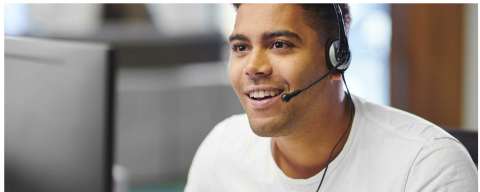


Blog

Chatbots and COVID-19: The contact centre trends defining 2022

Johan Bruze September 28, 2022 8 minutes Share



COVID-19 has transformed the contact centre landscape.

With the pandemic came the rise of remote working - and a collective re-evaluation of work life by employees.

As a result, organisations are having to adapt to ever-evolving client and employee expectations.

From cloud solutions to artificial intelligence, we explore the trends characterising contact centres in 2022 - and what they mean for your organisation.

Trend 1: Improved employee experience (EX) enhances customer experience (CX)

COVID-19 caused employees to re-assess their values and goals.

Among employees' top priorities? The availability of digital experiences that create a frictionless, collaborative work environment.

According to a 2020 IDC study, organisations that invested in digital transformation technologies saw a 20% increase in employee productivity. While 85% of respondents agreed that improved EX and higher employee engagement translate to better CX.

Another recent report explored CX's symbiotic relationship with EX, finding that EX improves when organisations elevate the role of the contact centre to enhance CX.

What's more, organisations in the top 25th percentile for EX scored twice as high for CX compared to others.

Bottom line? By investing in your EX, your organisation will elevate your CX as well.

Trend 2: Contact centres evolve into full engagement centres

Of the 2000 Chief Experience Officers Accenture interviewed in 2020, 77% agreed that investing in CX is a priority.

That figure pre-pandemic? 36%.

And at the heart of CX lies the contact centre: the engine driving the customer journey.

Leading the pack are those organisations that treat the contact centre not as a cost centre - but as a value creator. As a means of driving growth and enriching CX to create value for customers and shareholders alike.

Only 20% of the CX leaders Accenture surveyed hold this 'value creator' view of their contact centres. But it's their organisations that are thriving.

Over a two-year period, they grew their revenue three-and-a-half times more than the other 80%. Missing the 'value creator' mentality won't only translate into customer and shareholder value for your organisation. But into profits, too.

Bottom line? Consider your contact centre as a value and growth driver, not an expense line item.

Trend 3: Contact centres move to the cloud

The benefits of a cloud contact centre have always been the same: agility, continuity, security, and productivity.

But today, organisations rely on them like never before.

When COVID-19 transformed the way we work, cloud solutions came into their own. Contact centres flooded to the cloud en masse as organisations equipped their agents to work from home.

But a cloud contact centre comes with perks beyond remote access. It future-proofs your organisation against shifts in your workplace environment. It scales on demand. And it streamlines your user experience, removing friction for your clients and your employees alike.

The shift isn't slowing down, either. Going forward, more contact centres are set to move to the cloud as organisations seek to elevate CX and EX.

Bottom line? Moving to the cloud opens up opportunities that legacy, on-premise platforms are unable to deliver.

Trend 4: Artificial intelligence (AI) accelerates results

Today, customers expect contact centres to resolve anything at any time. They're less set on receiving human assistance - and more satisfied with actionable solutions and real-time support.

That's why there's a growing preference for 24/7 self-service tools like chatbots and virtual agents. When used effectively, these create better CX with fewer resources.

How? By listening to customers and predicting their needs. From answering questions in real time to directing users to the right department - chatbots are creating a more empathetic and efficient customer journey.

AI also enriches EX by supporting employees with next-best actions and real-time coaching. It handles tedious tasks, too, freeing humans up to focus their attention on solving more complex problems.

Plus, when AI helps meet customer expectations, these customers are less likely to be frustrated when they eventually talk to an agent.

Using AI for customer understanding and personalisation has become the mission of CX leaders the world over. And we expect organisations to continue integrating AI into their contact centres to grow revenue, lower costs and boost performance.

Bottom line? AI will allow you to focus on the issues that matter, because it sorts through the noise for you.

Trend 5: Data drives personalised customer journeys

With rich data at their disposal, contact centres can drive meaningful interactions and improve user experience.

The deeper an organisation's insights run, the better it can understand its customer - and leverage data-driven tools to personalise the customer journey.

The result? Enhanced CX and improved client engagement and retention.

As data-gathering tools become more accessible and effective, organisations will increasingly dissect data to tailor and enrich CX.

But remember, AI is only as effective as the data driving it. Automated responses and workflows must be informed by precise, real-time data if they're to accelerate agility and operations.

Bottom line? Removing siloes and integrating real-time data sources into contact centres will give you higher levels of client satisfaction and employee engagement.

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