

# Enable Intelligent Orchestration To Drive Differentiation And Growth

How Coordinated CX Strategy And Technology Delivers Competitive Advantage

A FORRESTER CONSULTING THOUGHT LEADERSHIP PAPER COMMISSIONED BY COGNIZANT, MAY 2024



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### Project Team:

[Jason Daniels](#),

Market Impact Consultant

Lillie Sinprasong,

Associate Market Impact Consultant

### Contributing Research:

Forrester's [Technology Architecture & Delivery](#) research group

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## Executive Summary

Customer experience is increasingly critical for organizations to get right as they navigate evolving customer expectations, organizational demands, and challenging markets. Why? Because delivering great CX is one of the key drivers of differentiation and levers to drive profitable growth across all industries.<sup>1</sup> Forrester data shows that higher CX scores correlate to increased customer retention, enrichment, and advocacy — and top-line revenue — regardless of industry.<sup>2</sup> Organizations stand to earn tens if not hundreds of millions of dollars in incremental revenue for every 1-point increase they achieve, according to Forrester's Customer Experience Index (CX Index™).<sup>3</sup>

But delivering consistently strong CX is difficult. In 2023, Forrester research revealed another decrease in CX quality for US firms as organizations struggled to measure CX initiatives, fill skills gaps, focus on customer strategy, and garner companywide support.<sup>4</sup> Current research confirms that companies require tighter internal alignment on CX priorities and understanding of customer needs. It's imperative that companies not only move past these barriers to avoid another decrease in CX quality in 2024 but also deliver superior CX to realize its transformational benefits.

This study shows how delivery of great CX can be achieved through **intelligent orchestration: a strategy, enabled by technology, which leverages data and AI to inform and automate across interoperable applications to create a dynamic experience ecosystem**. For this study, Cognizant commissioned Forrester Consulting to create a survey and maturity model that showed how leading firms differentiate themselves with intelligent orchestration to reap valuable customer and business benefits.

We found that firms must prioritize intelligent orchestration as a strategy to deliver exemplary CX and drive profitable growth. Doing so requires a balance of technology, data, and operational investments. Strategic planning and investments will prepare firms to quickly evolve with shifts in CX and embrace innovation (such as genAI) that will differentiate their business, transform CX, and accelerate growth.

## Key Findings

**Firms are missing key elements of CX delivery, and intelligent orchestration is the way forward.** Organizations are experiencing inconsistent CX delivery and a decline in CX scores. More than 80% of decision-makers say that their firm needs better alignment on CX priorities. Change is needed if firms wish to survive. They first need to understand intelligent orchestration so they can tie together their CX strategy, data, technology, and operations as one holistic ecosystem to enable superior CX, customer loyalty, and differentiated growth.

**Firms must invest in CX improvements now to future-proof their business for changes to CX.** Organizations that do not act now risk having ineffective CX strategies, technologies, operations, and data and AI practices. They will not be able to move quickly enough to harness AI innovation to drive CX improvements, and they will lose their competitive edge.

**Steps toward intelligent orchestration bring quantifiable business benefits.** Leaders — or firms classified as most mature with their intelligent orchestration practices — are more than 20% more likely than lagging firms to say that their customers trust them and that they consistently deliver relevant customer experiences. Leaders are also over 35% more likely than laggards to expect stronger customer satisfaction (CSAT), Net PromoterSM (NPS), and customer effort (CES) scores from their CX improvements over the next year.<sup>5</sup>

**Firms must assess their capabilities to know where to start with intelligent orchestration.** All organizations, irrespective of their maturity level, can take pragmatic steps to mature strategy, uplevel data practices, modernize technology, and streamline and automate processes. They will gain quantifiable customer and business value at every step of this journey.

## Firms Struggle To Deliver Superior CX

CX transformation brings quantifiable value to the business. For example, Forrester's CX Index measures how successfully a company delivers customer experiences that create and sustain loyalty.<sup>6</sup> Higher CX scores correlate to increased customer retention, enrichment, and advocacy — and top-line revenue, regardless of industry.<sup>7</sup> In addition, high-growth firms rate higher on CX best practices and focus more on delivering value for customers.<sup>8</sup> Forrester research also shows that organizations stand to earn tens if not hundreds of millions of dollars in incremental revenue for every 1-point increase they achieve in the CX Index.<sup>9</sup> Consequently, getting CX delivery right is a business imperative that leads to payoffs of greater customer lifetime value, differentiated growth, and competitive advantage.

However, firms do not deliver consistently strong CX. The average CX quality for companies in the US declined for an unprecedented second year in a row due to macroeconomic conditions, a skills gap, and changing customer expectations.<sup>10</sup> In addition, many organizations are losing focus on their customer strategies as leaders dismiss customer obsession as too big an initiative, merely a platitude, or something they claim to espouse but do not put into practice.<sup>11</sup> Exacerbating these issues, CX professionals often struggle to connect their initiatives to business results and demonstrate the ROI of CX efforts.<sup>12</sup>



**Just 1 in 4**

decision-makers strongly agree that their business is driven by a strategy focused on both CX and revenue growth.



**52%**

do not feel that their firm can intuitively anticipate their customers' needs.



**81%**

say that their organization needs better alignment on CX priorities.

This decline in CX delivery is an early warning signaling that firms are missing key capabilities and lacking organizational support. Our research confirmed these trends: Currently, 52% of surveyed decision-makers do not feel that their firm can intuitively anticipate their customers' needs, while 81% say that their organization needs better alignment on CX priorities. At this rate, firms will struggle mightily to evolve with rapid shifts in CX, embrace innovation like genAI, and accelerate differentiated growth. To address these trends and achieve the full business value of exemplary CX delivery, organizations must enact change now.

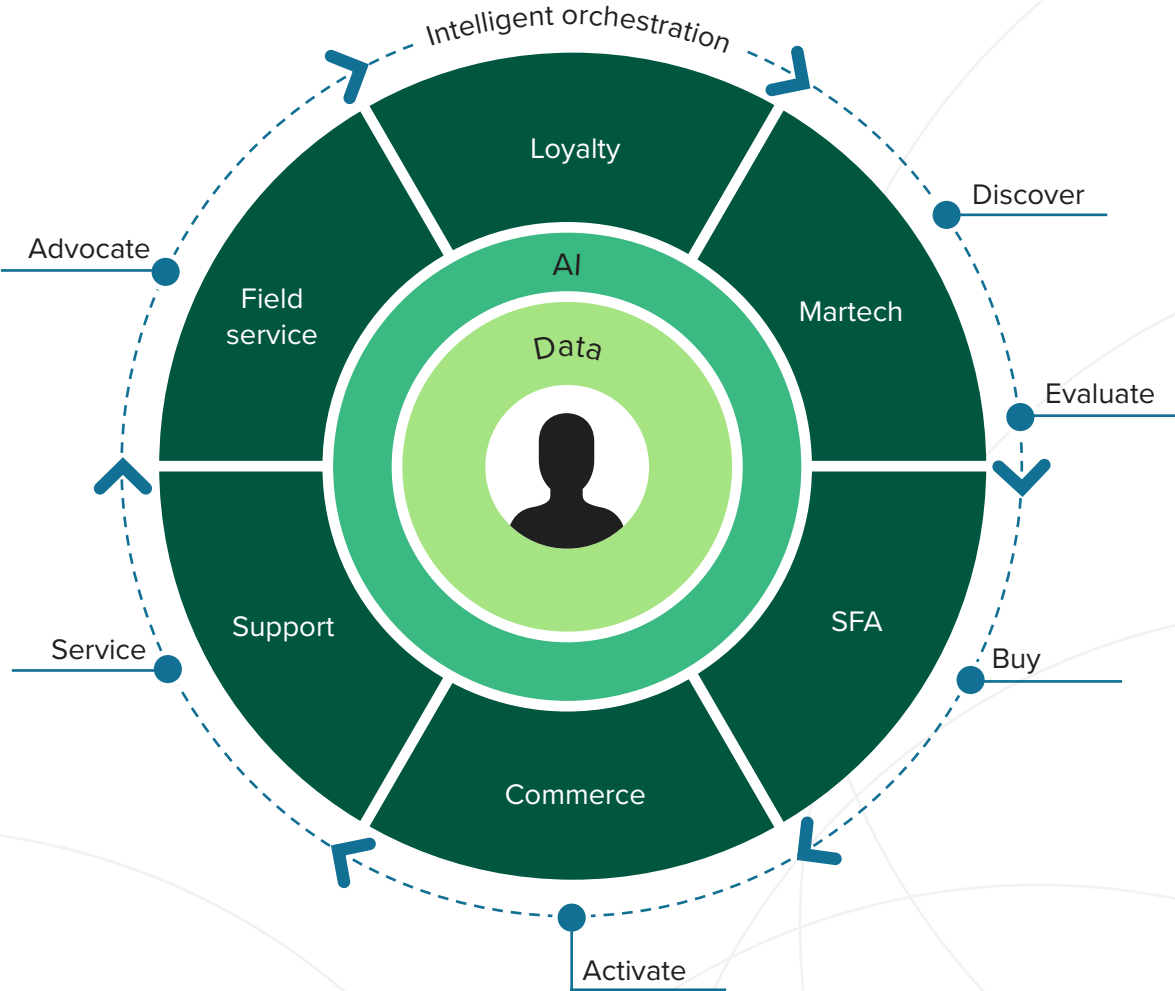
### **SUCCESSFUL CX DELIVERY REQUIRES INTELLIGENT ORCHESTRATION**

It is vital that firms invest in intelligent orchestration as a path to deliver great CX. Forrester defines intelligent orchestration as a strategy, enabled by technology, to deliver the right experiences in real time that provide customer and business value. It leverages data and AI to inform and automate across interoperable applications, creating a dynamic experience ecosystem.

Succeeding with intelligent orchestration requires a balanced investment and focus on technology, data, and operations. Executing on these improvements will allow firms to embrace the rising wave of AI innovation and transform CX in order to drive customer loyalty and accelerate growth. In surveying 769 CX decision-makers, we found that across multiple dimensions of CX operations, those who operate most effectively practice intelligent orchestration (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1

### The Intelligent Orchestration Lifecycle



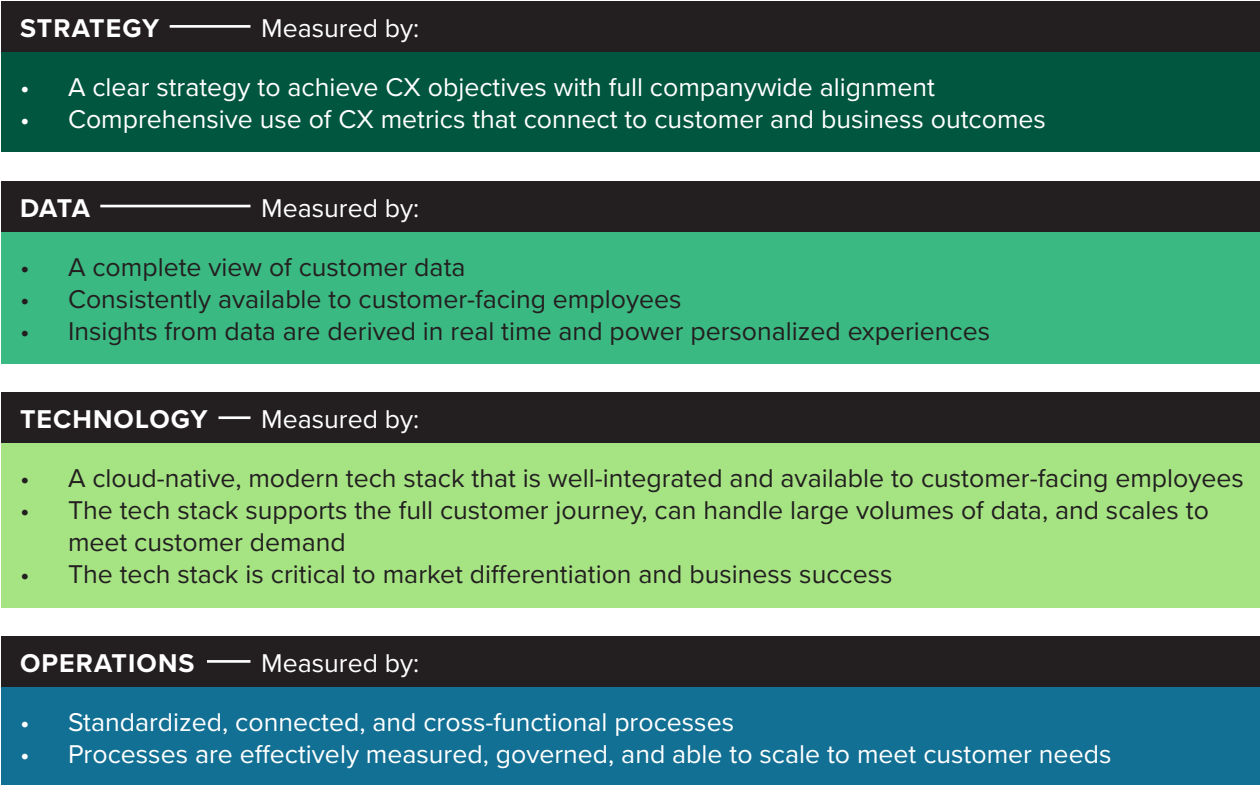
Base: 769 decision-makers with responsibility over or insights into CX and CRM strategies at their organization  
Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Cognizant, November 2023

# Understand The Foundation For Intelligent Orchestration

To differentiate their business, CX leaders must first evolve their state of mind around intelligent orchestration. Many may ask: Where do we sit today compared to competitors? How do we know what good looks like, and how do we get there? To start, CX decision-makers can use the following model to assess their maturity relative to the market. We scored responses across four dimensions for intelligent orchestration: strategy, data, technology, and operations (see Figure 2). From there, we classified respondents' companies into three categories based on their capabilities across these four dimensions: Laggards, Intermediates, and Leaders (see Figure 3). The next section describes what each tier represents from a maturity standpoint.

**FIGURE 2**

## Components Of Maturity

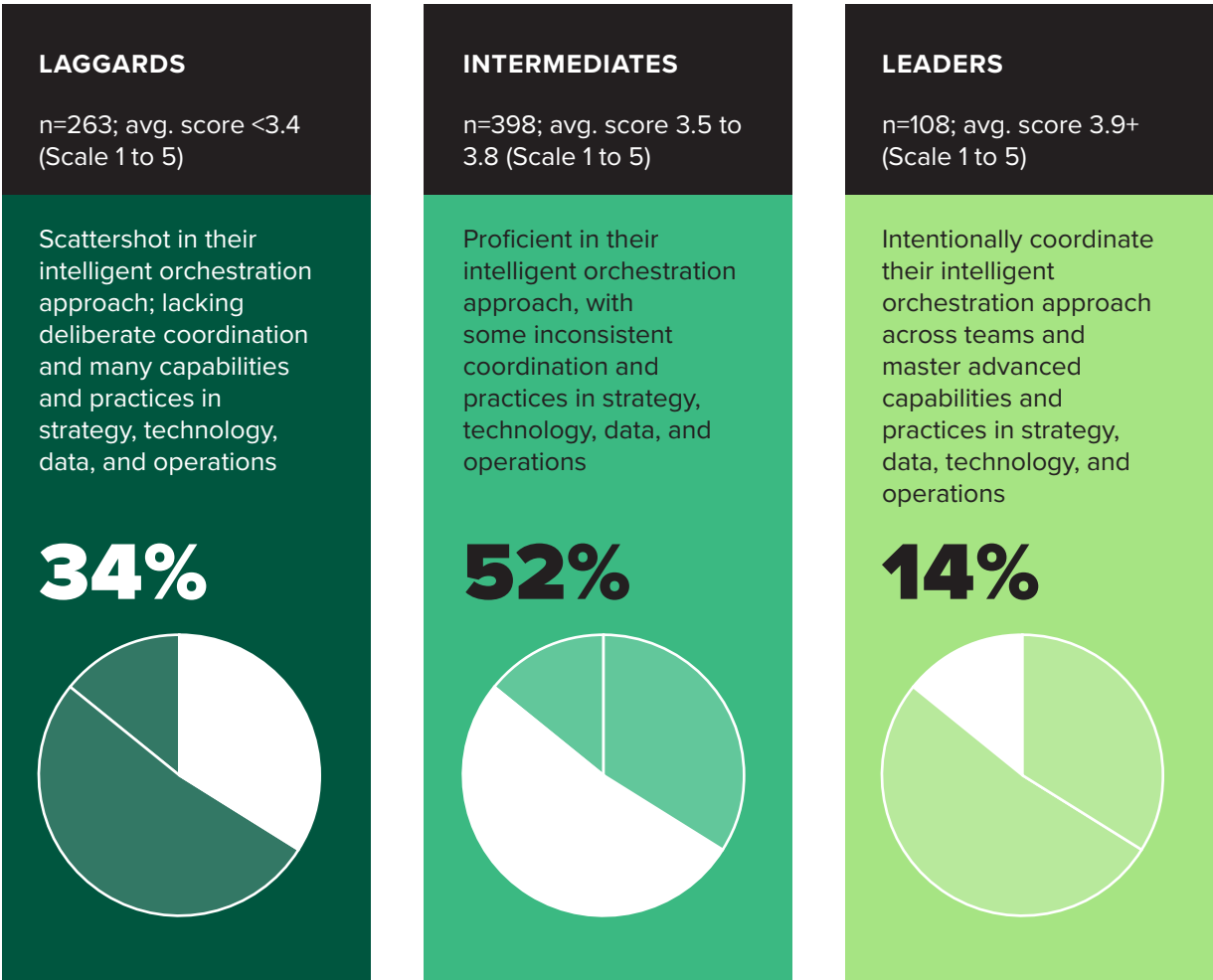


Base: 769 decision-makers with responsibility over or insights into CX and CRM strategies at their organization  
Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Cognizant, November 2023



FIGURE 3

### Intelligent Orchestration Maturity Tiers



Base: 769 decision-makers with responsibility over or insights into CX and CRM strategies at their organization  
Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Cognizant, November 2023

- **Leaders** comprise just 14% of surveyed decision-makers. Their organizations uniformly prioritize making business decisions that optimize CX: They measure CX outcomes (e.g., CES to measure ease of customer interaction and customer retention rate [CRR] to measure continued business), continually optimize for the best customer outcomes, and evangelize the value of CX initiatives throughout their firm. Leaders practice excellent governance of customer data, and 85%

of Leaders leverage real-time customer insights. Eighty percent have modern technology that delivers personalized experiences and supports customers through every phase of their buying journey. In addition, they foster a culture of cross-team collaboration and employ operating models and governance to achieve CX goals.

- **Intermediates** represent the largest share of respondents at 52% of the total surveyed. This group is proficient with CX strategy. For example, 88% prioritize making decisions that optimize the customer experience, and 76% state that their company has strong awareness of customer-oriented initiatives. However, Intermediates struggle to turn CX strategy into execution. Their data initiatives have room for improvement. Even though 69% equip their employees with a unified, 360-degree customer profile, only 55% leverage real-time customer insights. Similarly, only 47% are able to scale CX technology to meet fluctuating customer demand, and 54% support CX processes that span functional silos to support end-to-end customer journeys. Consequently, Intermediates lack the integrated systems, unified data, and process consistency required to deliver outstanding CX and create competitive advantage.
- **Laggards** struggle to execute on intelligent orchestration across their firms, despite understanding the value of CX. For example, less than half of Laggards (42%) have a clear strategy for how they will achieve their CX objectives. Their CX processes and technology are fragmented and cannot support the full customer journey. Their technology does not scale to meet fluctuating customer demand and is not viewed as strategic. For example, only 33% say that their CX technology is central to their differentiation from competitors. Customer data is siloed, and less than a quarter of respondents' firms use AI.

Firms can consider the aforementioned attributes and capabilities to understand where their organization sits on the intelligent orchestration maturity spectrum. For more information on key attributes and capabilities by maturity tier, please see the figures in the appendix.

## Learn From Intelligent Orchestration Leaders To Optimize CX Delivery

Next, firms can consider the following intelligent orchestration practices that separate great from lackluster. Leaders have more mature practices for intelligent orchestration across strategy, data, technology, and operations compared to Intermediates and Laggards. More effective execution of these practices ultimately enables more effective CX delivery (see Figure 8). Firms that focus on how the following practices are executed will establish the foundation for competitive differentiation in their respective industries and enable accelerated, profitable growth.

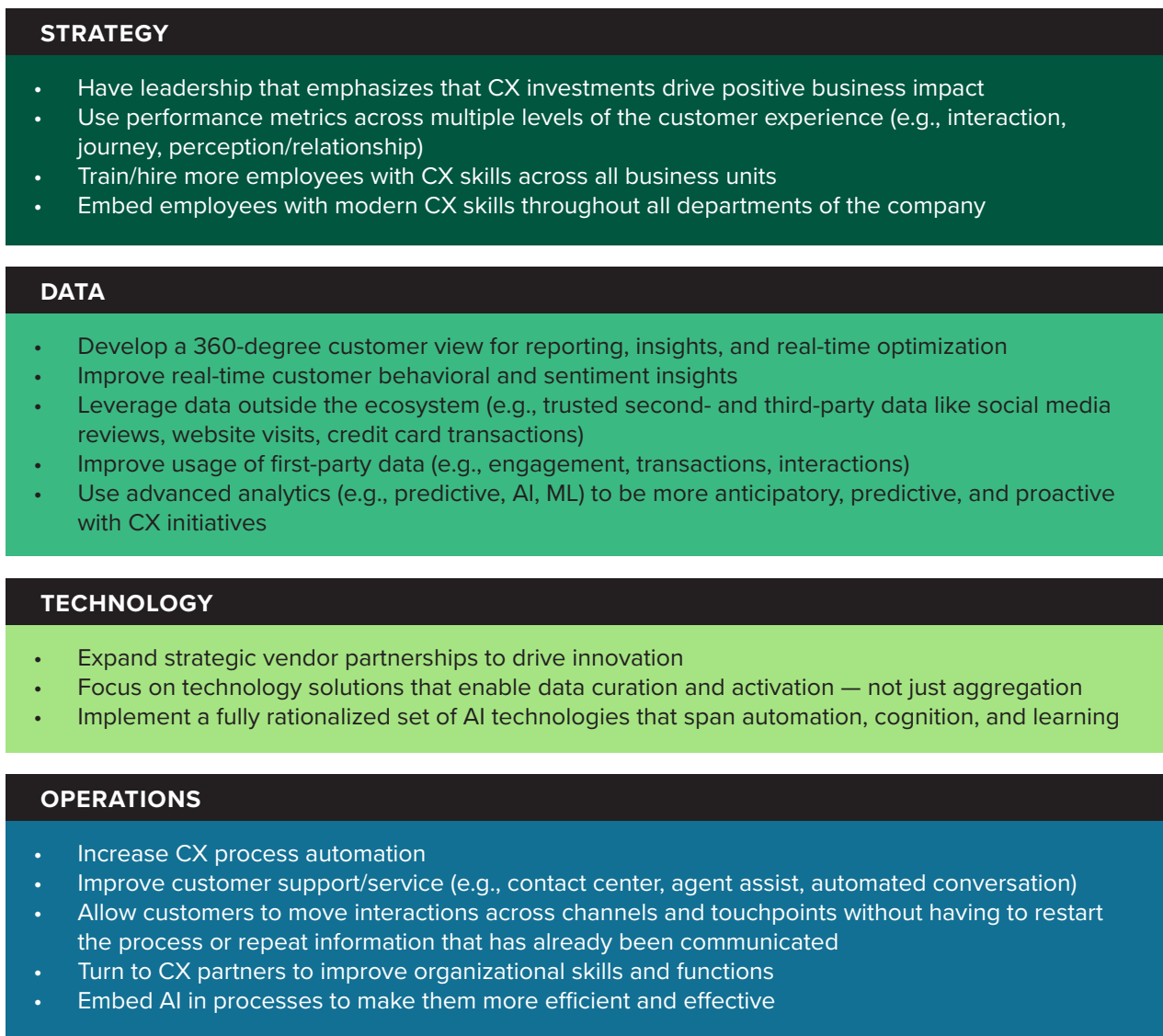
- **Strategy.** Leader firms are committed to the business value delivered by CX excellence. Their C-suite is 44% more likely than Laggards to emphasize that CX investments drive positive business impact. They understand the value of CX talent and are 50% more likely than Laggards to hire more employees with CX skill across all business units and embed CX-focused employees throughout all departments of their firm.
- **Data.** Leaders understand that clean, complete, and actionable data supports CX goals. They are 110% more likely than Laggards to develop a 360-degree view of their customers and 69% more likely to leverage trusted second- and third-party customer data to enhance customer profiles. More mature data practices fuel analytics success, and it is no surprise that Leaders are 44% more likely to use advanced analytics with their CX initiatives.
- **Technology.** Leaders boast aligned, enterprisewide technology practices that are scalable and agile. They fund technology initiatives based on measurable business outcomes. Compared to Laggards, they are 44% more likely to expand strategic vendor partnerships to drive innovation. They invest in and experiment with emerging technology to improve and differentiate the customer experience. Finally, they are 60% more likely than Laggards to implement a fully rationalized set of AI technologies that span automation, cognition, and learning.
- **Operations.** Leaders invest in processes that support the full customer journey and improve internal alignment and reporting across shared

CX goals. They look for opportunities to increase productivity and effectiveness. For example, they are 83% more likely than Laggards to increase CX process automation and 48% more likely to embed AI into processes. Leaders also heavily invest in CX skill building and incentivizing and rewarding CX performance across teams.

**FIGURE 8**

**Key Actions Of High-Maturity Firms**

Leaders separate themselves from others by taking the following actions to support their CX goals:



Base: 769 decision-makers with responsibility over or insights into CX and CRM strategies at their organization  
 Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Cognizant, November 2023

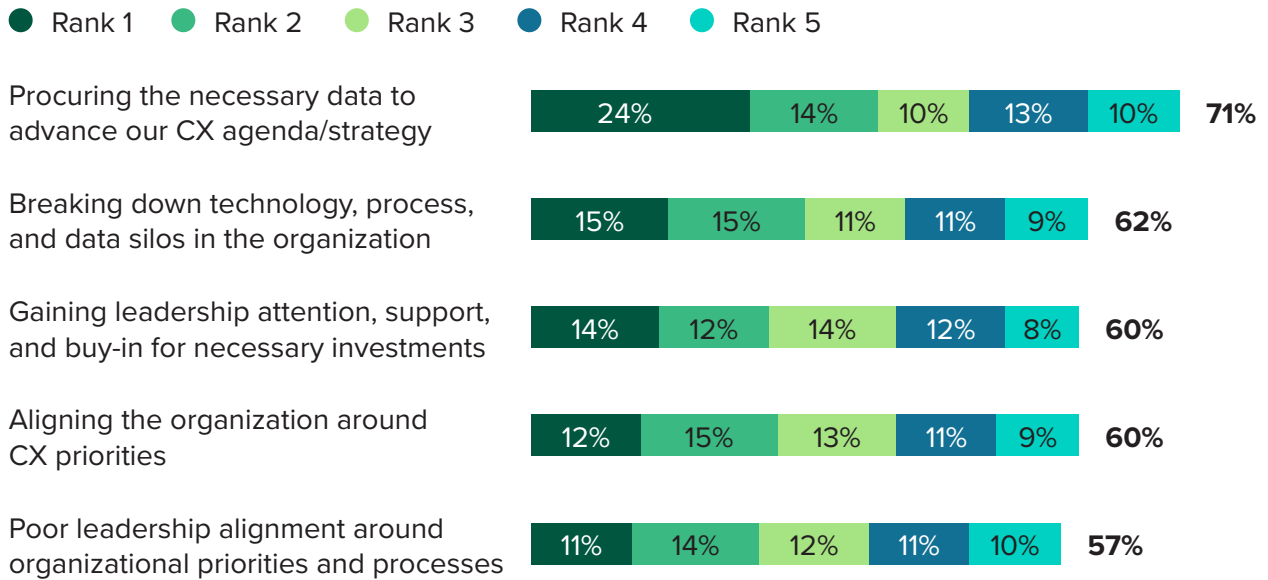
## TAKE NOTE OF KEY BARRIERS ON THE WAY TOWARD INTELLIGENT ORCHESTRATION

With mature Leader organizations as a benchmark for intelligent orchestration, CX professionals can gather a better sense of how to improve their own CX delivery. However, regardless of their firm's current intelligent orchestration maturity, they face common challenges delivering CX in line with customer expectations. This study found that respondents' firms are burdened with inefficient, manual processes; duplicate technologies that are neither easy to integrate nor change; and data locked in functional silos that cannot be accessed to yield real-time insights that drive business outcomes. As decision-makers grapple with these obstacles, they're feeling the effects. Survey respondents say they experience the following challenges across key dimensions of intelligent orchestration maturity, ultimately leading to weaker customer satisfaction, lower productivity, and poor executive-level decision-making that hamper their ability to compete:

- **Strategy.** Delivering outstanding CX requires that all company employees — from executive leadership on down, irrespective of their organizational silo — are aligned on providing value for the customer. It is no wonder that CX decision-makers made particular note of people-related challenges at their organizations, suggesting that executive support for key CX practices is lacking and volatile at best (see Figure 9). These challenges include gaining executive buy-in, connecting the organization around its CX priorities, and suffering from poor leadership alignment.
- **Data.** Customer-facing employees need a consistent view of the customer. In addition, they need real-time customer context in order to personalize experiences, messages, and next steps. However, seven in 10 respondents say their organizations have difficulty procuring the necessary data to advance their CX agenda/strategy. Meanwhile, 46% of decision-makers call out an inability to grasp real-time customer context. Laggards, whose data is locked in organizational silos, are more likely to lack access to the data required to execute on their CX strategies. Even more mature firms struggle with this as just 41% integrate holistic data practices to fuel business decision-making.

**FIGURE 9**

## Top CX Strategy Challenges



Base: 769 decision-makers with responsibility over or insights into CX and CRM strategies at their organization

Note: Showing top five responses

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Cognizant, November 2023

- Technology.** Firms must adopt modern, scalable cloud technologies that are open, can easily integrate with other front- and back-office applications, and support industry-specific privacy and security standards. At present, decision-makers say they rely on a sprawling mix of overlapping technologies to support the customer journey. More than half of respondents (53%) say that influencing the CX technology roadmap is a challenge, indicating that tech procurement and improvements are often misaligned with CX strategy. Nearly half (48%) also note that security and risk concerns stifle execution on CX initiatives.
- Operations.** CX success is about efficiently and effectively supporting the entire customer journey. Yet most survey respondents acknowledge that their business operations need better efficiency and agility. Survey data shows that nearly two in three decision-makers (62%) say breaking down organizational silos across technology, process, and data is a top challenge,

while two in five decision-makers call out organizational inabilities to standardize and automate CX processes, leverage in-house CX expertise, and connect technologies across the business. These challenges point to the need for greater consistency and reliability of CX operations. This is especially true for Laggards, which are more likely to note inabilities to scale operations given ineffective and disjointed systems.

“We can gain better employee satisfaction by investing in CX, and further, we can get better data quality and scale up the operations.”

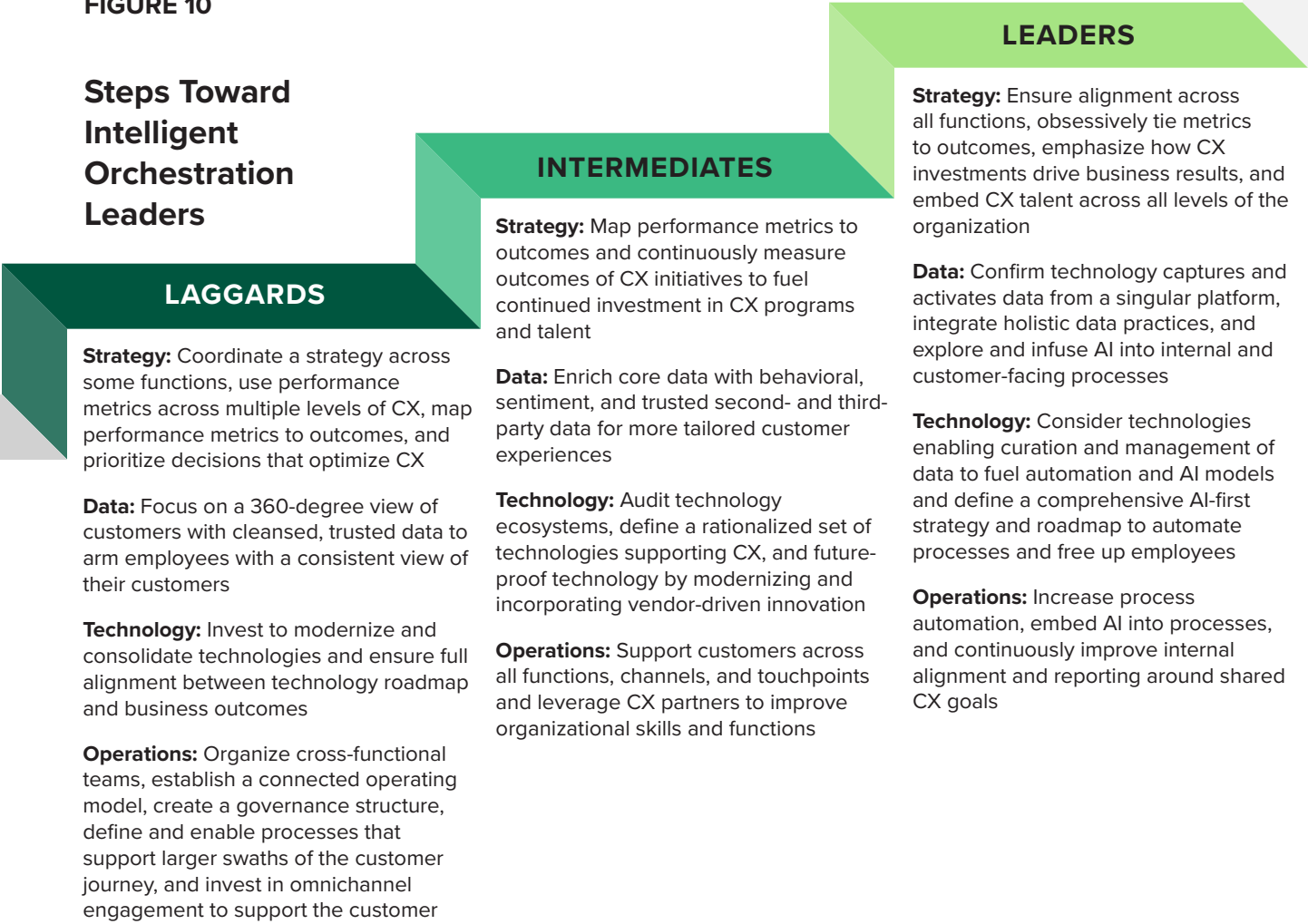
VICE PRESIDENT, TECHNOLOGY, AUSTRALIA

# A Focus On Intelligent Orchestration At Scale Drives Positive Outcomes For All Firms

Regardless of where a firm sits in its CX journey, there is significant runway for growth. From Laggards to Intermediates to Leaders, all organizations can take steps to strengthen their commitment to delivering exemplary CX by adopting intelligent orchestration at scale. This leadership initiative requires the buy-in and alignment of each CX function and team throughout the organization as no single entity can lead the charge alone (see Figure 10). Firms that invest in intelligent orchestration at scale will enable superior CX, customer loyalty, and differentiated growth into the future. Here is how to get started.

**FIGURE 10**

## Steps Toward Intelligent Orchestration Leaders



Base: 769 decision-makers with responsibility over or insights into CX and CRM strategies at their organization  
 Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Cognizant, November 2023



## STRATEGY

The North Star? A strategy that rests on adopting intelligent orchestration at scale to enable delivery of superior CX. This strategy will only succeed with the right executive leadership who can drive cross-organizational alignment.

- **For Leaders:** Leaders execute well on CX strategy but stumble on aligning their strategy across all functional silos and products. They must do better, obsessively focusing on tying CX measurement to customer and business outcomes. Leadership must continue to emphasize how CX investments drive positive business results. Investment in CX talent and embedding this talent at all levels of the organization is critical. Leaders must continue to increase budgets and commitments for CX initiatives to stay ahead of the pack.
- **For Intermediates:** Intermediates have a strong companywide awareness of customer-oriented initiatives, but they lack a clear path forward to achieve their CX objectives. They must map performance metrics to CX outcomes and continuously measure the outcomes of CX initiatives to help fuel continued investment in CX programs and talent.
- **For Laggards:** Laggards are siloed by function or product, and as a result, they lack companywide awareness of customer-oriented initiatives. To start, they should coordinate a strategy across some functions or products to achieve CX objectives. They must use performance metrics across multiple levels of the customer experience and map those metrics to CX outcomes, prioritizing business decisions that optimize the customer experience.

## DATA

Intelligent orchestration leverages data to fuel AI models. Data hygiene is vital — it must be complete and accurate. Data must also be well governed so that it is trusted and its use complies with regulations.

“[We’re increasing current investment in CX-related initiatives to] build an omnichannel strategy to win more customers on our side.”

DIRECTOR,  
FINANCIAL SERVICES, US

- **For Leaders:** Data practices at Leader organizations are scalable, performant, and adaptive. Leaders empower employees with 360-degree customer profiles and leverage real-time customer insights. They must ensure that CX technology can capture and activate customer data from a single platform (e.g., a customer data platform [CDP]) and integrate holistic data practices to fuel business decision-making. Finally, Leaders need to explore AI for automation, cognition, and learning and start infusing AI into customer-facing processes.
- **For Intermediates:** Foundational data practices are in order. Intermediates must focus on enriching core customer data with behavioral, sentiment, and trusted second- and third-party data to yield a better understanding of their customers. Real-time data can be used to better recommend the right experience, message, and interaction to deliver value at every step of the customer journey.
- **For Laggards:** Because their data is fragmented and captive in functional or product silos, Laggards must focus on developing a 360-degree view of their customers with cleansed, trusted data to arm employees with a consistent view of their customers.

## TECHNOLOGY

Intelligent orchestration requires interoperable applications coupled with data and AI to create a dynamic experience ecosystem.

- **For Leaders:** CX technology is critical to market differentiation and business success. Leaders rely on modern cloud technologies to support customer journeys and collect and analyze large customer and behavioral datasets. However, Leaders should not overlook technologies that enable data curation and management to fuel automation and AI models with clean data.

Leaders must define a comprehensive AI-first strategy and roadmap that automates processes and allows employees to focus on strengthening customer relationships.

“[CX investment is about] staying ahead of changing trends [and] adopting new features and services that align with shifting customer preferences.”

VICE PRESIDENT,  
MANUFACTURING AND  
MATERIALS, NEW ZEALAND

- **For Intermediates:** Intermediates should audit their technology ecosystem and define a fully rationalized set of technologies that support their CX efforts. They need to future-proof their technology by continuously modernizing and incorporating vendor-driven innovation. They must expand strategic vendor partnerships and use those relationships to co-innovate for their firm's and vendors' mutual benefit.
- **For Laggards:** Laggards must solidify the foundations of their CX technology stack. They need to invest in upgrading, refreshing, and consolidating technologies. They must also ensure full alignment between their technology roadmap and business outcomes to help prioritize investments.

## OPERATIONS

Intelligent orchestration relies on aligned processes and operations that deliver customer and business value.

- **For Leaders:** The vast majority of Leaders already operate with a culture of cross-team collaboration and have connected operating models and governance mechanisms to achieve CX goals. Their CX processes are standardized and supported across channels and touchpoints. Leaders must take process management to the next level by increasing the degree of process automation, embedding AI into processes to make them more effective, and continuously improving internal alignment and reporting around shared CX goals.
- **For Intermediates:** Most of Intermediates' CX processes are standardized, and their operations can scale to meet customer demand. While they measure the outcomes of these processes, they do not support the full customer journey. Intermediates must focus on supporting customers across all functional silos, channels, and touchpoints. They should leverage CX partners to improve organizational skills and functions.
- **For Laggards:** Laggards operate in a world of siloed functions and products. They must start by shifting behaviors to be more customer-centric: organizing cross-functional teams to create better experiences

for customers, establishing a connected operating model, and creating a governance structure. They must also define and enable processes that support larger swaths of the customer journey. Lastly, they need to invest in omnichannel engagement to seamlessly support customers as they cross touchpoints and channels.

“[We’re increasing current investment in CX-related initiatives to] make an impression in a congested market and continue using CX to make our brand more trusted.”

**DIRECTOR, RETAIL, NEW ZEALAND**

## Conclusion

The fastest way to overcome inconsistent and incomplete CX delivery practices, drive customer loyalty, and produce lasting business outcomes is to adopt enterprisewide intelligent orchestration. Firms that do not act now to adopt intelligent orchestration practices will struggle with fast-approaching CX shifts and will not be able to capitalize on the wave of AI technologies that are transforming CX delivery. In turn, they will be unable to quickly pivot based on changing customer expectations and sways in macroeconomic conditions, and they risk losing their competitive edge.

Effective intelligent orchestration requires continuous effort and improvement. Market conditions, technology innovations, and consumer preferences frequently shift, and firms must be ready to adapt and evolve. Intelligent orchestration helps business decision-makers take the proper steps to future-proof their organizations with the right strategy, technology, data, and operational processes to nimbly address any changes that may come. First, it takes a mandate from executive leadership and a total commitment from every employee to break through these barriers and succeed.

By connecting CX strategy, data, technology, and operations as one holistic ecosystem, firms enable superior CX delivery, fueling increased customer retention, enrichment, and advocacy — and differentiated growth, no matter the industry. Improving their intelligent orchestration practices empowers organizations to deliver more tailored customer experiences and earn customer trust. Doing so also leads to greater customer outcomes — such as stronger CSAT, NPS, and CES scores — as firms delight their customers. The link is clear: When organizations consistently deliver great CX, they enable stronger top-line revenue, accelerated growth, and competitive advantage as they contend with the next wave of CX transformation.

## Appendix A: Methodology

In August 2023, Cognizant commissioned Forrester Consulting to evaluate the state of intelligent orchestration at global organizations. Forrester conducted an online survey with 769 decision-makers at the manager level and above at organizations in North America, EMEA, and Asia Pacific with responsibility for insights into CX and CRM strategies at their organization. Respondents were offered a small incentive as a thank-you for time spent on the survey. The study began and was completed in November 2023.

## Appendix B: Demographics

REGIONS	
North America	52%
EMEA	24%
APAC	24%

BUSINESS MODEL	
Only B2B	21%
Primarily B2B with some B2C	21%
Roughly equally split between B2C and B2B	20%
Primarily B2C with some B2B	18%
Only B2C	19%

TOP INDUSTRIES	
Financial services, banking, and/or insurance	20%
Healthcare	12%
Retail	9%
Life sciences	8%
Manufacturing and materials	8%
Consumer product goods/services	8%
Energy, utilities, and/or waste management	7%

ANNUAL REVENUE	
\$5B or more	75%
\$1B to \$4.99B	25%

RESPONDENT LEVEL	
C-level executive	12%
Vice president	34%
Director	46%
Manager	8%

RESPONSIBILITY FOR CX STRATEGY	
Final decision-maker	34%
Part of a team making decisions	33%
Influence decisions	33%

TOP DEPARTMENTS	
Customer experience	13%
Sales	13%
Services	12%
IT	12%
Marketing	11%
E-commerce	11%
Strategy	10%

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

## Appendix C: Key Attributes And Capabilities By Maturity Tier

### KEY ATTRIBUTES DRIVING CX STRATEGY MATURITY

	LAGGARDS	INTERMEDIATES	LEADERS
Strategy	Limited	Coordinated	Aligned
	Siloed by function or product	Tactical alignment across functions and products	Differentiating
Organizational alignment	Siloed by function or product	Somewhat aligned across functions or product	Fully customer-centric with cross-functional alignment
CX metrics	Few used	Use a broader set of CX	Comprehensively used to measure multiple levels of the customer journey
		Inconsistent focus on CX outcomes	
CX metrics correlated to outcomes	Ad hoc	Loosely aligned to business outcomes	Full alignment
Alignment of business decisions to CX	No alignment of business decisions to customer experience	Inconsistent alignment of business decisions with customer experience outcomes	Business decisions optimize the customer experience
Awareness of CX initiatives	Limited awareness	Inconsistent communications and awareness	Consistent, companywide awareness
Customer insights	Siloed by function or product	Consistently gathered	Consistently gathered
	Human judgment used to drive CX strategy	Human judgment and data used to drive CX strategy	Data-driven CX strategy

Base: 769 decision-makers with responsibility over or insights into CX and CRM strategies at their organization  
 Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Cognizant, November 2023

## Appendix C: Key Attributes And Capabilities By Maturity Tier, Cont.

### KEY ATTRIBUTES DRIVING DATA MATURITY

	LAGGARDS	INTERMEDIATES	LEADERS
Data for CX initiatives	Incomplete, batched, and disconnected	Connected and available	Ubiquitous and real-time
Data platform	Siloed Duplicative across functions	Common data platform accessible across a subset of CX technologies	Common data platform accessible across all CX technologies
Data architecture	Inconsistent capture and activation of data	Capture and activation of data across a subset of CX technologies	Scalable, performant, and adaptive
Data governance	Ad hoc Inconsistently defined and followed	Coordinated practices	Mature and continuously evolving
Unified customer profile	Incomplete and siloed	Connected across CX tech	Comprehensive Continuously available
Personalization	Static	Contextual and triggered	Real-time, curated, 1:1
Real-time insights	Reactive, rules-based	Proactive	Anticipatory Available across the customer journey
AI	Tactical Focused on productivity gains	Predictive	Adaptive Continuously optimized CX outcomes

Base: 769 decision-makers with responsibility over or insights into CX and CRM strategies at their organization  
 Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Cognizant, November 2023



## Appendix C: Key Attributes And Capabilities By Maturity Tier, Cont.

### KEY ATTRIBUTES DRIVING CX TECHNOLOGY MATURITY

	LAGGARDS	INTERMEDIATES	LEADERS
CX strategy	Supporting narrow objectives	Compelling Fueling modern CX practices	Differentiating Critical to business success
Customer journey support	Disconnected	Supported with some disconnects	Fully supported Continuously evolving
Access	Available to some customer-facing employees Unable to consistently serve customers and personalize experiences	Available to all customer-facing employees Inconsistent access to data to serve customers and personalize experiences	Available to all customer-facing employees to serve customers and personalize experiences
Integration	Limited	Connected	Unified
Omnichannel access	Multichannel	Directed journeys	Channelless Customers can freely move across channels
Industry-specificity	None	Some use (e.g., AI models)	Industry-first approach
Cloud-native	Limited	Cloud adopted for modernization	Cloud-native approach to CX technologies
Scalability	Unproven	Somewhat scalable and performant but with known limitations	Robust and performant technology Able to scale to meet fluctuating demand
Agility	Rigid	Flexible	Adaptive and evolving

Base: 769 decision-makers with responsibility over or insights into CX and CRM strategies at their organization  
 Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Cognizant, November 2023

## Appendix C: Key Attributes And Capabilities By Maturity Tier, Cont.

### KEY ATTRIBUTES DRIVING OPERATIONS MATURITY

	LAGGARDS	INTERMEDIATES	LEADERS
Process standardization	Specific to a function or product	Standardized across functions or products	Continuously evolving based on outcomes
Process coverage	Ad hoc	Somewhat consistent across channels and touchpoints	Seamless coverage
Customer journey support	Not supported Siloed by function or product	Supported with some disconnects	Fully supported
Process optimization	Ad hoc measurement of process outcomes Process improvements are primarily internally focused	Outcomes measured for some processes Improvements are inconsistently tied to customer outcomes	Outcomes measured for all customer processes Improvements optimize customer outcomes
Process scalability	Unproven	Somewhat scalable and performant but with known limitations	Robust and performant Able to fully scale operations
Cross-functional team organization	Rigid	Connected	Continuously evolving
Collaboration	Limited	Cross-functional	Adaptive
Governance and operating models	Ad hoc Inconsistently defined and followed	Coordinated practices	Mature and continuously evolving

Base: 769 decision-makers with responsibility over or insights into CX and CRM strategies at their organization  
 Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Cognizant, November 2023

## Appendix D: Supplemental Material

### RELATED FORRESTER RESEARCH

[The State Of Customer Experience Teams, 2023](#), Forrester Research, Inc., November 1, 2023

[Generative AI Essentials For CX Leaders](#), Forrester Research, Inc., September 26, 2023

[Planning Guide 2024: Customer Experience](#), Forrester Research, Inc., August 1, 2023

[The Future Of CRM](#), Forrester Research, Inc., June 6, 2023

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[The Promise Of Generative AI For CX](#), Forrester Research, Inc., July 11, 2023

## Appendix E: Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Source: [The ROI Of CX Transformation](#), Forrester Research Inc., February 7, 2024

<sup>2</sup> Source: [How Customer Experience Drives Business Growth, 2023](#), Forrester Research Inc., October 13, 2023

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Source: [The US Customer Experience Index Rankings, 2023](#), Forrester Research, Inc., June 12, 2023

<sup>5</sup> Net Promoter, NPS, and the NPS-related emoticons are registered US trademarks, and Net Promoter Score and Net Promoter System are service marks, of Bain & Company, Inc., Satmetrix Systems, Inc., and Fred Reichheld.

<sup>6</sup> Source: [Forrester's Essential Customer Experience Index Research](#), Forrester Research Inc., February 22, 2024

<sup>7</sup> Source: [The ROI Of CX Transformation](#), Forrester Research Inc., February 7, 2024

<sup>8</sup> Source: [Forrester's Essential Customer Experience Index Research](#), Forrester Research Inc., February 22, 2024

<sup>9</sup> Source: [How Customer Experience Drives Business Growth, 2023](#), Forrester Research Inc., October 13, 2023

<sup>10</sup> Source: [The US Customer Experience Index Rankings, 2023](#), Forrester Research Inc., June 12, 2023

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Source: [The ROI Of CX Transformation](#), Forrester Research Inc., February 7, 2024



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