

The Customer-Centric Post

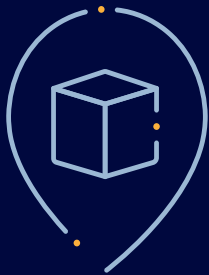


# HOW POSTS CAN DELIVER ON CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE



escher





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## Introduction to:

# CONSUMER-CENTRIC POSTAL SERVICES

When you're craving a meal from your favorite restaurant, the 'channel' you're going to use doesn't instantly spring to mind. Instead, you ask yourself, "Do I want to dine in, take it away or order from my phone?"

The strategy behind the 'always-on' consumer and how they interact with a growing number of industries is dominated by the idea of channels – especially omnichannel. Digital, physical and everything in-between is providing greater accessibility to products and services.

But is omnichannel the best available option?

The growing number of channels means that customers are increasingly empowered in the global market place, so Postal Operators are vying for their business against competitors that are using the latest technological innovations. If Posts capitalize on the available technology too, the result will be a 24/7 connection with its users, fuelled by:

- ✔ Counter Automation
- ✔ Self-Service Kiosks
- ✔ Mobile Point of Service Solutions
- ✔ Pick-Up/Drop-Off (PUDO)

However, we've come to rely so heavily on developing these channels that we've forgotten the point behind them: best-in-class customer service.

Customer-centric Posts is the targeted evolution of generalized omnichannel strategies, and they're empowering Postal Operators to fine-tune the consumer experience to unmatched levels.

Rather than simply providing options, innovative organizations are taking it one step further and leveraging technology to personalize the customer journey. For example, they're offering a coupon through a mobile app in real-time when a returning customer drives by their favorite restaurant.

By using big data and information gathered from the full suite of digital solutions available, Postal Operators can quickly respond to the needs of their users, improve the value of their services and develop long-lasting loyalty in a market where it's slipping away.

In this eBook we'll explore the core fundamentals of consumer experience, and the four phases and varying technologies that Posts must account for as they craft their engagement strategies.

INNOVATIVE POSTS  
ARE USING  
TECHNOLOGY TO  
PERSONALIZE THE  
CUSTOMER JOURNEY.

## Evolution of customer service in Posts

# FLASH SALES. LOYALTY REWARDS. FREE SHIPPING.

These are the eCommerce trends that businesses are capitalizing on, and they are fueling consumers' growing need for personalized convenience. It's revitalizing the retail industry, and propping up its estimated \$4.9 trillion global market valuation by 2021, according to Statista.

The trend has also shone a spotlight on the consumer experience (CX). Postal Operators are responsible for meeting faster delivery times due to eCommerce, putting greater demand on their services.

But the brand loyalty and the subsequent spike in revenue that retail is experiencing hasn't been fully realized by Posts. Parcel volumes have expanded by only 5 percent during the same time that business-to-consumer (B2C) eCommerce has enjoyed a 17 percent growth rate, according to SAP.

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DATA ANALYTICS  
ALLOWS POSTS TO  
REINVENT THE  
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE  
AND IMPROVE BRAND

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### SHIFTING FROM SHORT- TO LONG-TERM INNOVATION

Posts are people-first businesses, and sustained revenue growth in the industry relies on meeting customers' needs. That doesn't just mean getting a package from point A to point B.

Innovative organizations are elevating their omnichannel efforts into a strategy that closely resembles customer-centricity. The difference between the two comes down to the personalization and optimization of the buyer's lifecycle.

Where omnichannel has more or less come to represent digitalization, customer-centric strategies take it a step further by collecting and analyzing data to curate consumers' journeys to their specific needs – it's letting Posts be at the right place at the right time.

Using big data, Posts can implement new and innovative opportunities to meet consumer demand. But it's only through this type of granular analysis that Posts can reinvent the customer experience and improve brand loyalty, while at the same time accommodating the increase in parcel and mail volume.

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# LEVERAGING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION TO BENEFIT THE CONSUMER

**B**etter engagement with a brand commonly results in a better customer experience, but what drives those successful interactions?

A 2016 study by McKinsey & Company, "The four pillars of distinctive customer journeys," revealed there are four key factors in the ideal consumer journey:

- ✔ **Focus:** Posts need to focus on solving the biggest problems for their customers, instead of opting for wide-sweeping change for the sake of modernization.
- ✔ **Simplicity:** Consumers' schedules have grown increasingly hectic, and companies' services or offerings should reflect the lack of time their shoppers have.

POSTS NEED TO IMPLEMENT STRATEGIES THAT PROMOTE THE FOUR KEY ASPECTS OF THE IDEAL CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE.

- ✔ **Digital-first:** People want to be able to start their journey from their smartphone or device and finish it at the Post Office or agency outlet.
- ✔ **Perception:** Word of mouth marketing has been proven to be wildly effective, which positions brand appeal and loyalty as key indicators of an excellent customer experience.

Effective customer engagement strategies exhibit qualities of all four pillars. Its popularity is clearly gaining momentum among a Postal industry that thinks eCommerce will have the greatest impact on its success or failure over the next 10 years, according to the Escher Future of Posts survey.

Roughly 71 percent of Posts are planning on introducing Self-Service Kiosks in the next 12 months or have deployed them already, and one-fifth of respondents have the technology on their roadmap. Furthermore, nearly 70 percent of Posts offer some sort of mobile service at customers' doors, simplifying their journey.

The trend is also allowing employees to cater more closely to customer needs and provide a better in-store experience. A major reason behind this is the fact that multiple channels are available, reducing their job requirements and increasing their professional agility.

## The four critical service areas in customer-centric Posts


The ideal customer engagement strategy for Posts takes into consideration the four key phases of mail and parcel service. Each cornerstone has technologies that can greatly enhance, personalize and optimize the customer experience; collaboratively, they are best-in-class solutions for engaging with customers.



## Posts Solutions



**COUNTER  
AUTOMATION**



**SELF-SERVICE  
KIOSKS**



**MOBILE  
(POS)**



**PUDO**



# MAKING MAIL AND PARCEL PREPARATION SIMPLE

The first phase of creating customer-centric Postal services is likely to be the most time-consuming for consumers. A great customer experience hinges on quick but impactful transactions when and how it suits the customer best.

## THE CHALLENGE:

Streamlining preparation through a variety of channels, allowing people to start and finish their journey wherever suits.

Introducing technology in the preparation of mail and parcels is key to making Posts easy and friendly to use for younger generations. Letting them start a transaction digitally and end it physically is one of the ways Posts can match the functionality of eCommerce. Customers are now taking control in multiple locations through a variety of solutions.

**Counter Automation:** Start the customer journey off on the right foot by making it simple for customers to complete their purchase while saving time.

**Self-Service Kiosks:** Offer a wide array of products and functionality at people's disposal. Now, 24/7 Post Offices powered by Self-Service Kiosks are becoming more popular and provide even greater access.

**Mobile POS:** Allow customers to schedule and manage retail transactions on-the-go with one tap of the screen so they can avoid lines and interact with Posts on their terms.

**PUDO:** Manufacture flexibility to foster a more engaging customer experience by digitally equipping third-parties with the ability to manage transactions, placing Posts where consumers need them to be.

STARTING A TRANSACTION DIGITALLY AND ENDING IT PHYSICALLY IS AT THE HEART OF ECOMMERCE.



# ENSURING PEOPLE CAN SEND PARCELS AND MAIL WITH EASE

There isn't a place you can't deliver a package to, but sending from anywhere in the world is a different story. Rigid organizations have yet to evolve their services to turn the act of sending parcels into an enjoyable consumer experience.

## THE CHALLENGE:

Expanding the reach of Posts to provide an optimized variety of options for people to send parcels and mail from.

Customer-centric Postal services hinge on availability. There's no more important characteristic than being able to send mail effortlessly from a seemingly limitless number of locations. Posts are fusing automated technology with greater physical presence to offer consumers the ability to send a parcel or letter 24x7x365.

**Counter Automation:** Expands the ability of staff to meet a wide variety of consumer demands with ease through its highly customizable software that centralizes services and automates back-office tasks.

**Self-Service Kiosks:** Turn the Post Office into a self-service check-out by giving people the ability to complete the entire information and payment process on-screen at any hour of the day.

**Mobile Postal Worker:** Accept packages and letters from the doorstep of a home or business by equipping mail carriers with the tools to facilitate transactions on-site.

**PUDO:** Grow the physical footprint of Posts at an affordable cost by accessing thousands of retail outlets to provide drop-off locations that better suit customers' needs.

OPTIONS FOR SENDING MAIL SHOULD MATCH THE GLOBAL REACH OF POST.





# DELIVERING BY THE CUSTOMERS' RULES

Customer-centric Posts are reinventing the most critical part of the consumer experience: mail and parcel delivery. Ensure that the most important part of Postal services can be accessed from a variety of locations, and give employees the agility to meet increasingly complex demands.

Roughly 37 percent of respondents to KPMG's 2018 Retail Survey view booking a timeslot for delivery as highly important – enough to make two in every five consumers shop elsewhere if it isn't an option. Meeting this consumer demand is critical to support climbing parcel and mail revenue growth during the eCommerce era.

ENSURE THAT THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF POSTAL SERVICES CAN BE ACCESSED FROM A VARIETY OF LOCATIONS.

## THE CHALLENGE:

Giving customers the ability to dictate when, where and how they'll receive their mail, and providing up-to-the-minute real-time updates.

**Counter Automation:** Give employees the speed needed to maintain productivity and exceed expectations in light of rising activity related to eCommerce.

**Self-Service Kiosks:** Offer a 24/7 Postal experience by giving consumers the ability to access and complete a wide range of administrative functions at any time of day or night.

**Mobile POS:** Give mail carriers the ability to find optimized routes, let recipients know exactly when the mail is arriving and designate safe spots or neighbors where packages have been dropped off to ensure first-time delivery.

**PUDO:** Streamline pick-up and delivery of packages and parcels for efficiency and give customers the ability to find the nearest location through their consumer app.

# RETURNING GOODS WITH A STRESS-FREE EXPERIENCE

As the volume in goods sold through eCommerce grows, so too will the frequency of returns. Posts must make it easy for shoppers to send back items and parcels without disrupting the reverse logistics supply chain.

## THE CHALLENGE:

Giving customers the ability to dictate when, where and how they'll receive their mail, and providing up-to-the-minute insights on when it can be expected.

Innovative Postal Operators are creating Post Offices geared for eCommerce, with 24x7x365 functionality, an on-site dressing room and Kiosks to return products. Returns are more common than ever, with almost one-third of respondents to the KPMG survey indicating they'd return at least one item from their purchases during Black Friday. Optimizing that aspect is key to developing a great consumer experience.

**Counter Automation:** Ensure each experience with the Postal Office is consistent and easy by digitalizing the process so consumers can accomplish

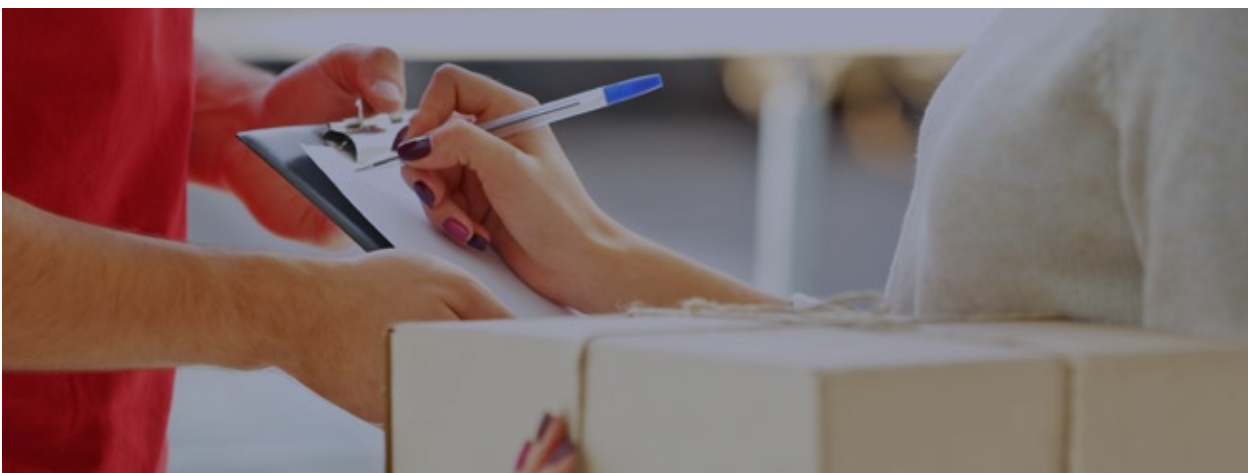
multiple tasks.

**Self-Service Kiosks:** Give consumers the ability to manage return details from the tap of a screen, centralize transactions for a smoother journey and alleviate resourcing concerns.

**Mobile POS:** Allow shoppers or businesses to return items the very next day, giving mail carriers all the tools they need to carry out everything necessary in a traditional return.

**PUDO:** Let people drop off items that need to be returned on their terms through a sprawling network of properly equipped third-party retail outlets that have various opening and closing hours.

POST OFFICES ARE NOW GEARED FOR ECOMMERCE WITH 24x7x365 FUNCTIONALITY.





# HOW MODERN POSTS DRIVE CUSTOMER LOYALTY

Posts around the world haven't ignored the need for a more engaging consumer experience. Building an all-inclusive customer journey is becoming essential to maintain competitiveness in the eCommerce era.

## USING DIGITAL PLATFORMS TO POSTS' ADVANTAGE

Data is the new gold, and consumer engagement strategies thrive off analytics. By moving services to digital platforms, Posts can capture vital information that fuels better decision-making.

In turn, Posts better understand consumers' habits. This allows them to meet their mail and parcel needs, whether it be for new touchpoints, services or different operating hours.

The trend is also enabling Posts to build comprehensive loyalty programs that reward transactions in an era where most people are shopping online anyway. Organizations can capitalize on the greater reliance on Postal services by ensuring there are an array of viable options available that meet

the consumers' long list of varying demands.

Now, the employee experience is improving due to previously laborious tasks becoming less strenuous, or being eliminated entirely.

## EXPLORING THE BENEFITS OF IMPROVED CONSUMER EXPERIENCE

Taking the time to improve the consumer experience will benefit Postal Operators as the world becomes more reliant on their services.

A well laid out customer experience strategy can:

- ✔ Increase customer loyalty through personalized services and a carefully designed reward program.
- ✔ Create better customer experience for consumers.
- ✔ Optimize the journey to reduce wait times and encourage more transactions.
- ✔ Support the workforce's agility by equipping them with intuitive tools to manage greater demand.
- ✔ Increase employee satisfaction by making their jobs easier.





# WHY ESCHER?

At Escher, we understand Post. We live in a busy world, and our lack of time shouldn't stop us from connecting with friends and family, or picking up parcels and letters. Innovative customer experiences fuse best-in-class technology with personalized strategies to give people the choices they need when they need it most.

Escher has developed Postal service technology since 1989 for Posts around the world. We have extensive knowledge of drawing up a digital architecture to meet the evolving needs posed by the workforce, customers and the industry in general, and then successfully deploying the solutions to achieve maximum adoption rates.

## ESCHER HAS FOUR POINT-OF-SERVICE SOLUTIONS THAT REVOLUTIONIZE THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE:



**COUNTER  
AUTOMATION**



**SELF-SERVICE  
KIOSKS**



**MOBILE  
(POS)**



**PUDO**

ECommerce isn't going away anytime soon, but customers could be. Customer-centric solutions make interacting with Posts simpler than ever before, and its benefits are becoming clearer with every passing day.



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