



Empower the voices of your business

Investing in authentic and empathetic customer service agents to optimise your voice channel



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A young woman with curly hair, wearing a headset and a white shirt, is smiling and looking to the side. She is in a call center environment, with other people in the background also wearing headsets. The image is overlaid with a blue and teal geometric design on the right side.

The business of
business is relationships;
the business of life is
human connection

Robin S. Sharma



The ability to communicate is essential for all life. However very few species are gifted with the power of speech.

An intrinsically human act, talking is an incredible skill and yet in modern times, we seem only to **talk** and forget to **connect**. In a world dominated by hashtags and HTML, humans can talk endlessly, but it is authentic, human connection that drives emotion, decision-making and loyalty.

Businesses understand the complexity of communication with ever-present technology at the customer's fingertips. But they also know, that when things get too complex to be solved by an FAQ or a chatbot or other self-service resources, nothing beats picking up the phone and talking to another human.

The voice channel still has its part to play and the potential to be the most authentic channel of them all.

Turning the voice channel into a **connection** with customers starts from within, by empowering customer service agents with skills, technology and confidence.



Empower agents with decision making

Customer service agents have a difficult task, especially as every customer presents a different puzzle to solve. In order to do their job effectively and confidently, agents need a flexible support system, one which encourages them to take control, make decisions and provide individual resolutions.

Being a decision-maker is a great responsibility, however with it comes pride, creativity and a feeling of being valued. Agents who are given the ability to decide and uniquely resolve queries, are more likely to feel invested in the business. In fact, **33%** of agents believe encouraging decision-making is one of the top-three most important routes to boosting agent morale.*

The opportunity to make decisions is empowering, and inspires agents to add personal value at every stage. This empowerment filters back to the customer, who in turn is shown that every agent has the ability and authorisation to find a solution, no matter how complex.

Source:


*Contact Babel UK Contact
Centre Decision-Makers'
Guide 2019-20



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Give half the context, get half the solution



Only **49%** of contact centres report that customer service agents have a full view of the customer history, including any non-voice interactions.*

Imagine only knowing half the problem but being expected to find the whole solution. In order to successfully support customers and feel confident in their abilities, agents require a 360-degree view of customer details and purchase history.

This presents them with the much needed context to make appropriate decisions and provide useful advice. Given this information, issues can be solved more efficiently, leaving the agent feeling fulfilled and importantly, the customer satisfied.



Happy agents build positive human connections

Technology is inevitably changing the way businesses communicate with their customers. However, in a world of artificial intelligence and social media, many customers still want to connect with a human voice at the end of the phone.

Customer service agents have the power to determine whether the brand connects with, or merely serves, its customers. They play an integral role in the human-centric approach to communication, and they unknowingly create moments of connection in every conversation; be it a laugh, a warm hello or an emoji that adds authenticity.

The tone with which an agent engages the customer is dependent on their positive or negative work attitude. This in turn is a result of how valued, supported and engaged each agent feels in their job.

Humans are sensitive to voice tone and an empathetic voice is hugely impactful. Creating an optimistic, supportive and happy work environment encourages agents to allow human personality to shine through, resulting in a friendly, warm and welcoming customer service experience.



Give agents the tools to do their job effectively

Customer service agents can feel lost and unable to work effectively without adequate IT systems to support them. Businesses are recognising this and in 2019, **36%** of organisations aimed to improve agent desktop and CRM experiences, so that agents could better support customers on a day-to-day basis.*

It is only natural that agents respond more confidently to customer enquiries and decision-making if they have intuitive and intelligent tools at their disposal. In fact, **22%** of agents believe the effort associated with improving internal tools carries the largest opportunity to improve agent experience.*

The steps being taken to improve systems, such as integrating contact centre tools or CRM platforms, will help data and information flow securely and seamlessly.

More contact centres are turning to AI and intelligent automation in the form of chatbots and other technologies to support agents and provide an exceptional service experience. It's predicted that the use of AI by customer service teams will increase by **143%** next year.**

Such improvements streamline the back-end of the voice channel, enabling agents to focus on providing efficient and personalised support to each customer.

Sources

*Cw market study the future of the contact centre in 2019

**State of Service, Salesforce Research, March 2019



Upskill agents to increase job satisfaction

In 2019, training represented a significant proportion of investment in the voice channel sector, followed closely by coaching. Providing agents with the opportunity to learn and develop their skills is a fantastic way of boosting agent morale and commitment to the business.

Improving soft skills represents a large proportion of agent training. Developing skills such as empathy, positivity, listening, patience and persuasion are not only key to a positive customer experience, but also beneficial life lessons for the agents themselves.

Agents who have access to learning and development opportunities feel more capable, valued and see an improvement in job satisfaction.

This motivates them to stay loyal to the business and find pride in providing a high standard of service to customers.



Talk is cheap. Connection is powerful.

Make sure you utilise the voice channel to its full potential!

Customers are craving human connection in a digital world and businesses can provide this through the voice channel.

However, success is not inevitable, on the contrary, it's the result of investment in the customer service agents whose voices make the channel come alive.

Any human can talk; agents however have to connect and this is a far greater skill. This eGuide has provided insight into how and why empowering agents is vital to the success of the voice channel. Supporting them is the foundation from which to build and getting it right has business-wide ramifications. Businesses retain empowered staff; staff are motivated and satisfied; and customers get the best possible service experience.



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