

How to improve the digital customer journey and

LEVEL UP YOUR CONVERSION

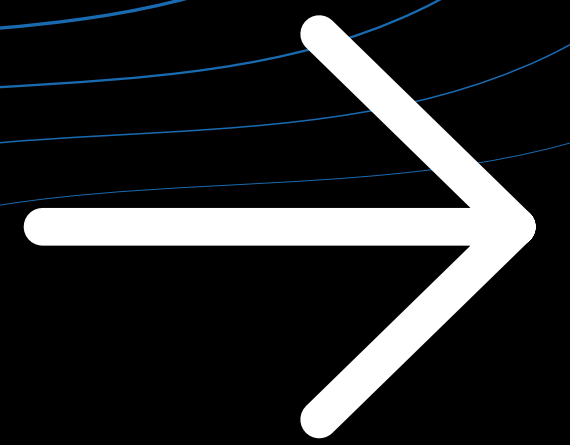


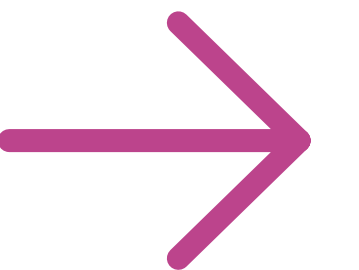
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“Improving your customer journey? This is the role of a Digital Experience Platform”

Almost every business has the objective of acquiring new customers and increasing revenue with existing ones. They try to achieve that goal with a fully or partly digital customer journey.

That is where the challenge emerges; how do you ensure that all touchpoints are well aligned? What customer information do you collect and how do you ensure proper deployment of that data further down the customer journey? How do you get the different applications you need to do this to work together properly? The right design of a Digital Experience Platform (DXP) can only be achieved by combining marketing and IT expertise.





1

Why is **DIGITAL EXPERIENCE A CHALLENGE?**

In a digital world, you have to continuously exceed the expectations of your (potential) customers. It is the only way to stay relevant. After all, your competition is just a click of the mouse away. In practice, this is much easier said than done. As a consumer, you often find that digital customer journeys falter.

1 Why is digital experience a challenge?

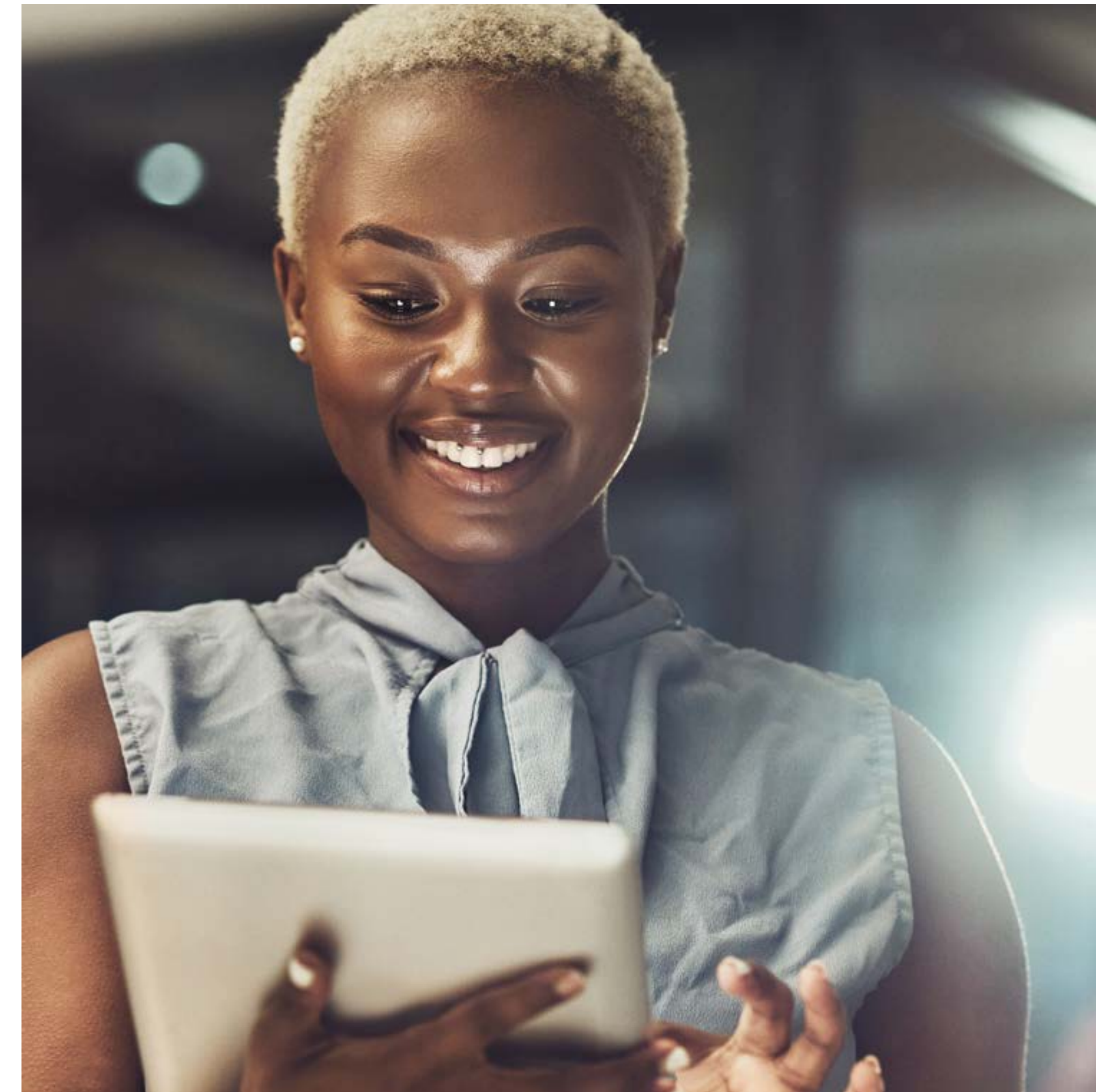
For example, you may see offers come up for products that do not appear to be in stock in your size or desired configuration. In addition, there are products that do not match your interests, and the supplier could have known. Or despite the offer being relevant, you can only order using an account you created a long time ago, but what email address and password was that again? There are dozens of examples like this, where investments in search engine optimization (SEO), search engine advertising (SEA), retargeting or digital newsletters are lost due to a lack of conversion.

Lots of applications, data, content and touchpoints

The fact that there are many opportunities for improvement is not surprising, since practical difficulties in having all elements of a customer journey properly aligned are abound. Especially when that customer journey occurs offline in addition to online. The number of channels has exploded in a relatively short period of time. Take the gigantic offering of social media platforms, for instance. The number of touchpoints (customer contact moments) has increased dramatically as a result.

And the amount of content you need to deploy in order to reach (potential) customers in a relevant way has grown proportionately. How to manage all that content and how to make sure that the right customer or prospect receives the right message on the right channel? The amount of customer data has grown proportionately as well. After all, you collect information every time you are in touch with the customer. How do you capitalise on all that data in such a way that it actually leads to more conversions?

Finally, the number of applications deployed in the domain of marketing and sales has grown proportionately as well. In the past, most companies could do just fine with a CMS for the website, a CRM package for customer data and an email marketing application to submit newsletters. But today's application landscape is a lot broader than that. That functionalities does your company need and which ones are unnecessary for you? What application strategy is best: will you go for best-of-breed or opt for one or two core applications to cover the majority of the functionalities you need?





2

Get your challenge

UNDER CONTROL WITH A CLEAR STRATEGY

The question is: how do you get this challenge under control? How do you ensure that all employees in a marketing or sales role align their activities, and shape and monitor the customer journey together? And how do you support all of this with a DXP?

2 Get your challenge under control with a clear strategy

Clear strategy

It all starts with a clear marketing and sales strategy, which is of course derived from the organisational strategy. Every company wants to increase their revenue by attracting new customers, increase the revenue gained from existing customers and reduce churn. But this has to be considered in the context of other challenges facing the organisations. Consider, for example, labour market tightness, which demonstrates the need to automate work that used to be done manually. Your marketing and sales strategy focuses your efforts and formulates what goals you are aiming for as well as how you intend to deliver on them.

Analysing the ‘as is’

The next step is an analysis of the as-is situation. Of course, organisations are already using marketing and sales applications with varying degrees of satisfaction. This satisfaction is often determined only to a small extent by the application itself, as bad applications hardly exist anymore. Poor processes, however, remain commonplace. These processes are often what causes the applications to be poorly deployed. For this reason, we always start by conducting a thorough analysis of the present situation. What does the customer journey look like for each customer group? What applications are being used? And what processes can be distinguish? How are those processes being supported by the applications?

Formulating the ‘to be’

Now you can determine where the organisation wants to go and how this goal can be supported by a DXP. How do we translate the strategy into objectives in terms of marketing and sales? How do we then translate this to policy and how do we execute on that policy? We like to use the TWO model, which stands for Technology, Working method and Organisation. After all, these three factors are intertwined. As stated above, poor technology barely exists anymore. Its success is mostly determined by the working method and organisation.

Target architecture and roadmap

The next step is to design a target architecture: what architecture do you need to support the customer journey? Which of your current applications are aligned with your target architecture? What applications can we say goodbye to? What functionalities remain to be implemented with new software? This is why the roadmap for how to convert the ‘as is’ to the ‘to be’ situation is inherently connected to the target architecture of a DXP.

“We always start by conducting a thorough analysis of the present situation”

2 Get your challenge under control with a clear strategy

Choosing a Digital Experience Platform (DXP)

The strategy and target architecture determine where the focus in your marketing and sales policy will lie and what role is reserved for which channels. Based on this outcome, we can determine which software best supports the organisation's ambitions and DNA. There is never a single truth in this regard. Multiple options present themselves, each with their own budget, timeline and challenges. The goal is to arrive at a choice supported by marketing, IT and management alike.

NBA *makes regulations and personal goals insightful for its members*

In the ideal scenario, you assume a new target architecture aligned with core applications such as ERP. But replacing the application landscape is not always possible or even desirable. The Royal Netherlands Institute of Chartered Accountants (NBA) was dealing with this exact question. They made a small enquiry around resources and management migration. The existing environment was taken as a starting point, without compromising on the end goal. Based on that existing situation, we then worked towards a target architecture in manageable steps, using existing applications as much as possible.

A photograph of two men sitting at a desk in a modern office. The man on the left, wearing glasses and a tan shirt, is laughing with his hands clasped. The man on the right, wearing a purple sweater, is also laughing, leaning forward. A laptop and some papers are on the desk. The background shows office shelves and windows.

3

How to **IMPLEMENT DIGITAL EXPERIENCE**

The journey from the 'as is' to the 'to be' situation requires good preparation from the organisation and consists of several stages. We do not deploy the ideal solution in one go. Instead, we realise this step by step, starting with a Minimum Viable Product (MVP).

Mapping customer journeys

The first step in realising an MVP is to map the customer journeys of different customer groups: what types of customers can we distinguish and what customer journeys do they make? What (digital) touchpoints do they use in the process? We then translate these customer journeys into a design for the digital solution. We do this with the agile methodology, in design sprints. The emphasis in this regard is on collaboration between our client's marketing and sales team and Conclusion Experience's digital experts.

Technical and visual design

Central to the design sprints is the question of how marketing and sales staff will be working with the DXP. After all, employee experience starts with a good design of the marketing and sales processes, supported by the right workflows. The technical design is therefore accompanied by a visual design, which makes it clear to everyone exactly how the new processes are organised and who is expected to take what actions and when.

Development

The final step in this phase is setting up the DXP and the solution we build 'on top' of it; i.e. development. Only at this stage do we start working on the technology. We choose the appropriate technologies based on the selected strategy. We can often use the existing applications, but implemented completely differently. As stated above, there is always a gap between the 'as is' and 'to be' situation. You can never have all your requirements met from the start; the change is simply too big to implement all at once. This is why we start with the basics - an MVP - which is then gradually expanded.

3 How to implement digital experience

WWF Nederland increases number of donors and donations with new website

WWF Netherlands had been lagging behind expectations for some time in terms of the number of donors and donations. This was partly because the method of fundraising had changed and WWF Netherlands had failed to respond accordingly. In addition, WWF wants to inspire people to contribute to conservation and protection of nature themselves by participating in collective action such as a beach clean-up or buying sustainable products in the WWF shop. The charitable organisation approached Conclusion Experience with the request to achieve these goals through a better online presence.

Together, WWF's marketers and Conclusion Experience's digital marketing experts developed new customer journeys and created a visual design for the new marketing processes. Conclusion Experience translated this design into a technical design for a Digital Experience Platform based on just two tools: Optimizely and Salesforce. This allows for all content, marketing automation, personalisation

and e-commerce to be easily managed in one CMS. An entirely new website was designed, including an online store with sustainable products. The website is continuously improved based on the way visitors navigate the site. Furthermore, visitors are presented with a personalised website, which is composed based on their preferences and clicks. Consequently, the website is always aligned with the customer journey of that specific visitor. The result: a 32 percent growth in the number of donors, a more than tenfold increase in the number of donations and a revenue increase in the online store with sustainable products of over 400 percent.

WWF wants to inspire people to contribute to conservation and protection of nature themselves by participating in collective actions.

Partner more important than tooling

It is important to choose a partner who offers multiple areas of expertise and multiple applications, to prevent you from ending up in a lock-in. In addition, your choice of tooling must take into account your future ambitions. You do not want to design a platform that will get in the way of your aspirations in the future. But creating a platform with so many options that most remain unused, should be avoided as well.

From expertise to coherent approach

Most marketing and sales tooling today offers so much functionality with so much power, that users find themselves completely lost. Digital marketing has become such a broad field, that it gave rise to many areas of expertise. It takes a strategic approach to ensure that those areas of expertise all work together coherently on those customer journeys that provide the highest returns. As stated above, it is rare for goals to remain unachieved due to technology in the Technology, Working method and Organisation triangle. Working method and organisation are much more important.

A man with a beard is shown in profile, looking down at a smartphone he is holding. The background is dark with out-of-focus bokeh lights in shades of pink, orange, and blue. The overall mood is focused and modern.

4

Continuous

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT

Once the basics of the DXP are in place (the MVP), the third and final phase ensues: optimising growth and performance. In the digital experience phase, we picked a car that matched the requirements. And we aligned the car to the objectives of the journey. Now you just have to learn to drive it such that you maximise on the possibilities. It goes without saying that an agile little car for groceries offers different possibilities than a sports car or delivery van. Anyone with a driving license will manage to get all three vehicles to drive. But in order for you to capitalise on the strengths of a car, you will need to learn to drive that car specifically. The more features a car has to offer, the longer the learning process.

4 Continuous performance improvement

Data-driven marketing and sales

The performance phase is all about making your marketing and sales organisation data-driven.

After all, (potential) customers leave behind a tremendous amount of data during their customer journey. This data speaks to their needs and you can deploy it to optimise your customer journey. Every euro invested into optimisation earns its keep through better performance. Take SEO and SEA, for instance: if your website is better found through better search keywords, this leads to lower SEA costs in addition to more visitors. Or A/B testing of your email newsletter, which allows you to dramatically elevate your conversion.

Brunel serves prospects with tailored content

With over 100 offices worldwide, Brunel is one of our country's largest secondment parties. Prospects are located in multiple countries and have different needs. Plus, the decision making unit (DMU) consists of various different people. HR managers have different information needs than buyers or line managers of departments where the hired individuals will be working. With a sophisticated content strategy and personalised website, however, Brunel succeeds in providing the right people from the DMU with the right information on the right subject, matching their role and phase in the marketing funnel. And in the right language, of course. The Digital Experience Platform was designed to simplify the development and implementation of campaigns. Moreover, marketers can easily test different versions of a campaign with a small sample before widely deploying it.

To measure is to know

To measure is to know; this applies to all online sales and marketing campaigns. In the offline world, you can never pinpoint exactly what investment led to which result - do customers choose your brand because they saw a TV commercial, a magazine ad or perhaps they heard about you through word of mouth? In a digital customer journey, however, everything can be made measurable.

This sounds lovely, but interpreting the numbers is an art in and of itself. You can gain insight into the touchpoints that someone's customer journey has passed through, but the scope of the exact contribution of each of those touchpoints remains a mystery. Practice shows that sales and marketing departments tend to make assumptions. Which is why we closely collaborate with our clients in this phase of continuous optimisation as well. We train sales and marketing specialists step by step to become digital experts and data scientists, with full insight into the data.

5

Role

CONCLUSION

Conclusion is a dynamic ecosystem of over 25 expert companies working together on business transformation and IT services. Through close mutual cooperation, we offer clients a one-stop shop for all their issues. We approach every client request from the perspective of the ecosystem: which company or combination of companies can best address their needs? This approach gives clients the benefit of a one-stop shop combined with in-depth expertise on sub-topics.

Conclusion Experience designs solutions that optimise the digital customer journey. We call these solutions Digital Experience Platforms (DXPs). With more than 400 experts and over a thousand trusted freelancers, we support (inter)national companies in the digital transformation of their marketing and sales processes, in the Netherlands as well as on a European scale. We develop a DXP based on software solutions from vendors that are global leaders and can be deployed in any country. The design of customer journeys takes place on a national level, of course, as the customer journey of a German prospect is likely different from the customer journey of a Dutch or British prospect.

Conclusion Experience designs solutions that optimise the digital customer journey. We call these solutions Digital Experience Platforms (DXPs).

We collaborate a lot with other companies in the Conclusion ecosystem, especially when it comes to applications that often touch the digital customer journey, such as an ERP or CRM system. For example, we frequently partner up with Neotalent Conclusion, with their branches in Spain and Portugal offering highly educated digital marketing experts that are so rare in our own country. We also collaborate with our German sister company diva-e, who, like Conclusion Experience, have a lot of expertise in digitising the customer relationship. We also regularly engage expertise from sister companies in the Netherlands such as Mediaan Conclusion and Hot ITem Conclusion, both of whom specialise in AI and advanced analytics.

LEAD THE CHANGE, BEFORE CHANGE LEADS YOU

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