![orange™]

YOXO: How Orange Romania Was First to Market With All-Digital Mobile

Orange Romania spotted a new, young, cost-conscious market segment that demanded a digital-first mobile experience. As key competitors launched all-digital brands in other markets, Orange Romania made a bold move. In less than a year, with approximately 15 people, and by partnering with MATRIXX Software, Orange Romania launched YOXO, the nation's first all-digital mobile brand.

Spotting the All-Digital Opportunity

Romania's mobile market is crowded and price competitive. A perennial market leader, Orange spotted a new growth opportunity in an emerging customer segment — young, digital and cost-conscious. As competitors were launching new brands to target this very segment in other markets, Orange needed to move quickly to be first to market in Romania.

In March 2020, Orange delivered the Romanian market's first all-digital mobile experience. Later rebranded and reintroduced, YOXO is a simple, inexpensive and easy to understand all-digital mobile brand. Customers sign up, order, and activate SIMs, change subscriptions month to month, manage payments and access support entirely from within the YOXO app. YOXO's features are enhanced continuously, based directly on customer feedback, to keep its experience in step with the changing wants and needs of its dynamic target market.

Embracing Change

Research revealed this young, digital cost-conscious segment was rejecting long-term subscription commitments. By prioritizing the flexibility to pay per month and cancel anytime, these customers wanted the most for their money and more. Winning them would take more than a first to market product launch. Orange Romania would need to embrace innovation and new ways of working to seize first-mover advantages, stay ahead of the competition and build a devoted customer community.

"We want to do more than just win customers from the competition. We want to reinforce an emotional connection with our brand. With YOXO, specifically, that means that we are using innovation and experimentation to create experiences that deliver meaningful value," says Anca Veluda, Head of Digital for Orange Romania.

While harnessing change to win market share would be a constant challenge, Orange Romania benefited from a group-wide organizational culture that encouraged adaptation and innovation.

As a result, the YOXO team was able to try new approaches to almost everything. "Our managers and leaders had the vision to support us. It was an experiment for us, and it's working!" Veluda says.

For example, YOXO's digital and customer-centric identity means that the look and feel of the app must evolve with, and adapt to, the market. To be able to respond to fast-moving trends, the YOXO team knew they had to build something that could adapt to customer feedback rapidly, but without massive effort or cost. This entailed an entirely new approach to product development and management.

Embracing Agile

Operating with a high degree of adaptability and flexibility meant adopting Agile. While this is a common way of working in tech, it is new to many telecom providers and was to Orange Romania. By adopting Agile, the YOXO team benefited from structural and cultural changes. For example, a new, multi-disciplinary, collocated team was created with four back-end developers, four mobile developers, a designer, two product owners, and a tester along with contributors from other IT teams.

Working in Agile also meant adopting a new product lifecycle for YOXO. In the past, Orange Romania might have updated products every year or two as part of a regular product catalog update. With YOXO on a digital path and using Agile, the whole approach changed.

"Now we have a product and once we release it, we change it and grow it," says Magda Miu, Technical Lead for YOXO.

The result is new product and pricing cycles reduced from months and years, down to days and weeks.

Agile does not work in isolation, however, especially in a large operator with many IT teams. "It was challenging to combine our Agile with the company's Waterfall," says Miu. "We needed to maintain speed, while still relying on contributors working at a different pace than ours." By clearly maintaining and communicating objectives, while also prioritizing critical dependencies, the YOXO team was able to deliver against its requirements. One of the most critical dependencies was the technology stack itself.

A Single Source of Agility, Powered by MATRIXX

Though Orange Romania's legacy platforms had performed well for a decade or more in most cases, they were designed to support services from mobile to quad-play that were managed on an annual or semi-annual schedule. They were built for Waterfall, not for YOXO's fast-changing, customer-responsive, all-digital mode of operating. The team needed a modern platform designed for agility. They chose MATRIXX Software for a solution that could power most of YOXO's core capabilities out-of-the-box.

MATRIXX delivered several important advantages for YOXO, such as:

- **No Code Configuration:** Useful out-of-the-box features are also easily extended for a custom implementation.

- **Legacy Integration:** The YOXO platform could integrate seamlessly with legacy billing and invoicing processes.

- **Massive Scale:** YOXO plans to grow fast and the platform needs to grow with it.

- **Real-Time Experience:** Customers can see and manage their account status and resources in real-time.

With its small team and Agile approach, focusing development resources was critical to success. "We were trying to build only the things we needed," says Valentin Ciocoiu, IT Solution Architect for YOXO. "That meant using what we could and rewriting where necessary," he says. The team leveraged MATRIXX's out-of-the-box components in their environment, benefiting from flexible integration with their legacy systems. "We matched the model from CRM with the model from MATRIXX and found the common elements between the platforms," Ciocoiu explains.
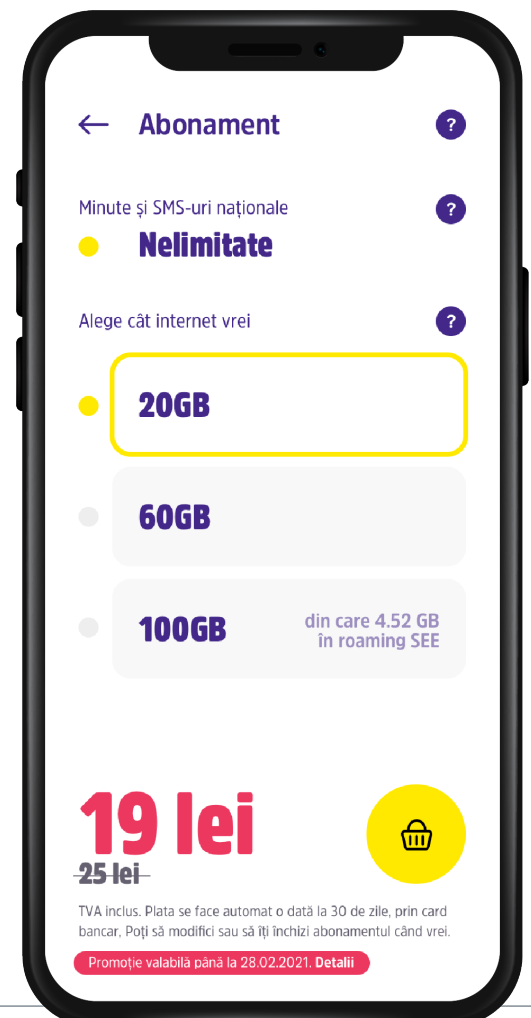
By matching its product modeling to MATRIXX's product catalog, the YOXO team reduced overhead in time, cost and IT components. As a result, the team rolled out its first MVP in just 5 months.

Realizing the Vision

YOXO launched in September 2020 and was first-to-market. A team of 15 people worked for just under a year to hit this critical milestone. The all-digital experience YOXO delivers allowed new YOXO customers to begin signing up, ordering and activating SIMs, checking account status, managing subscriptions and making payments — all via the app.

After launch, the team has delivered new features and improvements each month using a continuous approach that improves YOXO's customer experience. Customer feedback is collected and used to drive feature development, with customers seeing regular app improvements and new functionality drops, thanks to the team's use of Agile methodology.

The results speak for themselves. Most customers — as many as 90% — recommend YOXO to their friends and sales have tripled.

YOXO's product, technology stack and new ways of working also provide other Orange Group operators a proven model to launch all-digital mobile brands rapidly and adapt to changing markets faster than the competition.

CONTACT MATRIXX

YOXO Key Results

- Launched in one year with roughly 15 people

- MATRIXX-based MVP launched in 5 months

- NPS 66% higher than industry average

- 9 of 10 customers recommend YOXO to friends

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