

Tipsheet

5-steps to AI-integrated customer service

Do you constantly get the sense that your team is understaffed and unable to keep up with customer demands? You're not alone.

63% of customer service leaders worldwide say that customer expectations have increased since February 2020. Our research has shown that customer service operations are dealing with an increase in customer churn and customer urgency, which makes speedy resolutions and effective customer service a necessity for every business.

At this point, we all know AI and an automation-first approach to customer service can help empower your agents to provide superhuman service, but the trick is knowing where to start. We're here to help.

Follow this step-by-step guide to learn what pitfalls to avoid, and how to ensure successful adoption of AI-integrated customer service.

1

Define how your team will use AI

AI is not a magic bullet to every problem, but one of the many tools in your arsenal. So to make AI more effective in your customer service operations, it's extremely important to focus on customer experience.

It's crucial to set your AI goal around customer experience by:

Using AI to reduce friction: AI-chatbots are meant to help customers get an instant resolution without having to wait for a live-agent. If your goal is to leverage chatbots to automate 50% of customer queries, then that means the remaining half of query volume still results in friction for the customer.

Focusing on CSAT: For effective implementation of AI, interactions with chatbots need to provide the same if not better experience to the customer than what live-agents can. If a chatbot doesn't work the first time, customers will always avoid it and choose another channel for their engagement.

2

Identify what you need to automate

Your customer queries can be categorized into three groups:

Basic L1: These queries are also known as general FAQs and cover common questions like 'What is your refund policy', or 'How do I cancel my order'. This roughly makes up 15% of all your queries.

Advanced L1: These are user-specific queries such as 'What is the status of my refund' or 'Where is my order'. This roughly makes up 45% of all your queries.

L2+: These queries deal with advanced troubleshooting around more technical issues such as a product bug. This roughly makes up 40% of all your queries.

More often than not, an organization's bulk customer queries are Advanced L1 or user-specific queries. Despite that, most organizations only focus on automating Basic L1 queries making automation not as effective as it could be.

Automate this

15%

45%

40%

Basic
General FAQ's

Advanced L1
User-Specific Queries

L1+ Advanced
Troubleshooting

"What's your
refund policy"

"Where's my order?"

Product bug

You need to analyze and classify what kinds of queries customers typically ask and where a majority of your agents' hours are spent. Once you identify the roadblocks in your process, focus on how AI and the application of automation can help solve for them.

For **PhonePe**, India's fastest-growing mobile payments app, the solution was as simple as integrating bots to handle Advanced L1 queries, easing the burden on their agents.

"60% of our tickets or conversations are completely automated. This means they are taken care of without ever being touched by a human."

- Vishal Gupta, Head of Product, PhonePe

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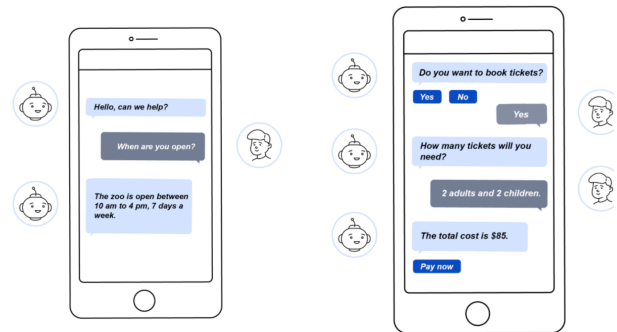
3

Choose between building & buying

AI can be easy. You don't need complex and expensive natural language bots to handle free-flowing conversations. More often than not, simple is best. Think IVRS workflows, but on chat.

AI-powered chatbots can be low-code, easy to build, and launch on your website in a matter of minutes. These chatbots can use triggered workflows to not just answer a customer's query, but also identify intent and make a sale without the customer ever leaving the chat window. With low-code bots, you can also keep iterating and improving the bot yourself without relying on third-parties and developers.

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For **Cred**, a financial services provider, bots don't just provide automated smart responses, but also act as decision-making, action-taking bodies bringing down agent needs by 50%!

4

Set up effective handovers to live agents

Bots, while effective, can never be the conversationalists that humans can, and might never have all the answers. Your customers will be sure to test a bot's limits either unintentionally or intentionally, so it's important to have a process in place for a Plan B.

When your bot doesn't have the answer, allow it to fail gracefully and transition your conversation to a human agent, especially when a customer is getting increasingly angry or impatient. AI-chatbots can offer frustration detection and intelligently hand-off conversations to an agent. This means when an angry customer says "I don't want to talk to a bot. Put me in touch with someone." the bot automatically transfers the chat to an agent.

Tree of Life Bookstores utilized bots to gather initial information from the customer, saving 3-5 minutes per interaction for their agents and providing them with complete context upon handover.

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5

Set up effective handovers to live agents

AI and automation are definitely helpful when dealing with customers, but it can be equally useful in making internal processes more efficient. There are several mandatory, repetitive tasks your agents do on a daily basis, and being able to automate those can make work more interesting for your teams.

Here are a few examples of how automation and AI can be used to increase productivity:

- When a ticket comes in, the team's manager needs **to route the ticket to the right agent**. This is usually a time-consuming, manual process, but it can be automated with the help of quick automation rules and with the help of AI.
- Agents need to **sort, categorize, and label all of their tickets**, which can take time away from actually resolving customer queries. AI can take care of this task entirely by identifying keywords in the subject line and the message to automatically classify and label each ticket.
- Agents need to learn all about your products, every type of customer, and every time of query a brand has in order to be able to effectively understand and solve customer issues. AI can simplify this mammoth task by **suggesting the most fitting solution articles as a response**, saving your agents the trouble of manually going through a whole laundry list in the knowledge base.

Bonus



Give your agents a bot of their own

Agent-assistant bots can help your agents locate information quickly, provide them with next-best-actions on tickets, and even help onboard new trainees faster. Your superheroes need a powerful sidekick to supply them with the right information at the right time and improve team performance!

Want to integrate AI into your customer service operations?

[Schedule a personalized demo now →](#)

