

# The Opportunity: Connected Digital Experiences

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DELIVERING SEAMLESS EXPERIENCES ACROSS  
ALL TOUCHPOINTS FOR YOUR DIGITAL SERVICES

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# Connected Experiences are Becoming Fundamental to Our Everyday

Businesses are increasingly adopting digital tools to **unify and speed up fragmented processes**, freeing up human resources to take on more strategic roles. Yet we see a slew of organizations struggling to holistically adopt digital innovation and reap the positive results of their efforts.

Take the ecommerce industry for instance. When an order isn't delivered on time, the problem may lie just about anywhere – with the product or service provider, at the warehouse or at customs. While technology can certainly help in tracking the order, fragmented processes across traditional systems deter businesses from quickly pinpointing the issue.

Nevertheless, the onset of unified service design, real-time data management, and intelligent systems are paving the way for remarkable connected digital experiences. And let's not forget, **fragmentation** across organizations is also

increasingly becoming common, chiefly due to localization, outsourcing of operations, product development, marketing, and more.

**The challenge, in our experience, lies not in the technologies themselves, but in how they are applied across systems, applications, and processes.** Adopting new strategies that inherently bridge the gap between humans and the digital world will result in powerful digitally connected experiences and unparalleled business performance.

This white paper offers fundamental insights on how to infuse great connected digital experiences across a multitude of systems, deliver value from a multi-user perspective (customers, employees, and the business), and redefine ROX (Return on Experience) to ensure positive outcomes.



# Why do Some Products, Services, and Brands Become Irrelevant? and What Can They do to Stay in Demand?

Digital Darwinism, Technological Revolution, and Demand for Contextualization are silent killers, snuffing out brands and products.

While digitalization is at an all-time high, technologies, consumers' lives, and societies at large are evolving faster than organizations can learn to adapt. This is specifically due to the lack of reliable systems that can guide brands to safely adapt to new world complexities.

According to a Forbes Council post, implementing new technology onto broken systems and failing to set clear, end-user experience goals greatly contributes to a company's failing at digital transformation.

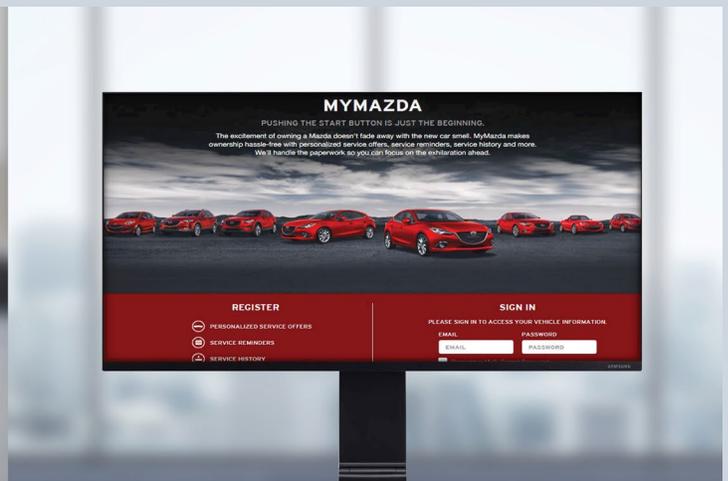
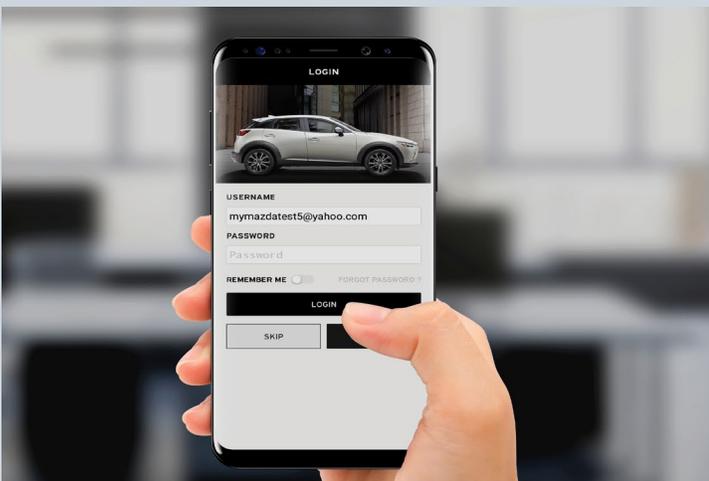
By proactively addressing the megatrends driving digital transformation, consumer-facing organizations can deliver rewarding customer experiences and maximize the value of service and support personnel. Furthermore, shifting focus from shareholders to evolving markets and customer expectations can help keep the offerings alive. It is imperative to understand and acknowledge that everything

you create is all about **people and purpose**, which, in turn, sets the stage to forge ahead.

Supercomputers and algorithms are taking the lead and most organizations are part of a race to achieve great technological heights. However, to truly excel, merely infusing technologies into multiple facets of business operations might not be enough. Instead, devising tailored connected experiences across physical and digital areas will help businesses scale up their game.

Connected digital transformation is the "perfect storm" on the horizon, where brands are being challenged each day to keep the customer of tomorrow in mind – someone who expects digitally enhanced experiences to be commonplace.

**Understanding what is to come and aligning business goals to achieve adaptability will allow companies to succeed with greater connection and circumstantial awareness.**



# The Rise of an Indispensable Consumer-Centered Metric: Connected Digital Experience

Connected digital experience is a process that unites digital capabilities with the physical world. But this dictionary definition barely scratches the surface. At the heart of the concept are two precise end goals: doing away with friction and evoking emotions.

We're lucky to live in an era where designers, technologists, architects, engineers, and artists are increasingly working together to enhance customer experiences. **Thanks to their creativity, things are becoming easier for us to use and adapt.**

But change doesn't happen overnight. One must anticipate new experiences and design them to be functional – because not doing so will result in inconvenience for the end user. **This is the low hanging fruit for all of us – friction or frustration, and how to eliminate it.**

When you consider a consumer-centred metric, it is vital to put every single touchpoint to the test. That way, you can trace the journey of a customer for any friction along the way and offer a solution. With rising customer expectations, it is imperative to keep frictions to a bare minimum as a brand or else you risk losing ground to the competition.

The real meaning of the word "connected" goes beyond bringing the physical and digital worlds closer together – it's about connecting people. And the best way to go about it is investing in functional storytelling. Today, emerging technologies at our disposal are helping brands build their personas using storytelling, connecting consumers to their deepest desires and shaping products to their likes and requirements.

While such a transformation is likely to unlock a slew of rewarding possibilities, knowing where to start can be tricky. The following tips can help set you on the right path:

- **Bring customers and employees into the same boat** – A study by PwC reveals how organizations investing to deliver great experiences for both employees and customers alike can charge as much as a 16 percent premium on their products and services. In other words, you are improving Employee Experience (EX) in order to create positive Return on Experience (ROX). Your employees, feeling valued, will serve customers better and remain emotionally committed to your brand. To put it simply, ROX is now synonymous to ROI.
- **Always, always invest in sophisticated data** – It's helpful to group certain behavioral characteristics to help create customer profiles that stand out. That way, you will get to know your loyalists and why they keep coming back to you.
- **Establish trust by ensuring customer data protection** – Nothing can threaten the reputation of a brand aiming to deliver connected digital experiences like brand agnosticism. Hence, it's imperative that you be transparent about customer data – why you are collecting it, what kind of data it is, and how you will be using it to better serve your customers. You will need to be cautious or else you may end up creating a negative ROX.

For instance, adding a chatbot on a website to capture user information but not having a system to analyze the

data being captured on the backend can result in a negative consumer experience. Such half-baked digital experiences only attract disruption, thereby making it difficult to act on data in hand and upset the very essence of a connected digital experience.

- **Bridge the rift between tactical and strategic thinking**
  - Connected experiences aren't bound to shiny LED screens or come-of-age POS machines. That's something brands keep copying from one another not knowing whether it's the right kind of approach for their line of products and services.

Think twice. Does investing in great-looking screens and uber cool gadgets serve your purpose? Will it amplify the shopping experience for your customers and get you more sales? Or are you just doing it for the sake of the "cool" quotient that doesn't necessarily do any good for your business.

"While technology is acting as the harbinger of change, it's the consumers who will typify the next wave, benefitting brands who play their digital game right delivering top notch customer experience."

– **Mohan Krishnaraj**, Vice President & Global Head, Digital Design at Huemen

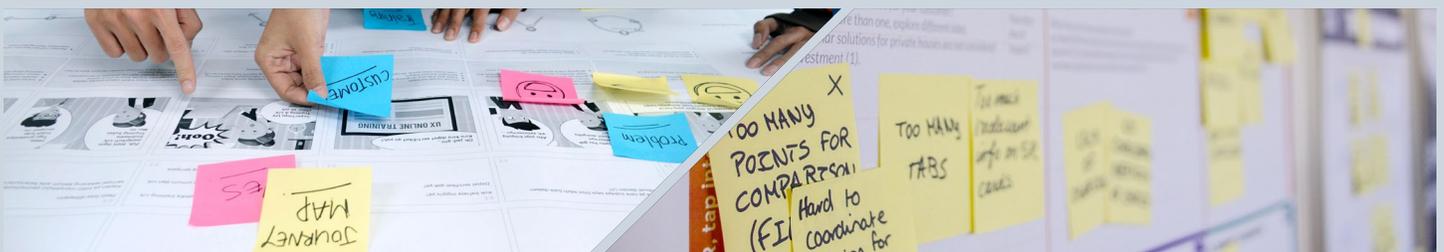
The years 2020–2021 will undoubtedly go down in history on account of the pandemic. But this period will also be remembered for how it drastically changed business operations, working environments, and customer expectations. The pandemic has changed the dynamics of business models and only those willing to think beyond traditional ROI will be able to deliver the experiences consumers crave.

Back when selling goods over the internet was new, it was relatively easy to sell and measure the success as "money in and money out" or ROI. But the current market is different. Consumers are knowledgeable, and they increasingly seek personalized experiences. To excel in such a market, creating experiences and measuring the **ROX will help businesses understand how they influence their consumers, and in turn, their business.**

Recently, Huemen worked with **Iptor**, a supply chain management company that provides professional services and enterprise resource management software for distributors and wholesalers. Iptor has a suite of ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) solutions that optimize the overall supply chain process.

Our work involved designing their digital experience and delivering the ability to react and adapt to the consumer's changing needs promptly. Our team of UX specialists, consultants, visual designers, analysts, and technologists transformed the digital experience for Sales Order, Picking and Packing Flows by developing every digital touchpoint in the system.

Huemen has since been recognized as Iptor's Agency On Record for an experience-centric product vision. And the **Huemen + Iptor UX modernization work was nominated for a UX Design Award 2021.**



# Mapping Customer Journeys to Design Functionally Connected Digital Experiences

The first step towards designing a connected experience is to cut the clutter. Then you can begin with preliminary research to determine the processes, services, and products that can help maintain long-term resilience and success.

To implement an effective digital design experience strategy, you will then need to dive deeper:

- **Identify key touchpoints:** Delve into your customer and staff journeys and understand the key moments of truth. Visualize the current experience of your product, process and service offers, and look for persistent pain points and happy moments.
- **Get real-time feedback:** Once you've mapped user journeys and identified touchpoints, measuring their impact through analytics and insights will highlight areas to improve – feedback inspires improvement.
- **Offer the best solution:** Monitor touchpoints and get to the bottom of a problem within your process or service experience. Once you successfully diagnose the most pressing issues of a customer's journey, you'll be able to modify things accordingly and ensure it resonates with the end user's goal.

"Often, businesses establish standalone user journeys running parallel to traditional systems. However, to design rewarding connected digital experiences, customer-centric activities, strategies, and journeys will need to be weaved into the fabric of core operating models."

- Mohan Krishnaraj, Vice President, Global Head & Digital Design at Huemen

## A Functional Model for Customer Journeys: Connected Experience Above All

Identify the pain points as well as opportunities to improve connectivity.

Strive to add value to EX (Employee Experience) to positively impact ROX (Return on Experience).

Reimagine the product, think strategically and adopt an omnichannel approach.

Personalize and engage real time to inspire loyalty.

# Re-Inventing Conventions by Infusing Consumer-Focused Capabilities

Undeniably, customer-centric design holds the power to eliminate as well as transform negative experiences into positive ones. By committing themselves to creating positive experiences, businesses can establish emotional connections and increase customer satisfaction level.

The secret to all of this is experience design, which can be employed to identify the gaps and develop new experiences across key stages for best leverage.

**Adopting an iterative experience with an ideation process is beneficial. It will result in continuous prototyping, testing, evaluating, and redefining until new user-centric journeys are crafted.**

## Optimizing the Customer Journey to Enhance the Delivery Experience

Research and build end-to-end maps of customer behavior to analyze the gaps.

Amplify the EX with high-value customer interactions for smart decision making.

Protect customer data and apply customer feedback to orchestrate engaging experiences.

Recommend next set of actions based on the customer journey to validate outcomes.

"To emerge as a customer-centric brand, it is imperative to design similar experiences for customers and employees. This will impart the much-needed edge and allow businesses to find themselves in a different light of the day. "

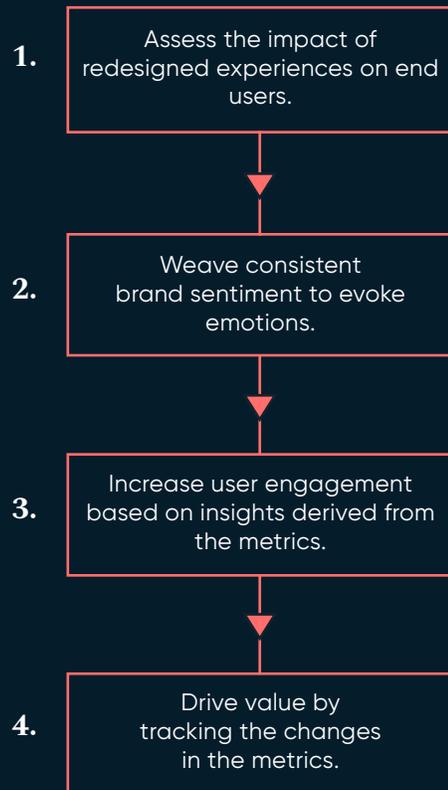
- **Mohan Krishnaraj**, Vice President, Global Head & Digital Design at Huemen

# Leveraging ROX to Quantify the Impact of Customer Experience

With customer experience now at the forefront, the need for a new metric is evident – something that appraises a brand strictly according to the experience it offers.

Return on Experience, or simply ROX, can work towards defining and qualifying investments that otherwise can't be measured. Additionally, it functions to comprehensively assess the overall business impact influencing experience-led investments in the future.

## Roadmap to Appraise the Value of Customer Experiences



# Heumen Helps Companies Analyze, Ascertain, and Engage

Engage with real connections in an ever-evolving digital world.

Solely designing for functionality cannot guarantee that a product or service will thrive. However, when the focus is shifted to designing for desirability, it's a fortuity for customer adaptation.

At Huemen, we're hyper-focused on the end user. When it comes to creating an experience, it's the impact on the end user that guides us. And that's why gathering customer feedback is vital – it's critical in designing and redesigning customer interaction models for a range of unforgettable experiences.

Besides assessing, analyzing, researching and resourcing, underpinning every activity that we do is a simple two-fold approach:

1. Knowing what our customers are looking for, and
2. Aligning our products, processes, and services to cater and fulfill customer end goals

**Because if you are not bent on considering every single product to build an amazing customer experience, you aren't doing enough to impact your business goals with your end users.**

## Solving Supply Chain Complexity Through Digital Experience



For Iptor, our aim was to enhance the experience of the supply chain through digital interfaces with the right call to action across all touch points.

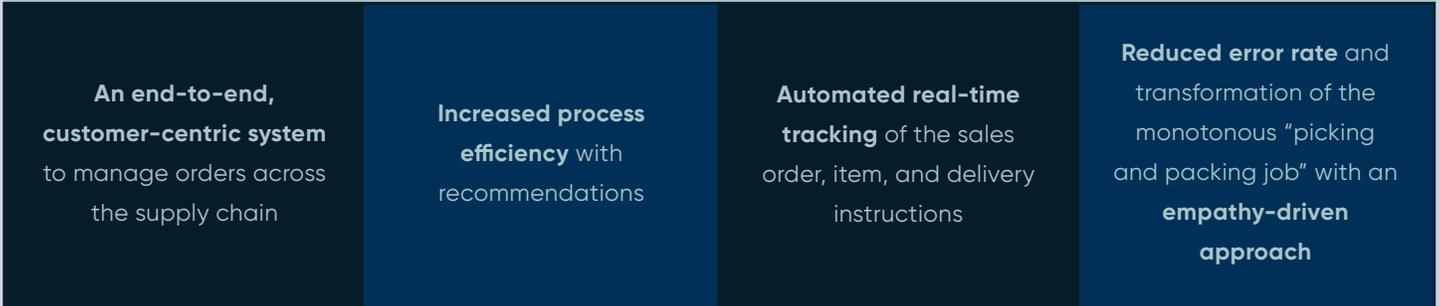
We brought together a range of different skill sets to **empathize, strategize, build, adopt, and engage with users at the heart of the process.**

Every persona in the Supply Chain Workforce was mapped with a role-based interface component to ensure each one has its own ecosystem to interact – Sales Order, Order Picking, and Order Packing.

We modelled workflows around well-defined customer journey maps and carried out discovery workshops with actual users to gather real-time contextual insights and understand how users consume Iptor's content.

The feedback received from extensive user testing was incorporated in the final product design, leading to an increase in user satisfaction.

## Our services culminated in:



A decade of designing experiences has shown that every outstanding product or service has a set of indispensable qualities – and they are our five pillars of experience excellence:

- 1. Empathy:** Understanding the consumer’s experience from their point of view.
- 2. Perseverance:** Transforming customer feedback into a rewarding reality across all touchpoints.
- 3. Personalization:** Driving emotional connections by adapting experiences that readily impact end users.
- 4. Consistency:** Doing away with customer frustration (friction) by tapping into innovative user interaction models.
- 5. Possibility:** Reimagining delivery patterns for a seamless experience across entities – partner groups, workforce, and end users in tandem.

“People tend to ignore designs that ignore people. The math is simple. Humans will always have to be at the heart of any design experience, and without that human factor, technology shall always remain inaccessible. Hence, designing experiences should inherently reflect the ethos of a business – integrating, aligning, and unifying multi-channel touchpoints to drive productivity.”

- **Mohan Krishnaraj**, Vice President, Global Head & Digital Design at Huemen

When we’re designing products for consumers, we measure the return on investments in customer and employee experiences. Why employee experiences? We have identified that **investing in and improving the employee experience drives better customer experiences**, as employees interact directly with customers, online and offline – they offer information, demos, advice and set the emotional tone and shape the overall consumer experience.

# Huemen Turns Brand Interactions Into Brand Love

Delivering exclusive experiences at consumers' fingertips.

Understanding that human beings are motivated by purpose, we create purpose-driven products and services to offer consumers something meaningful. Strongly rooted empathy-driven designs create lasting value for the workforce, improve process efficiency, and drive business growth. Perhaps most importantly, they drive better ROX.

"Seamless Information." "Easy Navigation." "Functional." "Intuitive." These are some of the words that guide our work on customer-centric design.

## Building the Foundation for Extraordinary Brand Experiences

Forging innovative digital solutions from concept to creation.

Huemen's approach is based upon pushing boundaries to create meaningful future-forward products and experiences that anticipate and accommodate tomorrow's needs.

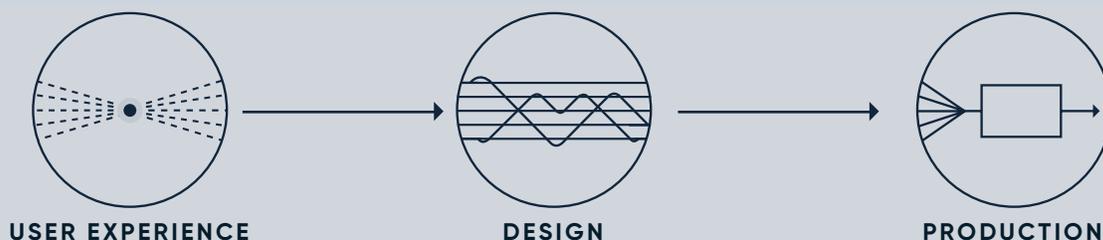
As part of the HARMAN family, we are known worldwide for our engineering solutions, and we are positioned to support the entire lifecycle of products, processes and service-oriented applications. From designing and prototyping to manufacturing and fulfillment, our services combine creative expertise with commercial awareness to build products that customers love.

"What you see is what you'll get! We are together on this journey, exploring countless possibilities across multiple platforms, applications, and emerging technologies to develop a product or service with no frills."

- Mohan Krishnaraj, Vice President & Global Head, Digital Design at Huemen

## Discover Our Development Process

With the lines between products, services, and user environments blurring, Huemen is focused on reimagining interactions and operations for growth, crafting integrated, immersive customer experiences that tear down the barriers, while constantly focusing on meeting customer expectations and ROX goals.



## User Experience

Our goal is to design products that are not only functional but also establish an emotional connection with the user. To achieve this, we include customers in the design process as early as possible. That way, we can work hand in hand while we test, design, and assess based on user behavior.

## Design

Our multifaceted team is comprised of researchers, engineers, designers, data analysts, product marketers, and writers who work together to build engaging products and never hesitate to innovate – therein lies the essence of a great design.

## Production

We work in tandem with industry experts and manufacturers to make everything accessible to potential customers, letting them decide what works for them, and then validating our design and implementation. We also adopt the digital twin concept, recreating systems and processes to optimize them.

“For Iptor, we have helped build one destination, the entry point for employees to track and monitor sales orders, order picking and packing. However, I don't think we'll ever have one destination for shopping and might have to settle for other destinations across supply chain management systems and that is what we are aiming for.”

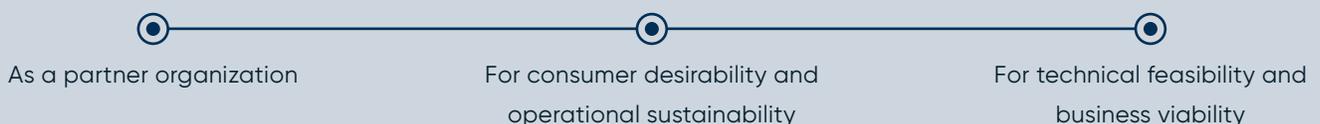
- **Mohan Krishnaraj**, Vice President & Global Head, Digital Design at Huemen

In addition to user experience, design and the actual production process, our methodology includes responsibility, chiefly in terms of creating sustainable products as well as accelerating the introduction of new solutions for the market.

## Ensuring a Successful Entry Into the Market

We create effective and coherent brand identities and curate brand communication strategies which includes the launch, alongside a bevy of brand building activities, hybrid launch events, community relations, and promotions.

As specialists crafting bespoke design experiences, we are the first choice for companies wanting to create meaningful experiences across digital, virtual, and physical touchpoints. In our line of work, we strive to attain balance across the following:



## Now Is the Time to Focus on ROX

The pandemic has changed consumers' buying behavior and decision-making processes for the long run. Companies looking to excel in this new environment will have to focus on ROX.

Relying on insights derived from ROX metrics in order to reorganize business models and approaches will undoubtedly yield powerful experiences, elevating the product or service value from the customer's perspective.

Now is the right time to collaborate with design experts and make the most of this opportunity to deliver experiences that enable frictionless interactions, coupled with empathy and compassion.



# IF YOU'RE READY TO BUILD SOMETHING AMAZING, HUEMEN CAN BRING IT TO LIFE

Regardless of where you are in your journey, from ideation to creation, we can help you turn your product idea into a commercial reality. If you start today, you can have a game-changing product ready to sell in 2022. Let's get started.

TALK TO HUEMEN

## huemen

Huemen Design is a leading global design agency that delivers meaningful, holistic, and human-centric experiences to give clients a competitive advantage. Huemen is a 200+ global team of the world's greatest problem solvers, strategists, thinkers, researchers and designers. Working as a thought leader and client partner, Huemen serves three key markets: Mobility, Consumer Products, and Digital Transformation Services. Based in New York City with six global anchor studios, Huemen leads and delivers world-class design research, multi-discipline product design and brand communications design for a broad range of clients, from startups to Fortune 500 companies.

**Contact: [hello@huemen.design.com](mailto:hello@huemen.design.com)**