Intraway: Preparing for The Age of Now

By: Scott St. John

We are now standing at the threshold of a new age. Today. Now.
An age where humans and the necessity of their interactions will diminish. An age where the physical gives way to the virtual. An age where technology will matter far more, and our value will change. This is an era where the systems we program will teach us, guide us, and do many of the things we once did. In fact, our dependence on it may become both our greatest strength and vulnerability.

The signs are all around us. We are already seeing the realization of artificial intelligence technology and application of it. There are over a thousand chatbots and virtual assistants today that can help us in a variety of ever-expanding ways. These examples signify a colossal change where the systems make decisions and the value of human interactions have been distilled down to the original development of the technology, and as a subsequent input source.

How we harness this technology is the key to our future. Automation in this context can help us contend with agricultural demands to feed the growing global population, analyze data from industrial IoT devices, and diagnose the spread of diseases. It can help economies thrive by helping businesses drive down costs, improve accuracy, and better serve customers. But as we enter this new age, we will have to contend with, and even anticipate, significant changes to what we deem today to be the norm.

The Now Consumer

Late last year, Amazon delivered its first packages by drone in the U.K. In a promotional video on the company's website, its First Prime Air Delivery boasts 13 minutes from click to delivery. This creates a new standard for fulfillment in the minds of all consumers. Minutes. Not weeks or even days, but minutes.
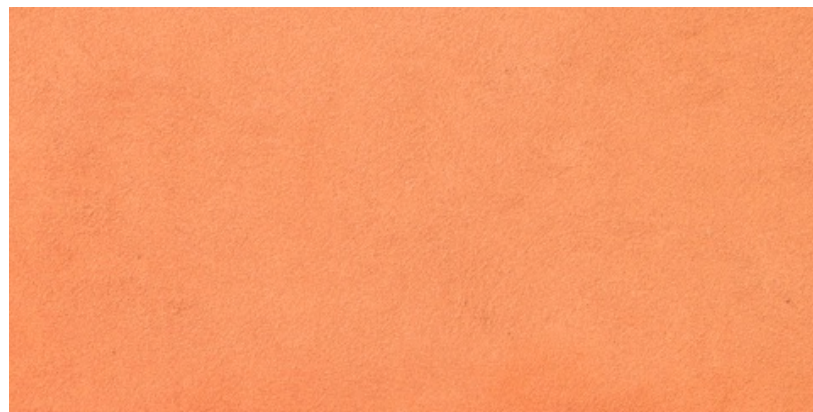
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Historically, retail reigned supreme and the in-store experience created the backdrop for big brands. Then, downtowns gave way to strip malls and big-box stores. The advent of e-commerce and app-commerce marked the shift to new, emerging methodologies and new buying behaviors. As online and application-based shopping continued to overtake retail, it marked the end of one era and the dawn of a new.

- The Key to CSPs Digital Success
- Universal Service Orchestration & Activation Brochure
- Mobile Service Orchestration Brochure
- Deploying Holistic Wi-Fi Technical Paper

As more and more Millennials come of age, this shift has become a monumental rift between legacy and contemporary. The bar has now been raised to rapid, point-and-click, and on-demand ordering with near instant fulfillment. And the differentiator is no longer brick and mortar or avantgarde interior design – but the experience itself.

We can learn a valuable lesson from these changes. [Retailers have tried to reinvent themselves and retrench](#) for ... but have ... fallen victim to the technology shift. The million ... ones that are succeeding are going so by embracing new technology and ... and the human factor. Because ... many of you who are reading ... ad ... native which gives them the luxury ... technology ...

The Principles of Digital Transformation

Legacy and innovation are the Yin and Yang of our industry which ... achieve harmony. Within every new innovation lies a seed of wisdom derived from legacy learning. One does not exist without the other. Service providers of all types and sizes wrestle with this overarching philosophy daily. But as the dawn of this new era falls upon us it has never been more important.

Pipeline recently had the opportunity to interview Steve Marsh, Chief Technology Officer for North America and Sandra Bobadilla, Program Manager at [Intraway](#). Fifteen years ago, Intraway developed its first DOCSIS Provisioning suite for Cablevision in Argentina. It has since become a leading provider of fulfillment solutions to service providers for service orchestration provisioning and activation for next generation services, with more than 55 deployments in over 20 countries. From their vast experience working with service providers of all sizes from around the world they have derived 7 Guiding Principles. They view these principles as the catalysts for innovation and the keys to digital transformation to content with the new era and The Age of Now:

1. Zero Touch – By its very nature, every human interaction is a delay and a chance for error. We simply can't aggregate the massive scale of data and analyze it as fast as today's systems; and systems always do as they are programmed to do. Delay and error poison the experience of The Now Consumer and are the antithesis of the Now Experience.

2. Self-serve, Self-healing and Self-managed – While every interaction has the possibility to be a positive one, it also has the probability it will be negative to some degree. Even the very best customer service experience, if and when a courteous and professional customer service representative (CSR) has access to all systems and the ability to solve a customer's problem, still requires effort and time on the part of the customer. The Now Consumer does not want to dial through automated or voice systems, pass security checkpoints, or wait. Moreover, they don't want to have to deal with service issues in the first place. The less they have to interact with their service provider, the better.

3. System Reliance vs. People Reliant – Relying on people relies on the systems that make it possible. Human interactions can be clogged with miscommunication, conflicting priorities and politics. In the Age of Now, there is no room for error, delay, or missteps. There is no place for the swivel chair. Systems must rely on and interact with other systems by design to share data and automate decisioning.

4. Real Time – All this must happen in The Now to achieve fulfillment in minutes and meet the expectations of The Now Consumer. Services must be designed so they are fulfilled as they are ordered, by way of the most efficient, optimal, and accurate path.

5. Portal for all Stakeholders – Customers, technicians, CSRs, and business stake holders need the tools to make end-to-end service management effortless. New systems must be designed with this in mind so that everyone involved with services are empowered to easily order, deliver, and manage them.

6. Metrics – Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) must be a byproduct of every operation. It's

essential to quantifying quality, identifying issues, and allowing other systems to react to changes. It's also an important source of data that can be turned into information that can be used to capitalize on new opportunities and continually improve the customer experience.

7. Indisputable Source of Truth – There must be a single, centralized source of indisputable truth. Inaccurate data creates a cascading effect of errors. New systems must recognize where this data lies and significant effort needs to be put on ensuring its accuracy. Without it, systems fail. System-to-system automation is required to keep the centralized, trusted data source consistently accurate.

These principles can enable service providers to transform and ensure they safely cross the technology chasm. Service providers can apply them to every new service, system, and implementation as we usher in this new era and prepare to serve The Now Consumer.

Application at work

Intraway has applied these principles to its leading orchestration solution, [Symphonica](#) as it has watched the technology evolve. They have helped service providers rapidly transform to offer new, innovative service offerings such as Fiber Access, Metro Ethernet, Internet of Things (IoT), Voice-over-LTE (VoLTE), Multi-screen TV, Software-defined Networking (SDN), and Network Functions Virtualization (NFV). It has also followed these principles in the architecture of their product.

Symphonica is a standards-based fulfillment platform that uses a single interface for northbound systems such as Business Support Systems (BSS), Customer Relationship Management (CRM), and Self-care applications. It contains connectors to commonly used network elements and a design studio for adding, building or modifying them – and sits in the center to facilitate communication from systems to other systems. It processes orders in real-time, using a centralized, BPM-based workflow engine. It features a stateful design to remain aware of services, network elements and changes to them; and automatically applies updates to inventory to provide better agile control and service design.

Solutions, like Symphonica help service providers transform by providing a bridge between the old and the new. They enable them to leverage their legacy, while capitalizing on new technology and are architected on the principles of transformation. They can be rapidly implemented to capitalize on new revenue and service opportunities, making them profitable in days.

The time is now

The Age of Now is upon us and consumer expectations have changed. Companies are embracing new technology, agile systems, and new technology to bridge the technology chasm. The days of days or weeks to deliver a service are gone. The expectations of The Now Consumer are high. How we harness technology will be directly equivalent to how well we succeed and the time to prepare is now.