

Thoughts from the Top



featuring

Jon Panella

Group Vice President of Customer
Experience Platform Practice

Jon has 30 years of technical, consulting and leadership experience and has been with Publicis Sapient for 18+ years. He is currently responsible for Publicis Sapient's Global Customer Engagement Platform Practice which includes sales, strategy, oversight, planning and reviews for numerous commerce strategy and implementation engagements. Jon is located in the Dallas/Fort Worth Area.



As many companies transition to e-commerce, what do you see as the biggest growth opportunity for companies to take advantage of? What changes do you think will likely remain post COVID?

When looking at the biggest growth opportunity, I think it is two-fold. The first opportunity is the more frequent engagement with customers. We are seeing larger shopping carts, increased frequency of purchase and more subscription-based models. It is an opportunity to ask how you take advantage of these opportunities to interact with your customers.

Most consumers are only using 5-9 retail sites on their phone, and if you don't have a relationship to get into that select group, you are left playing second fiddle.

You have to ask: how do I increase the engagement with those key consumers who are buying my product?

The second opportunity is convenience. We have seen the expansion of buy online, pick-up in store, curbside pickup and more adjacencies in the offering—everyone

expects the Amazon model. Customers' expectations are such that they need to have a real relationship with them, paired with the convenience that you offer.

Post COVID, we will see lasting changes in the delivery methods people are utilizing – touchless/contactless delivery, curbside pickup, etc. More importantly, the other thing that is going to change is that there is going to be a different dynamic in the relationship with the customer. Consumers are going to want to prevent situations where they don't have 3 months of toilet paper stored in their home or where they can't guarantee they have a pet food delivery coming every two weeks. Things have changed in the way they are shopping, especially around purchasing essentials and planning ahead. Brands have an opportunity to take advantage of that.



What unique advantages do Salesforce solutions bring to retail clients?

Data, data, data. By leveraging Salesforce, you have the unique ability to address every touchpoint that a customer has with a brand and leverage that information to further strengthen the relationship you have with the consumer and increase purchases. Having your data in Service Cloud or Commerce Cloud and knowing what other customers are doing that are similar to you is a huge lever from Salesforce's perspective. With capabilities like

Evergage bringing the CDP into the picture to be able to have that 1:1 relationship, you are able to meet the expectations customers have – customers no longer expect nor want to be just part of a persona. This advantage already exists today, but I see immense growth potential as this continues to expand with things such as Loyalty Cloud and Customer 360 – these components provide significant differentiation.



Describe our offering and how CP firms are leveraging Direct To Consumer (DTC) with Salesforce Commerce Cloud?

The key to our DTC with Salesforce Commerce Cloud (SFCC) offering is that it is an end-to-end solution. There are a lot of other vendors who are offering a quick to market commerce solution, however, not as a comprehensive solution. Our DTC offering allows you to feed into your marketing funnel, and take advantage of things such as analytics and Marketing Cloud and bring customers to your site, to a seamless purchase process through Commerce Cloud, all the way through fulfillment.

We selected SFCC as it allows for flexibility, agility and ability to leverage that data through the entire process.

The most important thing around Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG) Brands when leveraging

these solutions is to not think of this as solely driving revenue. One thing that we are bringing to the table with our offering is guidance on how Salesforce customers should be thinking about it. If you are selling any good (paper towels, M&Ms, cat food, etc.) the goal isn't to erode your business through other retailers. The goal is centered around relationships and data. You as the brand want to be taking advantage of the relationships you are able to build with your customers and feed that data into your other channels. Our offering allows for a CPG brand to spin up a consumer site as part of a bigger picture. We are taking that site, learning from the data and continuing to expand and move forward and drive more successful engagement with customers for the long-run.



What is the best way for Salesforce to engage with Publicis Sapient?

For Salesforce, the first thing is to not think of this as a transactional answer when working with us. Think about this as how you are going to help your clients transform their business. This does not need to be immensely complex, but it needs to be viewed from a lens of direct and indirect benefits that the customer will get by implementing a solution and

partnering with us along the way. Bring us in to have the conversations early so we can assist in areas that customers typically struggle with—getting a business case in place, understanding how this changes their marketing techniques, etc. This goes beyond commerce and expands to customer engagement.



What about the "Salesforce Ohana" and culture sticks out in your mind?

Being a technology guy, I always come back to the technology offering, but it truly ties back to the culture—it's about inclusivity. Salesforce's culture is about bringing together components—whether its technology components or agency partners, ISVs, SIs and clients together, it's the center of the

entire Salesforce philosophy from my perspective. It's about bringing the right pieces together to solve a problem... whether it's the technology or the people, that's what I think of. It's less about buying technology for technology's sake, but building an ecosystem that enables customer success.