

2023

State of Manufacuring: Digital CX

E-Book

Canam Research



Contents

Executive Summary	4
Key Observations	7
Trends	10
Trend #1 - CRM Goes Digital	12
Trend #2 - 360º Customer View	14
Trend #3 - Self-Service	18
Trend #4 - Evolving Tech: AI & RPA	22
Trend #5 - Future Is Now	22
Thank you	26

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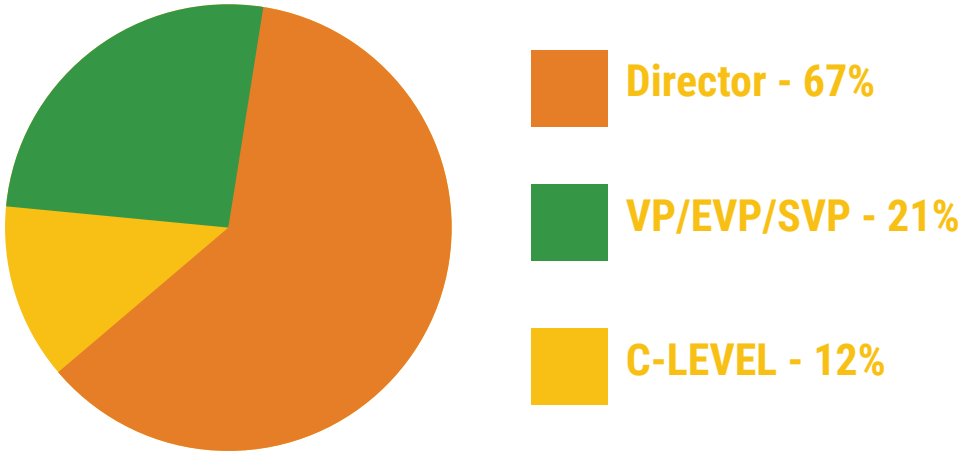
67%

OF RESPONDENTS ARE AT THE DIRECTOR LEVEL

ASAR DIGITAL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Canam Research partnered with ASAR and SAP on the topic of Digital Experience and manufacturing. Thousands were surveyed. Responses were collected from the C-Level Executives, VPs, and Directors, from a wide variety of companies in the manufacturing sector



- The importance of Digital CX to achieve business goals
- Challenges with Digital CX
- How well CRMs support the business
- The ability of customer service teams to access critical data
- Future focus areas for improving CX and Sales

Key Observations

State of Manufacturing: Digital CX





What's driving 2023 trends?

59% said that digital customer experience is a significant aspect of achieving business goals.



Top Challenges for 2023

49% state that a 360-degree view of customers and customer self-service are their top challenges.

Creating and converting quotes in orders

Only **28%** have an automated and easy system for creating quotes and converting them into orders.



Customer self-service

16% said their commerce platform provides effective customer self-service.



Emerging technologies

23% have implemented RPA, automation or AI.



Future Focus: CX

57% plan to focus on digital customer experience initiatives.

Customer & prospect interaction data

65% say they do NOT do a good job capturing & managing customer and prospect interaction data.

37% say they at best do an adequate job.

28% do not do a good job capturing and managing customer and prospect interaction data.

Learn more: ASARdigital.com



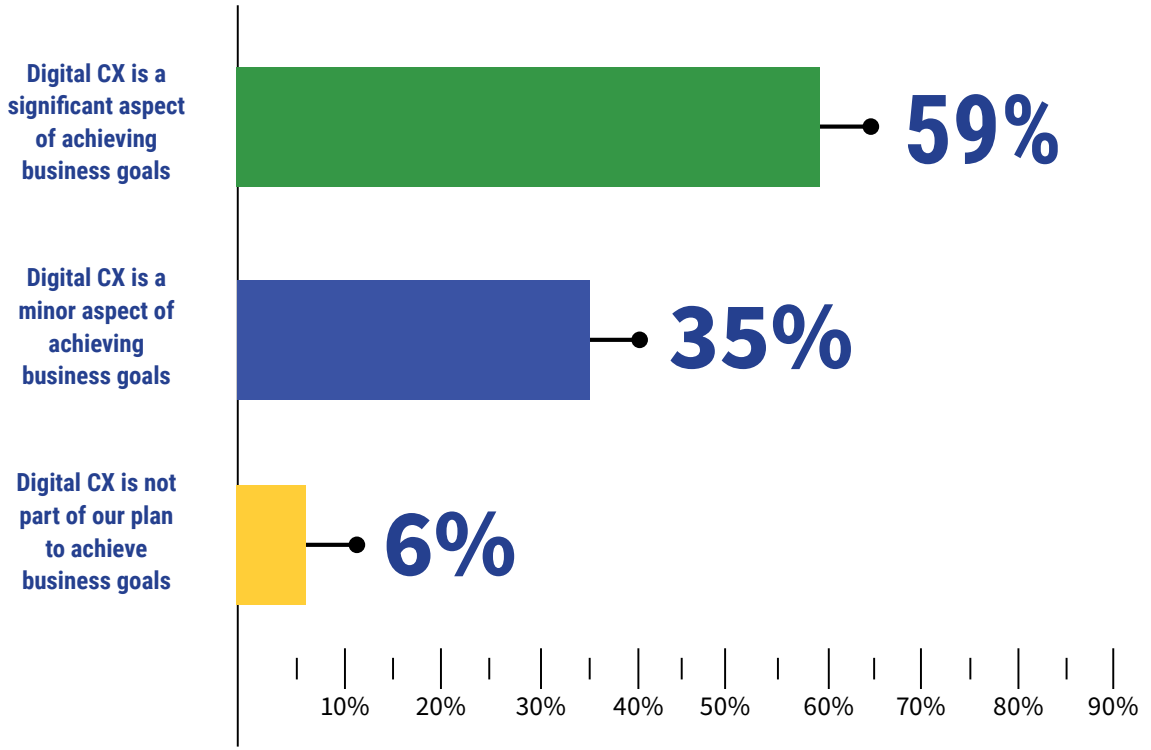
#1

Trend #1: CRM Goes Digital

How would you describe the importance of digital customer experience to achieving your business goals?

- Survey respondents see **digital CX** as being an important element of achieving their goals.

These manufacturers are likely responding to a **changing business landscape** that will entail more interactions with customers and prospects across **multiple channels**.



Slick Digital Customer Experience is Essential

How businesses approach the way they handle new and existing purchases has changed dramatically in recent years. More and more **buyers want access** to product research resources and purchasing processes that meet their needs and schedule. They want greater online research and transaction options rather than needing to contact a sales representative directly.

Is Your B2B Buying Journey Too Complex?

However, B2B businesses are not keeping pace with evolving purchasing behaviors. Recent research shows that **77% of B2B buyers** state that their last purchase was overly complex or difficult.

In 2023, manufacturers looking to move ahead of their competition should consider commerce solutions designed to ease complex processes and also put energy into constructing a robust and attractive digital customer experience. For instance, **SAP Commerce Cloud** enables manufacturing customers to have engaging experiences and access to e-commerce venues.









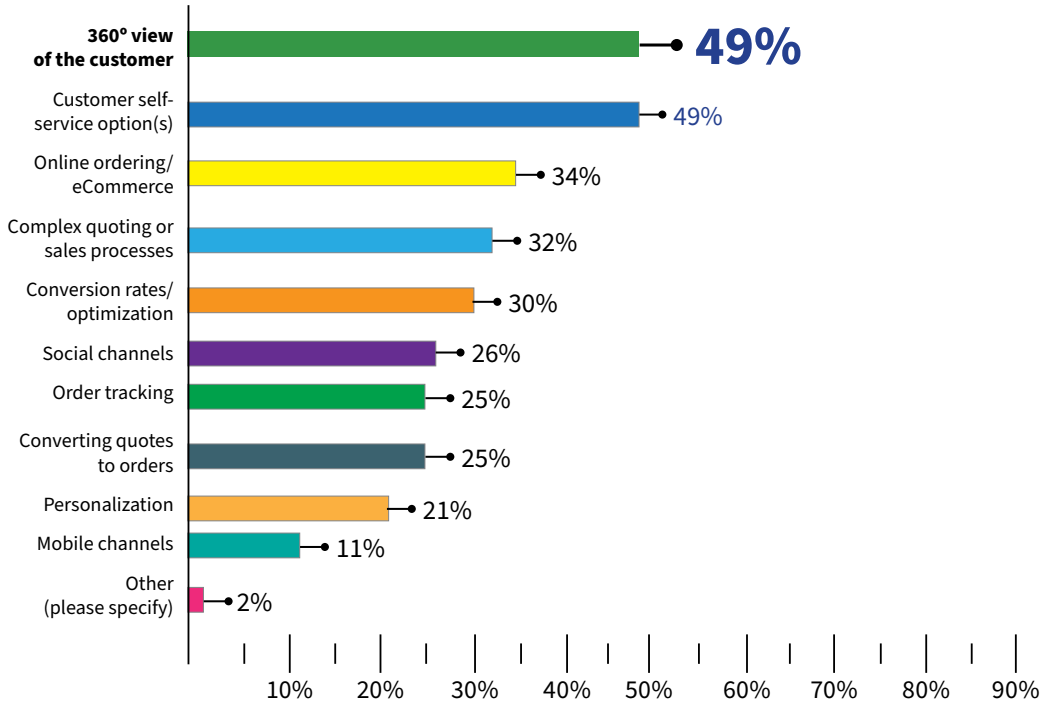
Trend #2: 360° Customer View

#2

What are the **top challenges** your company has with digital **customer service**?

- Companies in all sectors of the economy find that achieving a **360-degree view** of the customer and providing good **customer self-service** prove hard to get right.

  There are a variety second tier challenges that must be met such a **eCommerce**, **complex quoting** and **conversion optimization**.



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Trend **#2**

Challenge: 360° Customer View

Digital CX is not without its challenges. One common challenge is finding a system that can provide a clear, nearly telescopic view of a company's customers and those customer's behaviors.

In fact, at the time of our report, **49% of C-Suite executives** stated that their current CX setup does **NOT** provide them with a **360-degree view** of their customers.

If you can relate to that **49%**, are you concerned about the quality of data being used for making decisions?

Can you Trust Your Data?

If your digital systems are leading you to make strategic decisions with inaccurate or poorly populated numbers, there's a good probability you don't know your customers' needs or what types of **digital experiences** they'll respond to best.

In the coming years, manufacturers will increasingly need to adopt digital platforms and SaaS programs to understand their customers' needs and preferences and have the visibility necessary to **pivot production processes** to meet those needs efficiently.

Plus, since **49% of manufacturing companies are working with poor data**, then 51% are likely working with full-bodied data that helps them more easily keep their clients happy and manufacturing processes on-point.



#3

Trend #3: Customer Self-Service



Trend #3:

Customer Self-Service is Increasingly Important

Customers today expect self-service options from their suppliers and service providers. In 2022, the expectation for businesses to offer self-service features in the B2B industry is rising.

Manufacturing Customers Want Digital Self-Service Options

This presents a unique opportunity for manufacturing companies. Presently, the majority of manufacturers do not offer frictionless self-service options in their digital CX experience. According to our research, **just 16% of manufacturers describe their commerce platform customer self-service features as "effective."**

Developing effective and engaging self-services that customers appreciate will effectively build brand trust and increase customer loyalty. Additionally, **self-service** features enable you to collect accurate data about your customer's buying journey.





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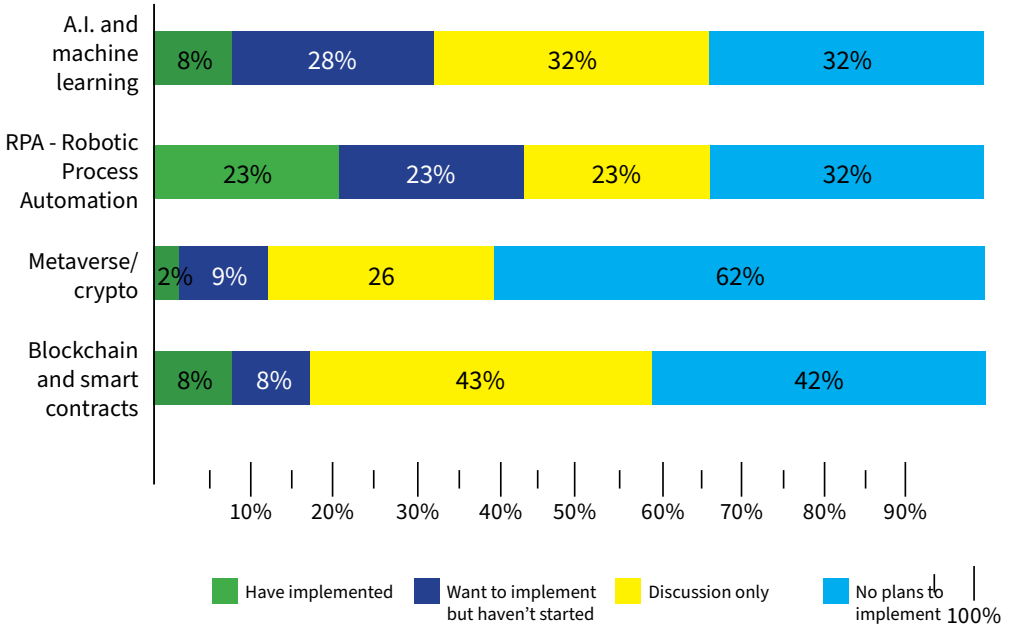
Trend #4: Emerging Tech

Automation & AI

Should your company invest in Automation & AI?

Manufacturing companies are definately pursuing newer and emerging technologies. RPA, A.I., and machine learning are no longer considered bleeding edge, many companies use these technologies to improve their business.

While crypto, the metaverse, and blockchain are still very early in their maturity cycles, these technologies are not completely rejected. Early adopters are testing the waters even now.



Trend #4: Emerging Tech

Incorporate Emerging Technologies

Improving efficiency and lowering costs while keeping the customer happy is the eternal quest for CEOs and business leaders. New technologies are emerging that can help manufacturers better achieve this aim.

Examples of Emerging Tech:

- **Robotic Process Automation (RPA)**
- **Artificial Intelligence**
- **Blockchain**

RPA can be used to streamline and automate repetitive processes, allowing your team to focus on more complex tasts. Additionally, AI systems like chatbots can provide customers with the personalized service they crave. Finally, blockchain technology has been proven effective for tracking supply chain data without requiring intermediaries or human error.





AI chatbots will provide customers with guidance and information 24/7, making your business accessible at any time.

RPA solutions can help automate production processes based on your customer's needs.

In order to truly succeed during this transition, manufacturers need to embrace emerging technologies that will not only streamline processes but also offer a better customer experience.

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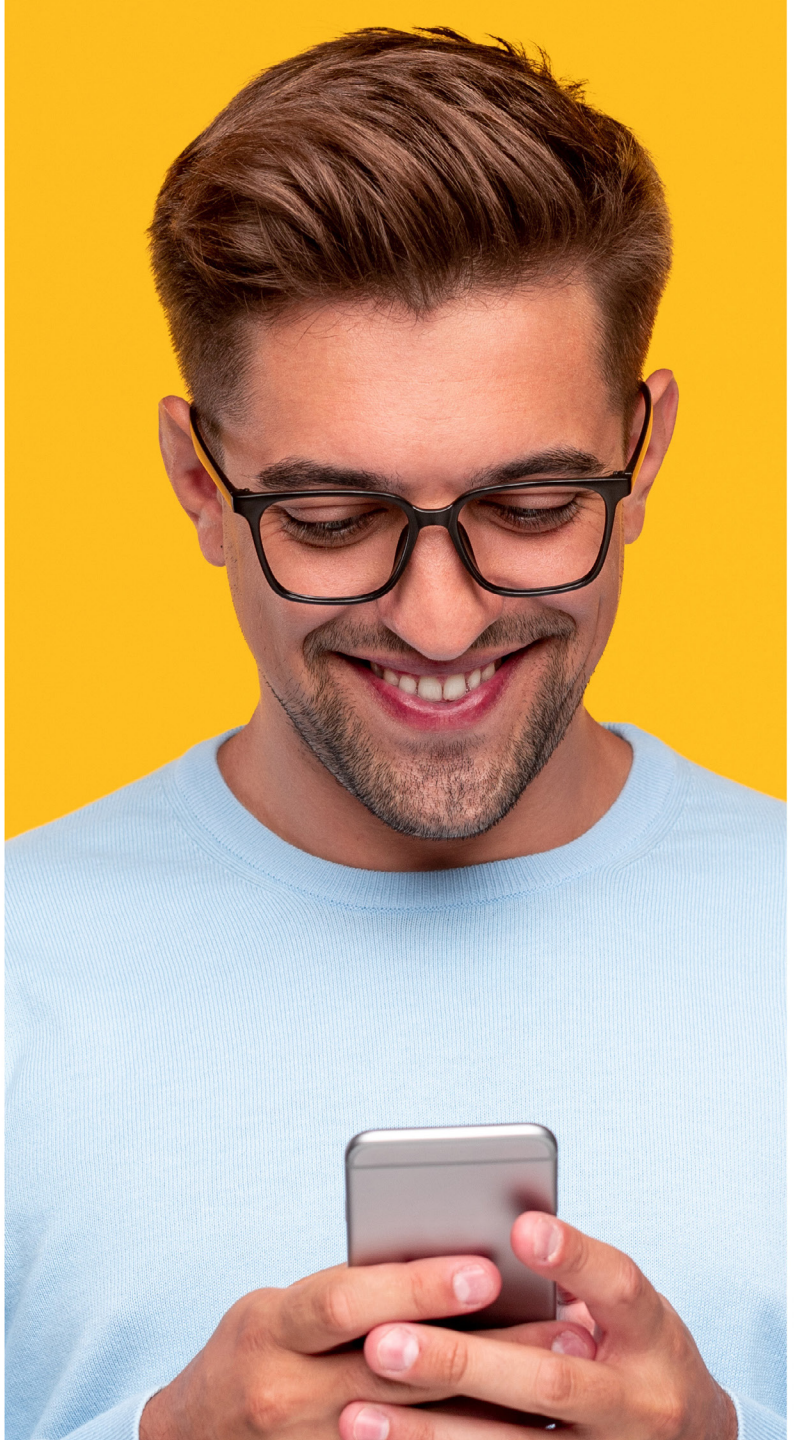
Trend #5: Future Is Omni-channel







Manufacturers Top Priority:
Better Digital CX

As mentioned before, most manufacturers are currently lagging behind in digital CX solutions. To compete successfully, they need to make digital CX a top priority.

To do this, manufacturers could consider using tools like SAP Service Cloud to build a personalized and engaging experience that keeps customers coming back for more. Also, focus on employing emerging technologies like **RPA, AI, and blockchain** to improve efficiency without sacrificing quality or customer satisfaction.

Finally, make self-service features an integral part of your digital CX plan so customers can easily find what they are looking for and get the answers they need.

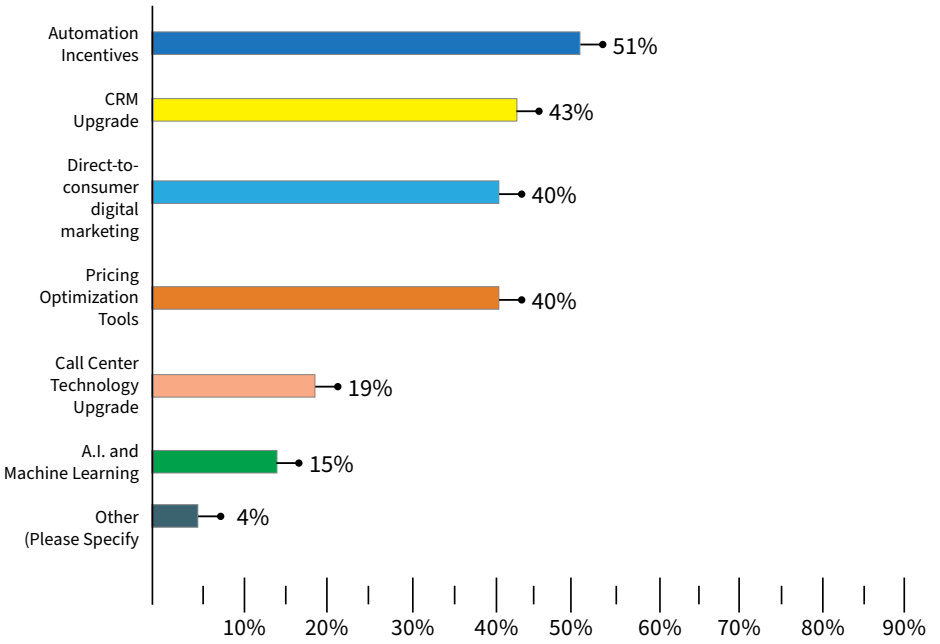
With help from ASAR Digital, implementing new SAP technologies can happen without creating data silos or winding up using multiple systems unable to share information. Whether you're looking to improve customer retention and satisfaction, or you simply want to ensure that your processes are as efficient as possible, ASAR Digital offers the SAP tools and support that manufacturers need to succeed in today's digital climate.



In the next 6 -12 months, what will your company focus on to improve customer experience & sales operations---------->

- 2023 will see a majority of survey participants **focusing on digital CX** initiatives as they seek to improve engagement and increase sales with new and exisiting customers.

It is notable that a sizable cohort of manufacturers in the survey will be **investing in direct-to-cunsumer marketing**. Price optimization is more important than ever in the current inflationary environment and is a key priority for survy participants.



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