

UNITED NATIONS  
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

BUSINESS ADAPTATION PROGRAMME

# Advanced Digital Technologies E-Guide for MSMEs

Future-Tourism in the Eastern Caribbean

#FUTURETOURISM

# Acknowledgements

This guide will enable you to understand concepts, skills and techniques of digital technologies to **REFLECT, RESTART or to REVITALISE** your business and to digitise at least one process in your business.

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## 1. The importance of customer experience

When implementing strategies to improve the customer experience, it is important to know who they are, how they act, what they want and what they need but also to actively listen to their comments, opinions and experiences with your brand.

The best way to engage and retain customers is to provide them with a satisfying, unique and, if possible, memorable experience. Improving the customer experience not only promotes customer loyalty, but also their recommendation, and thus leads to the acquisition of new customers.

Customers want to engage with businesses as conveniently and easily as possible, regardless of the channel (digital and non-digital).

## WHAT IS DIGITAL CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE?

The digital customer experience refers to the sum of all experiences that customers have in digital contact with a business or its offerings – before and during the purchase process. It is the customer's impression of a provider during digital interaction. Not only the experiences on the website or in the online shop, but also interactions with content from a business on social media, with an advertising campaign or the online contact through customer services, form a customer's impression. Every interaction is part of the overall impression of your brand. Digital customer experience encompasses technology and strategy, as well as sales and marketing.





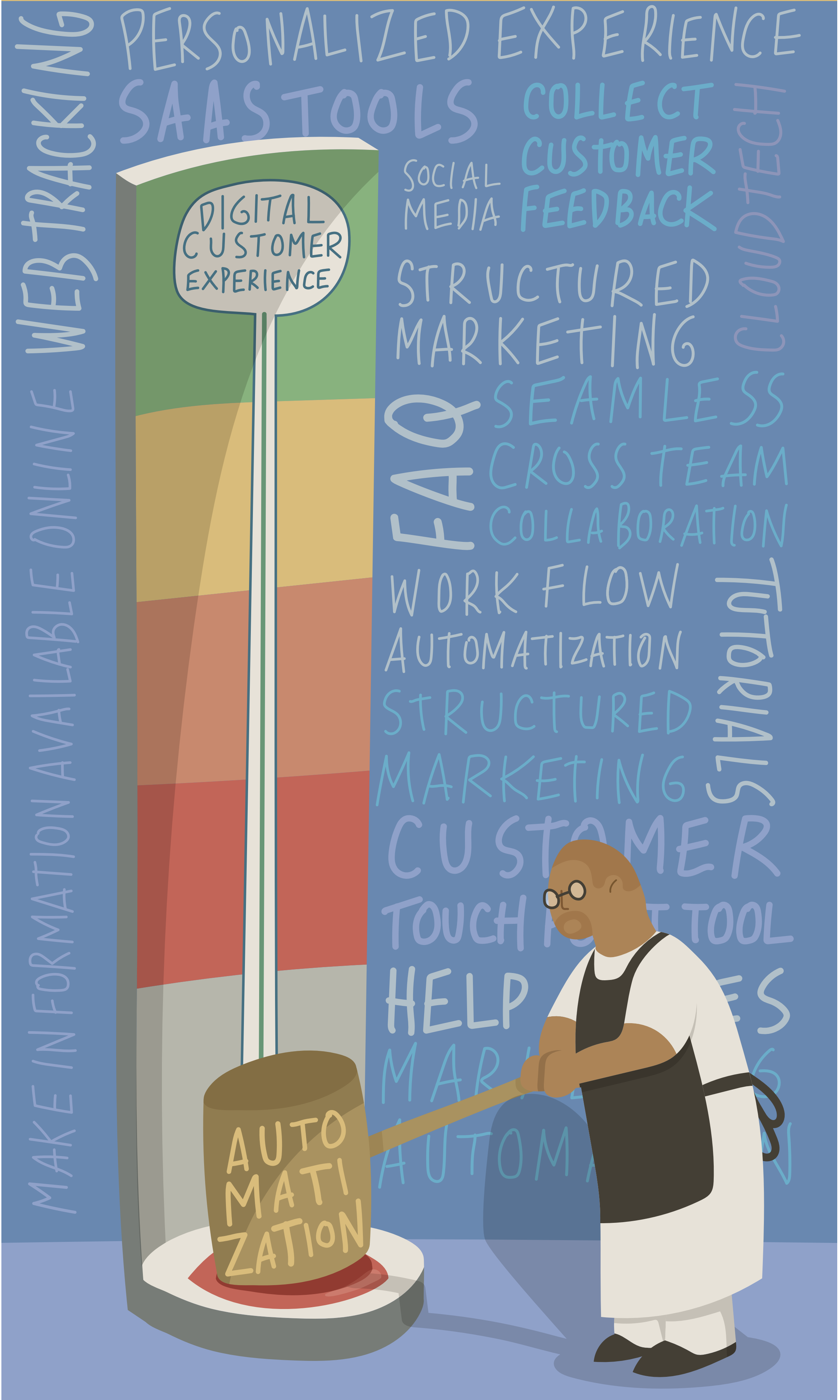
## DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DIGITAL CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

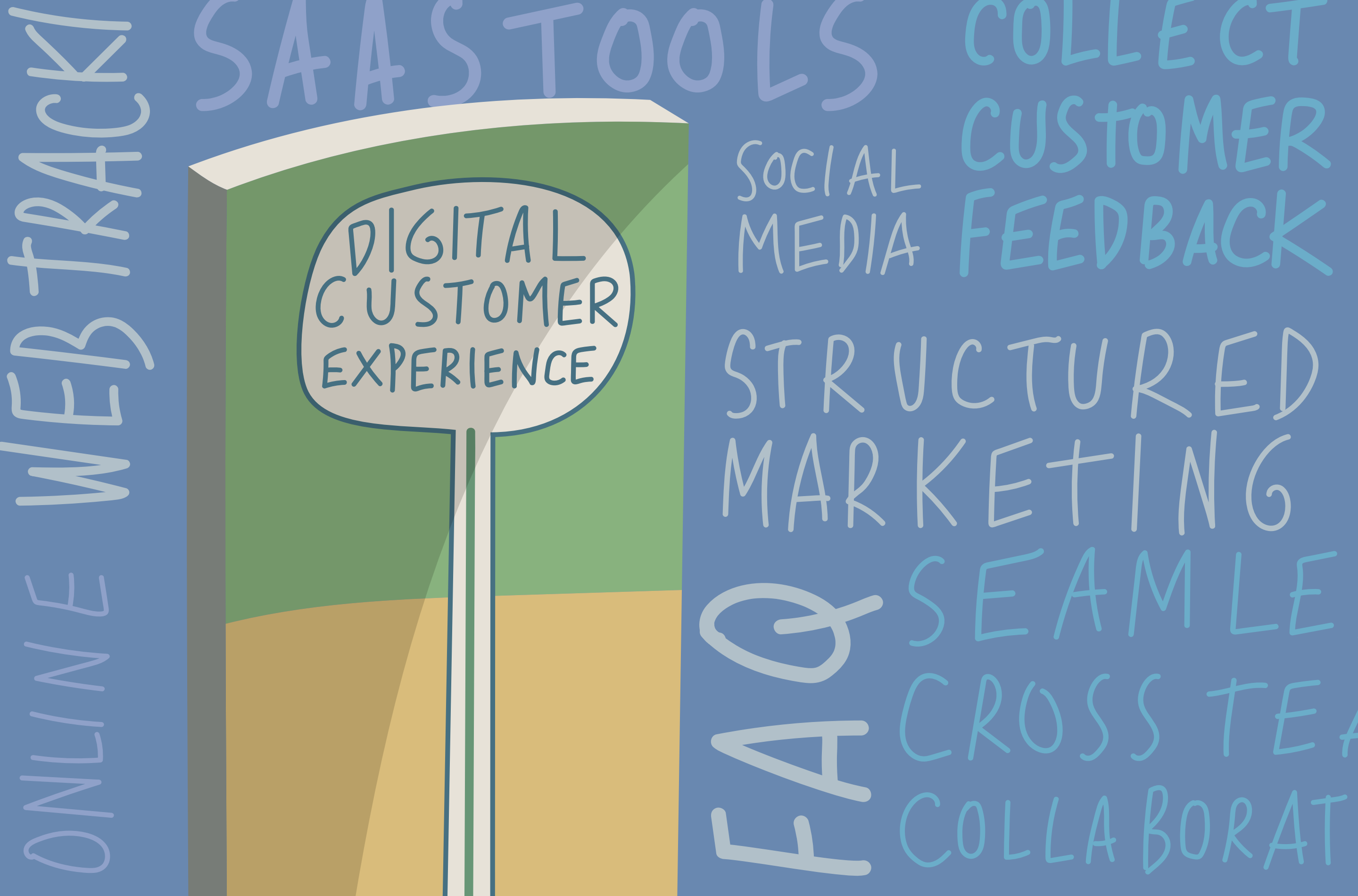
The customer experience is the sum of interactions with a brand's products and services over the course of a relationship with a business. Customer experience is about the overall perception of the brand at any point of contact between the customer and the business: in a physical store, at the reception, a print campaign, the delivery to the door.

Digital customer experience is about the **experience with digital communication tools** such as apps, chatbots, social media etc.

As the digital transformation progresses, separating the digital customer experience from the overall customer experience becomes "meaningless" in a world where digital and physical flow into each other. It measures customer engagement and the emotional response to experiences with a business, digital or otherwise. Bear in mind, the customer is the same, regardless of channels and devices.

HOW TO USE TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE?





Providing information online not only improves the digital customer experience, but also frees up your working time to help customers with more complex questions and issues.

Performing repetitive tasks can take up your team's time and energy. Automating tasks like follow-ups, sending customer satisfaction surveys after an interaction **can reduce the time your team spends on basic processes** and help them serve your customers more efficiently. Tailoring your content to individual users can go a long way in getting them to take action.

Particularly when customers are travelling, as most live through their phones. Since everything can be managed through a phone, it makes sense to ensure that your website, app or other materials found online are optimized for mobile devices.

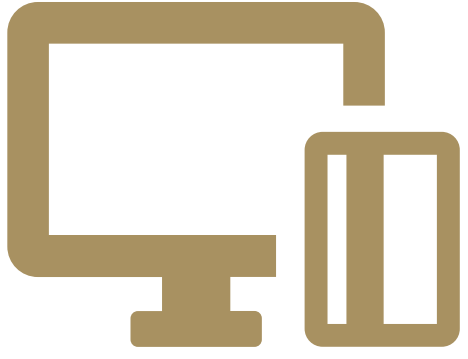
In the era of E-Tourism, consuming tourists share their opinions and experiences before going on a trip, during the trip, and after the end of the trip on social networks.





## 2. Digital Payment Methods

As a small business owner, you need to decide which payment methods you want to accept from customers. Not every business owner needs to accept all payment methods, but it is helpful to know them so that you can adjust when necessary.



### **Electronic payment systems:**

As online shopping has become indispensable, electronic payment methods have become indispensable for online vendors. Simple online electronic payments include bank transfers, eChecks, BNPL (buy now, pay later) solutions.

### **Mobile point of sales system (mPOS):**

An mPOS is a smartphone, tablet or dedicated wireless device that performs the functions of a cash register or electronic POS terminal wirelessly and is less expensive. Most useful for restaurants, bars, retailer and on the road service providers without having to be tethered to a single location. Most mPOS software solutions have features that allow businesses to email receipts, track sales and inventory. Using an mPOS device limits a business' liability because transactions are encrypted and credit and debit card data is not stored on the mPOS device itself.



**Mobile payment apps:** Mobile digital payment apps allow users to transfer funds to a person or business via a smartphone, tablet or other mobile device.





### **Contactless payment:**

Contactless payments can be made via credit and debit cards equipped with near field communication (NFC) technology. This is the same technology that paved the way for mobile wallets. QR codes also facilitate sales and payment processes.

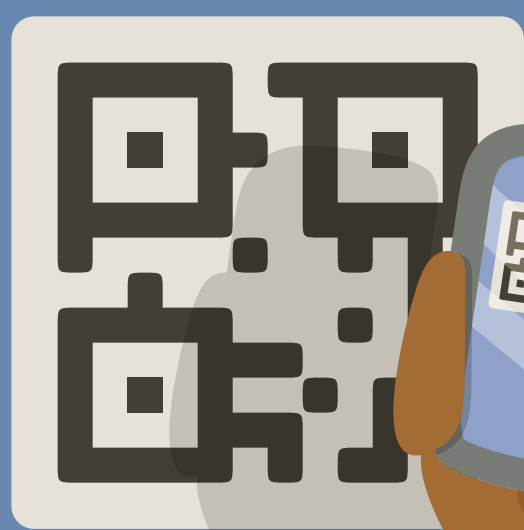
### **Digital wallet payments/ Mobile wallet payments:**

This technology is now very common and popular among consumers. Almost every smartphone has its own wallet that can be set up instantly. The iPhone has Apple Pay, Samsung has Samsung Pay and so on. For merchants, it is an advantage that most POS systems that allow contactless payments also accept mobile wallet payments. If you accept mobile wallets, you already accept biometrically authenticated payments.



#### **Known Digital Wallets in the Caribbean**

- mMoney (Barbados)
- DCash (Eastern Caribbean)
- JAD Cash (St. Kitts & Anguilla)
- MLajan (Dominica)
- Neteller (BVI)



### 3. QR Codes a contactless technology

During the pandemic, many restaurants have used QR codes to replace the use of a physical menu that is usually passed from table to table and person to person. QR codes have been also introduced as contactless payment options to allow the customer to pay directly from their phone, instead of swiping cards or using the chip reader and number pad to pay.

Each QR code consists of a black and white pixelated box and works similar to a barcode. When scanned using the smartphone camera it navigates to (or through) a specific website or app. **QR codes provide customers with convenience and businesses with data.**

## OPTIONS TO USE QR CODES IN YOUR BUSINESS



### Workflow management

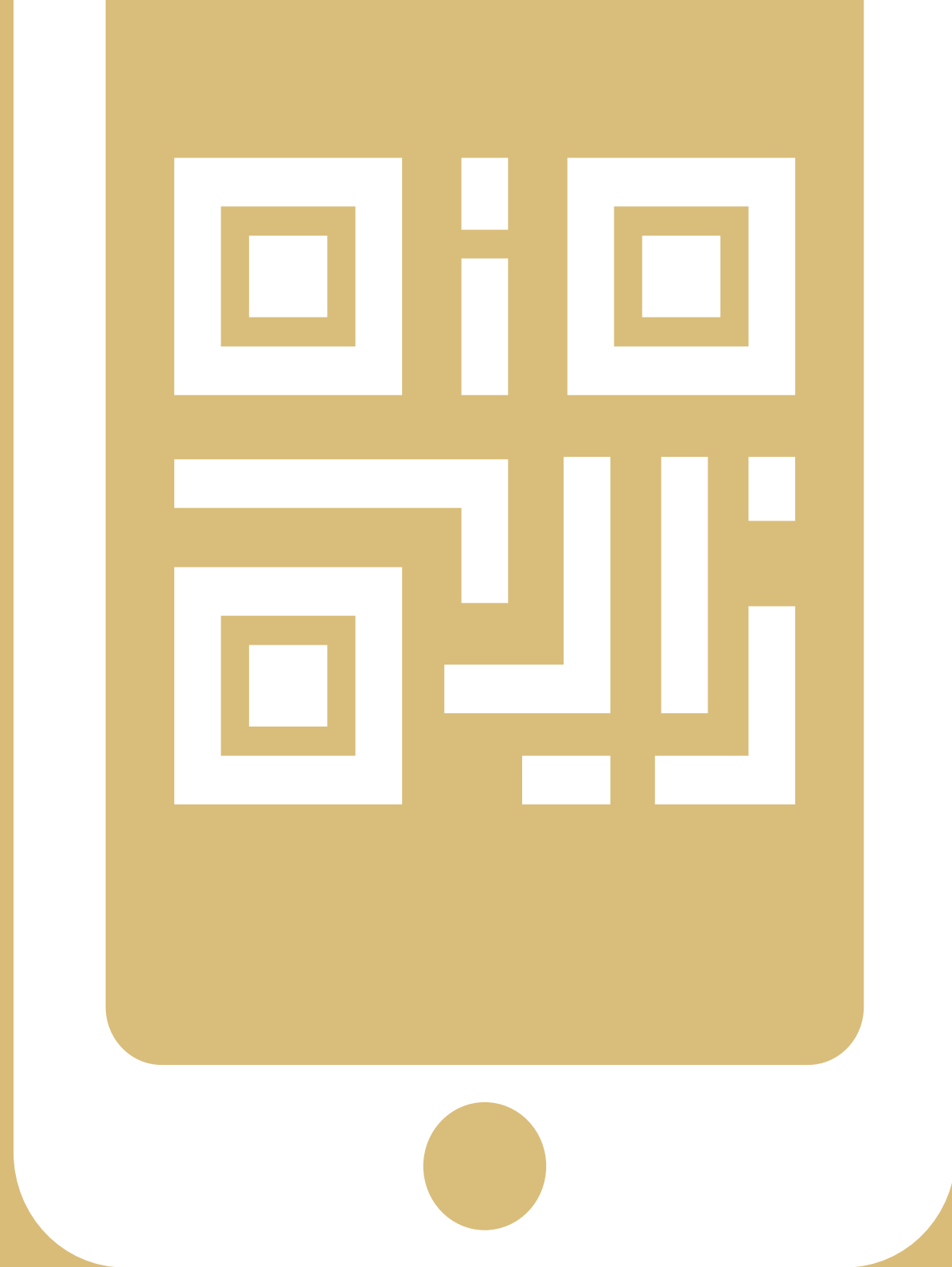
- **Inventory tracking:** To keep storage capacity on track and to improve inventory management
- **Transaction types/ Rental process:** Create custom transaction types (such as check in, check out, take inventory out for a job, transfer to a different location, send to repair, return etc.) via the web interface.

### Marketing/ Advertising

- **Business information:** Link to your website on promotional materials
- **Print Ads:** Bring your reader from print ads, billboards and similar to your digital platform.
- **Infographic**
- **Coupons:** Ongoing or one-time QR codes that link to coupons and discounts. Make different QR codes -- even if they link to the same coupon -- for different promotional events, locations, and marketing pieces to track which ones perform best. Users capture a discount coupon number in one simple action, instead of manually typing all digits at checkout in an online purchase.
- **Map Directions**
- **Product / Service information:** Add link to picture or brief information to expanded product/service information.

## Sales

- **Restaurants, bars, take away orders:** Link to a contactless menu, or order app
- **Rental services tags**
- **Tickets/ Entry pass**
- **Scan to pay**
- **In-person contactless payments**
- **Add-on features:** Link to accompanying documentation or products/ services.
- **Packaging and Labels:** Leading to web pages with more product information
- **Care instructions:** To help consumers enjoy the product for a long time



## Customer Service

- **Instructions:** Link to accompanying documentation or to reorder (for consumer products)
- **Information Sharing** (social media, product/service information, location)
- **Feedback Surveys:** Use targeted surveys at multiple points in the customer journey such as following a transaction or customer service experience.
- **Ratings:** Encourage customers to write comments and leave ratings on your website, social media.



## 4. Digital Data Analytics

Digital analytics includes the collection, measurement, analysis, visualisation and interpretation of digital data from different sources you use for your business, websites, mobile websites and mobile apps. These show how users or customers behave. With these insights, you can track behaviours and determine what works and what doesn't for your business.

## MARKET RESEARCH DATA

- SURVEYS
- QUALITATIVE METHODS
- SOCIAL SENTIMENT
- BIOMETRICS
- SECONDARY
- SYNDICATED

## TRANSACTIONAL DATA

- CRM
- LOYALTY PROGRAM DATA
- POS DATA
- e-COMMERCE DATA
- FINANCIAL PROFILING DATA

## PASSIVE DATA

- INTERNET OF THINGS
- SENSOR DATA
- GEO-SPATIAL

## ONLINE BEHAVIOUR DATA

- DIGITAL AD TRACKING
- SOCIAL NETWORK ACTIVITY
- COOKIE AND PIXEL TRACKING



## EXAMPLE OF DATA ANALYTICS

- **Website traffic:** What campaigns work and which ones do not?
- **Traffic by source:** Where do your visitors come from? Organic? Direct? Referral? Social?
- **Average length of the session** helps to understand navigation and ease of use.
- **Page views:** How many times does a user visit the same page?
- **Conversion rate:** How many visitors turn into sales.

## TOOLS TO SUPPORT WEB DATA ANALYSIS



**GOOGLE ANALYTICS:** One of the most used free web analytics services that provides real-time statistics and analysis of user interaction for website owners.



**ADOBE ANALYTICS:** It is a specialist analytical tool at a cost, more used by enterprises. It offers web analytics, marketing analytics, attribution, and predictive analytics, as well as advanced segmentation, cross-device analytics, and flow analysis.



**OPEN WEB ANALYTICS:** An open-source web analytics software. OWA provides information such as views, unique visits, referral sites, visitor location and click-streams. It also offers heat maps, which track where visitors click on your website.



## TOOLS TO IMPROVE YOUR ONLINE BUSINESS PRESENCE

**TRACKING:** A tracking tool by Google allows you to keep an eye on the web for keywords or search terms based on your search history and interests. Use more than one alert, e.g. you can track your brand name, your product/services, online reviews, your competitors, your industry. This will help you to make changes to your marketing strategy and approach. You can also monitor negative feedback by receiving notifications about any problems, giving you the opportunity to solve them. Tool names: Google Search Alerts

**ONLINE SURVEY:** Survey tools are digital tools used to gather customer feedback, experience or data through an online survey. You can analyse the results to see what you are doing right and what you need to improve. Most tools have survey templates and sample questions to use and can be integrated into your website or emails. Tool names: Google Forms, SurveyMonkey, SurveyLegend, SoGoSurvey.

**SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION (SEO):** SEO tools examine the potential of websites for higher placement on search engine ranking pages. They provide information about backlinks and keywords as well as insights into SEO competition on the internet.

Search engine optimisation is not only one of the fundamental activities in digital marketing. Rather, it plays an enormously important role in increasing the organic visibility of your website in the search engine so that (potential) customers find your company in i.e. Google searches and thus generate traffic to the website. There are hundreds of tools, most popular are: seobility, Google Search Console, Google Trends

**SEARCH ENGINE ADVERTISING (SEA):** SEA primarily refers to the placement of paid ads on search engines. As an advertiser, you bid on a keyword under which you want your ad to be placed.



## IMPORTANT

More than **3 billion searches** a day on Google alone. 93% online experiences begin with a search engine.

For consumers, it makes a big difference whether they find your website on the Search Engine results page when searching for products and services.

## VISIBILITY

## SALES

Search is the #1 driver of traffic to a website, **beating social media by 300%**. Search also has the best ROI and biggest impact on Lead Generation & Conversion

### WHAT IS SEO?

SEO is the **process of improving the performance and experience of your website** so it can gain better visibility in search engines. This will increase traffic on your website with the aim to increase your sales.

SEO is complex and consist of four key areas:

- **Content:** Having the most relevant and best answers to a prospect's question.
- **Technical SEO:** How well your content can be crawled and indexed by engines.
- **Off-page SEO:** Applying techniques to improve your website's ranking that are carried out outside your website.
- **On-page SEO:** The optimization of your content and HTML.

Technically you can group SEO into two categories: on-page SEO and off-page SEO.

SEO measures must be continuously adapted and further developed.

## WHAT IS SEA?

SEA is a technique of **gaining traffic to a website through paid advertising** like Google Adwords or PPC (Pay-per-Click) or CPC (Cost-per-Click) basis.

The display of ads in a keyword search by the customer is influenced by two essential factors: the advertiser's willingness to pay and the quality factor. The search engine therefore checks whether the user is offered what they are looking for on the target website. This ensures that the user is only shown ads that match the search term and that the associated target pages contain relevant information.

This is a short-term measure and not very sustainable. As soon as you switch off the ads, the traffic drops and your listing goes away, unless you have optimised the search engine optimisation at the same time.

## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SEA AND SEO?

SEA and SEO both aim to attract as much traffic as possible to a website via search engines. With SEA, ads are placed that are of relevance to keywords, while SEO focuses on organic results that are not listed because of advertising, but because they contain very relevant content for the corresponding search query. **SEO and SEA belong to the field of search engine marketing (SEM) in online marketing.** SEM includes all measures that aim to attract visitors to the website. SEO and SEA, both can benefit from each other and thus be used together.

Both SEA and SEO **have their advantages and disadvantages.** Which strategy should be pursued depends on a business' goals. The synergy effects of using both are manifold. An SEO-optimised web page also performs better in the ads. If a page is optimised accordingly, this influences the quality factor that a search engine takes into account for the display of the search ads. Thus, not only the positions in the ads can be better, but also the click prices can be reduced.



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