

FIVE TIPS FOR MASTERING DIGITAL CUSTOMER SERVICE IN 2016



Is your contact center prepared for the rising tide of digital engagement? With the continued, rapid adoption of mobile devices and an ever-growing number of digital channels, your customer's journey is more likely to begin from web chat, text, email, or a social media platform than from a phone call.

As contact center digital engagement reaches critical mass, customers now expect the same level of service

from digital and voice interactions. They're also looking for a seamless experience when they navigate across multiple channels.

How can your company be prepared for the increasing demand for digital customer service? The following tips will help you prepare for this profound shift in customer engagement.

01. ESTABLISH A GOAL TO BUILD CONSISTENCY ACROSS ALL CHANNELS

Industry data suggests that 2016 is the year contact centers should expect more digital than voice interactions. Yet, there is still a common customer perception that the quality of service offered on digital channels is inferior to that offered by live agents on the phone. This belief is backed by statistics that first contact resolution is much more likely to happen on the phone than via an online chat, email, or text conversation.

A strategic goal for any company that wants to sustain a high level of service within their contact center is to deliver a consistent experience for customers, whether they use a digital channel, a voice channel, or a combination of both. By establishing this goal, it becomes much easier to prepare for increased use of today's digital channels and to plan for new types of digital interactions that are just around the corner. One approach to this is using an integrated contact center platform, where all channels speak to one another, and contextual customer information is shared between channels.

02. PLAN FOR OMNICHANNEL SELF-SERVICE

Since the early days of IVR, simple contact center tasks, like paying a bill or checking the available balance on a credit card, could be completed without live agent intervention. Now, mobile and web technologies offer capabilities for completing increasingly complex tasks without agent assistance. According to the Technology Services Industry Association (TSIA), 65% of consumers say they prefer self-service channels for product support. FAQ pages, videos, or other self-service options empower customers and improve the overall contact center experience, as long as there's always an easy, straightforward way to access a live agent when needed.

03. START WITH A FEW CUSTOMER JOURNEYS TO IMPROVE

The idea of optimizing every aspect of the customer journey for digital can seem overwhelming. It may even be tempting to avoid change altogether under the faulty assumption that a single solution must be implemented to address every possible type of customer engagement. Instead, it's helpful to first identify common voice interactions that could be improved upon if offered via digital channels.

For example, many questions answered by live agents can be handled more efficiently by chat, if customers are given the option. Or, the implementation of a knowledge management system allows agents to find answers to common questions more quickly, thus improving email response times. This puts customer insight and history at the agent's fingertips to speed a context-sensitive response, and empowers agents to deliver proactive assistance, preventing downstream problems for the customer.

04. REVIEW AGENT HIRING PRACTICES

One of the biggest challenges of digital customer service is hiring and training a team to effectively manage multiple types of interactions. New skills are required, and the ability to multitask has become more important than ever. In some contact centers, agents are able to focus on one type of engagement, such as responding to emails or posts on social media. However, it is also common for agents to manage interactions on two or more channels, sometimes simultaneously. As part of the overall goal of building consistency across voice and digital channels, a careful assessment of hiring needs and practices is wise.

05. START PLANNING FOR INTERACTIONS DRIVEN BY THE INTERNET OF THINGS (IOT)

As with every aspect of business, contact centers will continue to evolve. The future of digital customer service is likely to include many interactions driven by the IoT. Initial applications range from home appliances that signal the need for maintenance to personal health monitors that alert healthcare professionals of impending life-threatening events. The IoT has the potential to change and pivot both business models and customer service.

Join the IoT discussions happening within your company now to understand the data that will be created, and how it will trigger communications both from and to your customers. Managing these new types of engagement will require innovative planning, and a customer experience platform that can analyze data, route interactions to the right expert efficiently and in real time, and over time, become predictive and anticipatory of customer needs and intentions. By using an integrated contact center platform with a rules engine to share rules across all touchpoints and a universal queue, you open up possibilities and deliver great experiences the first time.

THE REWARDS OF INCREASED DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

Your customers are increasingly tech-savvy, and expect companies to embrace technology as well, especially when it comes to customer service. They want to communicate on their own terms, and be treated as though their business and time is valued.

By effectively supporting the digital channels that customers feel most comfortable using now, and continuing to provide voice channels, you can dramatically improve your customer experience, while also driving higher revenues, lower costs, and greater efficiency.

To learn more about how you can deliver omnichannel customer experiences across digital channels and voice please visit <http://www.genesys.com/solutions/contact-center-modernization/digital-channels>

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ABOUT GENESYS

Genesys is the market leader in omnichannel customer experience (CX) and contact center solutions in the cloud and on-premises. We help brands of all sizes make great CX great business. The Genesys Customer Experience Platform powers optimal customer journeys consistently across all touchpoints, channels and interactions to turn customers into brand advocates. Genesys is trusted by over 4,500 customers in 80 countries to orchestrate more than 100 million digital and voice interactions each day.

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