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Customers expect more these days. You need to know what they want and when they want it. And then you need to make sure you exceed those expectations.

When you list the ways in which cloud can improve your operation, it's easy to see why: increased flexibility, more effective innovation activities, up to date infrastructure, the ability to roll out systems more efficiently, not to mention having powerful resources at your fingertips without a large upfront cost.Today, moving to the cloud is a natural step and manufacturers are increasingly making the transition.

Cloud offers a significant opportunity to build on what you already have and start innovating, but to do so, you need to connect your customers, products, people and data.

This can help reduce costs and increase quality, productivity, employee engagement and, ultimately, profitability – all of which unlock sustainable business growth.

Before you start, however, there are several challenges you need to tackle:

* **Coping with operational complexity**
* **Living up to your customer expectations**
* **Increasing productivity**

Below, you'll find out more details on how to live up to your customer expectations and recommendations for how to overcome them.

To learn more about the other two challenges and what you can do to address them, scroll down to the bottom of this article.

Living up to customer expectations

Increased revenue is only one benefit of happy customers – image courtesy of Depositphotos.

Having a totally satisfied customer can bring in 2.6-times as much revenue as a somewhat satisfied customer, and 17-times as much as a somewhat dissatisfied one.

Increased revenue, however, is only one benefit of happy customers. These customers can also act as advocates and help enhance your reputation. And if they're loyal, they'll help stop competitors from eroding your market share.

Customers all want something different or unique to them. So, how can you keep everyone happy? In simple terms, find out what they expect and respond accordingly.

Five areas you should focus on:

1. **Visibility** – This is a big one for customers. You need to keep track of all customer interactions. And if there's likely to be a delay, you need to let your agents know. Above all, you need to let customers know when they'll receive their orders.

2. **Omnichannel service** – Customers today don't expect to explain their problems over and over again to different people. By integrating text, social media, email and instant messaging, you can help customers and improve your image at the same time.

3. **New products** – Success is not just about what you're doing today. It's also about what you're going to do tomorrow. New products need to be available on time and at the right time, otherwise you risk affecting your reputation.

4. **Build to buy and personalisation** – Personalisation can help you sell a product. The cost of buying a product of this type used to be prohibitive; however, new technologies such as AI and 3D printing have made personalisation affordable for the average customer.

5. **After-sales support and service** – Customer relationships don't stop the moment you release your product. Offering the right after-sales support can promote loyalty, and it also helps create new sales opportunities via positive word of mouth.