

Customer convenience at whatever the cost

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In a retail environment, brands have to engage with their customers in a seamless manner to ensure that they not only remain relevant but also provide a service that makes the user experience more valuable.



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Two recent incidents, where customers have lashed back at well-known brands for bad customer service, have put the need for improved processes in the spotlight. Customers are no longer willing to accept sub-standard service and the proliferation of social media is making it much easier for them to make their grievance known.

Customers do not like waiting in long queues and companies have to ensure that they put measures in place to streamline the way in which they serve them. This is particularly relevant in a retail banking environment, but is also now shifting to other areas such as payment kiosks. In a recent statement, the City of Ekurhuleni announced that it would be rolling out kiosks, allowing residents to pay for their municipal accounts via cash, debit or credit cards.

In today's world, it is all about convenience. The pace of life continues to increase and customers want to be able to transact with organisations in a quick, seamless manner to save time. This will not only result in a happy customer, but will also reduce the cost to serve the customer.

Collaborating with the right service provider is critical in ensuring that kiosk deployment runs smoothly. Many of our clients know the result they are looking for, but do not have the resident knowledge, experience and skills to bring the complete solution together. This is where a strategic partner will guide you through the process, ensuring success of the rollout. Kiosk deployment need not be complicated, but that there are some considerations to keep in mind. One's point of departure must always be the customer. Unless one is presenting a compelling offer to them, they will have absolutely no reason to alter their shopping habits and this will result in failure.

Planning is critical and as much time should be spent on this as the actual kiosk introduction. Many companies fail to

differentiate between the pilot stage and scaling stage, creating expectations that cannot be met. In addition to that, companies need to realise that no first-time kiosk rollout is perfect and research is critical. You also have to allow enough time to observe the impact of the kiosk before refining the process and then continuing with the rollout.

Finally, location is of utmost importance. The location of the kiosk will to a large extent determine user adoption and here, again, a strategic partner will be able to advise you on the best positioning.

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