Leveraging AI to Make Humans More Humane

Balancing Man + Machine
in the Age of the Customer

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Leveraging AI to Make Humans More Humane

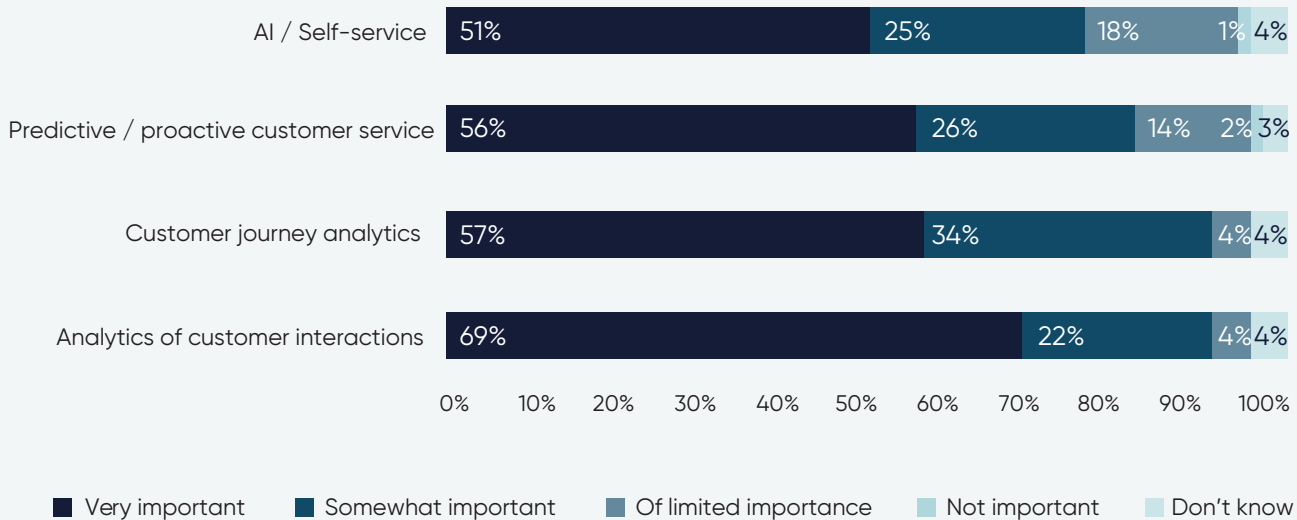## Artificial Intelligence: The Enabler of Winning CX Strategies

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Customer experience (CX) is an important competitive differentiator for businesses today—and artificial intelligence (AI) is mission critical to success.

So much so, that over 75% of CX decision-makers agree advancements in AI and self-service technology are among the most important factors for determining the future success of their CX program. Other key factors to CX success, such as predictive and proactive service options, as well as customer interaction and customer journey analytics, are all made more effective and powerful with AI.[1]

Still, there's a critical caveat: AI is only part of the equation. Humans remain essential in establishing high-value, loyal and satisfied customer relationships. In CX environments, too many businesses make the mistake of integrating AI and machine learning (ML) with a goal to replace human service. They work to over automate, removing the human from the conversation entirely.

On the other end, customer-led organizations use AI to automate tactical, low-complexity transactions, and seek to equip agents to connect more deeply, personally and effectively with customers.

Importance of CX Developments in the Next Two Years

	Very important	Somewhat important	Of limited importance	Not important	Don't know
AI / Self-service	51%	25%	18%	1%	4%
Predictive / proactive customer service	56%	26%	14%	2%	3%
Customer journey analytics	57%	34%	4%		4%
Analytics of customer interactions	69%	22%	4%		4%

■ Very important ■ Somewhat important ■ Of limited importance ■ Not important ■ Don't know

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1. ContactBabel, 2019. The Inner Circle Guide to AI, Chatbots & Machine Learning. Retrieved October 2020 from **https://learning.callminer.com/c/whitepaper-ai-chatbots-ml?x=CFl8z6&lx=amFxJO**

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"You can't transform something you don't understand. If you don't know and understand what the current state of the customer experience is, how can you possibly design the desired future state?"

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Annette Franz, Chief Experience Officer, CX Journey Inc.[2]

2. Franz, 2017. The 10 Commandments of Customer Experiences. Retrieved October 2020 from **https://www.iris.xyz/advisor-tools/the-10-commandments-of-customerexperiences/**

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The CX Code: Why Automation Calls for Humanization

Many brands see fully automated CX as a quick and easy way to cut costs, increase resolutions and improve customer satisfaction. Yet the No. 1 reason customers are directed to a live agent after a failed automated or self-service attempt is because their issue was too complicated for the machine to solve.

Although AI is a reliable means to address mundane, repetitive tasks such as checking an account balance or pausing a subscription, not all customers interactions are that simple.

That's because conversations are complex. The words exchanged during a brand-customer interaction – whether on the phone, through chat, or even text – are only one piece of the puzzle. It's usually easy to identify a customer need (the what), but more difficult to pinpoint the trigger (the why).

Perhaps more importantly, measuring how the issue or flow of the engagement affects the customer (the impact) determines if you can optimize loyalty for a customer, as well as move the performance needle for critical KPIs on a broader scale.

Another variable is emotion, which is even more critical to CX than ease of engagement. When consumers crave emotional connections with a brand, impersonal, mediocre, or canned responses simply don't work. In fact, when asked why they requested their problem was escalated to a live agent, **82% of respondents** claimed to want the reassurance only a live agent could offer.

This is especially true in the COVID-19 era. During times of crisis, customers are more vulnerable than ever. In turn, the majority (63%) crave human-to-human interactions. Of the customers that have switched providers since the start of the pandemic, **nearly half would have stayed if they delivered better CX, or connected with them on a more human level.**

So, what is it about CX that makes it impossible for businesses to rely solely on technology?

Not even the smartest technology can solve a problem it wasn't designed to solve. AI cannot teach itself to evoke compassion, empathy or connection—characteristics that today's consumers desperately seek from the brands they choose to do business with.

Simply put: AI cannot teach itself to be human. Balance is key. Brands that fail to use AI to drive actionable change based on what their own customers are telling them, or to equip their agents to be more responsive, effective and empathetic, are at a critical disadvantage.

Machine-learned results must be considered within the context of the customer's perceptive, as well as agent resources, technology, training and empowerment to truly bridge the insight to action gap. When that perfect balance is found – AI and ML can work to make each customer interaction more humane.

Fact vs. Fiction

Fiction **AI is here to replace people.**

Fact As businesses continue to invest in AI and ML, the most successful stories are about those that enhance – not eliminate – your employees. Most executives agree predictive analysis driven by AI will augment decisions, creating new levels and roles. Deep learning capabilities create an opportunity to make workdays less mundane, allowing employees to focus on more value-add tasks.

Fiction **Customers prefer fully automated service.**

Fact Even before the pandemic wreaked havoc on business operations, customer reliance on phone-based customer support had increased 17% since 2018.

Fiction **Employees don't trust AI.**

Fact AI provides objective, data-based feedback, and equips employees with the real-time guidance needed to improve outcomes, solve complex problems, improve performance scores and earn more money.

The H.U.M.A.N.E Approach to CX

Sixty-seven percent of business executives agree that AI will help humans and machines work together.[3]

In the world of CX, converging manpower with the capabilities of AI makes customer interactions more H.U.M.A.N.E.

H Harness

U Uncover

M Master

A Analyze

N Navigate

E Emotion

3. PwC, 2020. Bot.Me: A revolutionary partnership. Retrieved October 2020 from **http://pwcartificialintelligence.com/**

Harness

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Although spoken words are an essential part of identifying the solution, there are other factors that can make or break the outcome of each interaction.

The problem: many brands fail to ensure they're actively listening to their customers behavioral expressions that shape ease, effectiveness and emotional experiences.

It's important to remember that AI is not magic. Ensure the ML you are relying on for AI is trained with a significant body of contact center interactions. This establishes the foundation for contextual accuracy.

Machine learning makes it possible to intelligently cluster the intent, action and emotion of customer interactions to uncover conversational meaning far more effectively than humans can. From there, AI can help prioritize where to place customer service and CX attention.

For organizations, this means empowering customer service and call center agents with actional guidance derived from behavioral data and insights. The goal is to address problems before customers do – AI has the power to provide the guidance and support to make that happen.

Uncover

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There is no foolproof method to improve CX. From voice of the customer (VoC) insights to employee retention, customer loyalty and more – winning CX strategies require cross functional intelligence and collaboration.

Leverage AI to uncover the critical customer and employee insights management needs to transform, improve and change business strategy from the ground up.

Further, in our world of massive uncertainty – impacting customers and agents alike – using AI to discover the 'unexpected' is essential.

Continually correlating conversational context with machine-learned insights reveals unanticipated challenges, and in turn opportunities for agents to better support customers.

"AI streamlines inquiry capture and resolution; optimizes case routing, classification, and schedule management; and extracts useful information to monitor the quality of service delivered. Insights help coach agents and surface product and process trends and customer sentiment that impact customer retention and loyalty, tactics that both Vivint and Sirius XM use.**"**

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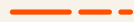
Forrester, Three Customer Service Megatrends in 2020: Fuse AI and Agents to Drive Better Experiences[4]

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4. Forrester, January 2020. "The Three Customer Service Megatrends In 2020: Fuse AI And Agents To Drive Better Experiences". Retrieved October 2020 from **https://www.forrester.com/report/The+Three+Customer+Service+Megatrends+In+2020+Fuse+AI+And+Agents+To+Drive+Better+Experiences/-/E-RES158838**

Master

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Consumers aren't ready to give up on human service. In fact, **the majority of customers** believe call centers should make live agents more specialized experts (88%), keep the option to transfer to a person (86%), and direct all complex questions to human representatives (42%).

88%	▬▬▬▬▬▬▬▬
86%	▬▬▬▬▬▬▬
42%	▬▬
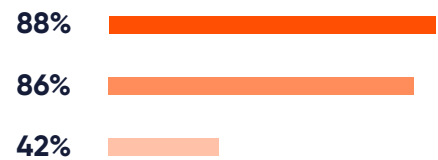
Organizations must continue to invest in their workforce and use AI to help agents master their jobs.

The more you coach and enable employees with data-supported guidance, the better they will perform – leading to stronger customer and employee satisfaction, better agent scores and higher compensation.

Consider Sitel, which manages over 2.5 million customer experiences every day.

"When we implemented speech analytics technology, agents began to feel that they finally had control of their own careers...Our agents now view our evaluation process as fair and complete. They see that our motivation is in helping them improve their performance and grow their careers. Trust between agents and supervisors has grown, and performance continues to increase."

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Cristopher Kuehl, Vice President of Analytics and Client Insights at Sitel Group.[5]

5. Schwantes, 2019. "How A.I. Is Helping Reduce Turnover in an Industry Known for Being a Revolving Door". Retrieved October 2020 from **https://www.inc.com/marcelschwantes/how-ai-is-helping-reduce-turnover-in-an-industry-known-for-being-a-revolving-door.html**

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Analyze

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Deploy AI and interaction analytics to analyze the context of a situation, and provide both real-time and post-engagement coaching, guidance and insights that results in better outcomes for the brand, customer and employee.

An example of this is **J. Lodge,** a third-party quality assurance (QA) provider. The company uses customer data to identify friction points, so its clients better understand the effectiveness of their individual policies and procedures and make changes where necessary.

Those insights are also leveraged to equip sales and marketing teams with the information necessary to understand which products and solutions are resonating best with the customer.

For instance, the insights can be used to coach the agent to understand which rebuttals to use when pitching or upselling, or influence go-forward product and service development strategies—enabling the brand to transform its businesses by providing customers with what they really want.

Navigate

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In situations where customers call or send messages that do not have an applicable script or answer, AI should suggest the best option based on historical and situational analyses, helping customer service teams navigate complex requests, quickly solve problems and offer solutions that meet customer needs.

Take the pandemic for example. Despite never experiencing something of that magnitude, businesses needed immediate insight into how their customers were being impacted—especially given that **30% of customers** believed agents were only "somewhat" able to answer their related questions.

By employing AI to generate insight-driven categories and incorporating industry-agnostic speech logic, interactions analytics users not only observed significant spikes in COVID-19-related mentions, but were able to adapt and address the situation head-on, prescribing solutions that would otherwise catch them off guard. The benefits extend far beyond that single interaction, as **80% of consumers** will stay loyal because of a positive, pandemic-related CX.

Emotion

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One of the **biggest concerns** over automation is that the machine will not understand the customer as well as a person can.

However, when executed properly, AI enables employees to become more emotionally intelligent over time by providing feedback that enables them to connect with their customers.

By providing a data-fueled customer perspective, agents can be empowered to offer appropriate empathy, guide conversations with issue-resolution ownership, and intelligently react to emotional expressions with techniques that reinforce brand perception.

"Skills centered in the interpersonal, empathetic and creative realms could become the key human differential in the labor market of tomorrow, and those with strengths in these domains – innate or acquired – will be best placed to prosper.**"**

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Emotion and Cognition in the Age of AI, The Economist Intelligence Unit[6]

6. The Economist, 2019. Emotion and Cognition in the Age of AI. Retrieved October 2020 from **http://www.globalhha.com/doclib/data/upload/doc_con/5e50c7e1a2578.pdf**

The way a brand interacts with its customers is the most critical component to an effective CX strategy.

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Across all channels, AI can optimize those interactions by uncovering customer insights like no human can—equipping the workforce with the necessary intelligence to immediately act, progressively transform and proactively improve.

But AI on its own is not enough.

The greatest success stories are those using AI to enhance – not eliminate – employees by uncovering the insights, both good and bad, that lead to a well-informed brand and ultimately, better relationships.

The connections today's customers crave crystalizes the importance of human intervention, powered by AI to make humans more humane.

Equipping employees to establish emotional customer connections the way only a human can, while also offering customers automation and self-service solutions to solve simple problems, is the key to balancing digital transformation in the age of the customer.

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About CallMiner

CallMiner is a speech analytics platform that drives business improvement by connecting insight to tangible action. We use the power of A.I. to scale human understanding, analyze interactions at the deepest levels, identify patterns and root causes, and reveal opportunities.

We believe that business improvement starts with a deep interest and curiosity in people. How do we detect a customer's true emotion, and how do we act on it to shift a business's culture and steer it on the most successful path? We aim to close these gaps through innovation, but the heart of our work lies in humanity: understanding, followed by action. We apply this same principle within our culture, promoting an attitude of kindness, compassion, genuine interest and respect for one another.

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