Customer Service Trends 2020

A full overview of upcoming customer service trends, the most prospective tools, the current state of customer service and it’s impact on business

by Jakub Kliszczak
"If you’re a restaurant, great food is table stakes. The same is true for you, regardless of your business category. Doing whatever it is you do well is NOT REMARKABLE. Why do consumers not leave 5-star reviews of electric utilities when they successfully flip on a light switch? Because “switch = light” is Minimum Viable Delivery. It’s giving the customer what she’s been trained to anticipate and nothing more."

— Jay Baer
Unlike most E-books, it’s not a cheaply made bait to sign you up for our email list. We’ve spent hours and hours perfecting the inside of this e-book and collaborated with dozens of top-notch industry experts so you can learn from the best.

The premise of this ebook is to educate and inform. The field of customer service and customer support is constantly changing. Thus, staying on top of the current trends is crucial to fulfilling customers’ needs. This e-book will help you stay on top of these trends and apply them before it’s too late. After all, it’s always better to be proactive than reactive, right?

**The Customer Service Trends 2020 E-book** contains four chapters that all together will give you a full overview of the current shape of customer service, how it has changed over the last years and what tools to use to apply it to your own efforts.

Now, there’s nothing else for us to do that move forward. *Shall we?*
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Customer Service Trends 2020

CHAPTER 1
Being able to reach out for help through various methods is getting more common. Nowadays, especially young customers (think: Gen Z) like to combine service channels in order to find the most relevant answer. They may start with simple Google Search, then move to YouTube to find a video tutorial to, in the end, call a customer service rep. Given such a scenario you see why your company has to be present all over the place. You may perfect one customer service channel but if your customers want to first find help using a different method, they’ll still end up disappointed.

According to Oracle’s ‘One Doesn’t Fit All’ report, **67% of customers** will first try to find an answer via self-serve methods other than the phone. Only the remaining **33%** grab their phone immediately as the issue pops.

Yet, when it comes to the favorite channel to get their issues resolved: **Millennials, Gen X, and Baby Boomers choose the phone**. Only Gen Zers choose Google as their first mean of help. Depending on your customer base you may want to double-down on what you already provide or introduce new customer service channels.

**Key takeaway:** Provide various ways for your customers to contact your company. Find out what is the most suitable mean of contact for them and make sure you have it available.
Customer Success Prioritization

Customer service was for a long time perceived as an add-on or a must-have (in the bad sense of this word).

As the business progressed more towards digital and companies were pushed to offer customer service through various means such as the phone, email or, nowadays, live chat, business owners realized that customer service is not just a way to answer your customers’ queries.

Because of the fact that everything on the web is public and can get easily distributed, doubling-down on an experience that the customer gets whilst interacting with your customer service department is crucial. That’s because the experience that the customer gets is a double-ended sword.

It can act as a push for future communication and a loyal relationship but can also mean the last contact the customer has ever had with your company.

In 2020 more companies will tailor their messaging and the way they serve their customers to truly put them first. Resolving issues is one thing but doing it in a way that’s suitable for the customer, not the business, is another.

Key takeaway: Make your customer service customer-centric. Don’t treat it like an empty phrase but optimize your resources, messaging, and service to better suit your customers’ needs.
Customer Success Prioritization, is to me, one of the biggest Customer Service trends that will shape the sector in 2020. This involves strategic steps taken to get customers that are at risk of severing the relationship with the company back to the path of the desired outcome.

This would normally encompass the segmentation of these at-risk customers so that highly targeted tactics can be applied in order to help them achieve their desired outcome with the product/service.

Another focus for customer success prioritization is customer nurturing in order to heighten customer loyalty and retention.

Bottom Line: Customer Success Prioritization is one trend that will be a major player in customer service come 2020. This trend mainly focuses on customer nurturing, and helping customers achieve their desired outcome in relation to the product/service or interaction with the company.

— Joe Bailey
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT AT My Trading Skills →

In 2020, customer success prioritization will be a key differentiating factor between brands that are winning at eCommerce and brands that are just existing. Amazon has redefined the bar for customer service. The customer is always right, and the customer needs a quick response to all inquiries.

At my business, we drop everything to respond to customer inquiries in a timely manner. There is no work which is as time-sensitive as getting an answer to a customer of your products.

— Calloway Cook
FOUNDER OF Illuminate Labs →
We’re definitely putting a lot more emphasis on this in 2020 and hope more companies will do the same.

Customer Success is still considered an emerging field, but we expect it to boom in 2020. It’s one of those things that seems so obvious when you think about it but is rather difficult to measure in a meaningful way for many companies.

In the early days of our business, we never considered the relationship our customers have with our products. One day we got down to analyzing our sales and refunds, and the numbers finally revealed some important areas we were lacking in. A common reason for customers refunding was that they felt our courses were difficult to follow or implement, and some explicitly stated they felt like we didn’t provide enough support when they got stuck. Finally, many refund requests came from users who never engaged with our Facebook community.

Clearly, we haven’t done everything to ensure that the people who buy our online courses would be aware of all the resources they can access to help them. We realized just how much revenue we were losing due to variables we could easily fix if we would consider the customer journey. So we did just that.

Now Customer Success is at the forefront of not just our support systems, but the way we create our products. In 9 out of 10 cases we already have a quick solution to a problem, and we regularly remind our users of the resources available to them. Focusing on Customer Success has been one of our most important sources of revenue growth. Thanks to the changes we implemented, our refund rate has dropped double digits in 2019 and is set to reduce even more in 2020.

— Mark Webster
CO-FOUNDER OF Authority Hacker →

Customers are much better educated these days. Great companies have raised the bar and so you have to make customer service a focal point.

— Shep Hyken
CUSTOMER SERVICE AND EXPERIENCE EXPERT, THE CHIEF AMAZEMENT OFFICER OF Shepard Presentations →
AI Chatbots

The man premise of customer service in 2020 can be summed up with one word. This word is: NOW.

Your customers want their issues resolved here and now as they contact your support. And that’s where AI Chatbots come into play.

With a little bit of research and programming, you can set up a fully functioning chatbot that will actively serve as a one-man army for all the issues your customer may have.

In a world where everyone wants an answer now, in real-time, chatbots are essential. It’s a lot of work - and money - to expect a person to actively watch a website in preparation to chat with anywhere between one and one thousand queries from people. People who don’t want to wait for an answer.

The chatbots solve this immediate necessity and cut down on costs at the same time. By 2020 we’ll reach a point where sites without chatbots are going to lose customers simply because they can’t answer questions now.

— Shayne Sherman
CEO OF TechLoris

In his book “Alchemy: The Dark Art and Curious Science of Creating Magic in Brands, Business, and Life” Rory Sutherland explains his way of how to limit the number of times people call their doctors.

Namely, some illnesses are seasonal and thus are common across the majority of people in a given time. Still, people call their doctors to get to
know whether “they’re okay”. His way of limiting the time doctors have to answer the same questions over and over is to:

Record a welcome message with all the current illnesses and their symptoms. It would sound like this: “Hello, you’ve reached Dr. Millner’s office. For your information, the currently common illnesses are X with symptoms of Y, Z with symptoms of B, and C with symptoms of D.

Your chatbot can act just like this welcome message. By feeding it with the most common issues your customers stumble upon, you can greatly limit the number of times your customer service reps have to intervene to resolve such issues.

Key takeaway: Implement chatbots to serve your customers in an instant and resolve basic issues without the customer service rep’s direct engagement.
To improve communication with the customers, the usage of chatbots will become more common. The chatbots are becoming smarter, resolving all the basic customer problems without an agent’s intervention and the enhanced ability to generate responses for individual customers. They will be intelligent enough to connect the customers to the right agents for support in case of their inability to resolve the issues.

— Hamna Amjad
TECH EXPERT AT @GX

In 2020, we will see a rapid decline of chatbot usage and the widespread adoption of more sophisticated Conversational AI Agents. Customers have been wildly underwhelmed - and often very frustrated - with chatbots that have very little understanding or ability to truly resolve an issue. As a result, the customer experience has suffered. We will see companies abandon their simpleton chatbots with rigid decision trees in favor of Conversational AI Agents that have the ability to think more like a human. While chatbots are manually programmed, Conversational AI Agents learn on the job. Conversational AI can understand the meaning behind what a person is saying, even if it has not been explicitly trained. With the more forgiving and natural experiences provided by Conversational AI Agents, in 2020 consumer satisfaction (CSAT) and preference for engaging with virtual agents will skyrocket.

— Can Ozdoruk
VP OF MARKETING AT Netomi
Real-Time Communication

Of course, not everything can be automated. (Said no marketer ever) Even though we’d like to make all processes as efficient as they could be, sometimes it’s just not worth it. Plus, it doesn’t necessarily align with what your customers expect.

Customer service is one such process. While previously mentioned AI Chatbots can help us resolve recurring issues, some problems can (or rather should) be handled by real humans.

According to the same Oracle report: **Over 60% of customers want human interaction.** This can be fulfilled by means like the phone and... on-page chats, known as live chat.

Live chat is a perfect way to indicate that you’re always easily accessible and can assist your customers whenever they need it from the level of your website. It makes things fast, intuitive, and can greatly reduce the time between first contact and actual resolution.

**Key takeaway:** Offer your customers a way to contact your company in the most low-friction way and implement a live chat on your website. This makes it easy to contact another human which is both quick and personal.
We will see more ‘chats’ rooms everywhere.

Chats became the new norm and this trend will only increase in size in 2020, customers love to ‘talk’ to someone, they don’t need to speak English and you can outsource this job to other freelancers and people in other countries, chats in the main webpage will be the new norm of customer service.

— Abe Navas

FROM Emily’s Maids →
Video content has certainly taken over the world of content and marketing, but what is the impact of video in customer service?

Well, until latest years, people were most likely to consume content in the form of text and images or a combination of both. Nowadays, we see a shift towards video and voice. That’s why social platforms push video content over text posts, more and more companies kick off their own podcasts, and marketers optimize text content for voice search (which we’ll talk about later).

Hence, video content can help you better serve your customers, even solely because it has a higher chance of grabbing their attention and - actually - explaining the issue.

What’s more, video can help you show what could be hard to describe using only text or voice. This can work especially well for physical products or goods which require assembling.

Besides that, video can help your company internally, as thanks to the newest tools, your customer service reps will be able to record the issue a customer has, to better explain it to the dev team.

On the other hand, your devs will be able to do the same to show the solution which can be later on send to the customer or used by your agents as a point of reference.

**Key takeaway:** Put out more video content as your customer service resources. This will help your customers who better understand visual explanations rather than text-based ones.
In a mobile-first world, you have less time to grab attention. People’s attention spans are shorter than ever so the video will be used even more in customer service, show don’t tell for maximum impact, rich content drives engagement, live streaming is available on every major social media platform and it is only getting bigger to hook in users with short attention spans.

— Paige Arnof-Fenn

FOUNDER & CEO AT Mavens & Moguls →

I’m a firm believer that in 2020, the video will play a significant role in customer support. Most customers in this day and age are time poor and option rich. If a customer has encountered a problem with a product or service they’re using, they could just as easily seek out an alternative, as opposed to waiting 10 or 15 minutes to speak to a customer service agent.

Creating short, helpful customer support videos, for common issues with your product or service is a great way of helping your customers solve any potential issues they might have. This has the dual effect of not only helping your customers solve their issues in a timely manner, but also reducing the strain on your customer support team, as they’ll deal with fewer calls from frustrated customers.

— Amara Ukaigwe

CEO AT Book Learn Pass →
A major customer service trend that will emerge in 2020 will be the addition of video capabilities to on-site chat windows. Why? Video increases empathy by bringing real people face-to-face. It also lets the user know that even if they are waiting, a real person is there working on their issue and looking for a resolution. Adding video chat functionality is not suitable for all businesses, but will prove essential for higher price point products and services, where users expect a VIP customer service experience.

— Tasia Duske  
CEO AT Museum Hack →

A significant trend in 2020 will be the broader adoption of video as a tool to provide interactive and personalized support to customers. This will impact several other important trends such as the rise of real-time messaging and self-service support, as support videos become an industry standard.

As more and more companies adopt live chat as a support channel, providing fast and on-demand interactions can be challenging for smaller teams helping a growing customer base.

Adding video to those support interactions can provide an excellent opportunity for teams to create a connection with their customers. At the same time, businesses should facilitate an easy solution to empower their customers to access information and solve common queries — self-service. Leveraging video content in help articles and other proactive support resources will create interactive guides. This way, customers can rely on self-service options for learning how to use the product without waiting for help.

— Susana Cigano  
MANAGER OF SUPPORT AT Loom →
Social Media

Social Media is a great way of making your brand visible to thousands of people. Every marketer knows that. Yet, not every customer service pro knows that you can leverage social media to provide better service.

Nowadays, people use social media not only to share pictures of their cute cats and photos from holidays but also to provide feedback and share their recommendations. This can be both beneficial and unfavorable for your company. That’s because people rely on what’s called, social proof, and base their decision-making process on the opinions and reviews of their peers, closest ones, and experts. Taking the above into account, you get an idea of how one bad or good review can impact your brand’s reputation and therefore sales and public opinion.

Also, social media can be used by your company to assist customers on the go. What you have to do, is monitor social mentions regarding your product or service and respond whenever one occurs. This 1.) shows the level of engagement from your brand and 2.) shows your customers that you truly listen.

Social media can be used successfully to inform your customers about current fixes you make, updates you roll out or even mistakes you’ve made. Handling such issues at public can be greatly beneficial as a.) you’ll inform most of your customers at one shot and b.) you’ll show that you’re honest about what you do and don’t fear criticism.

It’s how customer service goes another mile and takes otherwise unused means of contact to their advantage.

**Key takeaway:** Utilize social media as a way to assist your customers on the go and use it as a channel for customer service-related announcements and information.
Social media will continue to grow in importance when it comes to customer support. There’s already a trend of customers turning first to Facebook and Twitter with any issues they have with a business, as it provides them with an immediate audience. Businesses would be wise to increase their capacity for brand management on social media in order to quickly react to customer feedback. Without this, there will be real potential for damage to be done by dissatisfied customers. There are also great opportunities to proactively engage with customers and provide them with modes of communication to reach out for support. Messenger, for example, is becoming a much more natural way for customers to contact a business as opposed to writing an email or going to a business’s website for contact info. Integrating chatbot technology into social media will be a great way to manage customer engagement in the year to come. Be careful though, as customers can be sensitive to the fact that they’re not engaging with a real person.

— Nikola Baldikov
DIGITAL MARKETING AND SALES MANAGER AT Brosix

It seems like an old trend now, but in reality, it is not the case. It is an evergreen industry and will gain more popularity with time. Users are coming across new social media platforms with the technology advancements. As per statistics, social media users will be approximately 3.1 billion in 2021. Due to such a large ratio, digital marketing on social media channels has become necessary for effective advertisement and brand awareness.

People follow the brand’s channels to stay updated about their products or services. In case of any query, they instantly reach customer service representatives with messages or comments. Not replying to customers on time means to miss the lead that ultimately goes towards business loss. Businesses are readily investing a marvelous portion of their budget on social media marketing to generate leads. They could make good revenue only by hiring a talented customer service team that responds to clients’ queries in minimal time.

— Jessica Chase
FROM PremiereTitleLoans
Social media customer service and support is one of the biggest trending growth areas in 2020, and it is one that no business of any size can afford to ignore – literally. Even if your business is one of the few that doesn’t have a social presence at all (or if you do, but have a policy of not responding to customer support inquiries via social/ sending stock replies) this won’t stop your prospects and customers from using social to talk to and/or about your brand anyway.

Prospects and customers will commonly take to social media to get a response and a resolution publicly if they haven’t managed to achieve this via your other channels – or if your responses via your provided channels have been too slow or resulted in dissatisfaction. This is because social media users understand all too well the leverage that doing this gives them. By tagging, mentioning, or directing a question or complaint at a brand in the public domain via social channels, your prospect makes the choice to play out their complaint in public, knowing that the way your brand responds and the light it displays itself in is integral to your wider reputation and public perception of it.

Put simply, your brand has a lot more at stake than your customer does when it comes to how complaints or a customer services request play out in the public domain – your brand has everything to lose, and your customer has everything to gain, at little to no risk to themselves. All told, this means that brands that want to stay ahead of the game and that are image-conscious and PR-savvy are going with the flow, and enabling and catalyzing social media as a tool to invite and deliver excellent customer service. Failing to do so is simply swimming against the tide, and so as mentioned, this is not a trend that you can afford to ignore. It is THE customer service/support trend for 2020 and beyond that, you need to get on board with, if you want to maintain control of your brand’s image and public perception of it.

— Polly Kay

SENIOR MARKETING MANAGER AT English Blinds

“
Social media as a customer service tool is a relatively new concept to businesses but consumers have already come to terms with the idea that the best possible way to get really high-quality support is to mess with the marketing team behind the twitter account. Companies have a great opportunity to leverage this to their advantage and roll with the punches if the consumers are making inquiries to your social media account, go ahead and engage with them and get the customer service department involved. The only thing better than offering great customer service is offering great customer service where other people can see and appreciate it. So get out there and tweet away to those unhappy customers.

— Alexander M. Kehoe
CO-FOUNDER & OPERATIONS DIRECTOR AT Caveni

Customers have been using social media on mobile devices as part of the digital transformation we are going through and this requires a lot of changes in customer service. Companies that manage to implement social customer service will stand out and will certainly amaze their customers by offering a very personalized service. Alongside mobile digital transformation we see a huge trend in applying Artificial Intelligence to Customer Service by adopting chatbots for example.

— Danilo Carreira-Takahashi
GLOBAL CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AT Lime
Empowered Customer Service Agents

A lot of business owners think that money is what keeps their employees motivated to wake up every day and go to work.

But the truth is much different than that. Of course, money is the focal point of every job. After all, you’ve got to eat, right?

Yet, the real reason why people give their best at work is the fact that their work matters and their decisions have an actual impact.

That’s why when employers are looking for a way to make their employees more productive and motivated, they shouldn’t immediately reach into their pockets and hand out the money.

Instead, what they should do is combine their generosity with additional responsibility given to their employees. Giving your employees more responsible tasks indicates that you trust them and that you believe they’ll cope with the entrusted job. The pay rise is just a natural follow-up and justification of this act.

The common problem in customer support is the fact that customer support agents work in a way too scripted manner.

Their decisions and the way they talk and interact with the customers doesn’t differ enough from that of a chatbot.

This can be frustrating for both customers and business owners, as both will find the service unpleasant. One, because he won’t be happy with how his ticket was resolved and the other because it’s not how he would like his business to be perceived.

To tackle this issue you can use the above-mentioned technique.
Simply, give your agents a more responsible job. Everyone who’s ambitious and motivated to do their job will be happy to get promoted to a more serious role.

Empowered customer service agents will put much more thought into what they do, how they treat customers, and how your business is perceived through their actions.

This will also increase the overall happiness of your agents which will impact customer satisfaction as a 2nd-order consequence.

**Key takeaway:** Show your agents that you trust their expertise and therefore make the service more pleasant for your customers. This will help you achieve better customer satisfaction, as well as, will reduce the time necessary to resolve customer’s issues.
In 2020, the trend of empowering customer service agents will continue to grow. Indeed, savvy companies should already be moving in this direction. Customers are increasingly demanding on-demand solutions. They stream movies in an instant, request taxi and delivery vehicles to arrive in minutes, and get lunch delivered with no pre-planning. So, it shouldn’t be a surprise that when they reach out to a customer service team, they are also looking for on-demand help. No customer wants to hear that their problem needs to be escalated to a manager or another department, delaying their ability to get a resolution. This increases their frustration. Empowering customer service team members allows them to become better brand representatives and advocates. They can assist customers at the moment, providing immediate relief to frustrations and restoring and improving the brand’s relationship with that individual. At GoShare, customer service team members are trained to be experts in our order management system. They can take and adjust orders, make cancellations, or reschedule. The system is completely digital, so it can be changed in the moment and all affected parties are instantly updated. By empowering our customer service reps to be able to make these changes, we improve our speed to resolution and achieve high quarterly net-promoter scores with our customer base.

— Shaun Savage
CEO AND FOUNDER OF GoShare

The demand for smart, capable customer service professionals will grow in 2020. Customers are increasingly using self-service to efficiently handle many routine tasks without an employee’s assistance, such as checking in for a flight, paying for groceries, or resetting a password. That leaves the really complex issues for customer service employees to handle. Today’s customer service professionals require more specialized training than ever before. They must have excellent technical skills while also having the emotional intelligence to empathize with customers to help them feel better.

— Jeff Toister
AUTHOR OF Getting Service Right
We strongly believe that empowered customer service agents will be the customer service trend of 2020. What I mean by that is, not only will the tools customer service agents use be more sophisticated and integrated with web technology, other new pieces of technology such as chatbots will free up customer service agents to focus on more pressing, “human-touch required” customer service.

As a start-up, time is our greatest resource. We don’t have the massive customer service infrastructure that many mid-sized or large businesses do. Our agents only have so much time in a day to deal with support tickets, which is why we have to do everything within our power to support them, technologically or otherwise and make sure they’re spending their time as effectively as possible.

— Alain Gazaui
CEO of SpaKinect

Although it sounds like a cliché, emotions are still the strongest driver of customer loyalty. In 2020, customer service teams will continue to focus on customers’ feelings and reactions. I’m observing that companies are more likely to use products that are equipped with features dedicated to providing more empathetic and compassionate CX, an essential component of providing outstanding customer service which is becoming the new standard nowadays. This doesn’t mean that they’ve started to underestimate the role of chatbots or automatization in their communication processes; quite the opposite. They use them to free up human agents of repeatable cases and let them focus on more complex issues requiring not only specific knowledge but, more importantly, the so-called, soft skills. It also doesn’t mean hiring more agents on board, as today’s emerging technologies allow businesses to provide higher-quality services without a need to engage more resources. To sum up, the era of real Support Heroes has begun.

— Szymon Klimczak
CMO at LiveChat
AI and automation will be a major trend in 2020. Every company job, including every customer service function, is impacted by the march of AI and automation into our systems. AI and automation now handles routine tasks, and administrative work – like automatic case classification, knowledge identification, routing to the best agent, call wrap up notes, next best action to take including best offers, etc., leaving customer service agents dedicated to the harder interactions that require empathy, rich domain-level knowledge, and brand ambassadorship.

What it means: Agents will evolve to be higher skilled, better compensated and to have longer tenures than in the past. They will embrace technology, work semi-autonomously, often in non-traditional employment models such as work at home models, as contractors, or as part of the gig-economy that have special appeal to the younger demographic demanding to have more of an impact on customers. Case in point: Pier 1 Imports now hires trained designers instead of customer service agents to interact with its customers. Stitch Fix hires stylists and Intuit hires tax accountants and software engineers to staff their contact centers.

— Kate Leggett
VP AND PRINCIPAL ANALYST AT Forrester Research
Self-Service Options

Nowadays, customer service shifts towards enabling customers to quickly connect with a customer service rep in the most convenient way:

- live chat
- phone
- email
- Messenger chat

Yet, some customers would like to first try to resolve the issue on their own. You have to keep in mind that your customer base is likely to consist of both extroverts and introverts (who would like to avoid contact with your agents). Plus, some of your customers will be experienced and/or industry-savvy enough to resolve issues (even those technologically complex) on their own. And to serve that second part of your customer base, implementing self-service options can be your best choice.

This can be done in a few ways:

First is a knowledge base. A knowledge base allows you to build a sort-of advanced FAQ directory that your customers can browse through to find guides and tutorials that will help them resolve their issues. The properly constructed knowledge base can take a lot of work out of your agents’ shoulders as you can automate the process of resolving the most common issues. If you know that your customers stumble upon certain problems more than once and the problem can be resolved by themselves (with an explanatory text or video guide) then putting it into a knowledge base can limit the number of questions regarding that particular issue.

What’s important is that a knowledge base doesn’t have to serve complex issues only. You can include a quick start-up guide and tutorials on how to get going with basic things. This will help your less tech-savvy customers progress
on their own without having to directly contact your company. Also, it will help your customers to do a quick check on whether they’re doing things the right way.

The second way in which you can utilize self-service options is **product/service training** for your customers. This can be done in the form of a webinar, video tutorial or text guide. The whole purpose of such a resource is to give your customers a head start so they can successfully use your offer from the very first day. The byproduct of such action will be the increase in customer satisfaction and a higher likelihood that they will stay with your brand.

The third and the last method to provide a self-service option would be to **automate**. When your customers can get things done in a matter of a click or two, they won’t find a need to contact your agents to do the job for them.

Integrations can be a great example. Some software allows you to connect other 3rd-party software with no more, no less than one click. This convenience makes the action so simple and intuitive that there’s no need for further assistance.

You can implement that approach to your software in general. Make certain key actions easy to understand and automated so your customers need to perform no complex actions and can achieve their goal with just a few clicks.

**Key takeaway:** Offer self-serve methods for customers who don’t need your customer service reps assistance. Implement a knowledge base, product training and find ways to automate the use of your product.
Proactive Data-Driven Support

*Why cure when you can prevent it?* I bet you’ve heard that phrase more than once. Most likely it was your grandma or grandpa advising you what to do, not to get sick. And the same approach should be applied to customer service, especially in the following year.

Proactive customer service is simply being the first in the race for resolving an issue. You must always be one step ahead of your customers and be right there when they need your help.

This means you should include various ways of service such as knowledge bases (look a trend above) and social media (page 20).

We can go even further and use data and metrics to better provide proactive support. With tons of metrics and insights that customer service teams gather through software, you can optimize your content and approach to better serve your customers.

Analyzing trends, most common issues, and key metrics will help you get an idea of what and how to optimize your service to provide help even *before* any of your customers contact your company.

**Key takeaway:** Use data to create better-tailored resources and get to know the most common issues to address them proactively and stand out from the crowd of various companies’ reactive approach.
Predictive customer support is the next frontier; leverage all of the metrics and insights at your fingertips to proactively address customer needs. This approach will result in surpassing industry standards and delighting your customers!

— Mary Poppen
CHIEF CUSTOMER OFFICER, GLINT INC. AT Linkedin →
Blockchain and Distributed Ledger Technology

Thanks to the last year’s Bitcoin boom we’ve all heard about cryptocurrencies and blockchain. And while the technology behind it still seems to be a mystery box for many, there’s a possibility that we’ll see applications of it in the following year.

That’s because blockchain and distributed ledger technology bring various advantages that no other system can provide.

For the main advantage, many point at anonymity that blockchain brings to the table.

Thanks to the equal distribution that allows everyone to check and confirm (or to refuse) on each transaction made, let’s users of the same system be anonymous and, at the same time, be safe and be sure that they won’t be cheated.

So far, we haven’t seen practical use cases of blockchain and distributed ledger technology which, for more standard users, may indicate that the technology is not ready to be applied to customer service but for the innovators, it’s just the right time to hop on the trend and dominate the niche.

**Key takeaway:** Detect processes within your company’s customer service that could be decentralized and distributed with the usage of blockchain and distributed ledger technology. Focus on providing more privacy and security to your customers.
I think Blockchain technology has the potential to revolutionize the customer service/support in 2020. Blockchain and Distributed Ledger Technology

Blockchain is one type of distributed ledger. This technology uses independent computers, known as nodes, to record, share, and synchronize financial transactions in their respective electronic ledgers. If your business has to interact with customers, the blockchain technology can radically transform the customer service industry.

1. For example, payments could be easily and securely made through blockchain technology which can eliminate banking-related issues, allowing send and receive money freely between businesses and their customers without prior banking operations. Blockchain peer to peer payments would make this a frictionless process. The use of decentralized transactions would also democratize the investing process by allowing two parties to trade without the need for a third intermediary. Less administration, less cost!

2. Also, Blockchain protects your identity securely. In the customer service department, the technology facilitates reliable identity management. With digital IDs, your customers and your employees can easily verify their identity. And, if this information is stored on a blockchain network, it can prevent frauds, money laundering, and risks of identity theft or breach.

3. The nature of blockchain-based record-keeping means that this information can be simultaneously secured through cryptographic encoding. Additionally, as a distributed ledger-based technology, where all shareholders maintain a copy of the ledger, it also reduces manual efforts and delays due to reconciliation since data consistency is a vital attribute of the distributed ledger.

— Aqsa Tabassam

GROWTH MARKETER AT brandnic →
Anticipating Customer Moves and Personalization with Analytics

The usage of data doesn’t have to be utilized only in terms of proactive customer support but also at better personalizing it to the individual customer. Thanks to advanced software, we can crunch big chunks of data on a single-customer level and therefore optimize the way we serve him or her in a way that feels personal, accurate, and adequate to the needs and wants of that one specific person.

Personalization is a big thing in product-creation in general, but the same can be told in regards to customer service.

*Customer A might prefer to watch a video tutorial on how to fix a bug, while Customer B would like to read an in-depth article explaining the issue.* Better understanding your specific customers’ preferences will help you personalize their journey and thus have a better experience with your brand.

Remember, customer service is not only a mean of helping your customers. It is also your PR, marketing, and sales machine. Even if you don’t treat it like so (HINT: You should.)

**Key takeaway:** Use data and analytics to personalize your messaging to single users and therefore build trust and relationship. It will result in a more loyal customer base and higher LTV.
Companies will embrace predictive analytics to improve their customer interactions. Understanding your customers’ behavior and their preferences can help in creating targeted and personalized experiences for your customers. Analyzing this data would help to target the right customers, predict their future decisions and influence their future choices.

The marketers can create personalized marketing campaigns and establish a reputation as a brand that cares about its customers and actively works for them to have a positive experience. The best way to use predictive analytics is to narrow it down to the individual level. The data collected from a single customer is valuable enough to create a targeted experience to increase the probability of getting the desired result.

— Hamna Amjad
TECH EXPERT AT @GX
Anticipating Customer Moves and Personalization with Analytics

The first thing that comes to mind when you think of AR is likely to be games. We’ve seen how popular this technology can get with a sudden rise of Pokemon Go and people obsessing over their virtual pets. But this technology has much more potential and its capabilities can go way beyond entertainment.

Namely, it can be very beneficial in terms of assisting your customers and making certain issues simpler to resolve. That’s because some issues would be resolved much quicker when visibly showed than when explained over the phone or via chat messages.

While, at this point, AR to many seems to still be a quite complex and undiscovered concept, the industry is predicted to grow. Grow exponentially. As Goldman Sachs predicts, AR is expected to grow into an $80 billion market by 2025. The same message is being reinforced by Google who says that hundreds of millions of mobile devices will support AR capabilities in the coming years.

This is an important disclosure as the accessibility of the technology will dictate how likely people will be to use it. To get a hint of how AR can make customer service job simpler, imagine this scenario:
You sell a medical device than needs further assembling after the purchase. Let’s say you’re IKEA for neurologists. Your customers find it hard to match cables with their right inputs. They mess it up and can’t get started.

Now, you have two choices:

1. Get them on a phone or chat and explain to them how it’s done.
2. Let them use your AR presentation with which they can simply point their phones onto the device and visually see how it should be done.

If the construction of the device can be explained in simple words then the first choice might be just right. Yet, if it’s not, most of your customers would appreciate further guidance.

What’s more, such a solution not only makes it simpler for your customers but also subtracts your customer service reps from the equation. Their assistance is no longer needed.

Of course, not every service and not every product can benefit from the use of AR. But so far, the results of AR implementation in customer service are tempting enough to try it in your company, no matter the industry.

Plus, if you decided to implement AR as part of your customer service stack, you can also use it for other purposes such as pre-purchase product presentations.

According to Retail Perceptions, 40% of consumers would pay more for a product, if they could experience it in AR.

**Key takeaway:** Find a way to implement AR into your customer service process and aim to give your customers more real-life experience to make the service more accessible.
Technology in customer service should be personalized according to the age of your customers. Don’t try too hard with implementing every software possible. Here, the more is not always the better. Test and practice to find what’s actually convenient and helps enhance the customer experience.

— Shep Hyken
CUSTOMER SERVICE AND EXPERIENCE EXPERT, THE CHIEF AMAZEMENT OFFICER OF *Shepard Presentations*

Augmented Reality is the next big thing in most industries and there’s every reason to believe it will be for customer service, too. Augmented reality is creating a means by which customers can experience what they’re purchasing before purchasing.

*Satisfaction guaranteed, a try before you buy* an option that gives customers a peace of mind. But there’s also the potential for meeting with customer service agents “face to face” without having to travel to inconvenient locations.

There’s a lot of possibilities here and the technology is on the cusp of wide-spread integration.

— Chane Steiner
CEO OF *Crediful*
Voice Search for Customer Service

Voice is another big trend that, just like the video, takes over the way people search for and consume information.

At first glance, it may seem more like a marketing or sales trend only, but when you take a look at how customer service changes, meaning it leans more towards a proactive approach than waiting for your customers to come, optimizing your customer service resources for voice search can be a gamechanger.

People love the convenience and if what they would normally type can be boiled down to a keyword or one sentence, they’ll rather ask voice assistant than using their keyboard.

“The world is rapidly turning into a hands-off society. Customers are increasingly using digital assistants and voice-activated devices like Siri, Alexa, and Google Assistant to search for things online, shop, write messages, and much more. People love how voice search has eliminated the need to look at the screen and type something, making the whole experience much easier and fun.”

— Abe Navas
TECH EXPERT AT @GX →
“50% of all searches will be voice searches by 2020” — comScore.

“There will be an estimated 21.4 million smart speakers in the US by 2020” — Activate.

The above statistics alone show how powerful and prospective the field of voice search is.

The following year will only confirm that trend with a faster and easier distribution of smart speakers, better working voice assistants, and generally higher public recognition.

**Key takeaway:** Optimize your text-based customer service contents so they can be easily found using voice only prompts.
Smart speakers and voice search are growing in importance so being able to optimize for voice search will be key to maximize the customer service opportunities on Siri, Alexa, Google Home, etc.

I predict that the brands that perfect the “branded skill” with more customer-friendly, less invasive communication are going to win big.

Are you prepared when customers ask your specific brand for help like “Alexa ask Nestle for an oatmeal cookie recipe” if not you are missing a big opportunity!

— Paige Arnof-Fenn
FOUNDER & CEO AT Mavens & Moguls
Sincere content

This trend is quite similar to the personalization.

Whilst it’s not exactly the same thing, the premise of both of these trends can be boiled down to: “double-down on trust and relation”.

Personalization shows that you care about and know your customers. You do not target them on a high, group-level but rather tailor your message to one person only.

The same can be done on a bigger scale with customer support content you put out.

Curated content and ideas from a trusted source beat paid content every time. Partnering and building relationships with the right influencers with content that is co-created helps brands scale and grow faster and amplify and boost their message.

— Paige Arnof-Fenn
FOUNDER & CEO AT Mavens & Moguls

We see a huge decline in who and what people trust. People tend to rely on suggestions and recommendations made by their friends and peers and stay away from regular advertisements.
The earlier mentioned Oracle report shows clearly that:

- **88%** of consumers trust shopping recommendations from people they know.
- **52%** of all consumers surveyed are skeptical of shopping recommendations (ads) delivered on evolving digital platforms, and distrust increases with age.

The way to use this trend in regards to customer service would be to focus on relationship whenever giving help. Don’t use the one-for-all framework or template.

Your customers desire to be served quickly, accurately, and with special attention. Whilst it might be the 100th call of the day for your customer service rep, it’s the first and only one for a single customer.

Spin your mindset towards such an approach and you’ll make your customers stay.

**Key takeaway:** Make your customer service efforts as sincere as possible. Instead of putting out generic content, focus on building trust and treating each customer on a personal level.
Technology runs our lives more than ever but it is relationships that drive business and commerce so people will find more ways to connect in-person to build trust and strengthen connections.

**Make sure you offer several ways** to talk with them and get to know them. Algorithms can only tell you so much about a customer, transactions are driven by relationships.

Use automation where you can but do not ignore the power of the personal touch in customer service.

— Paige Arnof-Fenn

**FOUNDER & CEO AT Mavens & Moguls**

As technology has enabled more and more businesses and economic conditions have continued to be favorable over the last 10 years, more and more businesses are producing products that are less and less differentiated. In other words, competition is up, and everyone’s trying to get a piece of the good markets. Where’s that lead prospects? With too many choices and not enough information. As a result, prospects are looking inward to their networks, asking for recommendations from friends, family, and peers — and we’re seeing a renaissance for review sites. And where’s that leave companies? They need to get creative to differentiate, while not ignoring the macro trends in their buyers.

So, companies are competing more and more on recommendations, sentiment, and reviews. The ultimate lever to getting good reviews is good customer experience, and to produce world-class customer experience firms need world-class customer success. This trend is so pervasive that we’re even seeing the penetration of customer success tactics into new industries: customer success, which began in SaaS, is now commonplace in hardware businesses, service businesses, and more. The macro trend of consumers having more choices and needing peer input to cut through the noise has led to customer success being a key lever for growth, and all sorts of industries are taking notice.

— Michael Redbord

**CUSTOMER SUPPORT EXPERT AT redbord.com**
Internal conversation reviews

Every customer support folk knows that analyzing feedback from their customers is crucial to optimize their service, as well as, future and current resources.

The only problem may be that we don’t review the feedback properly. Oftentimes, we get stuck on one-dimensional metrics like 1-to-10 rating or ‘good or bad’. Yet, there is much more to be discovered in every conversation you have with your clients.

Also, taking into account how big of a trend chatbots and on-page chats are, you’ll collect even more feedback that, when utilized properly, can take your service from 0 to hero.

Conversation reviews are the most important trend that we’ll see in the customer service space in 2020. The past few years have already shown that successful support teams no longer rely (solely) on customer feedback when it comes to assessing their own performance. CSAT, NPS, CES don’t reflect the quality of customer service. These are great metrics for measuring customers’ overall satisfaction with your products, services, and company in general.

However, one can never draw an equation mark between the customer survey results and a support team’s performance.

We’ve already seen companies like Automattic, Wistia, Soundcloud, and PandaDoc implement regular conversation review programs in their support teams. That’s a trend that will take a sharp rise in the coming years.

— Valentina Thörner
HEAD OF PRODUCT AT Klaus

Chapter 1  CUSTOMER SERVICE TRENDS 2020
The burden of the digital age is that we have tons of information and yet we can’t really make use of most of that.

Plus, if you know the reality of customer support, you know that there’s more pressure on helping the customer than afterward analyzing what you or he said.

That’s why we tend to boil the review of the conversation to simple grades and symbolic systems. But with a software that can do the work for you and analyze the feedback in the way a human wouldn’t be able to, the whole game changes.

Internal conversation reviews are still a bit of an unknown practice but if you utilize the means of customer service such as live chat or chatbots then giving it a try might be more than worth it.

**Key takeaway:** Use software to analyze internal conversations your reps have and get to know otherwise hard-to-uncover ways to optimize and better your customer service.
Conversation reviews are a systematic way of analyzing support interactions (emails, chat, calls, etc.) and providing feedback to your agents.

It’s the only way they can become better at what they do. In 2020, we’ll see conversation reviews boom in the customer service field.

With support quality affecting the buying decisions of 62% B2B customers, we can be sure that more and more businesses will shift their focus to providing excellent customer care, and turn their eyes to conversation reviews.

— Valentina Thörner
HEAD OF PRODUCT AT Klaus
Enriching Customer Experience Through Local Agents

In customer service space, we got used to that our support teams are either distributed in-house or totally outsourced and work remotely.

But one of the newest trends shows that some businesses may need to redesign their approach and focus on distributing their customer support agents accordingly to their target audience’s location. The trend works on the premise that some people, for example elderly, would like to be served by local agents who are actually located in their area.

This gives them the comfort of competency and a sense of trust that only a neighbor can offer.

Of course, this can’t be applied in a case of every company due to their resources or capabilities of management but there’s a big chance for those who serve location-specific audiences and would like to double down on customer experience.

This can be beneficial not only in terms of better customer service but also 2nd- and 3rd-order benefits which are better customer loyalty and therefore higher CLTV.

More and more companies realize that better customer service and customer experience is the best way to make the customer happy and therefore keep him with the brand.

**Key takeaway:** Serve your location-specific customers through local agents to offer more personalized and rich customer experience to those who expect it.
Because we are in a business that deals with very personal issues (senior housing), we see the trend moving toward localized service from agents who understand the needs and the markets in which our customers reside. The old system of “one size fits all” doesn’t work anymore. When a consumer contacts us, they want to speak with someone who really understands their needs and who lives in or around their community. With remote call center technology, this is now completely possible. It not only increases our sales, but it improves the experience and trust of our customers.

— Ryan Patterson
CEO at SeniorAdvice.com
Brand and User Integration

As each of the trends shows, companies use customer service to bring their customers closer to the brand and make them more loyal than ever before.

The shift from thinking about customer service as solely a way to resolve customers’ issues opened a new approach that intends to make customers an integral part of the brand.

The Brand-User Integration is a trend that correlates with one of the first trends we’ve mentioned in the Ebook, namely, Customer Success Prioritization.

The main premise of this trend, as well as, the premise of CS prioritization is that when a customer feels bonded to the company (in a positive way) he or she is much more likely to stay and therefore increase one’s CLTV.

Companies thrive to find a viable way to make their customers stay but it seems like only a few brands have actually managed to create such a system that creates a strong enough relationship and keeps their customers from churning.

The core of the Brand-User Integration is a great product that meets expectations of a given group, then, according to the principles of this trend, a job of customer service efforts should be the happy relationship created by the company that engages the customer on a personal level and shows that they’re a main entity in the whole process.

**Key takeaway:** Make your users an integral part of your company and focus on creating a relationship between your brand and your users. This will result in life-long customers and a better and more loyal customer base.
Brand and user integration will become major in 2020 as brands try to find ways to both create loyal customers for life as well as use customers for brand and marketing reach as much as possible. When a brand is able to integrate users with their platform by giving loyalty rewards and reasons for them to keep coming back, they are likely to be creating a customer who will go to them without even thinking and become loyal for life, something that most brands aspire to. This helps them get a high customer lifetime value and the most possible revenue per customer. Additionally, having customers for life means they will likely be telling their friends and family about the brand and giving the brand free marketing and reach both goals of any brand, and a reason why brand and user integration will keep increasing in popularity in 2020.

— Stacy Capri
FOUNDER OF Accelerated Growth Marketing →

A major trend for Customer Satisfaction in 2020 is going to be retention; specifically going back to the basics of customer retention. As brands increase the sophistication, glamor, and expense around the on and offline experience, there is a real danger that the basics of service delivery will be forgotten. In fact, Forrester in 2018 said: “In 2019, customer experience will continue as a major factor in how companies do business.” Predictions like this seem commonplace. Consequently, brands are pumping more cash into attracting new customers. Yet despite this, customer rates have not declined, and in some industries even increased. This shows businesses over-promised on the glitz and the glamor of experience but undelivered on the execution. And when unhappy customers have a cell phone and social media - they will complain to an ever-growing audience before a business has had a chance to correct the issue.
So my prediction is that a back to basics focus on operational execution will become the backbone of any ‘Experience Improvement’, with the key metrics being customer defection (or churn) rates.

— Matt Selbie
FOUNDER OF Opiniator →
CHAPTER 2

Customer Service Tools and Services
Customers want to contact your brand in the most suitable (for them) way. But how do you guess which solution will be best for your customers?

The answer is you don’t.

And the other, more compelling answer, is that you provide an Omnichannel Support. The exact first trend we’ve talked about in this E-Book.

Below, you’ll find a list of tools that will help you provide support via every channel your customer may dream of and that are ready for 2020. Each of these tools will help you cover all trends from #1 to #17.

Getting to know these trends is one thing but actually providing service that works accordingly to these trends is a whole another piece of bread.

Thus, don’t stop here. Find tools that your customer service stack may need and implement them to be ready for future demand.

Making your customer service ready at this point will give you a headstart over your competition. Remember, deciding on and getting the tool is just the first step. Onboarding your employees and getting efficient in the process oftentimes takes much more time and requires a lot of practice.

Now, let’s move onto the list of customer service tools and services for 2020.
Phone support is one of the key features in a customer service stack. In fact, customers got so used to being able to call the customer service agents that the lack of a phone number in a contact tab may be worrisome.

Even though many people think that a phone is an obsolete feature in a start-up era, statics show the opposite. Customers tend to solve most of their issues through the phone because it allows them to quickly get in contact with another human, explain the issue with your own words without having to write it down and it helps you express your emotions through voice (something you can’t do using chat or an email).

This is not only beneficial from the standpoint of the customer but also for the company itself. With highly skilled customer service reps who can properly handle phone calls, emphasize, and relate to calling customers, you can win long-lasting relationships and life-time customers.

**CrazyCall is a cloud-based calling software that lets you handle all phone-related efforts like a pro.**

No matter if you want to focus on inbound or outbound calls, CrazyCall has features that will help you master both. You can easily build a reliable helpline with the usage of an IVR and international phone numbers. This will make the contact rate skyrocket and help you improve customer satisfaction through shorter phone call time and quicker issue resolution.

Thanks to call recording and call monitoring you’ll get a full overview of all phone calls going in and out of your company. Plus, interactive dashboards and downloadable in-depth reports will make it easy to measure all KPIs you need.

CrazyCall comes with additional benefits such as a Callback Widget that you can put onto your website in the form of a smart pop-up or a bubble that
will both help you collect phone numbers of your visitors.

Another add-on that you’ll find useful is the Click-to-Call chrome extension that lets you make calls with a single click from any webpage you’re on. This allows you to make calls in the most efficient way without having to directly access any software.

Learn more about CrazyCall →
Live chat & chatbots — Intercom

Live chat and chatbots are relatively new ways of communicating with clients but according to industry experts and upcoming trends, it’s there to stay for at least one more year.

Adding live chat to your website allows your visitors to communicate with your company from right where they are. There’s no need to use additional resources or tools. Just click on the chatbox and start asking your questions. This simplicity made live chat one of the most widely used customer service tools out there.

Yet, the ability to add a chatbox to your website is not very exclusive. You can do it with many software that is out there. That’s why it’s important to not only choose the live chat itself but also the whole system that operates behind it. With a good system, you can utilize the data you get, store it the way you want, and easily exchange information between various teams (think: marketing and sales).

That’s why Intercom is one of the best picks when it comes to live chat systems.

Not only it provides the most customizable messaging suite but it also comes packed with additional features to help you generate leads and operate in a more efficient way.

Besides the live chat, Intercom offers smart, customizable chatbots that can be integrated with your knowledge base to better serve your customers without having to connect them directly to any of your agents.
Intercom brings all the data into one place. You don’t have to use an outside sales CRM (even though you can) as Intercom stores a ton of customer information regarding their purchases and the way they interact with your brand.

Intercom also excels when it comes to automation. With our Answer Bot and customized bots with an integrated knowledge base, you can serve your customers immediately without them having to wait for another human to resolve their issue. This can help you keep the costs low and your customers happy.

— Jeff Gardner
INTERCOM

Learn more about Intercom →
Video — Loom

Video is clearly a rising star of customer service trends. With its popularity among everyday users and amazing results that video content gets, it was only a matter of time until someone spotted an opportunity to use this medium for customer service purposes.

What’s great about video is that you can easily showcase actions that would be otherwise hard to explain. Therefore, with video content, you get an easy way to show solutions to various problems between different entities inside and outside your company. How?

The first and most obvious use case would be to show customers a video on how to solve a specific problem. This will give them a quick step-by-step solution that they can follow with ease.

The less obvious one would be to use video internally between different departments within your company. For example, your dev team could record a video on how to solve some bug or issue and then send it to your customer support reps. This way, they’ll be able to quickly explain even highly technical problem to your customers.

This, of course, can go the opposite way. Your customer support reps may record videos showcasing problems that occur to your customers. It’ll save them time on explaining the issue with text and will help your dev team to better understand the problem.

Here, a tool that does all the above things great is Loom.

That’s because Loom is the simplest and most straightforward tool that lets you record your screen and use options that all of us need. This goes for choosing what portion of our screen to record, whether to include our webcam or not and the recording of voice.
Loom is so simple to use that you’ll love recording videos as it will become the fastest way of sending information from now on. And, applying this to your customer service processes will help you better communicate with your clients and, hopefully, will speed up your company’s internal processes.

Learn more about Loom →
Recording quick videos can help companies support their customer base but also
train their employees on workflows and processes. At Loom, my team of 5 supports
almost 2 million users. We need to always be on the same page and follow the same
workflows. We use quick videos to:

• **Explain to our customers how the product works or help troubleshooting**
  Video provides customers with an instant understanding of how the product works
  and reduces the need for back and forth messaging. Less is more.

• **Record bug reports for our Dev Team**
  A quick video showcasing how to reproduce a bug helps replace the cumbersome
  task of taking screenshots and annotating instructions. Video has saved our team
countless hours of productive work.

• **Document workflows and training videos for our team**
  We use video to document processes so our entire team can easily find and learn
  important information whenever they need to. This helps my team feel confident
  that what they are communicating to our customers is correct.

• **Send a video to de-escalate frustrated or upset customers**
  We find that sending a video to a customer having a poor experience can help
  both parties work towards a productive solution. For the customer, seeing a friendly
  face on video can instantly help change the tone of the conversation.

• **Create tutorials and user guides in your Help Center**
  A Help Center’s goal is to facilitate learning to our customers. Video helps us show
  our product in action and, for a lot of people that is preferable to a convoluted
  list of steps or instructions. This helps create tremendous value customers who
  prefer to learn in a visual way.

As a result, we’re delighted to see how video content has positively impacted the
way our team works. Our customer satisfaction rating climbed to 96% in 2019, which
perfectly encapsulates how much value videos have brought into the interactions
with our customers.

**Susana Cigano**
**Manager of Support at Loom**
Year by year social media becomes more of an integral part of customer service stack than ever before.

Customers and, especially, unhappy clients require their words to be heard even when they’re not directly speaking to a company. Because of this, coping with social media may seem like a daunting task for a customer service team but with a proper approach and good software choices, it can be all done easily both for the customers and the company.

A proper approach means that you have to be a lot like a firefighter. A firefighter doesn’t wait until a fire gets so big that his team has to spend days to bring the building to its previous state. Cognately, you can’t wait until a complaint on social media spreads far enough that it damages your brand’s name amongst the vast audience. You have to react quickly and instead of trying to bury the issue down, treat it with openness and offer your customers whatever help they may require.

Here, a great tool to use will be Brand24.

What Brand24 does is it makes it easy to monitor social media live and react whenever it is needed. Thanks to this feature you’ll be able to react in an instant and crush the complaint in the bud before it spreads too far.

What’s more, it allows you to spot certain trends on social media which may help you be more proactive and serve your customers even before any issue appears.

All of this will help you improve customer satisfaction and protect your online reputation.

Learn more about Brand24 →
Personalization — Drip

The more data we collect the more personalized message we can send to our customers. Nowadays, with software that gathers every little piece of information regarding our clients allows us to tailor all the messages (think: emails, offers, discounts) to narrow audiences.

While we all know the basic, high-level personalization methods which can be as simple as using your customer’s name, we can go much deeper with proper software and well-structured data. The huge benefit that such an approach gives is the fact that by using historical data you can anticipate the customers’ moves and serve them the right offer at the right time.

This will not only help you increase sales but also serve your customers when they need it the most. By knowing the customer journey from the beginning to an end and spotting the most important pain points you can reach your customers just when they need it.

Another big thing is the fact that personalization lets you send a message that’s actually appealing to your customers. Most emails and offers people get are generic messages sent to thousands if not hundreds of thousands of customers without even a little difference between each of the emails. Therefore, your message (no matter if it’s customer support related email or an actual offer) that is actually personalized will stand out from the rest of the crowd.

Software that does great when it comes to personalization is Drip.

Drip collects all the data you may need regarding how your customers interact with your brand and the most impactful moments on a single customer’s journey. Thanks to this data and the fact that Drip allows you to segment audiences in regards to the littlest detail you may think about, you can send unique messages that will not only get delivered but will be also well received.
What’s more, Drip allows you to set up workflows which are, in the most basic terms, custom customer journeys tailored to segments of your audience.

Thanks to the workflows you can use the data that shows the most impactful moments on your customers’ journey and build them into the journey so your customers are treated accordingly to their current needs and wants.

Learn more about Drip →
When you think about customer service and, especially, customer support, the first thing that comes to your mind is (probably) a customer service rep talking to a customer.

This is the standard scenario in which the customer contacts the company and a specialized employee helps the customer resolve their issue. Yet, as the customer service gets more proactive and companies do their best to anticipate customers’ moves, options that allow customers to resolve issues on their own get more popular.

The most basic, although the best-working at the same time, method of self-service is a knowledge base. The knowledge base is a set of short articles, tutorials, and guides that can help customers resolve their issues without the need to contact a company in any direct way.

This means that a customer, with a quick search inside your knowledge base, can find an article that treats the exact problem he has and by following steps described in the article he can effortlessly resolve his issue.

This is great for two reasons:

1. Customers who prefer not to contact the other human won’t have to do so.

2. Your customer service reps will have fewer emails, calls, and chats to respond to.

Such an approach will help you take some workload off your customer service reps and increase customer satisfaction among the group that wants to resolve issues on their own.

A great tool to build your knowledge base would be Zendesk Guide.
Zendesk Guide lets you create a neatly-organized knowledge base that your customers will search through with ease.

What’s more, you can structure your knowledge base so your newly customers will see the most basic guides first and then - if there’s such a need - they can go deeper into more technical stuff.

This allows you to use your knowledge base not only as a way to treat certain technical issues and malfunctions but also as a quick-start guide for your new customers.

Learn more about Zendesk Guide →
Internal conversation reviews  
— KlausApp

While this trend is quite new, we’re probably going to see more companies allowing their users to implement internal conversation reviews into their software. That’s because by making use of internal conversations, companies can improve the quality of their customer service like never before.

Using the feedback that’s exchanged directly between your customer service department and customers you can better spot issues that your customers have and also work on a more efficient way to treat these issues.

The problem with internal feedback is that it’s either not stored or if it’s stored it’s never put to work. Fortunately, thanks to the newest software, companies can finally harness all these conversations and use them to provide better customer service.

**One of such software is Klaus.**

Klaus is a tool that connects right into your favorite helpdesk/customer support software and helps you manage all the internal conversations your reps have. The biggest benefit that this tool gives you is the structure.

Using Klaus your conversations will be easily manageable and less time-consuming to go through. Meaning, you erase two of the biggest obstacles when trying to make use of internal conversations in general.

Also, Klaus makes it easy to review all conversations. You can quickly filter through hundreds of tickets and leave actionable reviews that will help your reps develop.
This goes the other way as not only you can review the conversations but also measure their quality as a whole.

Such a feature will let you assess the quality of your service with a quick glance at the dashboard, as well as, will make it easy to spot certain trends that will give you an idea of whether the processes you’ve implemented are helping or not.

Klaus is a conversation review and QA platform for customer service teams. It connects with all popular help desk solutions and pulls customer interactions in for internal review.

Conversation reviews are the most important customer service trend to follow in 2020 because they reveal support teams’ areas of improvement and help agents become better at what they do. It’s the most efficient way to boost customer service quality and bring consistency to support interactions. Klaus provides an out-of-the-box solution that helps teams get going with conversation reviews in a matter of minutes. For companies that already have a process in place, it cuts the time spent on reviewing one conversation by 70%.

— Valentina Thörner
HEAD OF PRODUCT AT Klaus →
Tools themselves are useless when you don’t know how to put them to work. And that stays true not only for the technical term of ‘using the tool’ but also principal knowledge behind customer service. Without knowing what customers expect and how they should be served, no tool will come in useful as no tool can do 100% of the job for you.

And that’s where training services come into play. With online and on-site customer service training you can assure that your employees and, especially, managers and team leaders will know how to put to work the most important principles of customer service.

Such training is also a great way to discover new ideas, tips, and strategies that could be applied to your business. And most importantly, by constantly refreshing your knowledge and keeping it up-to-date, you will stay on top of current trends and best practices which will help you successfully serve your customers.

Also, such training can work as a powerful boost to your mindset and approach which are extremely important in a work environment that requires you to deal with other people all the time.

Here, the best customer service training a company can choose is Shepard Virtual Training and Live On-site Training: The Customer Focus.

Depending on your capabilities you can equip your team with 24/7 on-demand training or book an on-site customer service training designed specifically to your team’s and your company’s needs. Shep’s main premise when it comes to customer service trends is the fact that the best companies have raised the bar so high when it comes to customer service that customers will
compare experiences you offer to those they got served by these companies.

Yet, what Shep intends to do by his training is to make your customers stop comparing your customer service to any other service they had but to make your customer service their North Star.

If you want to give your customer service team the tools they need, the knowledge they can put to work and the right mindset that will set them to win, Shep’s customer service training is the way to go.

Learn more about Shep’s training →
According to customer service experts, companies that will double-down on analytics for their customer service processes will win in 2020. We can see that the usage of data becomes more important than data storing itself. Now, you have to put those numbers, names, and dates that are laying around in spreadsheets to work.

The important part will be how you measure the most important things.

- How do you measure NPS?
- How do you measure the efficiency of your agents?
- How do you optimize the work of your customer service reps?

All these questions can be easily answered when your data is put to work.

A great way to do that is to use Sisense.

Sisense is a Business Intelligence Software that allows you to visualize your analytics and discover actionable metrics that will help you optimize your business.

Here, the only limit is what you want to measure. With Sisense you can get inside each of your company’s processes, analyze it, and see what data says and finally get an idea on how to optimize it.

What’s great about such a platform is the fact that you can see things you wouldn’t be able to see otherwise. With it, tickets and the number of calls or the time your agents spend on the phone will yield the whole another depth that a human eye wouldn’t be able to spot.

Learn more about Sisense →
Besides tools and training, your company may need something completely different. That’s because both of the above may empower you in the long-term (making your employees better or there work easier to do). But what if you have to execute now?

There are certain parts of your company that you have to launch now, not in the months ahead and you’d like to get them optimized as soon as possible.

For such things, it would be great to use data and insights from already proven actions. Plus, it would be beneficial to not only borrow from the past but to also be able to take a look in the future and base what you’re doing now on the predictions and forecasts for the market.

**Luckily, you can do all the above with the help of Forrester Research.**

Forrester is one of the most powerful research and advisory companies in the world. They serve firms from various industries and can help you optimize all sorts of business functions such as:

- Security & Risk
- CMO & Marketing
- Customer Experience
- Innovation & Strategy
- Employee Experience
- CIO & Information Technology
- Customer Insights & Analytics
- Digital Business & Experience

Thanks to data they operate and the way they operate with it, Forrester can help your company through learning, consulting, advising and conducting research.
With such insights at hand you’ll find it easy to optimize certain parts of your business and, what’s even more important, make it ready for what future holds.

Forrester (Nasdaq: FORR) is one of the most influential research and advisory firms in the world. We work with business and technology leaders to develop customer-obsessed strategies that drive growth. Forrester’s unique insights are grounded in annual surveys of more than 675,000 consumers and business leaders worldwide, rigorous and objective methodologies, and the shared wisdom of our most innovative clients. Through proprietary research, analytics, custom consulting, exclusive executive peer groups, learning offerings, and events, the Forrester experience is about a singular and powerful purpose: to challenge the thinking of our clients to help them lead change in their organizations.

— Kate Leggett
VP AND PRINCIPAL ANALYST AT Forrester Research

Learn more about Forrester
Impact of Customer Service on Business in 2020

CHAPTER 3
2019 was a year during which we could read dozens of articles claiming that customer service is much more than just a service itself. While at the beginning of its existence, customer service was purely a system to answer customers’ queries, now people claim the paradigm shifted and that customer service has much more to do with the business itself than just serving your customers.

Some of these claims may be actually true but a lot of bold predictions end up being just exaggerated statements from people trying to push clickable news.

Below, we’ve listed 5 statements backed by customer service experts who’ve shared with us their view on how big of an impact customer service has and will continue to have in the following year. These should not only explain how important customer service is (or not) but also give you a good idea of whether you should invest in it within your company.

The problem with customer service was always that it was ‘a must’ to have such a department in your company. Treating it like a must-have that someone just handed you but you didn’t really want to take it, made many businesses keep it at the very basic level. No training to agents, no proficient tools, no analytics, little-to-no management.

Nowadays, business owners and managers realize that customer service has much more to do than just helping your customers solve their issues.

Let’s see what impact customer service really has on the business and what experts have to say about that.
Customer Success Is a Differentiator

We’re currently living in the times when businesses thrive, new ideas come to life each day and great companies get set up one after another. Such a state leads to a certain level of saturation on the market. This, on the other hand, makes it hard to stand out in a company of tens if not hundreds also successful companies targeting the same niche.

A great product is, of course, the main thing that should help you stand out from the crowd. But what if your competitors have a great product as well? Well, then there’s your offer. Better price, better package, better deal. But you can’t game on price forever.

Here comes the other aspect of your businesses that in today’s era of shared information can be your best differentiator and that is customer success. According to the newest reports, people are turning away from advertisements and influencers and would rather rely on recommendations from their closest social circle - friends & family. The real quest for companies is how they can make it an integral part of their business when it’s a channel that is outside of their direct reach.

Therefore, companies have to find a way around that problem and develop an effective process that would help them collect good reviews and build that social proof around their product.

All in all, customer success and positive feedback that customers leave after having success with your product and service can work as a way to differentiate yourself from the pool of similar brands that would otherwise be as attractive as yours.
We’ll see the customer experience continue to become the key differentiator. This trend is already happening today, but it’ll reach a fever pitch in 2020 as markets get increasingly saturated in the longest bull stretch of economic expansion on recent record. As a result of customer experience becoming a central differentiator and competition at all-time highs, winning firms will aim to lead with their value increasingly often in 2020. To do this, they’ll pull more customer-friendly, customer-success style tactics further and further pre-sale, to deliver more value before the transaction and beat out the competition for customer share of wallet.

What will this look like? A few examples: More freemium, value-before-you-buy acquisition models in go-to-market, which will be supported by support, instead of traditional SDR/BDR hunting. More thoughtful sales processes that deliver consulting and strategic value, to help businesses before the close. And more usage of customer reviews and social proof as a key decision point in the buyer’s journey.

— Michael Redbord  
CUSTOMER SUPPORT EXPERT AT redbord.com ➔

Competition is so high these days that many of the differences between products and services have disappeared. Therefore, the only real differentiator between many products and services is the service and experience that they deliver. Therefore, the impact on business these days can be huge. You can’t get away with having a pretty good product and lousy service these days. Customers just won’t stand for it.

— Adrian Swinscoe  
CUSTOMER SERVICE AND EXPERIENCE ADVISOR AT adrianswinscoe.com ➔
Customer Support Is Not a Profit Center

Ever heard that your customer support department can be your profit center? The major source of sales? And your main revenue driver?

Well, these and other profit-related claims regarding customer support have popped up like mushroom during 2019. Most such statements are based on the premise that the better your customer support is the higher the customer’s happiness gets and thus the customer becomes more loyal and stays longer. This, of course, gets linked to a higher CLTV.

While such thinking may be true in some cases, it would be an overestimation to assume that every customer who has any contact with your customer support is impacted on the same level. That being said, some customers will indeed become loyal customers thanks to your service but others, who were treated the same way, won’t.

It’s also quite hard to prove the dollar-wise impact your customer support has on your business because there can be many other impactful moments on your customers’ journey that impact his decision on whether to stick with the brand or go. Even worse as there’s a little-to-no chance you can track the impact of your customer support.

Of course, there are some exceptions to that and we’ve seen tweets that went viral after a customer received an exceptional service but that’s not an everyday occurrence. Also, there still remains a question of whether that will really make a customer loyal. What if your competitors lower their prices and, at the same time, offer an awfully similar product? Will your customer remain loyal? Or does the product and an offer come first?
In general, don’t treat your customer support as a profit center nor try to push it to be one. Instead, treat it like a cost as it is and strive to optimize it so your whole company stays profitable.

“Customer support is very valuable to the business and it is, in fact, evolving but the argument that customer support is a profit center rather than a call center is rather a silly one. It has to be a cost. So anyway you can reduce the cost while giving people amazing service is always going to be better in the long run for a business.

You need to give your customer amazing experiences with your product or they won’t buy them but it’s basically impossible to find a correlation between customer support and the impact it has on the profits.”

— Jeff Gardner
FROM Intercom
Customer Service Creates Loyal Customers

After reading the last few pages you may think that, in fact, customer service is a money-draining vampire that should be treated with garlic and maybe a few hits with a shovel. Well, before you grab your anti-vampire equipment, let me tell you that customer service does impact your business and can help you produce loyal customers.

The main thing that you should remember is the fact that customer service itself, no matter how good, cannot create a loyal customer. Every customer service pro will tell you that your product has to come first. As Shep Hyken said:

> I won’t tell an airline that customer service must be their priority. Of course not. Safety is their priority, customer service has to be their focal point but not the priority.

If your customer is happy with the product itself then comes the moment when your customer service has the biggest impact on whether your customer will stay for longer. But, the reality is, your customer may not have any problems with your product whatsoever and will use it happily without your assistance. Therefore, it may happen that your product will be the only driver of his loyalty.

On the other hand, if your customer has an issue, the way he gets treated may impact his decision of whether to stay with your brand or switch to another. That’s because customers may walk away from the company even after one bad experience. This, luckily for companies, changes and younger customers are willing to give a company another chance.
Yet, on average one-third of your customers will actually switch to another brand after just one poor experience. The market is so saturated with similar products and offers that almost no solution is unique and can be easily replaced if needed.

And that’s why every interaction your customers have with your brand must be on-point, quick, and lead to the solution.

This way, you’ll make sure your customers will stay with your brand and they’ll become loyal customers.
Customer Experience Gets Increasingly More Attention

This new trend can heavily impact businesses that serve a younger audience (think >Millenials). That’s because these people give CX much more attention than anyone ever before.

Luckily for businesses, they’re also more likely to give a brand another chance, but for these people, you can’t rely on your product only. While for the older generation the self-explanatory product that doesn’t break was enough, now, the richer the experience around the product the better the chance your customers will be contented.

Here, I should also clarify that while this fact may be actual for companies targeting Gen Z audience, these people will only take more of the market share while the rest will continuously fade. And that’s the reason you can’t ignore this fact even if you’re not targeting the Gen Z customers right now.

The good part of this trend is that younger customers are likely to return the favor. This means that if you invest in customer experience your customers will invest in you. You have to also change the way you think about customer service that makes ‘everything around your product’.

Now it’s not an add-on. It’s an integral part of the product.

That’s also where we go back to the first point about customer service’s impact on business. Namely, it can be your differentiator. With more attention being put towards the experience around the product your prospect will expect to see it even before they make a purchase.

Therefore you have to do your best to prove that your company’s customer service is on-point without a customer ever interacting with it.
Still, this should not make you shift your thinking to customer service first, product second. No. If your product is of poor quality and it underdelivers, your customer will churn anyway. But, if you have a great product but poor experience around it, your potential customers may never even give it a try.

Thus, use customer experience as an attention catcher and prove that you’re worth it with a great product.

"Customer service should be a fundamental part of any business. At Loom, the Support team is the face of the company and will go above and beyond to provide exceptional experiences to any customer who requests assistance.

All businesses will need to respond to customer queries, but going the extra mile to offer quality and efficient service will set them apart from the competition. Customers’ expectations for exceptional support are growing every year and they will pay a premium to walk away satisfied.

A customer service team that runs efficiently will have a massive impact on how the business runs, but also how a product evolves. Keeping a tight communication loop with the customers and acting on feedback will set the team up for success when it comes to making product changes.

Successful businesses recognize customer service as a competitive advantage and empower their support team to create meaningful experiences for their customers."

— Susana Cigano
MANAGER OF SUPPORT AT Loom
Customer Service Can Impact Your Bottom Line

The last insight might be also the most important one from the business owner standpoint.

That’s because even though customer service efforts are hard to measure, we know that they can impact your business in both a positive and negative way.

As we’ve learned a few pages before, customer service may have an impact on how loyal a customer is and therefore have an indirect impact on the company’s bottom line. While these - positive - efforts can’t be measured and nor they are described by statistics, the negative efforts (or rather the lack of the effort in general) can be.

To recall: One-third of your customers will walk away from a brand after just one bad customer experience.

Keep in mind that this is not a one-time event. If your customer service is of poor quality then you might be loosing around 33% of customers daily, per month, per year, and per lifetime! That’s actually a bit daunting.

Once again, we can’t call customer service a profit center but we certainly can name it a possible loss center. Of course, such a fact shouldn’t scare any business owner about his or her situation.

Contrarily, it should do no more than motivate you to double-down on your customer service in the following year and stress to your managers and team leaders that it’s not about providing service itself. It’s about being part
of the product and an overall brand.

With such an approach you’ll make it much easier for customer service reps to do their job as they’ll get recognized and will feel the responsibility (which is good) and it will push your company to find a way to optimize your customer service and automate the parts that can be automated.

All in all, remember that customer service can impact your bottom line just as a poor product or technical malfunctions can do. Make it an integral part of your product and provide it when it’s needed the most.

“The Internet brought to customers the ability to share their ideas, opinions, and interests openly and collaboratively. If a company fails to amaze its customers, they would potentially post their experience online and the consequence might be a negative impact on the company’s reputation.

In the past, the network of customers was much more limited and the news didn’t spread that fast. The role of the customer service team within a company has a huge impact on businesses and has the power to engage customers with the brand.”

— Danilo Carreira-Takahashi
GLOBAL CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AT Lime
Current Customer Service Shape

CHAPTER 4
Customer Service is a constantly evolving field.

Even such a short time as 5 years can bring substantial changes to how businesses go about customer service, how much they invest in it and how much impact it has on the business.

That’s also related to the fast-changing world of technology that brings new solutions to the world of customer service.

Below, we’ll explore major changes in customer service that took place during the last five years.

Did it change so much as the trends suggest?

Or has the core of what customer service is changed at all?

Although it’s inevitably true that customer service has gone through many changes, we can see many claims that could be compared to the one that customer support is your profit center.

Obviously, customer service is much more than just helping your customers and this Ebook has supported that claim many times, but no matter what, we can’t forget that serving the customer will always remain the main premise.
Customer Support Quality Has Been Driven By a Business Model Change

One of the biggest changes that we could observe in customer service over the course of the last years was the one driven by an outside force. Namely, the change in a business model used by companies has led to major changes in customer service.

What I’m referring to is, of course, a switch to the subscription model. Before such a model was a thing, companies who made their money off of one-time purchases didn’t have to invest in customer support at all. All they had to do was deliver a working product and lay back in their comfy business chairs.

Now, because customers are more used to purchasing a subscription of a product instead of a product itself, you have to make sure they’ll keep coming month after month or year after year. This oftentimes can’t be done without proper customer support as every product has faults. The only situation in which you could still pull that off would be the one in which you have a monopoly on the market. But in today’s age, it is a rare thing.

Here, we can notice that customer service has evolved from something non-existing or barely existing to an important part of the business. With the current trend of subscription models that will continue to develop during the next years, the importance of customer service will rise as well. The matter of how well you treat your customers after they make a purchase will determine how likely they are to stay with your brand and make a payment after the next 30 days.

This can also lead to another, more general conclusion.

Namely, the one that states that customer service trends and changes are directly correlated to business model changes. And that the business model that is majorly adopted by the companies will drive current changes within
the field of customer service.

Also, with this change, the process of sales became more customer-oriented as your business can’t focus on sales alone. It also has to provide a good service.
It Must Be a Focal Point

Another change that happened in the customer service field over the last couple of years is the fact that customer service is no longer treated as an ‘unwanted must’ but gets a central point in business.

As Shep Hyken explains, the first thing you have to focus on is the product. Then, you have to make customer service a focal point. Customer Service is not, as some claim, a complete priority, meaning that it should come before the product. Your main offer will always be a product, service, piece of software, etc.

Customer service, on the other hand, should be an integral part of that offer, not the offer itself. Nowadays, companies that value their customers realize that customer service must be one of their priorities and that they can’t compromise on its importance as it used to happen a few years back. The importance of customer service has changed a lot. The further we go back, the bigger change we will see.

This is linked to the awareness of customers who are used to great experiences provided by the top-notch companies. Such companies have raised the bar so high that your current and future customers will simply compare what they get from you to the experience they received somewhere else. Sadly for you, as Shep Hyken said:

"Your customers no longer compare you to your competitor. They compare you to the best service they ever had, from anyone."

It highlights how important it is to make customer service a focal point no matter what niche, industry or audience you serve.
The average customer gets more demanding and, what's important, he expects a great experience provided by your company besides the core product.

This means that the service he gets - before and after the purchase - is as important as the thing he purchases.

Making customer service a focal point will help you properly align your efforts and win lifetime customers who, right now, expect customer service to be top-notch.
Another difference between the current shape of customer service and the one we could experience a few years ago is the change linked to how companies treat their customers in general.

Namely: the job of a customer support rep is to help a customer make the most out of the product.

While this role was mostly assigned to marketers and salespeople, the shift in how customers communicate with companies led to the major changes in that aspect as well.

In the past, the job of the customer support rep was to provide help and get rid of the customer as soon as possible. The efficiency was the most important metric and the shorter you spent talking to a customer the better your grade would be.

Now, the job of a customer service rep is also about nourishing the customer.

That’s because companies look for the most optimal ways to explain to the customer that their product offers more value than the company X, Y, and Z.

Guiding a customer through different parts of your product is hard and thus using customer service as an additional way to do so seems very reasonable.

That’s because your customer service reps may have more contact with your clients that anyone else on your team. Therefore, they have a chance of showing the actual value behind the product and making them more immersed with it.
In the age of constant competition, even the slightest edge that you can get is worth the effort. And sometimes your customers may switch to another brand not because your product is of poor quality or lacks necessary features but because they didn’t explore any of those.

Another important change in regards to customer service is tied to one of the trends described in the book. Namely, customer service switches to a more proactive approach as opposed to the fully reactive one performed by companies over the course of last years.

Customers expect ready-to-use solutions when it comes to fixing their problems and companies strive to come up with a way to treat various issues even before the customer stumbles upon them.

Here, we can see a big change regarding the type of resources that customer service creates, as well as, the change in methodology that claims a company should be the first entity that makes a move, not the customer.

 Customers’ expectations have changed in the last 5 years. Before, reaching out for help meant not hearing back for ages and having a potentially long, cumbersome experience with a support agent. Now, customers can message businesses like they would message their friends on social media. Customers expect quality and efficient support experiences and failing to meet these expectations can mean substantial losses to the business.

— Susana Cigano
MANAGER OF SUPPORT AT Loom →
Customer Service Is No Longer a ‘Thing To Have’ But a Thing To Win

You’ve heard it many times throughout this Ebook but another significant change regarding customer service is the fact that companies stopped treating it like a must and rather perceive it as their way to win.

A few pages above you’ve read that more and more businesses realize how important customer service is and that it should be their focal point.

We can go even deeper into that topic as customer service becomes more of a thing to win the customer than ever before.

That’s actually a huge change to what we’ve experienced before. This indicates a change from a must-have that no one really wants to a viable way to gain customers.

As we’ve mentioned before, customer service can be a differentiator that helps customers make decisions in a field of many similar companies that serve the same audience.

Experts predict that these companies who realize how big of a thing customer service has become over the last couple of years will strive in the future. It shows that good customer service won’t be solely a differentiator between brands but also the driver of success and an indirect contributor to how a business prospers.

As Oracle’s report ‘One Size Doesn’t Fit All’ indicates, the customer is willing to pay more for great experiences. This includes the service they get before and after the purchase.

And although your customer support itself will never be a profit creator, its contribution to how well your company will do is clear and indisputable.
In my experience, the last 5 years have been a “coming of age” moment for customer experience and customer service. 5-10 years ago, service was important (it never hasn’t been, of course) but the long run of economic expansion and rise of competition means service and the word-of-mouth it generates has become the key differentiator here in 2020, at the end of this economic cycle. As a result, technology, tools, and process have come a long way. Foremost among these is the application of AI/ML in rote customer service work -- expect that as a trend to continue. Probably secondly as important is data organization and warehousing in customer data platforms (CDPs), integration platforms as a service (iPaaS), and any other tool that makes data collection, warehousing, and implementation more successful.

As we look forward to the next 5 years and a likely global economic contraction, the firms that weather the storm best will be the same ones that are winning now on service. Not everyone will survive, and they’ll be consolidation as valuations come down. But firms who’ve built durable, happy customers will weather the storm the best, retaining and managing those long-standing customer relationships through the recession. The strongest relationships will win, and the next 5 years will be the story of “the best customer experience companies of the 2010’s expansion became the most durable brands of the 2020’s contraction.”

— Michael Redbord
CUSTOMER SUPPORT EXPERT AT redbord.com
Thanks for reading!

We hope you’ve enjoyed our Customer Service Trends 2020 Ebook.

If you’re looking for a reliable calling solution for your customer service check out CrazyCall. We strive to provide the best software we can and to prove that we use no other software than ours to handle all the calls going in and out of our company.
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Images

Besides headshots provided by authors of the quotes, all illustrations were made by our Graphic Designer Anastasia Solina.

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Jakub Kliszczak is a Marketing Specialist at CrazyCall. His role is to spread the word about CrazyCall in every corner of the Internet and share valuable information with our audience. He is passionate about growth hacking which can be seen in many of his pieces. While he is not working on CrazyCall’s marketing efforts he enjoys a good game of football and time spent on reading.