Guide

The Advanced Guide to Customer Service Chatbots

The Definitive Manual to Set Your Support up for Success

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1 Setting the Scene

Our story starts, as you might expect, with customer expectations. In today's digital world, customer expectations are sky-high. Customers expect answers immediately, any time of the day or week. They also reach out to brands through more digital channels and devices 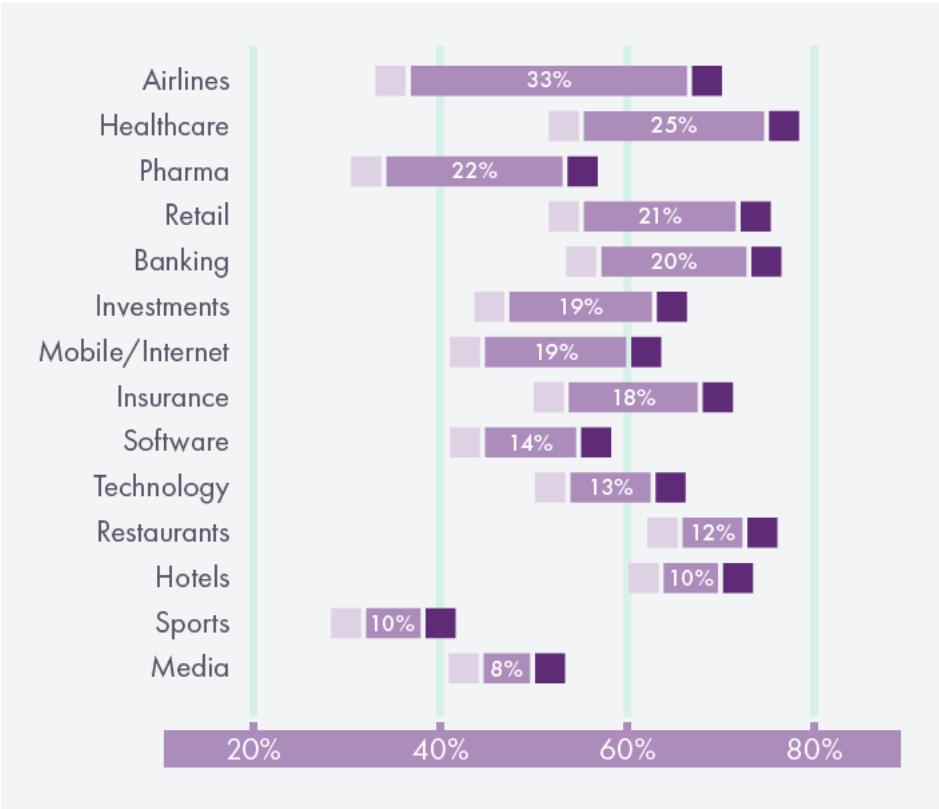than ever before. Some people call it the Amazon effect. It doesn't just affect ecommerce. Consumers today expect instant answers to anything they are searching for. We live in an instant economy. So how are brands meeting those expectations? Not very well.

In today's customer (service) world prevails an invisible chasm of expectations.

Bain & Company[1] recorded the famous delivery gap in 2005, pointing out the vast chasm between how companies perceive their own service level and how their customers experience it.

80%	Expectations Gap	8%
Of companies **believe** their service is superior		Of customers feel they receive superior service

SOURCE: BAIN & COMPANY[1]

Over a decade later, this gap between experience and expectation is still far from being closed and exists across all industries to different extents.

Industry	Gap
Airlines	33%
Healthcare	25%
Pharma	22%
Retail	21%
Banking	20%
Investments	19%
Mobile/Internet	19%
Insurance	18%
Software	14%
Technology	13%
Restaurants	12%
Hotels	10%
Sports	10%
Media	8%

20% 40% 60% 80%

SOURCE: PwC[2]

4

Customer service channels play a crucial role in keeping this gap wide open and creating dissatisfying customer experiences. And the worst part is that many brands just aren't aware of how they are stacking up.

Here are a few stats:

1 hr **expectation** on email
response time

12 hr 10 min **average**
email response time
SOURCE[3]

90-120 sec before consumers
hang up the phone
SOURCE[4]

3 hr **average**
phone response time
SOURCE[5]

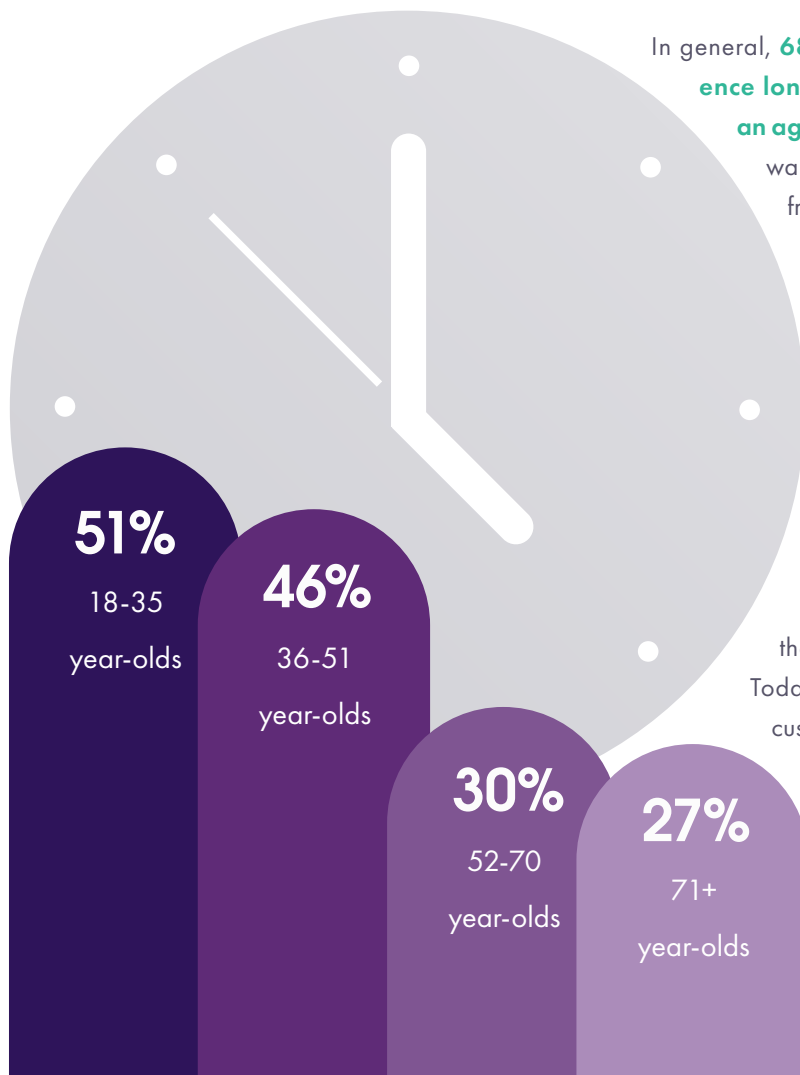48 sec **expectation** on
live chat response time
SOURCE[6]

60 min **average**
live chat response time
SOURCE[7]

6 hr **expectation** on Facebook
response time

1 d 3 hr 47 min **average**
Facebook response time
SOURCE[8]

During the holidays, things can get even worse. In December 2020, we conducted a study of 10 German online consumer electronics retailers and **on average, the testers waited 30 hours and 15 minutes** for a response from customer service via email.

In general, **68% of customers experience long waiting times to reach an agent very frequently.**[7] Long waiting times not only lead to frustration and a bad CX, but also to customers switching channels in order to get the same problem solved – potentially creating even more frustration on the side of the consumer and inefficiency within the company as various resources may be deployed to answer the same customer's request. Today's instant economy makes customers more impatient than ever before, especially the younger generation.

51%
18-35
year-olds

46%
36-51
year-olds

30%
52-70
year-olds

27%
71+
year-olds

We don't have to tell anyone that creating multiple service inquiries for the same problem is just bad – both for the customer and the service team. The solution? Creating a strategic funnel for your omnichannel service (read our guide on **"The Customer Service Funnel"** to learn how to build it).

Back to customer expectations, understanding them to the fullest extent and which negative impact it has not meeting them makes it clear that brands have to work towards closing that gap. How? It's about creating a space with **the right balance between using automation to answer questions and employing human support** to make your customer experience a frustration-free zone, delivering what customers today have come to expect: personalized, accurate and speedy service.

The gap closer is customer service chatbots. The hype is over – they are here to stay.

The goal here is not to replace human agents with a bot, but rather empowering them with it. According to Forrester, *"as a forward-thinking CX pro, you must augment — not replace — your employees with technology."*[9] It's about the empowered customer and the empowered service agent, and using technology to enable meaningful, quality conversations.
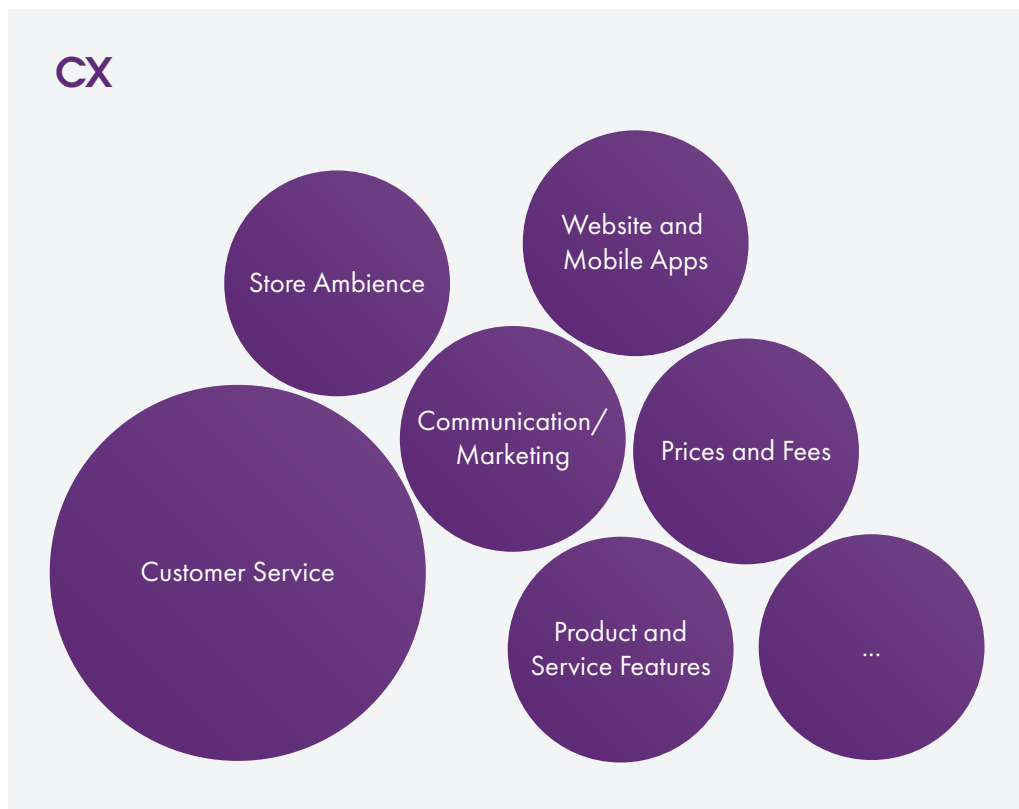
Chatbots are the perfect tool for today's instant economy, offering an already familiar conversational interface to the user. After evaluating **if a chatbot is the right choice for your business**, it's time to explore its impact on your customer service on a deeper level. In this guide you'll learn about the benefits of automating your customer service and how to set up your chatbot for success. We share best practices and industry insights by focussing on four areas:

- Improving the Customer Experience (CX)

- Boosting Efficiency

- Increasing Effectiveness

- Understanding Customers Better

Our extensive guide contains all the building bricks you need to create a great customer service experience with chatbots. Let's get started.

2 Improving the Customer Experience (CX)

Customer experience is one of the most buzzing words and most important matters to master – not only in the service sphere. **CX is a clear competitive differentiator.**[10] Improving a brand's overall CX leads to three major business benefits: **reduced cost and risk as well as increased revenue.**[11] Delivering a high quality CX does not solely depend on customer service, **but is its biggest lever.**[9]

CX

- Store Ambience
- Website and Mobile Apps
- Communication/ Marketing
- Prices and Fees
- Customer Service
- Product and Service Features
- ...

SOURCE: FORRESTER[9]

According to a recent **PwC study**[2], just one dissatisfying encounter with one of the many stakeholders' areas can lead to customers perceiving a brand so negatively that 32% are immediately willing to walk away. After several bad experiences nearly 50% will stop doing business with a company. The good news is that the key to a satisfied customer is as simple as "**creating positive experiences**"[12] for them. And the lock for this key is customer service.

Handling complaints about products, prices and other parts outside of the service department's sphere which led to a bad CX, support agents have the opportunity and the power to actively shape the customers' service experience. This is the prime factor customer service can influence and control. It's a powerful tool to define the Customer Lifetime Value (CLV) and set the tone for the overall customer relationship.

Various studies have shown that customers value and expect these four criteria most in their experience: **speed, convenience, knowledgeable and friendly service[2] as well as personalised support[7]**. These are the must-have skills of both chatbots and service agents to make customers happy.

Speed

Did you know that **64% of customers go straight to self-service options[13]** to solve their request rather than trying to contact an agent? **On top of that, 69% of customers want to resolve as many issues as possible on their own.[14]** Why? Because it is fast and convenient. People don't want to be stuck on hold.

While consumers have adopted asynchronous messaging widely as **"it fits into their day and allows them to communicate when and where they choose",** companies are far behind this trend: Only 19% use asynchronous messaging on third-party platforms according to a Forrester survey.[15] The biggest constraints for companies to incorporate messaging apps into their channel mix are budget, bandwidth and privacy concerns.

Even though channels like Facebook and WhatsApp are asynchronous, customers expect the same immediate experience as they were chatting with a friend. This is hard to fulfil as not every customer service is able to dedicate one or more agents to these channels as it would be required in order to offer great CX.

But there is another way which goes easy on resources, both human and monetary. It's unarguable that chatbots trump everything else in speed. Integrating a bot to your digital contact channels means being able to keep up with the pace of instant economy with low effort and high results.

Implementing a successful self-service strategy with a chatbot at the core of it means faster response times for both customers and support agents. Customers will find answers to their questions more quickly on their own without needing to switch channels and creating multiple touchpoints while agents can help other customers more timely and efficiently, hereby offering higher value and improving CX.

Convenience

Speed is one part of convenient customer service, yet it's not everything. Yes, customers don't want to wait, but they certainly **don't want to repeat themselves and they hate to have to contact support multiple times.**[7] Frustration is preprogrammed and clearly doesn't serve convenience and great CX. Ease is key.

What if a customer's problem could be resolved in one conversation?

First contact resolution (FCR) is a crucial driver of customer satisfaction and an important factor of improving CX. Machine learning (ML) ensures that the chatbot gets smarter with every conversation and is able to solve an inquiry efficiently in one go. Having such a helpful tool at hand serves both customers and service agents. Inefficiency can be reduced as multiple contacts for the same request from impatient customers decrease.

And what if a customer's problem could not only be resolved in one conversation, but also within 56.7 seconds?

Sounds like sorcery? Not quite! Resolution time is another factor which comes to play in convenient customer service. It's not only about speed, but efficiency as well. Chatbots are able to work such wonders without any magic involved. A well-built and well-trained bot is able to solve a request quickly, leading to a convenient customer experience.

The agents are also more likely to step up their game as they gain back time from previously inefficient contacts to cater to high-value conversations. Establishing a strong self-service empowers both customers and service agents – and makes their lives more convenient.

Personalized Support

Customers expect a personalized service experience, which provides a competitive advantage.[7] Chatbots are a perfect medium for personalizing the customer experience in a valuable, meaningful way that will make the customer's life easier and make them feel understood. Chatbots (just like human agents) need to take the customer's context into account to understand them.

The integration with a CRM system is becoming increasingly indispensable as it opens various opportunities for serving customers in a personalized manner – just like in a personal conversation. With the help of the right integrations, the bot accesses the relevant information at a glance and can act accordingly. The possibilities range from small digital gestures such as addressing logged-in customers by name up to pulling relevant information from their account data and history to solve their requests on a personal level.

But even if it's a new or unknown customer interacting with the bot, there are still data insights that can contribute to a personalized and meaningful conversation: IP address, device information, language, time zone settings, searches and pages viewed, time spent or referrals - in short the behavior and attributes which are helpful in tailoring the service of the chatbot exactly to the customer.

It might seem like a small measure, but it has a big effect: **The personal approach creates trust and strengthens customer loyalty in the long term.** Personalization not only improves CX, but also customer satisfaction, CSAT and your bottom line.

In addition, understanding does not only mean using given information in its context, but also actively and specifically asking for it. Similar to a phone call, a chatbot conversation needs to be just as interactive in order to get to the bottom of the customer's problem and to be able to give a satisfactory answer. Precise, personal, quick and easy to use are the key attributes of the chatbot, which offer customers significant added value compared to, for example, an FAQ.

Knowledge and Friendliness

Can a chatbot be friendly and knowledgeable? Of course! After all, it becomes the way it is trained – human input influences the character of the bot. Giving the chatbot a personality comes down to the content that it consists of and the number of personalized features.

Since a chatbot is a dynamic self-service solution, it is so much more powerful than a static FAQ page. It can contain much more solutions, can display them dynamically based on the context of the conversation and tailor the service offer to the customer's request. The goal with an adaptive approach is that the customer does not have to click through an endless static decision tree to eventually get to the desired answer, but that the right solution is proposed by answering just a few simple questions. It's interactive and engaging, just like a conversation with a service agent.

To make it more friendly, a great conversational design and user experience (UX) is key. Basically, the same criteria as for a great service agent apply to a chatbot. It should speak the customer's language, represent the company in a good light and make the conversation as comfortable and helpful as possible for the customer. This will increase the chatbot's effectiveness.

Chatbots can cater to your customer's service needs at every stage of the customer journey.

Indeed, the best feature about chatbots is that they can support customers when they have questions before and after their purchase, pull data regarding their recent orders or returns, as well as recommend further information, as well as hand over to a service agent if the task at hand goes beyond their capability.

With the integration of APIs from third-party providers into the chatbot system a company is able to provide holistic service at all stages of the customer journey.

3 Boosting Efficiency

Ticket deflection is a common argument to automate your customer service and is perceived as an efficiency booster to get more things done in less time. Yet, there is so much more to it. Deeply connected to personalization and integrations, a top tier chatbot should be able to do more than just provide simple Q&A solutions in order to deflect tickets. An efficient (and in the long-run effective) chatbot solution is able to perform powerful actions.

Performing actions instead of simply answering questions is important because it leads to a better ROI for the company, an improved service experience for the customers and ultimately retrieving valuable time as well as increasing satisfaction – both for customers and service agents. This is the essence of efficient customer service.

More than answers— chatbots perform actions.

One of the key challenges of customer service is to **maintain a good balance between the efficiency and the quality of the service offer.**[16] This holds true for agents and chatbots. Both have their strengths in different areas, but together they manage to strike a balance to serve customers in an efficient and high-quality manner.

A well-built bot is a service department's first line of defense, a poorly built bot is a ticking bomb.

Closely tied to the customers' expectations of a great service experience, speed and convenience are a chatbot's top two features which boost the overall efficiency of a service department. Just like an agent, a chatbot has also to fulfil certain criteria to become a pro at customer service and receive the right training.

Making the right chatbot choice and committing to it is crucial for a business. If chosen carefully, the chatbot is a valuable addition to the support department. Efficiency through automation means less manual work for the service team, regained time for high-value requests and higher employee satisfaction. Automation will not only improve the team's morale, it will also allow companies to scale their team's output while containing costs. It's the paramount to an efficient 24/7 customer service strategy.

Streamlining Business Processes

One of a chatbot's overall superpowers is to **streamline business processes.** Cases which need no agent involvement should be the subject of automation. **While an agent can only focus on three customers via live chat at the same time to still offer great support to every single one of them,**[17] a chatbot can simultaneously serve a limitless number of customers. It's an energy-saver for agents which allows them to dedicate themselves to the cases which need a human touch.

Gaining New Customer Insights

With the possibility to conduct various conversations at the same time, the chatbot takes in a **continuous stream of valuable information.** A chatbot receives customer data and direct feedback, making both available in a quantifiable manner through an analytical dashboard. It helps to outline a more precise customer profile which in turn is helpful to tailor the service offer based on this improved understanding of a customer's needs. It's analysis also shows the shortcomings of the service offer and makes it easy to address these problems which otherwise probably wouldn't have surfaced so clearly. A well-trained chatbot could even be used to teach new employees.

Context-awareness & Multi-lingual Support

A chatbot's efficiency is also demonstrated by its ability to take in the **context of the conversation** and to offer **multi-language support.** A well-built bot, just like a human agent, listens (or rather reads along) to the customer to understand their request and give an exact and satisfying answer. Above all, this means being integrated with a CRM tool to access relevant customer data. In addition, understanding does not only mean taking up the given information in its context, but also actively and specifically asking questions. Similar to a phone call, a chatbot conversation needs to be just as interactive in order to get to the bottom of the customer's problem and to be able to give a satisfactory answer. This can be achieved with the power of natural language processing (NLP). Supported by NLP, a chatbot is able to quickly adapt and display the best possible solution. Another advantage of NLP is the possibility of multi-linguality, which is perfect for global companies offering support in different countries. Precise, personal, quick and easy to use are the key attributes of an efficient chatbot, which offer customers significant added value compared to e.g. an FAQ.

When it comes to efficiency, the matter of effectiveness is closely related, yet demonstrates an even more powerful outcome for a company. Both go hand in hand, yet **effectiveness is the supreme discipline in the automation game.** Why? Keep on reading.

4 Increasing Effectiveness

Deflecting tickets is a good start, but providing a holistic service experience is next level. To deliver effective customer service with automation, you have to do it the right way. Always keep in mind: The provided service experience can only be as good as the bot itself and its set-up. And a bot's effectiveness highly depends on this, too.

Here are a few tips and tricks on how to make your chatbot more effective and which benefits this will bring along.

How to Measure the Effectiveness of Your Chatbot

Before deep diving into improvement strategies, it's crucial to understand which effects an efficient chatbot can have and how to measure them. Implementing a chatbot with a strong self-service strategy comes with a few perks **like influencing the service department's KPIs positively.**

In general, it's always advisable to **look at the ratio instead of an absolute number** as it paints a more comprehensive picture (e.g. number of contacts per user or per order). It is also important to distinguish between purely service tickets (support inquiries: where the goal is to deflect) and marketing/sales tickets (product inquiries: where the goal is to get as much engagement as possible) as they can't and shouldn't be compared due to their opposite objectives. If the bot is used to drive more sales (e.g. giving product advice) then another important KPI would be to measure the conversion rate. Overall, **calculating the bot's ROI is always a good idea.**

For the measurement of a chatbot's success, we gathered valuable recommendations and insights from across our own customer base.

What to expect from an effective chatbot:

Decrease in

- Visits on FAQ page
- Average handling time per ticket
- Number of touches per ticket
- Missed chats
- Live chat waiting times
- Costs of resolving a ticket
- Staff turnover

Increase in

- CSAT
- First contact resolution
- Self-service rate
- Ticket deflection
- Employee satisfaction

To get to this desired stage of great KPIs, we collected a few guidelines to follow in order to make a chatbot as impactful and effective as possible.

How to Increase Your Chatbot's Effectiveness

There are a couple of things one can do to make the chatbot the best version of itself. It involves providing great user experience (UX), a clear strategy of user-channeling, implementing the right integrations, ensuring smooth handovers and applying machine learning.

Let's Talk About UX

It's important to find the right balance of your chatbot's appearance to offer a pleasant user experience. By now, everyone has probably come across a website where the chatbot window immediately opens up, nagging one to use it intrusively even though one has just visited the site to browse in peace? The presence and service of a chatbot shouldn't in any case annoy users. **Until the customer chooses to engage, the chatbot should be quiet, but not silent.**

In general, a chatbot has to be accessible from every page on the website by implementing a small beacon (e.g. in the lower right corner). When a user comes to the website, displaying a subtle message of "Hi there, I'm here – just in case you need me." is helpful, but it should also disappear again after a while. When the customer then chooses to click on the beacon, a chat window pops open and they can start their conversation. It is useful to delay the appearance of the beacon as well as the appearance of the bot's text bubbles in the widget to make it feel more natural. Following these guidelines ensures users will turn to the chatbot for help without feeling pushed to do so.

Technically, there are a few levers one can pull to make the chatbot as pleasing as possible to the customer and create an enjoyable service experience. For customers to not feel alienated by the chatbot, it's crucial to carefully design it's personality, meaning its voice and appearance.

Making it look on brand is one thing, but the bot should also have it's own personality. This could mean using the company mascot as the face of the bot or to develop such a buddy, who creates a sense of familiarity and is able to build a relation to the customer.

The bot's tone of voice should match the brand's. It should be casual and chatty, but not too informal. One has to be aware that the more personable a chatbot appears, the more people will assume that it's likewise knowledgeable. Matching its personality to the actions that the bot can perform is a fine line which needs to be taken into account.

One major goal of a chatbot is to enable meaningful conversations and offer convenient support. If users are logged in, it allows for creating a more personalized experience by addressing them directly by name, taking their contact information and order history into account and tailoring the conversation to them.

Great UX also involves good user-channeling, seamless handovers by implementing the right integrations and an improved experience over time based on machine learning.

User-Channeling to Build a Strong Self-Service Funnel

According to **Microsoft's State of Global Customer Service Report,** about 66% of customers begin with self-service instead of contacting a human agent when engaging with customer service, and 86% expect companies to offer a self-service option.[13] This is the sweet spot for deploying an effective chatbot.

Furthermore, **Forrester predicts an increase of digital customer service interaction by 40% in 2021.**[18] More and more customers are moving to digital channels, even those who used them for the first time in 2020 during the pandemic. It's basically no longer an option to neglect customers on these channels and a chance to offer a great service experience with a chatbot.

Think of a chatbot as the first line of defense: It's the service team member which interacts with customers as a primary touchpoint. Therefore it should be placed already on the main page and the pages where customers are actively looking for support, such as contact page, support and help pages, e.g. FAQ. On top of that, it is useful to feature a clear message on the website's header or menu which takes the user directly to the chatbot – for instance, a clear CTA saying "Get in touch with us 24/7".

Guiding the customer through the chatbot first offers various bene-fits, ranging from empowering the customer to solve problems on their own over retrieving all the relevant information to routing them to the right agent if needed to resolve the inquiry efficiently and to the customer's satisfaction.

In order to implement a strong user-channelling strategy, **the different contact channels must be funneled.** Removing direct contact options such as phone number, email address and forms from the website is a first and necessary step to drive users to the chatbot, but it doesn't mean that these channels are shut down. They're just moved to a later stage of the customer service funnel where they are more valuable.

Besides having the bot as a first point of contact on the website or integrating it to an app, it's best practice to implement it on messaging channels such as **Facebook** and **WhatsApp** as well. Offering instant service on instant messaging platforms is simply a must and helps the service team to stay on top of incoming requests through these channels and offer more self-service options.

What if there are still some customers who keep on calling or writing emails? While they're waiting for a reply or somebody to pick up the phone, they should be referred to using the chatbot. In an automatic response email, one can give them the option to interact with the chatbot to resolve their problem immediately. The same goes for calls: The chatbot can be mentioned in the IVR (interactive voice response) before the customer is being connected to a service agent, hereby highlighting the benefit of a faster response. This can potentially drive more users to the chatbot.

Partner Up: More Effectiveness Through API Integrations

Integrate, integrate, integrate. This can't be stressed enough. A chatbot gets more powerful and efficient with other tools connected to it. While the chatbot itself can be integrated to a handful of channels, such as messaging apps, other major customer service software should be integrated into the bot via Application Programming Interface (API). These include:
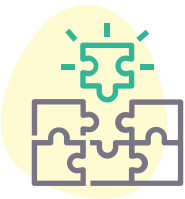
CRM

The most important integration is between a chatbot and a service department's customer relationship management (CRM) tool. This allows the chatbot to directly interact with customer data, access relevant information and update the database if needed. Handing over to a service agent via a form is also accumulated in the CRM, having all of the customer intel for the agent on display in one central system.

Customer support tools

Handing over within the same widget to an agent can be done with various tools. Using a live chat handover will create a seamless experience for the customer when continuing to chat with an agent. If the customer is using a mobile device, a phone call can be directly triggered from the bot.

Customized tech stack

Especially for ecommerce companies, integrations to their customized tech stack are crucial. This ranges from the web shop system, logistical software and post-sales communication tools, e.g. to inform customers about the order status. Integrating tools to track the order, apply direct changes to it or handle returns and claims are extremely helpful to keep the customer engaged and informed. But also beyond ecommerce, integrating the chatbot into own software systems is a must-do.

The fundamental idea of integrations is to make the chatbot a one-stop shop for the company.

Analytical tools

Track even more data by connecting the bot to a Google Analytics account. Using a chatbot to boost sales, one can monitor conversion rates through bot interactions, comparing it easily to other channels.

Handovers Done Right

Let's face it, some high-value cases just need a human touch. Period. Whenever an agent needs to be involved, the transition from the chatbot to them has to be as smooth as possible, both from a technical and a personal experience.

When the technical integrations are set up, seamless handovers are just a matter of the right definition and routing. As a next step, escalation strategies should be defined right from the start when setting up the bot. This includes not only integrations which allow a handover via other contact channels, but also routing the customer to the right expert agent or department based on the nature of the inquiry.

One can even go as far as defining the type of channel for the handover based on the inquiry. If it's an urgent matter, like a stolen credit card that needs to be deactivated, the customer should not be forced to write an email. Instead, immediate handovers either via live chat or phone should be offered. And if it's something like a lost parcel, a form can be helpful to capture as much relevant information as possible when transferring it to the agent for handling it. The use case of the inquiry demands a definition of the channel handover.

Form / Email

This is the most simple form of a handover and suited when no agent is available as the contact is made outside of their working hours. It allows gathering all the relevant information an agent needs to solve the customer request.

Live Chat

This handover could either take place on the website or on a social media channel. It keeps the customer engaged by staying in the same chat widget. The advantage for the agents is here that they can handle a few live chats at once.

Phone

Connecting the customer via phone to a service agent is the most resourceful solution, but it is crucial for cases which are high-value and need to be handled more sensitively.

On top of this, it is important to always **give the customer the option to connect with an agent at any stage of the conversation.** They shouldn't be left feeling abandoned by giving them the chatbot as the only option. Defining handover strategies is a crucial part of setting up an effective chatbot and delivering a great service experience.

If handovers are done right, not only the chatbot becomes more effective, but also the service agents. Using the right tools empowers the agents to help the customers in a more efficient and effective manner. It also empowers the customer by offering self-service first and then a reliable back-up to solve their problem.

Getting Smarter Every Day: Machine Learning

To provide the best support for your customers, your chatbot needs to learn every day. You need to find out which requests cannot yet be handled well by your chatbot and where important information is still missing. But how to find out what matters when thousands of customers use it everyday?

The solution is called Machine Learning (ML). By analysing user behaviours, their communication, their feedback and escalated cases, machine learning algorithms can extract common patterns to bring your attention to the right spot. To easily understand what's going on, similar user behaviours are clustered together. And by confirming the correct bot behaviour, it will learn and boost your bot capabilities to new heights.

A chatbot relies heavily on the data it is trained with. This defines its character and effectiveness. A chatbot is only as efficient and effective as the sum of conversations it's able to handle successfully by offering a satisfying solution to the customer. It gets trained by every conversation it conducts with customers, but it also needs internal input. Machine learning improves the bot over time, enabling it to handle even complex requests efficiently and effectively.

How Effective Are Customer Service Chatbots?

Looking at which actions to take to make chatbots more effective and how to measure it, leads to the question how effective they really are. Keeping track of the chatbot's KPIs is one side of the medal, the other one is to learn how to interpret them. This is why we've created a benchmark report based on our own customer base to give real recommendations and insights.

5 Understanding Customers Better

Building a top tier self-service strategy comes with an impactful and positive side effect: strong customer analytics and actionable insights. The gathered data range from conversations, including requests and solutions, to feedback through interactions with the chatbot.

Giving customers the option to provide **"feedback beyond numbers"**[19] makes it possible to gather valuable insights from their written feedback (after rating the chatbot conversation) which helps understanding their needs and the chatbot's efficiency. These qualitative and quantitative information are crucial to improve the success of a company's self-service strategy.

Why are insights and analysis important?

- ☑ Improve customer experience in the long term
- ☑ Collect data for valuable intel for your business
- ☑ Identify UX and CX issues early on and improve them
- ☑ Predict issues and prevent them
- ☑ Improve the content inside the chatbot
- ☑ Get additional information on the website and customer journey
- ☑ Set up workflows that generate more revenue
- ☑ Reduce and contain costs
- ☑ Stay ahead of your competitors

Chatbots can also in fact also help personalize the customer service experience in retrospect by gathering customer data from their interactions. With that data, service agents can use the information to personalize their interactions with customers. Customer information can be fed to the agent in real time (when they're speaking to a customer on the phone), so they can provide relevant solutions based on current needs as well as previous interactions with the company.

Use Data Insights for Continuous CX and Bottomline Improvement

Being able to know how effective a chatbot serves the customers is key to take further improvement actions. We've created the following benchmark report based on our industry insights.
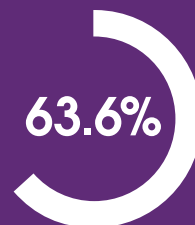
Benchmark Report

Across all industries

Self-service rate

81%

CSAT

63.6%

CSAT

Without handover

★★★★☆

With handover

★★★☆☆

Desktop vs. mobile traffic

49%
Desktop traffic

51%
Mobile traffic

Solutions proposed monthly

3,417

Average handling time

26.3 secs
Time to solution

56.7 secs
Time to verification of solution

Industry-specific KPIs

E-Commerce

- Self-service rate **78%**
- CSAT **69.3%**
- Solutions proposed monthly **2,184**

Average handling time
- Time to solution: **24.2 secs**
- Time to verification: **62.1 secs**
- Desktop traffic: **47%**
- Mobile traffic: **53%**

Financial Services

- Self-service rate **76%**
- CSAT **77.7%**
- Solutions proposed monthly **3,525**

Average handling time
- Time to solution: **35.8 secs**
- Time to verification: **84.2 secs**
- Desktop traffic: **46%**
- Mobile traffic: **54%**

Software & Apps

- Self-service rate **73%**
- CSAT **65,7%**
- Solutions proposed monthly **3,307**

Average handling time
- Time to solution: **24.9 secs**
- Time to verification: **42.9 secs**
- Desktop traffic: **21%**
- Mobile traffic: **79%**

6 Key Takeaways to Guide You to Success

Setting a chatbot up for success is a journey which involves taking the following steps and benefiting from them in return:

Improving the Customer Experience (CX)

Customer service is a defining part of CX and a huge competitive differentiator. Creating a great service experience is crucial to Lifetime Value (CLV) and set the tone for the overall customer relationship. To improve it, the service offered by both service agents and chatbots needs to fulfil the following criteria: speed, convenience, knowledge and friendliness as well as personalized support.

Boosting efficiency

To be efficient, chatbots must give more than answers - they need to perform actions. If they are well-built, they are a service department's first line of defense by automating incoming requests. Efficient chatbots can streamline business processes, gain valuable customer insights, take in the context of the conversation and offer multi-lingual support.

Increasing effectiveness

Effectiveness is the supreme discipline in the automation game and chatbots are the key to it. There are a couple of things one can do to make the chatbot the best version of itself. It involves providing great user experience (UX), a clear strategy of user-channeling, implementing the right integrations, ensuring smooth handovers and applying machine learning.

Understanding customers better

Building a top tier self-service strategy comes with an impactful and positive side effect: strong customer analytics and actionable insights. The gathered data range from conversations, including requests and solutions, to feedback through interactions with the chatbot. This helps to understand customers better and to continuously improve a brand's CX and bottom line.

Following these steps is crucial to implement an advanced customer service automation strategy.

Looking at improvement, an outstanding question is how advanced will chatbots become in the future. No matter the technical progress, there will always be a human touch needed in customer service. But we believe that chatbots will evolve in a few areas:

No-Code Automation

Chatbots are the interface between you and your customers. To make chatbots really successful they need to be able to automate the important service requests. This requires that you connect the chatbot with your IT infrastructure and your business logic. We believe that this should be in full control of your service department. That's why we see a big future for no-code automation builders that will be able to enable full end-to-end automation between you and your customers.

Voice

And why stop there? We believe that the best service automation platform will be able to serve the same service on voice channels like your phone hotline. Automate cases, deliver instant answers and handover to the right department if needed.

Omnichannel

Your bots will not be limited to single channels like your website. Instead the borders between them will vanish. Offering your chatbots across multiple platforms allows for seamless and instant service. Digital conversations become more streamlined and personalized.

Better Conversational Design

And as your chatbots become the central platform for your service interactions, the conversational design will evolve: switching between bots, automation flows and agents becomes a seamless experience. Your customers will get the best service that is needed along their journey with your brand - and they won't notice the borders between these different worlds anymore.

There are exciting times ahead – let's make the most out of them!

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Get Started for Free

Solvemate enables brands to deliver quality customer service through meaningful conversations. Our customer service automation platform is powered by smart conversational AI that allows companies to create chatbot conversations so service teams can focus their expertise where it matters most. Solvemate's unique contextual conversation engine learns more quickly, integrates more easily and resolves requests faster and more reliably than any other chatbot on the market. Brands benefit from a personalized, real-time self-service experience that increases customer satisfaction, reduces costs, and offers actionable customer service insights. Solvemate is trusted by brands such as **On**, **musicMagpie**, **egym**, and **JustPark**.

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