RingCentral

An introduction to AI in customer service

The AI challenges and opportunities to consider as you prepare your organization to create customer experiences that give you an edge and set you apart.

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The time is now to look at adopting AI

Top companies are looking to use artificial intelligence (AI) to better understand, predict, and meet the needs of their customers and make their operations more efficient. Businesses that move fast to integrate AI into their customer experience (CX) can create a competitive advantage, driving significant improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of their customer service delivery.

This eBook explores AI's impact within the customer service industry and examines the challenges and potential that AI adoption creates. It also outlines key steps for integrating AI into your CX strategies to help you maximize the impact of your AI investment.

$7 trillion

Goldman Sachs estimates GenAI has the potential to improve productivity growth by 1.5% and raise the global GDP by 7%, the equivalent of $7 trillion, over the next 10 years[1].

40%

is how much business performance can be boosted according to a joint study by researchers at Harvard Business School, The Wharton Business School, and MIT Sloan School[2].

75%

of top executives believe AI will help their organization grow[3].

26%

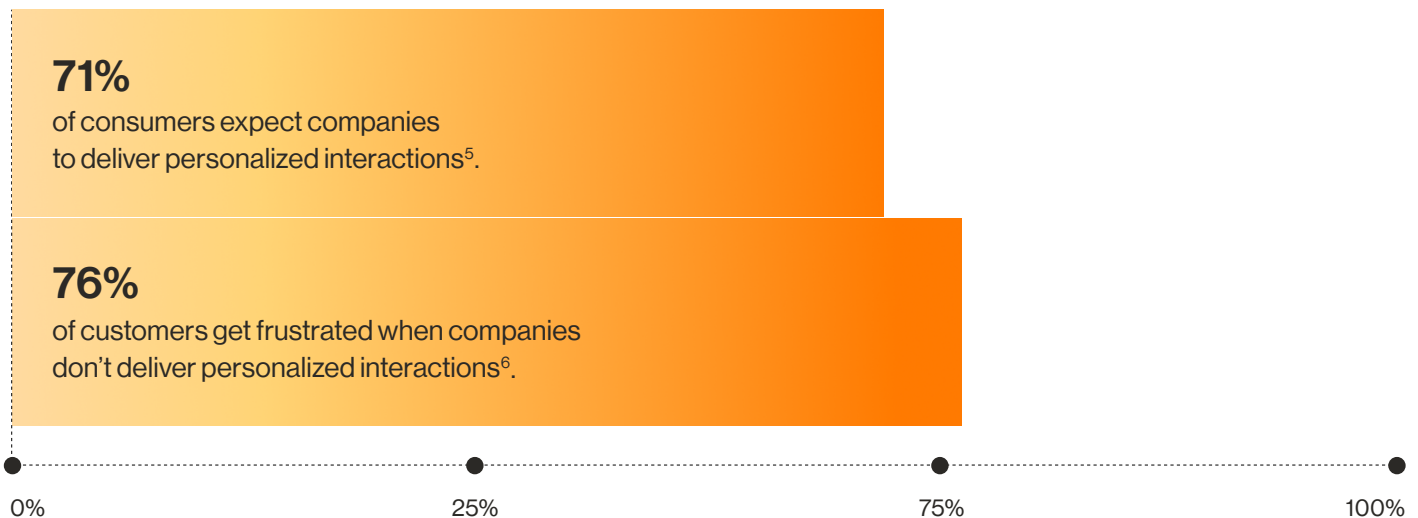is what AI is projected to add to the GDP of local economies by 2030[4].

The potential of AI-powered customer service

AI can be applied to accelerate and improve your customer service operations, increasing your ability to understand what your customers want and tailor experiences to meet those expectations.

Increase personalization

The more you know, the more you can do to personalize your customer experiences. AI can put all your data to work for you to create more satisfying self-service and agent interactions. When integrated with your CRM and other contact center and business applications, AI can further streamline and hyper-personalize those interactions. For instance, AI can recognize and provide information on a customer (e.g., name, account number, interaction history, etc.), so an agent doesn't need to waste time asking for it and can get straight to addressing their specific needs.

In addition, the intelligence enabled by AI into all your interactions across all your channels allows you to monitor and take steps to improve service excellence at a very personal level. For instance, AI can reveal and track customer sentiment, the frequency of key topics and phrases, and other insights at a scale to uncover trends and opportunities for improvement that might otherwise go unidentified.

71%
of consumers expect companies
to deliver personalized interactions[5].

76%
of customers get frustrated when companies
don't deliver personalized interactions[6].

0%   25%   75%   100%

Enable effective self-service

AI can increase your contact center's operational capacity, reducing the load on agents with effective self-service capabilities that make it easy for customers to resolve their issues on their own. Advanced AI-powered intelligent virtual agents using natural language processing (NLP) provide more accurate responses to customer questions and issues.
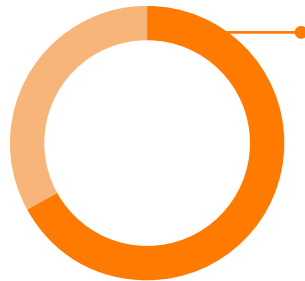
67%

of customers prefer using a form of self-service rather than talking to a customer service representative[7].

Support real-time decision-making

AI enhances the speed and accuracy of decision-making by analyzing hundreds, even thousands, of similar interactions to generate real-time guidance or next steps that optimize first contact resolutions. AI can provide real-time sentiment analysis to help agents and bots meet customers where they are and provide more relevant responses. In addition, supervisors and coaches can monitor interactions in real time and provide coaching, or even step in when necessary, to optimize the customer experience.
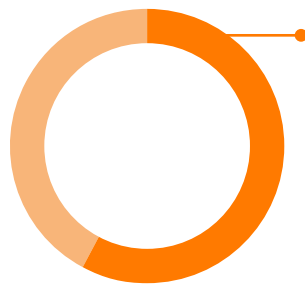
58%

of respondents say they lack the functionality or information required to help even their most capable and empathetic agent from reaching their potential[8].

Generate a positive return on investment

All the contact center operational efficiencies enabled by AI-powered solutions can generate big savings, as well as revenue growth. In addition to increasing customer satisfaction and loyalty with exceptional experiences, which can increase customer lifetime value, AI can automate product recommendations and identify potential upsell or cross-sell opportunities that have the best chance for success.

Current and predicted use of AI in the contact center[8]

Supporting agents with real-time information/suggested answers

16%	84%

Predicting customer behaviour and requirements

20%	68%	12%

Assisting with workforce management and quality monitoring

26%	70%	4%

Replacing IVR processes/intelligent routing

30%	65%	4%

Automated webchat (chatbots)

84%	12%	4%

- ● Yes, use this now
- ● No, but would be useful
- ● No, will not use this

The challenges of AI adoption in customer service

Even with a clear understanding of the critical need for AI, there can be obstacles to its adoption. To ensure success, you may need to take the time to educate different stakeholders within your organization on its benefits and reassure staff that the role of AI is to enhance, not replace their job.

9 out of 10

organizations support using AI to gain a competitive edge over rivals[10].

The time and cost involved in integrating AI into CX can be a common fear among business leaders. However, advanced AI-powered solutions can typically learn the language and context of your organization's documents and interactions pretty quickly to smooth the transition and accelerate the value it brings to your business.

There can also be costs associated with the technology and any training it may require, but those are often quickly offset by AI's productivity and efficiency gains. For instance, AI can automate tedious, manual tasks and improve support and self-service functionality to offload agents and allow them to focus on higher value work. Ultimately, this can reduce agent burnout, increase satisfaction, lower turnover, and generate better overall service.

In addition, the right partner can set you up for success and address any potential AI adoption challenges you encounter. Look for vendors that can provide the tools and support you need to successfully implement the AI-powered solutions to reach your desired outcomes.

80%

reported improvement in productivity from staff currently using AI[11].

#3

reason why contact center staff leave their call center job is repetitive work[12], which is something AI-powered automation can tackle.

20%

increase in first contact resolutions with AI, reducing the load on agents[13].

How to start integrating AI into your CX operations

To jumpstart your AI CX integration, you can follow these steps for success:

1. Align with business goals

Consider how you will use AI to move your business forward. More specifically, determine the key pain points you want to address and then define what success will look like and mean for your customer experience.

2. Define your roadmap

Break the integration process down into manageable phases. In some cases, you may find your AI technology vendor can easily handle the integration with minimal help from your team. Even if your integration requires a more hands-on approach, working with the right technology partner will help set expectations and milestones.

### 3. Ensure organizational readiness

Identify and get buy in from all relevant stakeholders and develop a preemptive strategy to address any resistance or concerns you anticipate encountering. Identify "cheerleaders" among your staff who will champion the use of AI and collaborate to ensure a smooth implementation.

4. Start small

In the beginning, to build confidence in your AI initiative, choose low-risk areas within your customer service operations. For instance, you may deploy AI chatbots to handle routine inquiries, which is low-risk, but can yield rich results that will encourage your team to move forward with more ambitious AI projects.

5. Measure success

You cannot manage or improve what you cannot measure, so make sure to choose key performance indicators you can use to identify and demonstrate success. These can be metrics, such as customer satisfaction (CSAT) scores, cost savings, response times, agent efficiency gains, first contact resolution rates, and others that provide insights into AI's impact on customer interactions.
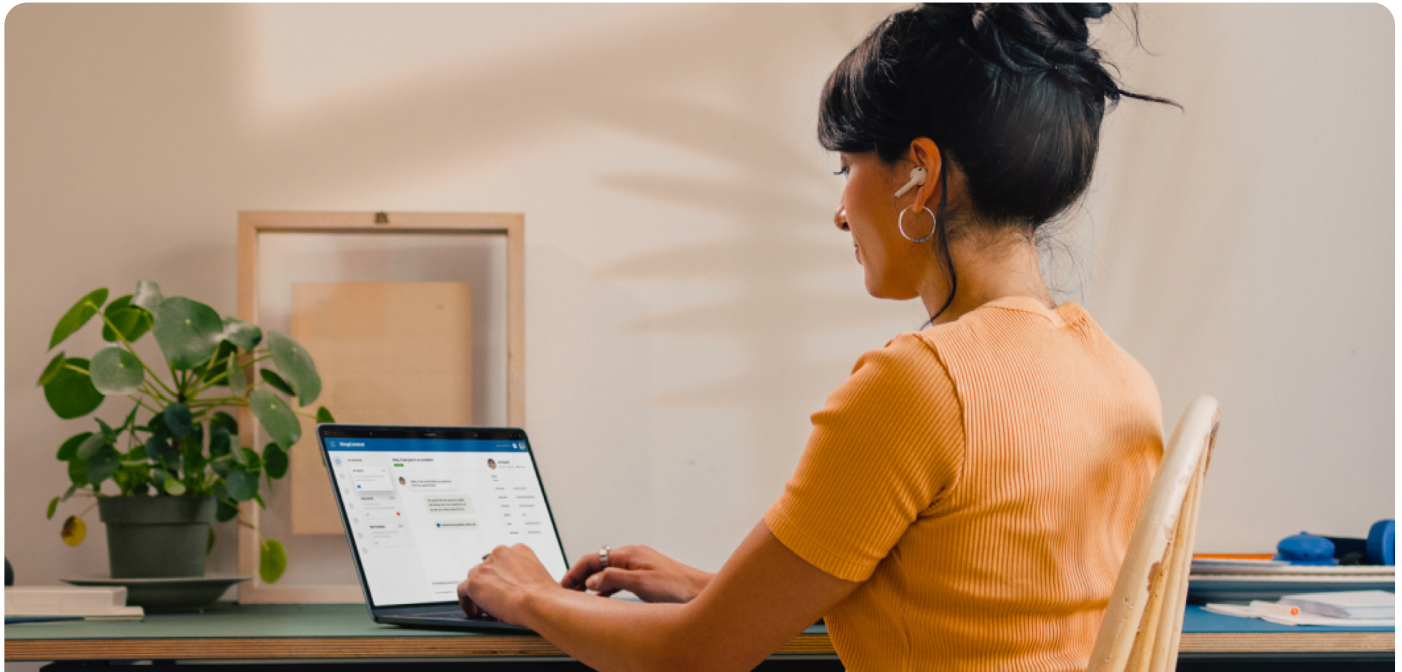
6. Gather feedback and iterate

Once you have integrated AI into your CX operations, query customers and agents about their experiences with AI. Identify areas for improvement and iterate on the technology based on real insights and learnings from your pilot program. Optimize the performance of your AI solution over time by continuing to monitor and adjust your strategies based on insights.

The right AI-powered CX solution can make all the difference

The right AI-powered solution can enable your contact center to deliver:

24/7 support

AI-enabled intelligent virtual agents can provide responses and support around the clock to ensure your customers have an open line of communication with your business no matter when or where they try to contact you.

Proactive problem-solving

Because AI can detect patterns in customer inquiries and behaviors, it can often accurately predict future customer behaviors and identify problems before they escalate. By enabling a proactive approach to CX, AI minimizes the risk of customer dissatisfaction and churn.

An improved agent experience

By providing agents with actionable insights at their fingertips and automating repetitive tasks, AI frees agents to work on value-added activities that promote agent engagement and satisfaction, which, in turn, increases agent retention.

Adrian Cruz

	15:28	80%
SENTIMENT		Positive
ENERGY		96.9
LONGEST MONOLOGUE		1 Min
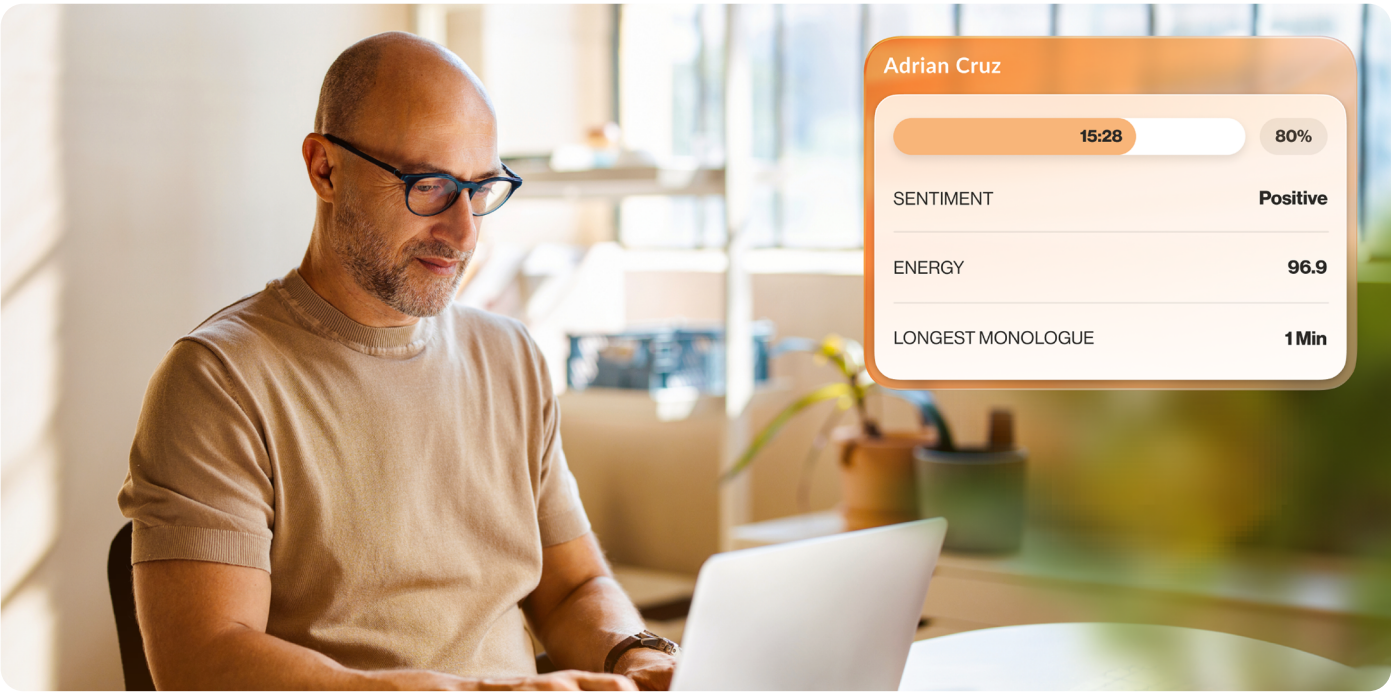
Hyper-personalization at scale

AI can sort through high customer data volumes to understand past customer interactions and even predict future behaviors. By serving up customer insights with unprecedented breadth and depth in a fraction of the time it would take humans to access that information, AI can be a powerful time-saver for real-time customer support.

Cost savings and operational efficiencies

AI-powered CX solutions give you the agility you need to meet budget constraints without impacting service quality. You can use automation to drive increases in productivity and efficiency that help you make the most of your agents. You can easily scale to handle increased demand during peak times without triggering a need to hire more or strain staff.

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7. Research by Nuance Enterprise, "Searching for Self-Service," May 17, 2023, https://www.zendesk.co.uk/blog/searching-for-self-service/#georedirect

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13. "The State of AI in 2023: Generative AI's Breakout Year," McKinsey & Company, August 2023.

About RingCentral

RingCentral Inc. (NYSE: RNG) is a leading provider of AI-driven cloud business communications, contact center, video and hybrid event solutions. RingCentral empowers businesses with conversation intelligence, and unlocks rich customer and employee interactions to provide insights and improved business outcomes. With decades of expertise in reliable and secure cloud communications, RingCentral has earned the trust of millions of customers and thousands of partners worldwide. RingCentral is headquartered in Belmont, California, and has offices around the world.

For more information, please contact a sales representative. Visit ringcentral.com or call 855-774-2510.