five years.

The size of the individual vendor markers in the IDC MarketScape represents the market share of each individual vendor within the specific market segment being assessed.

IDC MarketScape Methodology

IDC MarketScape criteria selection, weightings, and vendor scores represent well-researched IDC judgment about the market and specific vendors. IDC analysts tailor the range of standard characteristics by which vendors are measured through structured discussions, surveys, and interviews with market leaders, participants, and end users. Market weightings are based on user interviews, buyer surveys, and the input of IDC experts in each market. IDC analysts base individual

vendor scores, and ultimately vendor positions on the IDC MarketScape, on detailed surveys and interviews with the vendors, publicly available information, and end-user experiences in an effort to provide an accurate and consistent assessment of each vendor's characteristics, behavior, and capability.

Market Definition

Customer experience (CX) improvement services are a subset of digital agency services, which use new technologies, design services, and content services to drive improvements in a client organization's marketing, advertising, sales, customer support, loyalty, and design capabilities. CX improvement services draw on the seven segments of IDC's definition of digital agency services:

- **Digital engagement project services:** These aim to transform the "journey" that the organization's customers/clients take, from initial contact with the brand through buying and post-transaction services. They take an end-to-end approach to the customer journey, comprising both advisory and implementation services.
- **Experience design services:** These are consulting and implementation services to help the client to design and create services and products, with a focus on improving the experience of the users of products or services. This can include external users (such as customers, partners, and suppliers) and internal users (employees).
- **Brand strategy services:** These are consulting and implementation services that help the client to position and develop its brand.
- **Marketing consulting services:** These are consulting and implementation services that transform a client's marketing function and/or transform its marketing and advertising strategies. They also include running short-term marketing and advertising campaigns on behalf of the client.
- **Commerce platform management:** These are services to manage and continually optimize a client's commerce platform. This may involve hosting of websites, updating of pricing, and management and optimization (and/or provision) of the platform technology.
- **Marketing management services:** These are services help the client acquire customers for a brand and keep them loyal to that brand. They include marketing campaign management services.
- **Advertising managed services:** These are services to improve the client's capabilities in its advertising activities, notably by running all or part of the client's advertising activities as a managed service. It includes media planning, media buying, ad placement services, and research conducted to inform media buying and placement.

For more on the definition of digital agency services and on demand trends and market sizes, see *Worldwide and U.S. Digital Agency Services Forecast, 2020-2024* (IDC #US45198220, July 2020).

Types of CX Improvement Services Providers

With regard to the types of CX improvement services providers, the market is served by five main vendor types. These vendor types are nonexclusive, and some larger and more diversified services vendors, including most of the vendors assessed in this IDC MarketScape, appear in more than one category:

- **ICT services providers:** These supply services around telecom and technology advice, implementation, integration, management, and support. They usually have a heritage in application development and management and systems integration.

- **Business consultancies:** These vendors have a strong business consulting capability, which is usually their largest service line. They usually also provide some IT services, such as IT consulting around new technologies.
- **Design houses:** These are consulting firms whose primary business is providing service design, product design, or physical facility design services on a project basis. Services they offer can include service design and creation, product design and creation, user experience (UX) and user interface (UI) design, and design thinking consultancy.
- **Holding companies and their network agencies:** Holding companies are large, global companies that own and/or control a wide and diverse range of network agencies, including advertising, marketing, design, and business transformation agencies. The most important holding companies include Dentsu, Interpublic, Omnicom, Publicis, and WPP. A network agency is an agency owned by one of the holding companies. For example, AKQA is owned by WPP, while Publicis Sapient is owned by Publicis.
- **Independent digital agencies:** These vendors are digital-focused agencies that are owned neither by an IT services provider nor by a business consultancy nor by a holding company. They are often multidisciplinary and can provide a wide range of digital agency services.

For more detail on these categories of vendor, see *IDC Market Glance: Digital Agency Services, 2Q20* (IDC #US46363620, June 2020).

Strategies and Capabilities Criteria

CX has become an important part of digital agency services – arguably the most important part, as clients seek to improve the experiences they offer to customers/clients and to other key stakeholders such as suppliers, partners, and employees. Specifically, CX improvement services focus strongly on the following areas, which combine and cut across the seven segments listed previously:

- **Technology change** plays an important enabling role in CX improvement services and includes technologies that end clients use to drive CX improvements such as cloud, mobility, social business, big data, analytics, augmented and virtual reality (AR/VR), the Internet of Things (IoT), and cognitive technologies such as machine learning and artificial intelligence. In the CX space, specialist technologies include marketing campaign management applications, advertising campaign management software, data management platforms (DMPs), demand-side platforms (DSPs), dynamic creative optimization (DCO) platforms, search engine marketing (SEM) software, social advertising software, and supply-side platforms (SSPs). Vendors in this IDC MarketScape were therefore assessed on the breadth and depth of their CX technology alliances with vendors such as Adobe, Salesforce, Oracle, SAP, and Sitecore.
- **Design services** are an increasingly important part of CX improvement services. Design includes physical and virtual product design, service design, user experience design, user interface design, and branding design. Vendors in this IDC MarketScape were therefore assessed on their capabilities in product and service design and in customer journey design. Vendors were also assessed on the strength of their global networks of innovation centers, which are spaces where clients can ideate and create high-level designs for new and improved offerings.
- **Content services** include the planning, creation, and distribution of digital and physical content such as sales, marketing, and advertising content play an important role in driving enjoyable customer experiences. These are not traditional services for many services vendors in the CX space, particularly those with a background in mainstream IT services, but clients increasingly expect vendors to have capabilities in this space. Witness, for example, Deloitte's acquisition of advertising agency Heat in 2016 or Accenture's acquisition of advertising agency Droga5 in

2019. Content innovation and creativity was therefore one of the capabilities that IDC looked for when assessing vendors in this IDC MarketScape.

- **End-customer engagement services** include capabilities to help clients interact better with their end customers. These services can be provided either directly through customer care services, marketing services, or advertising services or indirectly through advisory and implementation services that drive improvements in the client's customer support, marketing, and advertising functions. As with content services, these are not traditionally core offerings for many CX improvement services suppliers, particularly those with an IT services background (although some IT services suppliers have long-established customer care outsourcing operations). End-customer engagement was one of the capabilities that IDC looked for when assessing vendors in this IDC MarketScape.
- **Organizational and business change** plays an important role in CX improvement services, by helping clients become more agile, proactive, innovative, and insightful. If clients do not change their workflows, processes, organizational structures, and even their work culture, and if they do not rethink their business and digital strategies, they risk reducing or even entirely negating the benefits they get from engaging with services vendors to design new offerings or transform their technology. In assessing vendors for this IDC MarketScape, one of the capabilities that IDC looked for in vendors was therefore the ability to drive organizational change and also to provide CX-related and consumer-related insight and thought leadership to clients.

IDC believes customer experience improvement services vendors should exhibit the characteristics shown in Tables 1 and 2 to be successful when crafting a strategy to remain relevant to clients in the future and when leveraging existing capabilities to create optimal value for clients today. The factors were weighted because IDC believes that some factors are more important than others in maximizing value for clients.

TABLE 1

Key Strategy Measures for Success: Worldwide Customer Experience Improvement Services

Strategies Criteria	Definition	Weight (%)
Offering strategy	Vendors must display a vision and a road map for driving new and better CX for clients. This will include future applications of technology but also the changes needed to clients' business models and operating models necessary to drive relentless CX improvement based on likely technological, socioeconomic, and business changes in the next few years.	8.0
	Vendors should offer a range of pricing/payment models that take into account clients' need for both flexibility and certainty and their appetite for risk.	9.0
	Vendors must provide staff of the highest caliber to meet client expectations. When key staff transitions occur, they should handle them quickly and effectively.	10.0
Portfolio strategy	Focus areas and offerings in the next two years should incorporate a balance of innovative new technologies and new CX-related issues, alongside longer-term issues and more mature technologies.	8.0
	Vendors must successfully and continually challenge their clients to accept new ideas, approaches or services, and technologies.	9.0
Innovation	Vendors should have client-facing and/or client-embedded capabilities for needs and opportunity discovery, ideation, use case and business case development, MVP creation, and rapid prototyping.	9.0
	Vendors should display innovation and creativity in the way that they help clients understand, transform, and continually optimize their management of the multiple stages of the "customer journey," from awareness through buying and post-sales support.	10.0
Growth	Vendors must continually develop and revise growth strategies to ensure that they remain relevant to clients and are financial healthy.	9.0
	Vendors should constantly expand and strengthen their alliance networks (technology and services providers, boutique agencies, start-ups, academia, etc.) to ensure that their offerings contain innovative and leading-edge elements and to ensure that they address clients' rapidly changing needs.	8.0
	Vendors should be seen by clients as strongly differentiated from their peers.	9.0
	A vendor should act as a true business partner to a client, empathizing with the client and supporting its goals and its business purpose.	11.0
Total		100.0

Source: IDC, 2020

TABLE 2

Key Capability Measures for Success: Worldwide Customer Experience Improvement Services

Capabilities Criteria	Definition	Weight (%)
Offering delivered	Vendors should help clients design and create new customer-facing service offerings and redesign and transform existing service offerings.	10.0
	Vendors should help clients design and create products and/or physical spaces (showrooms, shops, etc.) and redesign and transform existing products and spaces.	10.0
	Vendors should optimize a client's use of customer-facing personalization technologies and services. This can include personalization strategy, implementation, and management services.	10.0
	Vendors should use data-centric services to help a client derive customer and market insight from multiple data sources — the aim being to better create/optimize and market their offerings and to better serve customers across the CX life cycle.	10.0
	Vendors should have the capability to engage directly with end customers in order to ensure the best possible CX across the entire customer journey, including post-sales.	8.0
Innovation	Vendors should help clients constantly change and improve their understanding and categorization of end customers/clients — for instance, by identifying new customer segments or new customer needs.	9.0
	Vendors should create and/or continually optimize a client's customer-facing digital content, such as its digital marketing, sales, and customer-service content. This can include management and continual optimization of the client's digital content strategy, its content management and production services, and its content platform services.	8.0
Portfolio benefits	Vendors should have advisory and implementation services that help clients transform the "people side" of their organizations. These might include strategy consulting, organizational consulting, and process consulting. It might include (but does not have to include) capabilities in people-related disciplines such as anthropology and applied psychology.	8.0
	Vendors should partner systematically with a constantly growing network of key CX technology platform providers, to ensure that clients have access to a mix of robust, industry-standard, innovative, and leading-edge technology platforms.	9.0
Customer service delivery	Vendors should have a deep understanding of a client organization's business strategy, culture, needs, and challenges.	8.0
	Vendors should execute their client account strategies flawlessly, delivering maximum value, and should use data/feedback to confirm or adjust account strategies as necessary.	10.0
Total		100.0

Source: IDC, 2020

LEARN MORE

Related Research

- *Worldwide and U.S. Digital Agency Services Forecast, 2020-2024* (IDC #US45198220, July 2020)
- *IDC Market Glance: Digital Agency Services, 2Q20* (IDC #US46363620, June 2020)
- *The Reality of Digital Transformation* (IDC #US44445419, March 2020)
- *Creating Empathy at Scale: Driving CX Culture Across the Organization* (IDC #DR2020_T3_DH, March 2020)

Synopsis

This IDC study represents a vendor assessment of the customer experience (CX) improvement services market through the IDC MarketScape model. This assessment discusses both quantitative and qualitative characteristics that explain success in this market. The evaluation is based on a comprehensive and rigorous framework that assesses vendors relative to the criteria and to one another and highlights the factors expected to be the most influential for success in the market in both the short term and the long term.

"Customer engagement is one of the two top strategic business objectives for organizations worldwide, and its importance can only get greater as enterprises and public bodies adapt to the challenges of COVID-19 and the arrival of a yet-to-be-defined 'new normal' era," said Douglas Hayward, research director for Digital Strategy and Agency Services at IDC. "To drive great customer experience, and to keep making it greater, organizations need trusted advisors and implementers that can transform not just their technology and business processes and offerings, but often their work culture too.

"Clients today are looking for strategic partners that empathize strongly with them, that challenge them and push them forward, that drive agility and customer centricity across their organization, and that give them fast access to a broad and deep range of expertise," added Hayward. "The strongest vendors are the ones that will do all this while leading the client into the future with a strong and differentiated vision of CX."

About IDC

International Data Corporation (IDC) is the premier global provider of market intelligence, advisory services, and events for the information technology, telecommunications and consumer technology markets. IDC helps IT professionals, business executives, and the investment community make fact-based decisions on technology purchases and business strategy. More than 1,100 IDC analysts provide global, regional, and local expertise on technology and industry opportunities and trends in over 110 countries worldwide. For 50 years, IDC has provided strategic insights to help our clients achieve their key business objectives. IDC is a subsidiary of IDG, the world's leading technology media, research, and events company.

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