

# In-housing could be the answer to creating a great customer experience

By [Reagen Kok](#)

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Just like 'new normal', 'pivot' and 'WFH' were part of the corporate lingo of 2020, the phrase in-house will likely soon be rolling off our tongues as big corporates opt to bring their marketing and advertising functions in-house.



Reagen Kok, managing director at Hoorah Digital | Source: Supplied

This move towards in-housing is not a brand new one, but as businesses continue to tighten their purse strings in the wake of the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, ditching the agency and building their own version appears to be both the most cost-effective and best way to pursue a new way of customer engagement and value creation.

## In-housing enables businesses to engage with the customer

For most companies, the motivation for in-housing is to help with efficiency, speed, control and cost, according to a [Digiday](#) article that also highlights how in-housing can help companies become more diverse and inclusive. And if the past year has highlighted anything, it is the importance of ensuring plans are flexible and strategies dynamic, and that is true for businesses across sectors, be it retail, hospitality, healthcare or finance. The impact of the pandemic on business brought into stark relief the fact that no matter the field you play in, without the customer, there is no business.

Increasingly, businesses are recognising in-housing as a means of enhancing the customer value proposition by being more closely involved with the advertising and marketing functions that engage with the customer. Just like Rome wasn't built in a day, in-housing isn't an overnight process in which the creative agency is simply ditched and the expertise, strategy and creativity suddenly emerges from within. The decision to in-house starts with recognising the need for this model and unpacking how and why it will benefit the business, while ultimately driving customer value.

Strategic business decisions are typically about solutions, and the decision to take the services that have been outsourced to a creative agency for decades and bring them in-house, should be motivated by a need to find more dynamic solutions to a problem. Successful in-housing, then, is about so much more than the talent, the tools and technology needed to get the job done, but about an approach to business leadership and customer services that values innovation, solutions, creativity and a future-forward approach to all operations.



## What is an omnichannel customer engagement hub and why do I need it?

Brent Haumann 30 Jul 2021



### The data drive

It is impossible to talk about in-housing and this drive to create a more nimble, more agile and more customer-centric business without looking to the demands of the digitally savvy customer of 2021. As such, data needs to be central to this approach and understood as a key ingredient in creating the value customers crave, and the loyalty brands are rewarded with, when the customer is relevantly engaged.

Beyond the buzz around it and the way it is touted as the panacea for every type of business challenge, data is simply information. The value of the data lies in the analysis and interpretation thereof and the extent to which it informs overall business strategy, not just creative production. In fact, [a recent study](#) warns of the danger of 'disconnected departmental thinking' when it comes to the application of data and analytics in business, highlighting instead, the need for a holistic, customer-centric approach that allows for a customer-first brand experience at every turn.

Herein lies the potential and power of in-housing, taking the information and making it part of the overall business thinking process, opposed to farming it off to the agency to use it to create clever ads and catchy campaigns.

### The agency legacy

But before we start proclaiming 'the agency is dead,' which certainly isn't, it is useful to take a couple of steps back and consider the fact that there is 'the need for a much more complex and intimate understanding of data, technology, brand, customer behaviour and marketplace dynamics' in business today, according to [Ad Exchanger](#).

Add to this 'the break-neck pace of change in virtually every area and it becomes clear that the agency, with its specialist skills, innate creativity and disruptive-by-nature approach, needs to evolve.' And evolution, because it happens over time, need not be a threat to those committed to the ultimate craft of the agency, the magical ability to turn products and services into ideals, aspirations, trends, hope and thoughts that come to define eras, generations and zeitgeists.

It's all about the consumer - the person - ultimately, and while this is understood to be the universal truth, agencies, both in-house or external, are on the exact same page.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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