The New Rules of Customer Engagement

A 2019 Survey Report
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Executive Summary

Today’s customers have expectations. The well-informed digitally-savvy ones in particular, want to do business with companies that know them, understand their expectations intimately, and design experiences that meet their needs. At Freshworks, we see the customer engagement industry going through rapid change. Not only do we want to understand and anticipate this change, we want to impact it. What do customers really expect? Where, when and how are they communicating with brands of their choice? In the following pages, we share actionable insights from our first multi-country survey on customer engagement, based on the responses of 3000 consumers across 6 countries.

Consumers Control CX

56% of consumers globally have stopped doing business with a brand due to a single bad service experience in the last 12 months.

Omnichannel Gets Noticed

67% of consumers globally use 3 or more channels to engage with a brand and 39% use 5 or more channels.

Messaging Overtakes Traditional

21% Live Chat emerges as the third most preferred channel of engagement for consumers globally, after voice and email.
The New Rules of Customer Engagement Survey was conducted online using a third-party opt-in survey tool. Approximately 3,000 consumers across 6 regions and ages 18 and older were surveyed, equally divided between male and female with varying household incomes. The below representations highlight the survey demographics.

### Demographics

#### Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-29</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>30-44</td>
<td>33%</td>
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<tr>
<td>45-60</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;60</td>
<td>16%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>50%</td>
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#### Household Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$0-$9,999</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>$10,000-$24,999</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000-$49,999</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000-$74,999</td>
<td>18%</td>
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<tr>
<td>$75,000-$99,999</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>$100,000-$124,999</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>$125,000-$149,999</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000-$174,999</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$175,000-$199,999</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$200,000+</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer not to answer</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6 Countries

3000 Consumers

United States
1000 Consumers

Germany
250 Consumers

India
500 Consumers

United Kingdom
500 Consumers

France
250 Consumers

Australia
500 Consumers
The themes that emerge from this survey report are frustratingly familiar - better omnichannel engagement, 360 view of the customer and more personalised and proactive support - many of which have been around for a number of years. Much of the problem seems to be that too many CX efforts are focused on delighting customers rather than getting the basics right. The basics of delivering an experience that is connected, understands the customer, anticipates their needs and shows up when needed. The best brands do this and do it relentlessly. This, one, puts them head and shoulders above many of their competitors and, two, gives them a huge foundation on which they can build better, longer lasting and more valuable relationships with their customers.

ADRIAN SWINScoe
Customer Service and Experience Advisor & Speaker, Forbes Contributor.
Brand Expectations
Customers demand experiences marked by **immediacy, personalisation, and convenience**. When they don’t receive it, substantial numbers get affected, often after just one bad customer experience. This rising bar of customer expectations has significant implications for service organizations across regions and industries.

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**01**

**Consumer expectations are at an all-time high**

**02**

**Consumers are loyal to brands with great experiences**

**03**

**Consumers demand contextual support across channels**

**04**

**Customers prefer proactive over reactive support**

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"*Given the well-informed and connected customer, advances in technology, and the massive amounts of data that companies collect about their customers, the experience needs to be personalized, simplified, relevant, and consistent.*"

ANNETTE FRANZ, CCXP
Founder & CEO CX JOURNEY Inc., CX Advisor & Author
Consumers expect more than ever from their favourite brands.

47% of consumers globally have higher customer service expectations from their favourite brands, than they had in the last two years.

Consumers are pushing the envelope of 'great' experiences - their last best experience is now the minimum expectation for the experience they want.

**How have your customer service expectations changed in the last two years?**

- Increased significantly: 15%
- Increased slightly: 32%
- Same: 42%
- Decreased slightly: 8%
- Decreased significantly: 3%

01 Consumer Expectations are at an All-time High
India (51%) leads the way in raising the bar for service expectations with significantly higher expectations than the last two years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGIONAL SNAPSHOT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How have your customer service expectations changed in the last two years?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**UNITED STATES**
- Increased significantly: 14%
- Increased slightly: 31%
- Same: 41%
- Decreased slightly: 10%
- Decreased significantly: 4%

**UNITED KINGDOM**
- Increased significantly: 12%
- Increased slightly: 34%
- Same: 47%
- Decreased slightly: 6%
- Decreased significantly: 1%

**INDIA**
- Increased significantly: 51%
- Increased slightly: 32%
- Same: 14%
- Decreased slightly: 2%
- Decreased significantly: 1%

**AUSTRALIA**
- Increased significantly: 12%
- Increased slightly: 32%
- Same: 49%
- Decreased slightly: 5%
- Decreased significantly: 2%

**GERMANY**
- Increased significantly: 16%
- Increased slightly: 34%
- Same: 46%
- Decreased slightly: 2%
- Decreased significantly: 2%

**FRANCE**
- Increased significantly: 18%
- Increased slightly: 37%
- Same: 39%
- Decreased slightly: 4%
- Decreased significantly: 2%
Unhappy consumers act quick and switch fast.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>01</strong></td>
<td>Customer churn is just one ‘bad service experience’ away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>02</strong></td>
<td>60% of customers globally share bad experiences with others, either in-person, or online on peer sites, review forums and social media.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>03</strong></td>
<td>56% of consumers globally have stopped doing business with a brand or switched to a competitor due to a single bad customer service experience in the last 12 months.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
American consumers (69%) are the quickest to walk away from a brand after one bad service experience.

In the last 12 months, have you ever stopped doing business with a brand or switched to a competitor due to a bad service experience?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>48%</td>
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<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>42%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Consumers are willing to pay more for great experiences.

31% of consumers globally are willing to pay more for a great customer service experience.

Great service experiences drive competitive differentiation, increased or even new revenue streams and greater loyalty.

I would be willing to pay a fee to receive a higher level of customer service.

- Strongly agree: 14%
- Somewhat agree: 17%
- Neutral: 22%
- Somewhat disagree: 16%
- Strongly disagree: 31%
The payoffs of delivering great experiences are most lucrative in India with 71% of consumers willing to pay more for better service, followed by France (55%) and Germany (50%).

I would be willing to pay a fee to receive a higher level of customer service.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The New Rules of Customer Engagement
Consumers are willing to wait longer for better service.

- 9% of consumers believe it’s acceptable to wait up to **one minute** to speak with an agent; another 42% believe a one to three minute wait is acceptable.

- When asked if they would be willing to wait longer for a more knowledgeable representative, 42% consumers confirmed they’d be willing to wait up to **two minutes** while another 32% would wait between two to five minutes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acceptable wait time to speak to a customer service representative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between 1 - 3 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 3 - 5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 5 - 10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate (&lt;1 minute)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 minutes or over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would prefer a call back when there is any amount of wait</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Willingness to wait longer for a knowledgeable customer service representative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, up to 2 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, between 2 - 5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, more than 5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, I would not wait on hold longer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Acceptable wait time to speak to a customer service representative

### REGIONAL SNAPSHOT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGION</th>
<th>Immediate (&lt;1 minute)</th>
<th>Between 1 - 3 minutes</th>
<th>Between 3 - 5 minutes</th>
<th>Between 5 - 10 minutes</th>
<th>10 minutes or over</th>
<th>Would prefer a call back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNITED STATES</strong></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNITED KINGDOM</strong></td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INDIA</strong></td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AUSTRALIA</strong></td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GERMANY</strong></td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FRANCE</strong></td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** The percentages are based on a survey of customers in different countries, indicating their acceptable wait times to speak to a customer service representative.
Willingness to wait longer for a knowledgeable customer service representative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGIONAL SNAPSHOT</th>
<th>UNITED STATES</th>
<th>UNITED KINGDOM</th>
<th>INDIA</th>
<th>AUSTRALIA</th>
<th>GERMANY</th>
<th>FRANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No, I would not wait on hold longer</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, up to 2 minutes</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, between 2 - 5 minutes</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, more than 5 minutes</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Consumers prefer brands that engage across multiple channels.

70% of customers globally prefer brands that provide service across multiple channels (email, chat, social, etc.).

Do you have a preference for brands that offer customer service across multiple channels (email, chat, social, etc.)?

- **YES**: 70%
- **NO**: 30%
Customers need to be delivered respect. Respect that companies honor how they want to interact with them. Respect that they are available on the customers’ terms and respect that every faction of the business knows them and honor them. This is fundamentally how we all want to be treated. So to simplify, omnichannel is truly about building your “customer respect delivery machine.”

**JEANNE BLISS, CCXP**
President CustomerBliss, CX Pioneer, Advisor & Author

### Regional Snapshot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Yes (%)</th>
<th>No (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you have a preference for brands that offer customer service across multiple channels (email, chat, social, etc.)?
What are your most common frustrations when dealing with customer service?

- Having to repeat myself, over and over: 25%
- Waiting long enough before receiving any resolution to my issue: 21%
- Difficulty in locating and contacting a customer service representative: 17%
- Switching between multiple service representatives/teams for a resolution: 16%
- Facing service representatives who lack the knowledge to solve my issue: 11%
- Meeting with rude and unfriendly representatives during an interaction: 5%
- Having to follow-up with service representatives multiple times: 5%

Consumers crave contextual engagement, saving them from the frustration of having to repeat themselves.
What are your most common frustrations when dealing with customer service?

**UNITED STATES**
- Difficulty in locating and contacting a service rep: 14%
- Waiting long before receiving any resolution: 13%
- Having to repeat myself, over and over: 22%
- Switching between reps/teams for a resolution: 21%
- Facing reps who lack the knowledge to solve my issue: 17%
- Having to follow-up with reps multiple times: 5%
- Meeting with rude and unfriendly reps during an interaction: 8%

**AUSTRALIA**
- Difficulty in locating and contacting a service rep: 14%
- Waiting long before receiving any resolution: 21%
- Having to repeat myself, over and over: 30%
- Switching between reps/teams for a resolution: 18%
- Facing reps who lack the knowledge to solve my issue: 7%
- Having to follow-up with reps multiple times: 4%
- Meeting with rude and unfriendly reps during an interaction: 6%

**UNITED KINGDOM**
- Difficulty in locating and contacting a service rep: 12%
- Waiting long before receiving any resolution: 24%
- Having to repeat myself, over and over: 33%
- Switching between reps/teams for a resolution: 14%
- Facing reps who lack the knowledge to solve my issue: 8%
- Having to follow-up with reps multiple times: 5%
- Meeting with rude and unfriendly reps during an interaction: 4%

**GERMANY**
- Difficulty in locating and contacting a service rep: 26%
- Waiting long before receiving any resolution: 24%
- Having to repeat myself, over and over: 16%
- Switching between reps/teams for a resolution: 16%
- Facing reps who lack the knowledge to solve my issue: 14%
- Having to follow-up with reps multiple times: 1%
- Meeting with rude and unfriendly reps during an interaction: 3%

**INDIA**
- Difficulty in locating and contacting a service rep: 26%
- Waiting long before receiving any resolution: 31%
- Having to repeat myself, over and over: 18%
- Switching between reps/teams for a resolution: 10%
- Facing reps who lack the knowledge to solve my issue: 9%
- Having to follow-up with reps multiple times: 4%
- Meeting with rude and unfriendly reps during an interaction: 2%

**FRANCE**
- Difficulty in locating and contacting a service rep: 14%
- Waiting long before receiving any resolution: 24%
- Having to repeat myself, over and over: 37%
- Switching between reps/teams for a resolution: 12%
- Facing reps who lack the knowledge to solve my issue: 6%
- Having to follow-up with reps multiple times: 3%
- Meeting with rude and unfriendly reps during an interaction: 4%
69% of consumers globally have a clear preference for brands that offer proactive notifications and service to them.

The modern, digitally-savvy consumers of today expect brands to move from a state of ‘meet my needs’ to ‘anticipate my needs’. Proactive engagement is opening doors for businesses to interact with prospects and existing customers in a more personalized and intelligent way, with targeted and tailored content based on customer analytics and insights.

Customers prefer Proactive over Reactive Support

Do you have a preference for brands that offer proactive notifications and customer service to you?

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<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>69%</td>
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<td>NO</td>
<td>31%</td>
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0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80%
Globally, Indian consumers (87%) have a clear preference for brands that proactively engage.

_Do you have a preference for brands that offer proactive notifications and customer service to you?_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“All too often in CX, we’re focused on improving effectiveness and ease of use. While these are important to prevent disloyalty, they do nothing to earn the right for customers to keep doing business with you. Customers are looking for a more authentic relationship with brands, which requires creating an emotional connection with customers – and you can’t do that by focusing only on reducing pain points. The message is clear – rather than trying to “fix” your experience, customer engagement requires brands to recreate their experiences in order to create an emotional connection.”

JIM TINCHER, CCXP
CX Speaker & Advisor, Mapper-in-Chief at ‘Heart of the Customer’
Channels of Engagement
Today’s customers want the speed and efficiency of automated engagement but also crave the warming art of human empathy and emotional connection. This influences their choice of customer service channel. As confidence in using new channels continues to grow, customer expectations increase exponentially. The always-on, always-connected customers of today demand great service experiences on their terms and on channels of their preference.

In recent years, the proliferation of mobile devices and social media forever changed the way we communicate, allowing customers to choose from an even wider array of channels to interact with brands and companies. The customer journey is now often a mish-mash of non-linear engagement opportunities, for example, beginning in one channel such as a website and continuing on others such as an app on a smartphone or on Social Media, then back to the web, followed by a store visit, and so forth.

01  The Growth of Multichannel Touchpoints

02  The Rise of Live Chat & Messaging

03  The Surge in Self Service & Social Channels
67% of consumers globally use 3 or more channels regularly to engage with a brand today.

**How many different communication channels do you regularly use to engage/interact with a brand?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Channels</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Channel</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Channels</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Channels</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Channels</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Channels</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Channels</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Channels</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Channels</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Channels</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Channels</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 10 Channels</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REGIONAL SNAPSHOT</td>
<td>UNITED STATES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNITED STATES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Channel</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Channels</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Channels</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Channels</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Channels</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 5 Channels</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AUSTRALIA</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Channel</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Channels</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Channels</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Channels</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Channels</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 5 Channels</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GERMANY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Channel</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Channels</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Channels</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Channels</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Channels</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 5 Channels</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FRANCE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Channel</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Channels</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Channels</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Channels</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Channels</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 5 Channels</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Which of the following channels do you use regularly to interact with brands of your choice?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Channel</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile App</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live Chat</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Help Center / FAQs</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMS / Text Message</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook Messenger</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amazon, eBay and other e-commerce stores</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youtube</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WhatsApp</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Community / Forums</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>App store / Play store reviews</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third-party review websites</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snapchat</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chatbots</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skype</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apple iMessage</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google Hangouts</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WeChat</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viber</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kik</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

0% 80%
In most cases, the difference between an ordinary and an exceptional experience lies in the ability to engage customers on their terms and provide consistent, meaningful journeys across all engagement channels. The rise in multichannel touchpoints has greatly complicated the end-to-end customer journey, especially with the increased use of mobile devices. Yet, customers expect consistent and personalized experiences—no matter which channel they use.

Our survey reveals the following as the top three commonly used channels of engagement, globally.
34% of the consumers globally rank having support available, anytime, anywhere, on their preferred channel of communication, as the most valued aspect of a service interaction.
### REGIONAL SNAPSHOT

#### Which of these do you value most in a customer service interaction?

**UNITED STATES**
- Finding the right information without contacting support: 29%
- Having support available to me, anytime, anywhere: 28%
- Knowing me and understanding my history well: 8%
- Experiencing a friendly, empathic interaction: 17%
- Having a professional and reliable follow-through: 18%

**UNITED KINGDOM**
- Finding the right information without contacting support: 27%
- Having support available to me, anytime, anywhere: 39%
- Knowing me and understanding my history well: 12%
- Experiencing a friendly, empathic interaction: 12%
- Having a professional and reliable follow-through: 10%

**INDIA**
- Finding the right information without contacting support: 43%
- Having support available to me, anytime, anywhere: 37%
- Knowing me and understanding my history well: 6%
- Experiencing a friendly, empathic interaction: 7%
- Having a professional and reliable follow-through: 7%

**AUSTRALIA**
- Finding the right information without contacting support: 30%
- Having support available to me, anytime, anywhere: 33%
- Knowing me and understanding my history well: 7%
- Experiencing a friendly, empathic interaction: 13%
- Having a professional and reliable follow-through: 17%

**GERMANY**
- Finding the right information without contacting support: 29%
- Having support available to me, anytime, anywhere: 36%
- Knowing me and understanding my history well: 12%
- Experiencing a friendly, empathic interaction: 18%
- Having a professional and reliable follow-through: 5%

**FRANCE**
- Finding the right information without contacting support: 34%
- Having support available to me, anytime, anywhere: 37%
- Knowing me and understanding my history well: 14%
- Experiencing a friendly, empathic interaction: 4%
- Having a professional and reliable follow-through: 11%
2019 will be the year where connectedness drives growth in channels with more immediate, real-time interaction.

While email (36%) and voice (29%) will continue to be the two most preferred channels globally for service interactions, live chat (21%) is fast emerging as the next most preferred engagement channel.

Which of the following is your most preferred communication channel for a service interaction with a brand?

- Email: 36%
- Voice: 29%
- Live Chat: 21%
- Other: 14%
Which of the following is your most preferred communication channel for a service interaction with a brand?

### REGIONAL SNAPSHOT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Voice</th>
<th>Live Chat</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Video</th>
<th>Self service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNITED STATES</strong></td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNITED KINGDOM</strong></td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INDIA</strong></td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AUSTRALIA</strong></td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GERMANY</strong></td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FRANCE</strong></td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**UNITED STATES**
- Email: 35%
- Voice: 28%
- Live Chat: 26%
- Self service: 6%
- Social: 4%
- Video: 1%

**UNITED KINGDOM**
- Email: 44%
- Voice: 19%
- Live Chat: 26%
- Social: 5%
- Video: 3%
- Self service: 3%

**INDIA**
- Voice: 30%
- Email: 25%
- Live Chat: 20%
- Social: 14%
- Video: 9%
- Self service: 2%

**AUSTRALIA**
- Email: 36%
- Voice: 26%
- Live Chat: 22%
- Self service: 7%
- Social: 6%
- Video: 3%

**GERMANY**
- Voice: 49%
- Email: 38%
- Live Chat: 7%
- Social: 4%
- Video: 1%
- Self service: 1%

**FRANCE**
- Email: 42%
- Voice: 33%
- Live Chat: 8%
- Social: 8%
- Self service: 5%
- Video: 4%
76% of consumers globally prefer to first try to solve issues on their own before contacting support.

No longer just an important option for millennials, social channels are also gradually becoming a standard for all demographics. In fact, 46% of consumers globally currently use social networks to rant or rave about their recent service experiences.

### When you have a need for customer service, do you search online for a solution or directly try to contact support?

- I try to search for a solution online: 76%
- I directly contact support: 24%

### What would you do if you experienced poor customer service (select all that apply)?

- Switch to a competitor brand: 82%
- Talk about it on social channels: 46%
- Write a complaint letter or email: 43%
- Tell family/friends/colleagues: 39%
- Wouldn’t do anything: 7%
When you have a need for customer service, do you search online for a solution or directly try to contact support?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGIONAL SNAPSHOT</th>
<th>UNITED STATES</th>
<th>UNITED KINGDOM</th>
<th>INDIA</th>
<th>AUSTRALIA</th>
<th>GERMANY</th>
<th>FRANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I try to search for a solution online</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I directly contact support</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What would you do if you experienced poor customer service (select all that apply)?

**UNITED STATES**
- Write a complaint letter or email: 39%
- Never do business with the brand again: 46%
- Switch to a competitor brand: 50%
- Post a negative online review: 30%
- Complain via social networks: 18%
- Tell family/friends/colleagues: 50%
- Wouldn’t do anything: 7%

**UNITED KINGDOM**
- Write a complaint letter or email: 45%
- Never do business with the brand again: 34%
- Switch to a competitor brand: 41%
- Post a negative online review: 29%
- Complain via social networks: 16%
- Tell family/friends/colleagues: 33%
- Wouldn’t do anything: 4%

**INDIA**
- Write a complaint letter or email: 60%
- Never do business with the brand again: 30%
- Switch to a competitor brand: 42%
- Post a negative online review: 31%
- Complain via social networks: 32%
- Tell family/friends/colleagues: 30%
- Wouldn’t do anything: 6%

**AUSTRALIA**
- Write a complaint letter or email: 39%
- Never do business with the brand again: 39%
- Switch to a competitor brand: 41%
- Post a negative online review: 21%
- Complain via social networks: 14%
- Tell family/friends/colleagues: 43%
- Wouldn’t do anything: 9%

**GERMANY**
- Write a complaint letter or email: 37%
- Never do business with the brand again: 32%
- Switch to a competitor brand: 23%
- Post a negative online review: 23%
- Complain via social networks: 5%
- Tell family/friends/colleagues: 28%
- Wouldn’t do anything: 11%

**FRANCE**
- Write a complaint letter or email: 29%
- Never do business with the brand again: 50%
- Switch to a competitor brand: 46%
- Post a negative online review: 37%
- Complain via social networks: 18%
- Tell family/friends/colleagues: 27%
- Wouldn’t do anything: 3%
Key Takeaways
Today, customers know more, and they expect more. Fast forward a few years, and there’s little doubt the bar will be set even higher and new priorities will have emerged. Here are our key recommendations for businesses to stay relevant and competitive.

**Create a Unified 360-degree Customer View**

The premise behind the identification of your customer is about creating a single view. It’s about consolidating multiple data points, likely from disparate repositories, into a single, cohesive view so that you can truly engage with that customer in an effective and hyper-personalized way. To know your customers better and how best to engage with them, you need a unified customer view with their entire history. Businesses today are moving from point solutions for each engagement channel to unified solutions that consolidate engagement and touchpoints across the journey.

**Deliver Seamless, Integrated Omnichannel Engagement**

We’re living in a cross-device, cross-platform, cross-channel world. This means there’s no one messaging channel that can reach everybody effectively. Each of these channels has unique strengths. If your channels are still organized as silos, then the time to act is right now or you’ll be left further behind.

**Shift to Personalized Proactive Support**

Customer interactions have gone from transactional to continuous, and consumers want proactive, not reactive engagement. They want businesses to anticipate their needs and proactively reach out to them with the right information and the right context, where and when they need it. Use your customer information to create smarter, personalized and relevant conversations.
Annexures
COUNTRY PROFILE:
United States
(1000 Consumers)

Age
- 21% 18-29
- 27% 30-44
- 27% 45-60
- 25% >60

Device Type
- iOS Phone / Tablet 51%
- Android Phone / Tablet 31%
- Other Phone / Tablet 0%
- Windows Desktop / Laptop 16%
- MacOS Desktop / Laptop 2%
- Other 0%

Region
- New England 4%
- Middle Atlantic 13%
- Mountain 4%
- Pacific 13%
- East North Central 16%
- West North Central 6%
- East South Central 6%
- West South Central 12%
- South Atlantic 22%
COUNTRY PROFILE:
United Kingdom
(500 Consumers)
COUNTRY PROFILE: India
(500 Consumers)
COUNTRY PROFILE: Australia (500 Consumers)

Age:
- 33% 18-29
- 29% 30-44
- 18% 45-60
- 20% >60

Device Type:
- iOS Phone / Tablet 28%
- Android Phone / Tablet 33%
- Other Phone / Tablet 0%
- Windows Desktop / Laptop 33%
- MacOS Desktop / Laptop 6%
- Other 0%

Population by State:
- Victoria 24%
- Western Australia 8%
- Queensland 21%
- South Australia 12%
- Australian Capital Territory 2%
- Tasmania 2%
COUNTRY PROFILE: Germany
(250 Consumers)

**Age**
- 18-29: 23%
- 30-44: 36%
- 45-60: 30%
- >60: 11%

**Device Type**
- iOS Phone / Tablet: 11%
- Android Phone / Tablet: 44%
- Other Phone / Tablet: 0%
- Windows Desktop / Laptop: 41%
- MacOS Desktop / Laptop: 2%
- Other: 2%
COUNTRY PROFILE: France
(250 Consumers)
About

Freshworks provides customer engagement software to businesses of all sizes, making it easy for customer support, sales and marketing professionals to communicate more effectively with customers and deliver moments of wow. Freshworks offers a full suite of SaaS (Software as a Service) products that create compelling customer experiences and lets businesses share a 360 degree view of relevant customer information internally.

Founded in October 2010, Freshworks Inc., is backed by Accel, Tiger Global Management, CapitalG and Sequoia Capital India. Freshworks is a 1,800 + team headquartered in San Mateo, California, with global offices in India, UK, Australia and Germany. The company's cloud-based suite is widely used by over 150,000 businesses around the world including the NHS, Honda, Rightmove, Hugo Boss, Citizens Advice, Toshiba and Cisco.

For more information, please visit www.freshworks.com