

A JITTERBIT REPORT

2023 State of Automation:

Eliminate Application
Integration Challenges to
Elevate Customer Experiences





About this Report

Customer experience (CX) is proving to be one of the most critical functions for today's organizations. Every industry is becoming hyper competitive, and there is very little to differentiate based on products or services alone. In fact, Gartner reports that 80% of organizations expect to compete mainly based on CX¹.

But delivering personalized customer experiences is no easy task. To do it right, you need to gain a deep understanding of the customer journey, which means looking at lots of data across different touchpoints and systems to create actionable insights.

Integration and automation tools make it easier for businesses to obtain these insights and elevate customer experiences. We conducted the *2023 State of Automation: Eliminate Application Integration Challenges to Elevate Customer Experiences* survey to uncover organizations' priorities, challenges, and expected benefits from automating the customer experience process. Our goal was to find out which customer-facing functions and use cases are being prioritized for automation.

We hope the insights collected from this survey help you anticipate customer experience trends, compare strategies with your peers, and better prepare your business for digital transformation.



Key Findings

01

Automating processes to enhance the customer experience is a priority for organizations

Customer experience ranks second, only behind IT, as the function with the most automated business processes. This clearly highlights the importance and the prioritization of the customer experience function within businesses. Yet despite being one of the most automated business functions already, customer experience remains among the top five that are being prioritized for additional automation of business processes. The key driver for this trend is the desire for businesses to gain a deeper understanding of engagement across the customer journey.

02

Application proliferation, IT resource constraints, and manual integration are key challenges organizations face in delivering a seamless customer experience

While CX remains one of the most automated functions within an organization, it has its own challenges. The constantly growing application landscape, and especially the growing Martech stack, poses integration challenges. Two-thirds of respondents found application integration as either an extremely or very challenging hindrance to delivering an optimal customer experience. The integration challenges are accentuated by reliance on central IT and manual or legacy point-to-point integrations.

03

Integration and automation of marketing operations is a top priority for organizations to deliver optimal customer experiences

According to our survey, 80% of respondents are planning to invest in integrating the marketing function over the next 12 months. However, respondents also cited automating and integrating additional business processes, including marketing operations, sales and ordering, billing and payments, fulfillment, logistics, and customer support, as crucial use cases for delivering the best possible customer experience.

01

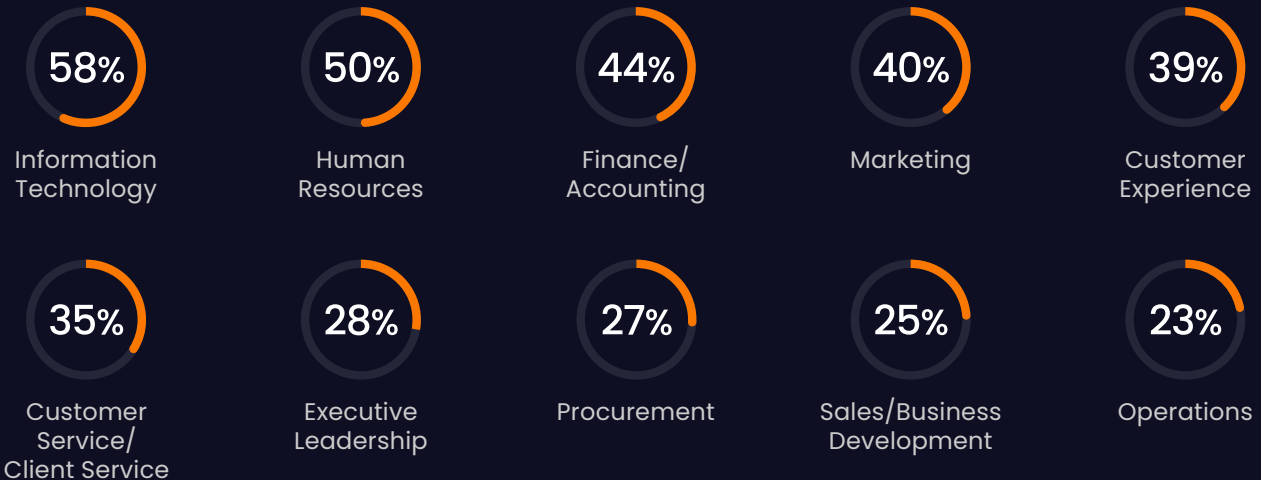
Automating processes to enhance the customer experience is a priority for organizations

In your opinion, which departments and functions across your organization have the most automated business processes?



According to our respondents, customer experience ranks second for having the most automated business processes across their organization, only behind IT. This shows that businesses have prioritized customer experience as one of the highest value functions for automation.

Which departments and functions are being prioritized for additional automation of business processes?



Note: respondents could select multiple answers

Despite being the second most automated business process, customer experience is still one of the top five departments that organizations are prioritizing for additional automation, which demonstrates the growing need for today's business leaders to optimize CX processes.

But delivering a seamless customer experience is still often a challenge for businesses, even with a high level of automation and prioritization. More than 60% of respondents said they don't find it easy to deliver optimal customer experiences, showing that organizations have rightly prioritized customer experience for additional automation and optimization.

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What benefits does your organization hope to realize by integrating customer experience applications?

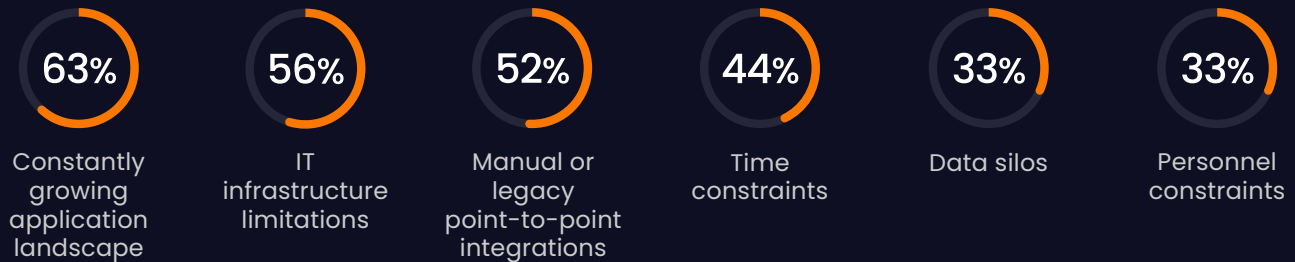


Why do it? Businesses expect an increase in customer satisfaction and retention (33%), an increase in customer cross-sell/upsell (20%), and improved efficiency of resources (17%) as key benefits of integrating customer-facing applications. Businesses want to see an increase in these KPIs to achieve a higher customer lifetime value.

02

Application proliferation, IT constraints, and manual integration are the key challenges organizations face before they can deliver a seamless customer experience

What makes it difficult for your organization to provide seamless customer experiences?

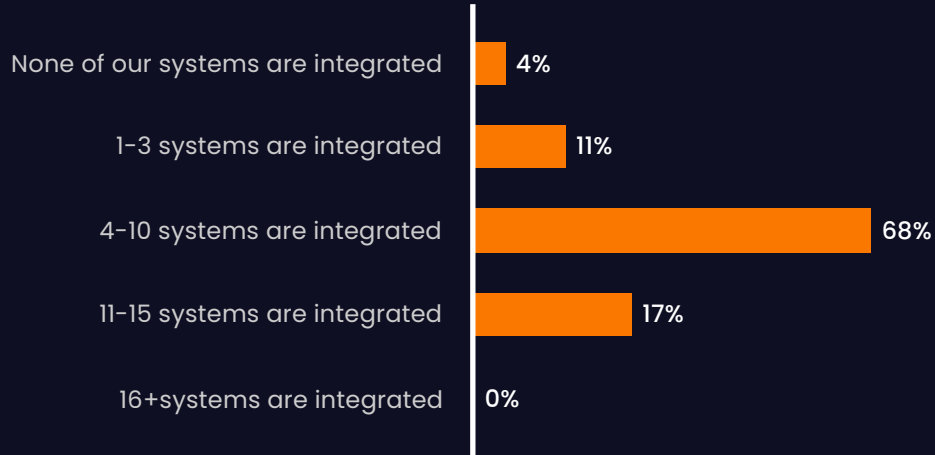


Note: respondents could select multiple answers

As companies are continuing to invest in more tools to gain a deeper understanding of their customers and deliver a superior customer experience, the process comes with its own set of challenges. The constantly growing application landscape tops the list (63%) for being the most common challenge organizations face in their journey to delivering a seamless customer experience.

The other top challenges raised by respondents include IT infrastructure limitations (56%) and manual or legacy point-to-point integrations (52%).

How many of your department's systems are integrated across your organization?



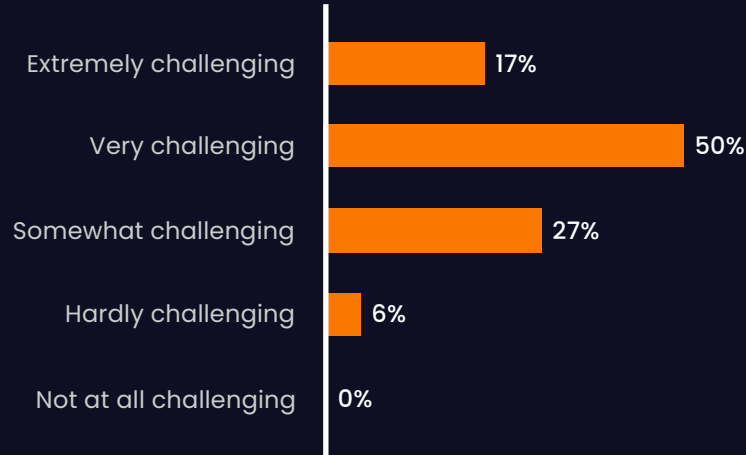
According to Deloitte Digital, companies today leverage an average of 17 applications and 28 data sources to manage customer data and generate customer insights and engagement². Yet our research shows 83% of marketing department systems have fewer than 10 systems being integrated. This also means that more than half of these applications are not communicating with each other, often resulting in an abundance of customer data silos across the organization.

Gathering customer data through a broad array of data sets is like a double-edged sword. On one hand, companies need to aggregate customer data through multiple applications in the customer journey. At the same time, this creates an urgency for organizations to quickly create integrations between these applications.

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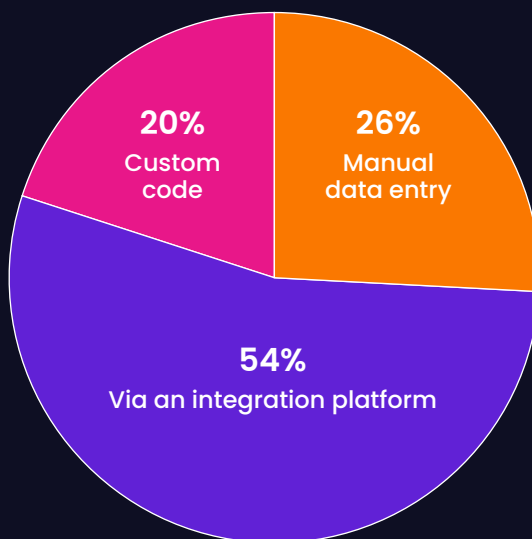


To what extent are application integration challenges a hindrance in delivering those optimal customer experiences for your organization?



With the growing application stacks, it is not surprising that two-thirds of respondents found application integration as an extremely or very challenging hindrance to delivering optimal customer experiences.

How do you currently connect your marketing department's applications with your other apps and other sources?



Application integration forms the basis of automating the customer experience, which allows companies to strategically build and measure their customer experience performance. But this is not an easy task when almost half (46%) of all integrations within the customer experience function are still done through custom code or manual data entry, which increases the implementation time for integrations. Plus, these custom-coded integrations cannot be easily changed or extended, impeding an organization's ability to integrate their customer experience applications at scale.

03

Integration and automation of marketing operations is a top priority for organizations to deliver optimal customer experiences

When it comes to improving the customer experience, the marketing function is the most important focus for organizations. Respondents ranked it as both the most important use case to automate and the most relevant system to invest in to improve the customer experience.

Which Customer Experience system is your organization looking to invest in integrating in the next 12 months?



Marketing



eCommerce



Customer Service



Sales



Fulfillment



Support

Note: respondents could select multiple answers

Eighty percent of organizations stated they plan to invest in integrating their marketing systems in the next 12 months. However, it's important to recognize that integrating marketing systems alone won't necessarily result in excellent customer experiences. To truly enhance customer experiences, organizations must focus on integrating all systems that capture customer data, including those related to ecommerce and customer service, which were ranked second and third, plus sales and fulfillment. End-to-end integration of customer data across various touchpoints is essential to achieving this goal.

80%

of organizations plan to invest in integrating their marketing systems in the next 12 months.



Which use cases are important to automate to deliver optimal customer experiences?



Marketing operations



Sales and ordering



Billing and payments



Fulfillment and logistics



Customer support

Note: respondents could select multiple answers

To the same point, marketing operations was also ranked as the most important use case to automate in order to deliver optimal customer experiences, followed by sales and ordering, billing and payments, fulfillment and logistics, and customer support. Each of these use cases automates a certain customer experience business process, such as lead passing between marketing automation and CRM, automated creation of sales orders, financial and fulfillment data sharing between ERP, CRM, and ecommerce applications, and synchronizing customer data to respond quickly and accurately to issues.

These use cases together cover a wide range of customer touchpoints, from lead generation and ordering to shipping and customer support. To truly improve customer experiences, it's important to gather and integrate customer data across all touchpoints throughout the typical customer lifecycle.

Who is responsible for ensuring the marketing department data is shared between multiple relevant applications?



The department itself



Shared between IT and departments



Central IT



Outsourced IT or System Integrator

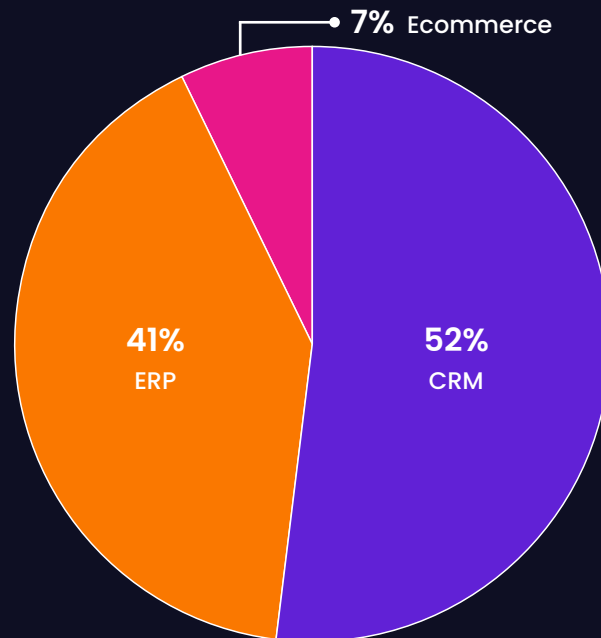


Don't know

Note: respondents could select multiple answers

Our research also indicates that marketing executives are increasingly involved in taking on the data sharing responsibilities, with 59% saying that their department itself is responsible for sharing data between applications, and 56% stating that the responsibility is shared between the department and IT. It is clear that marketing is playing a larger role in ensuring data is shared between departments to ensure a good customer journey.

Which is the primary driver of integration within the marketing department?



Increasingly, CRM is the primary driver of integration within organizations at 52 percent. Customer data in CRM systems is being used to gain a better understanding of the customer's journey. This illustrates the shift from ERP as a system of record to the CRM system. It highlights how organizational focus is increasing on the customer data and not only on the financial and the operational data that you get from ERP systems.

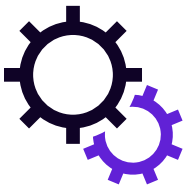


Recommendations



Make customer experience a true differentiator for your organization

Customers have made their preferences clear, and now it's up to organizations to deliver a seamless customer experience that helps them stand out from the competition. Our survey shows that organizations are aware of the importance of CX and have started working towards optimizing it, but there's still work to be done to automate customer-facing workflows and create the ultimate customer experience.



Tackle the integration challenges first to provide the optimal customer experience

As the number of applications used by organizations continues to grow, and with IT resources already stretched, integration projects often experience delays. Organizations relying on manual or point-to-point integrations, without implementing an automated enterprise-wide integration approach, are at a significant disadvantage. To deliver an optimal customer experience, addressing integration challenges should be the first step taken.



Address each area of the customer lifecycle for a true and consistent customer experience throughout the journey

While it's encouraging to see that a significant number of organizations prioritize integrating marketing systems, delivering a comprehensive customer experience goes beyond providing a satisfactory marketing experience. Every interaction that a customer has with an organization contributes to their overall experience, and data from these interactions is scattered across various applications, including CRM, marketing automation, customer support, ecommerce, finance, procurement, and more. Integrating these systems and business processes allows organizations to connect touchpoints between customer interactions, providing a crucial foundation to identify actionable insights and build personalized experiences that ultimately improve the customer journey.

About Jitterbit

Jitterbit helps organizations improve the customer journey. Our Customer Experience solution enables you to automate critical business processes throughout the customer lifecycle by integrating key workflows such as billing and invoicing, orders and fulfillment, and customer management. Surface actionable insights from your customer data so that you can build personalized experiences.

Learn more about Jitterbit's Customer Experience solution [here](#).

Methodology

This research into State of Automation: Customer Experience was conducted within the context of a larger study into the current state of business automation. The results in this report are from an online survey of IT directors and above, marketing directors and above, and HR managers and above that was fielded from February 2 to 10, 2023. There were 167 respondents to the survey, all in firms with 100+ employees. All results are from U.S. respondents. The responses were not weighted.

35% of the respondents had a workforce of 100-999 employees, 54% had a head count of 1,000-9,999 employees, while 11% of those surveyed employed 10,000 or more workers. Contributors hailed from senior management levels, at organizations providing a mix of products and services to the business to business (B2B), business to consumer (B2C) and business to government (B2G) sectors.

Sources

¹ Realizing the Benefits of Superior Customer Experience, *Gartner Inc.*, 2018, <https://www.gartner.com/en/doc/3874972-realizing-the-benefits-of-superior-customer-experience-a-gartner-trend-insight-report>

² What's the Secret to Winning on Customer Experience?, *Deloitte Digital*, 2020, <https://www.deloittedigital.com/us/en/offerings/customer-led-marketing/advertising--marketing-and-commerce/hux/how-to-win-on-customer-experience.html>



Jitterbit empowers businesses to optimize their connectivity and scalability through a single integration and workflow automation platform. Our mission is to turn complexity into simplicity so your entire organization can work faster and more efficiently.

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