

The Top Trends Transforming Customer Service

Leading businesses are adopting new methods to optimize their support organizations.

Technology has changed the way we communicate, how we shop, and the way customers interact with brands. For companies, this means adapting to a new reality where customers will simply go elsewhere if they don't get the help they want, when they want it.

From automations to conversational support, contact centers and support teams are using new technologies to make customer service both more natural and more efficient. Companies are also learning to track service interactions, enabling them to get a far better picture of their customers than was previously possible.

For support leaders who don't want to get left behind, here are the top three trends you can adopt today to make it easier to support your customers.





01.

Proactive support through automations

The Trend

Customer service is first and foremost a human job – people helping people to solve problems. Although that hasn't changed much, recent innovations in helpdesk software has made it possible for businesses to automate the clerical aspects of support work and get in front of an issue before customers ever have to deal with it.

Traditionally, customer support was **reactive** – it's all about putting out fires when unhappy customers reach out. By this point their issue has become a problem, they're already having a bad day, and all you can do is make it less bad. On the other hand, addressing a user's issue **proactively** allows businesses to operate more efficiently by anticipating issues before they become problems, minimizing customer frustration.

Why support teams need to adopt

Automations free support leaders from constant manual checks on SLAs, workloads, and performance. By planning ahead and mapping out repetitive support scenarios, support managers are able to program conditional actions.

This enables support managers to both save time and risk-proof their support operation by selecting who will get a heads-up when it's extra busy with calls or tickets. Additionally, automations allow support teams to keep an eye on agent KPIs by being notified when they are not hitting their call performance targets.

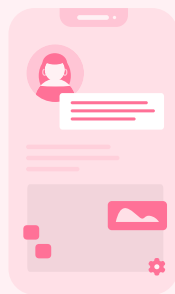
How to stay ahead of the pack

Look for an automation engine that allows managers to learn about negative CSAT right when it is submitted, so teams can react immediately by reviewing the issue and check if there's anything that can be done to remedy the situation.

“By 2025, proactive (outbound) customer engagement interactions will outnumber reactive (inbound) customer engagement interactions.”

CRM Customer Service and Support
Garner December, 2020.

02.



Conversational and mobile-first support

The Trend

Smartphones have changed the way we communicate, and customer service has adapted to change with it. What used to be a tedious encounter with robotic phone menus and impossible wait times, has evolved into a more intuitive and personal experience. This reflects the way we naturally interact with each other on our mobile devices, over messaging apps and social media – instantly and effortlessly.

‘Conversational support’ uses these channels to make businesses feel more available and accessible, providing contact points in the places customers already interact with their favorite brands. By being available across multiple channels, you have the ability to meet your customers where they are.

Why support teams need to adopt

The problem is that not all helpdesk software facilitates conversational support. For a start, many don’t allow support departments to be present on the social channels where businesses are advertising – creating a disconnect for the digital shopper. Those that do enable support over social channels require you to juggle just as many browser tabs to keep up with customer communications – creating a disconnect for the agent.

This constant swivel-screening creates a fractured support experience for customers, agents, and managers alike. It not only cuts into agent efficiency, it also means you never have the full picture of what’s going on within your customer’s journey.

How to stay ahead of the pack

Choose helpdesk software that is built around supporting customers in the way that feels most natural to them. This means providing a seamless support experience for both agents and customers, no matter which channel they’re using.

71% of Support Leaders agree that scaling conversational support will allow their organization to stay competitive or make them an industry leader.

Drive Conversational Experiences For A Future-Ready Customer Support Strategy.
Forrester Consulting, April 2021.



03.

Self-service through a dynamic knowledge base

The Trend

When it comes to innovations in support, self-service is perhaps the most overlooked tool with the highest ROI. That's because when people think of self-service, they tend to picture a PDF of instructions or an FAQ page where frustrated customers go to troubleshoot their issues. In fact, a true cloud-based knowledge management system is a form of proactive customer service that allows support leaders to track and anticipate users' needs – and support them with answers to their questions before they arise.

Like everything that happens online today, self-service leaves a digital footprint that can be used to capture and analyze user behavior. A modern knowledge base is a dynamic platform that meets users' needs while measuring usage in real-time.

Why support teams need to adopt

Self-service is first and foremost a means of making your expertise available to your customers at all times, which is the best way to skim ticket volume off the top.

But managing a support team isn't only about deflecting tickets – it's also about understanding the big picture, and this is where self-service provides a golden insight into your voice-of-customer. By monitoring the traffic to different knowledge base articles in real-time, managers can scan analytics to track spiking support issues, and take the necessary steps to address them.

How to stay ahead of the pack

Look to a dynamic knowledge base that can not only assist in deflecting tickets, but can provide insights into which knowledge base articles are useful (or not) to customers. Insights can then be fed to product, marketing, and other internal teams, enabling them to tackle issues before they become major problems.

Less than 10% of customer service journeys are fulfilled using end-to-end self-service...root cause is suboptimal knowledge management capabilities within legacy support platforms.

Improve Customer Self-Service Adoption by Automating Knowledge Capture and Curation.
Gartner, December 2020.

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