

CIVICA

Guide to Best Practice

Complaints Management



“ Consumers’ expectations have gone digital, and there’s no turning back.

Regardless of a shift back towards pre-pandemic life, the convenience and flexibility of a digital customer is here to stay.”

Customer-Experience-Related
Predictions For 2021
- Forbes



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Welcome

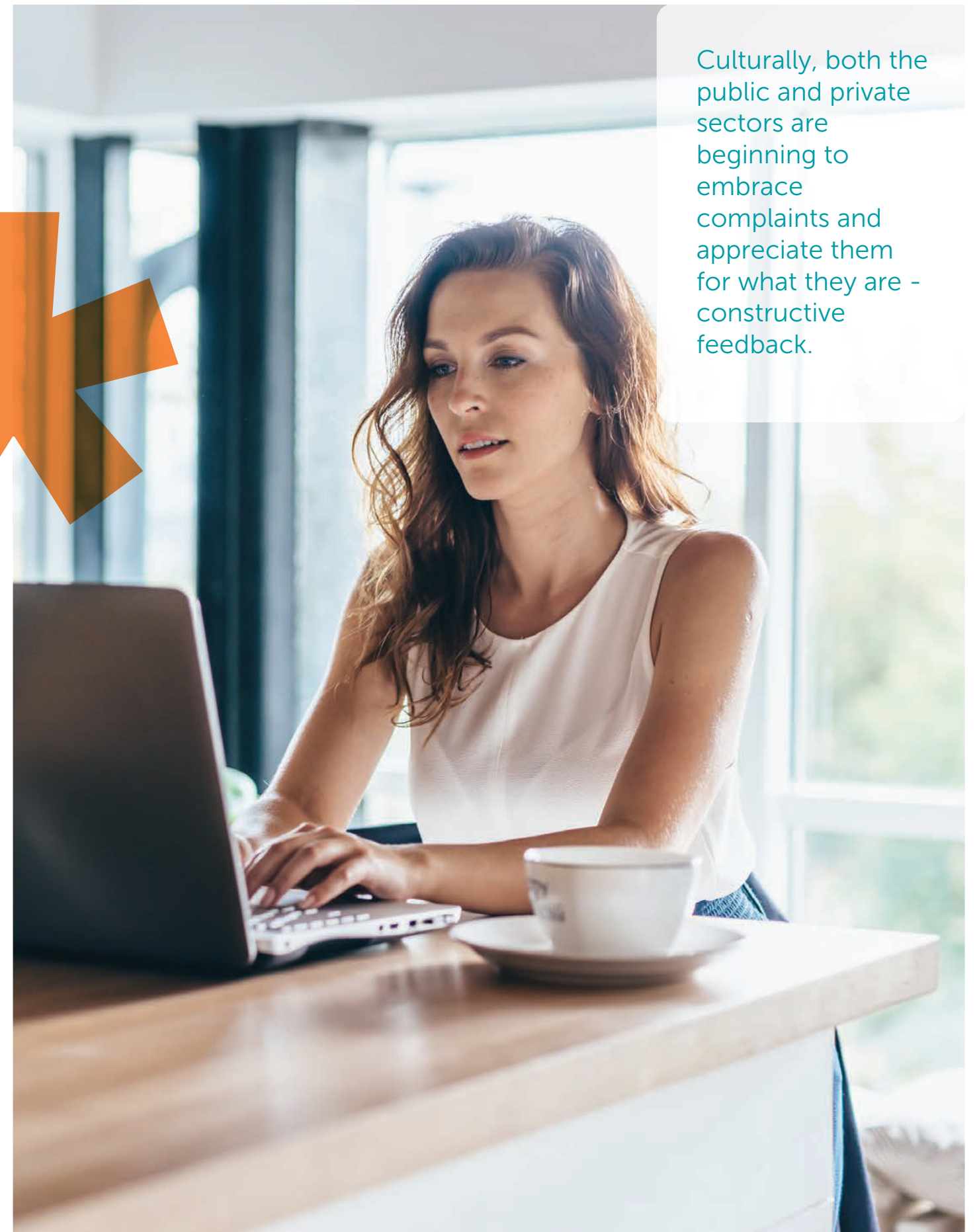


In this guide, we explore how organisations are transitioning to process based, automated complaints management systems that elevate complaints to an integral part of the business.

We'll discuss how organisations achieve regulatory compliance, the evolving role of the complaint function and why a customer-centric approach yields innovative ideas and drives customer loyalty.

Regardless of your organisation's level of complaint management maturity, this practical guide will help you navigate the next step.

Culturally, both the public and private sectors are beginning to embrace complaints and appreciate them for what they are - constructive feedback.



What does modern complaint management look like?



“ It’s our job every day to make every important aspect of the customer experience a little better.

Jeff Bezos
CEO Amazon

Complaints management continues to evolve. Organisations are using structured, objective, outcomes-focused processes that speedily progress complaints towards a fair resolution.

The pandemic had a dramatic effect on complaint handling. Offices shut down, leaving service teams separated, inhibiting a natural ability to collaborate face-to-face.

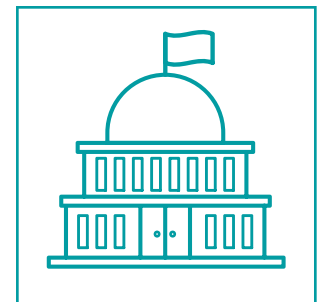
In just one year, teams became far more reliant on technology. Equally, there became a greater focus on consumer vulnerability and the wider impact of complaints. Each problem experienced and expressed by a customer needed to be treated with care and understanding to ensure customers felt supported during the complaint handling process.

This is a welcome change. Customers now recognise organisations that are focused upon getting problems solved, as opposed to those who are difficult to contact and keen to quickly put up the defences when a complaint is made. Those organisations that deployed best-of-breed complaint management solutions are able to capture customer issues wherever they are received and automatically update the customer with an instant acknowledgment outlining the process and timeline for resolution.

Like customers, organisations have high expectations when it comes to complaint management. The valuable feedback received can be used for analysing trends and ultimately delivering business intelligence that will help organisations improve products and services.

Times are changing. Customers, now more than ever, know their rights as a consumer and the means for obtaining redress when things go wrong.

Complaints are being reframed. No longer the bane of an organisation, best practice complaints handling is delivering a competitive edge from a deeper understanding of customer insights.



Industries and their emerging standards and regulations

“ All staff should have the freedom to actively seek feedback to improve services and resolve issues quickly and effectively. Staff receive training in how to do this and how to ensure people know they are being listened to and treated with empathy, courtesy and respect.”

The UK Health Service Ombudsman

Not that long ago, complaints from customers were handled by many organisations in an ad hoc manner with, not surprisingly, mixed results. However, regulators have increasingly begun to collect complaints data to identify emerging or systemic issues within a sector.

Complaint handling requirements for a specific industry can be framed in different ways – guidelines, code of practice, or strict regulatory requirements mandated by legislation. Navigating the various complaint handling requirements for your industry can be daunting, but essential if non-compliance is to be avoided.

Deploying a best-of-breed complaints management software solution is the easiest way to mitigate any risk and comply with the complaints handling rules and reporting requirements for your sector. Selecting a complaints management solution with a proven track record within your sector is the best place to start.

Using customer complaints to find your key differentiator

Customer complaints, on face value, may not be an obvious place to find what makes your product or service unique.

Entrepreneurs and innovators past and present, have been open to failure – but recognise the need to quickly learn from mistakes as they tweak, reset, and then redo if necessary. Customer feedback allows organisation to make continuous improvements ahead of the competition. Similarly, many organisations will be paying external research companies to survey and understand customer needs and demands – but complaints too can reveal unknown features and benefits that lead to key differentiators in the market.

Ways to uncover key differentiators

- Find out if resources are regularly being diverted to solve common customer complaints. If so, investigate if there is a business case to amend the product or service to avoid this diversion of resources in the future while creating a unique differentiator in the marketplace.
- Examine customer complaints (and compliments) to uncover any unconventional use of a product. A whole new marketplace could be ready to buy this product with some minor modifications.
- Assess those complaints where customers feel that their needs are unmet by a product or service and identify if opportunities exist to create a differentiator and therefore a competitive advantage.
- Utilise complaints management reporting capabilities to assess learnings implemented from the handling of complaints, such as product modifications or policy changes, to understand how this is driving product innovation and make this a selling feature.

Conceiving a key differentiator out of what was originally a complaint can be a short cut to creating a competitive advantage.

“ Your most unhappy customer is your greatest source of learning.”

Bill Gates

Microsoft Founder and Philanthropist

Organisational visibility of complaints across all channels

A disgruntled customer used to put pen to paper and post off their complaint to an organisation. Consumers now have a myriad of customer engagement channels to vent their issues. An omni-channel complaints management solution is the easiest way to capture and organise these complaints in a structured framework.

Previously manual and laborious procedures can now be automated, allowing staff to focus on the important task of delivering a personalised and fair outcome to the customer. Dynamically generated dashboards and predetermined reports, collate the data and present everyone, from frontline staff to management, with a clear picture of how the organisation is traveling in terms of customer insight and performance in addressing customer complaints from originating from multiple sources.



Cloud Security

When choosing a complaints management solution for your organisation, there are many aspects of the deployment that need to be considered and assessed before the tender process commences - for starters which platform? The choices include an on-premise self-managed infrastructure, a hosted cloud platform or a hybrid of the two.

Cloud-based infrastructure is perceived by IT professionals as the most practical choice because of its significant emphasis on both security and flexible scalability.

Ensuring your data is protected from breaches, loss of data or cyber-attacks is critical. Complaint management solutions such as the cloud-based iCasework platform is not only compliant with the broadly accepted international information security standard - ISO 27001, but has comprehensive security policies for its infrastructure. These policies specify exactly how its customers data is protected. Each client's data is held in a separated database and uses an AES-256 encryption algorithm to encrypt all data. Automated backups, network isolation, fail-over automation and data replication across multiple data centers combine to ensure that information is kept as secure as possible.

In addition to security, the cloud provides the opportunity to collaborate with the vendor in configuring a complaints management solution that can effectively address all of your business requirements. Ease of growth, web-based access and integration options also empower you to expand at your own pace without sacrificing functionality.

"You've got to start with the customer experience and work backward to the technology."

Steve Jobs
Founder of Apple

[Civica products powered by iCasework



Civica Case Management

Bespoke deployments that help organisations manage specific feedback requirements. [Read more](#)



Civica Complaints Management

Helping service teams comply with market specific regulation and capture, manage and respond to feedback. [Read more](#)



Civica Data Privacy

Capturing and automating case processes and reporting for UK-GDPR and global data privacy regulations. [Read more](#)



Civica Information Governance

Manage and report on Freedom of Information Act, Environmental Information Regulations and Subject Access Requests. [Read more](#)



Civica Employee Relations

Helping internal teams manage employee cases in line with company policy and within target timescales. [Read more](#)



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Automating file and case management, debt recovery, time recording and billing for private and public legal practices. [Read more](#)



Civica Registrations

Helping local public service registration offices to manage deaths, births and marriage cases effectively. [Read more](#)



Civica Coroners

Workflow automation for coronial jurisdictions, helping them comply with the Coroners and Justice Act. [Read more](#)



Civica Section 75

Simplifying dispute resolution on section 75s and chargebacks for credit and store card providers. [Read more](#)



Get in touch

Civica can help streamline your case and complaints management with our leading cloud solution Civica Case Management, powered by iCasework.

For a demonstration, [contact us today](#).

If you would like to know more about best practice complaints handling please email casemanagement@civica.co.uk.



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