

Knowledge Management and AI: Rx for better CX and AX!

Customers speak out

The best way to get started with fixing customer experience (CX) is to hear about issues from the “horse’s mouth,” namely, the customer. With our sponsorship, Forrester Consulting asked 5000 consumers, “What created the biggest pain when you contacted a business for customer service?” The lack of and inconsistency in agent knowledge turned out to be the biggest culprit, followed by the difficulty of finding relevant answers on company websites. The survey also revealed that younger consumers are far less forgiving of unknowledgeable agents.

TOP CONSUMER PAIN POINTS	MILLENNIALS/GEN Z	OLDER BOOMERS
Agents don't know the answer	40%	24%
Different answers from different folks / systems	48%	33%
Can't find answer on website	31%	28%
Other	9%	32%

Note: Respondents could pick up to two pain points.

Agents speak out

We followed the “chain of pain,” and in a first-of-its-kind [survey](#), focused on agent experience (AX). We asked agents what their biggest hurdles were while delivering customer service. Not so surprisingly, their struggles virtually mirrored those of consumers!

- ▶ Finding the right answers to customer questions: 26%
- ▶ Different systems/information sources give different answers: 25%
- ▶ Hopping from one application/window to another: 20%
- ▶ Hard to keep up with all the new information/changes I need to know about: 14%

Knowledge for customer service, a challenge and an opportunity

Why has knowledge rapidly become an imperative for CX (customer experience) and AX (agent experience)? One can attribute it to the following forces:

- ▶ The digital customer is demanding self-service and insisting that self-service systems get smarter.
- ▶ As self-service systems get smarter, only complex questions and problems are presented to agents.

- ▶ Business' information is constantly changing today, whether it is about products and services that the business offers, compliance requirements, or process changes. The information overload and flux make life challenging for the contact center and customer service organization.
- ▶ Knowledge retention and consumption style of next-gen agents have completely changed. Today's millennial and Gen Z agents do not like to keep knowledge in their heads. They would rather "look it up" for answers or get guided to them, similar to the way their automobile GPS guides them to a destination—all at the push of a button!

However, contact centers often have legacy tools that leave agents with the dreaded "no results found" message or hundreds of hits that the agent has to contend with—all while the customer is waiting impatiently on the line. Worse, these tools are primarily search-oriented. They lack process knowhow which is critical to handling complex queries that today's agents need to handle.

Here is the good news: Modern knowledge management (KM) systems, infused with Artificial Intelligence (AI), can address these issues all at once! Take for instance, "click-to-solve"™ problem resolution. eGain has a "Solve" button that bootstraps contextual knowledge and AI-enabled process guidance relevant to the service query, directly from the agent desktop. What's more, agents can use click-to-ask™ to collaborate internally with peers, subject matter experts, and supervisors, and through click-to-suggest™ buttons, suggest new content for the knowledge base.

Knowledge, infused with AI, transforms CX and AX

If there is a killer use for KM and AI in the enterprise, it is in the contact center. Our Global 1000 clients have taken customer experience and contact center performance to whole new levels with AI-infused knowledge. Here are some transformational examples:

- ▶ **GLOBAL BANK** reduced call handle time by 67% and agent training time by 50%, while its subsidiary vaulted to the #1 position in customer experience in its market
- ▶ **GLOBAL MEDIA AND LEGAL SERVICES COMPANY** deflected up to 70% of its calls, while making go-no-go decisions on high-profile litigation services projects
- ▶ **NORTH AMERICAN TELECOM** reduced average handle time by 17% and incoming calls by 19% by using knowledge-guided customer self-service
- ▶ **US BRANDED MANUFACTURER** improved service quality by 33%
- ▶ **EUROPEAN TELECOM** reduced unwarranted handset returns and exchanges by 38% through better problem resolution in the contact center, while enhancing agent experience by 90%

Rx for better CX and AX

Here are proven prescriptions for both customer and agent pain points.

PROBLEM: INCONSISTENCY OF ANSWERS

- ▶ Rx: Implementing an omnichannel knowledge management platform rather than relying on channel-specific knowledge silos helps increase the consistency of answers. It also makes it easier to maintain the knowledge base.

PROBLEM: LACK OF KNOWLEDGE

- ▶ Rx: True knowledge is more than content. It leverages AI to understand customer intent (including natural language processing) and guide users to answers and through customer interactions and processes. This guidance is based on an expert understanding of what has worked in the past and therefore might work at the point of interaction. AI knowledge can, in fact, enable all agents to take all calls—it can make all agents as good as the best, and make the best agents even better.

PROBLEM: INEFFECTIVE SELF-SERVICE

- ▶ Rx: Just like assisted service, customer self-service can only be effective when it has knowledge and AI behind it. It is also important that self-service knowledge be consistent with agent knowledge. An omnichannel platform approach to customer engagement, knowledge management, and AI will ensure this consistency, while allowing seamless, context-aware transition from self-service to agent-assisted service. Moreover, an omnichannel agent desktop will minimize, if not eliminate, the need for agents to keep hopping across applications during customer interactions.

More Rx

Finally, measure to manage. It's equally important that your knowledge and AI solution includes comprehensive analytics to identify knowledge gaps and address them on an ongoing basis. Also make sure to select a solution provider with a proven track record in the domain, who can bring you the best in technology **and** domain expertise. And when you make the business case for knowledge and AI investments, take a holistic approach to ROI. For example, knowledge and AI add value beyond core contact center metrics—they can even help reduce unwarranted product returns, product exchanges, and field service, while enhancing regulatory compliance. So, what are you waiting for? Gain the experience edge with AI-infused *knowledge!*

About eGain

eGain customer engagement solutions power digital transformation for leading brands. Our [top-rated cloud applications](#) for social, mobile, web, and contact centers help clients deliver connected customer journeys in an omnichannel world. To find out more about eGain, visit <https://www.egain.com/>.