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First Edition

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE (CX) TRENDS

CUSTOMER SERVICE INSIGHTS IN THE GEN AI ERA



What you'll learn in this report



6,400

customers, customer service agents, and customer experience leaders

9

countries and regions around the world

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For this first edition of the Customer Experience Trends report, ServiceNow commissioned a survey of nearly 6,400 customers, agents, and leaders across more than nine countries and regions and more than a dozen industries. We wanted to learn about perceptions on the state of customer service.

Based on feedback gathered in the survey, this report presents insights about:

- Impact of customer experience on brand loyalty
- Top expectations and desires of customers and agents
- Biggest challenges leaders face
- Role of AI, including generative AI, in customer service—now and in the future

About the survey

Data in this report was gathered in a survey of 4,242 B2B and B2C customers and 2,157 leaders and agents from July 12 to August 8, 2023.[1] Respondents varied across industry, age, role, and job title and were located in Australia, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, the Nordic region, the UK, and the U.S.

For more detailed responses by country, as well as specific demographics of survey respondents, see the **About the survey** section starting on page 40.

[1] Not all percentage totals in this report equal 100% due to respondents' ability to choose multiple answers on some questions.

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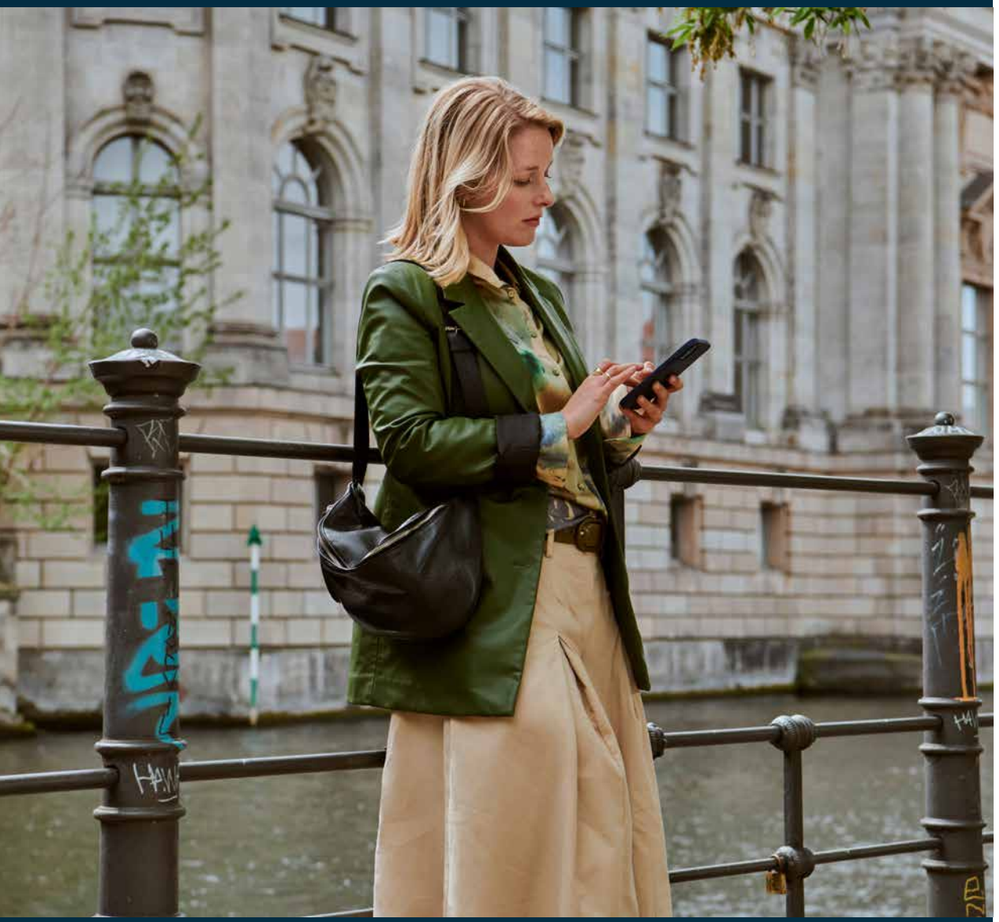
GLOSSARY:

Survey terms to know



Customer experience

Customer experience (CX) is every interaction a customer has with your organization as they navigate touch points throughout their journey and engage with your products or services.

Customer service

Customer service is a critical component of the whole customer experience. It includes direct customer touch points during purchase, use, or support of a product or service.

Customers

Survey respondents who identified as business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) customers across multiple industries, ages, roles, and job titles. Status as a ServiceNow customer was not a demographic question or a criterion for selection to participate in the survey.

Customer experience leaders

Survey respondents responsible for management and decision-making for the customer service environment and overall customer experience in their organizations: senior management (C-suite), high-level executives (VPs), or mid-level executives (directors).

Customer service agents

Survey respondents in roles with front-line activities that address customer needs (representatives).

Generative AI

Generative AI (GenAI) is a type of artificial intelligence (AI) that produces content by learning from existing data. It provides realistic and creative text, images, and other media that can be used to transform industries.

Workforce optimization

Workforce optimization applies data analytics strategies to enhance both employee and operational effectiveness by unifying business systems and processes.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Stellar customer service is more important than ever

No matter how good your product or service, the quality of your overall customer experience is what can make or break your bottom line. A single bad service encounter can undermine even the best-designed solution, while a positive encounter can set your company apart and help you win new business.

Although organizations are making progress toward delivering better customer service experiences by investing in people, processes, and technology, the ServiceNow Customer Experience (CX) Trends Survey shows there's still significant room for improvement.



Customer Service Snapshot

69%

of customers say they're likely to switch brands based on a poor customer service experience

84%

of customers say they're likely to recommend a brand based on great customer service

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INTRODUCTION:

5 revelations about today's customer service experience

1. Customers feel disconnected and discontented

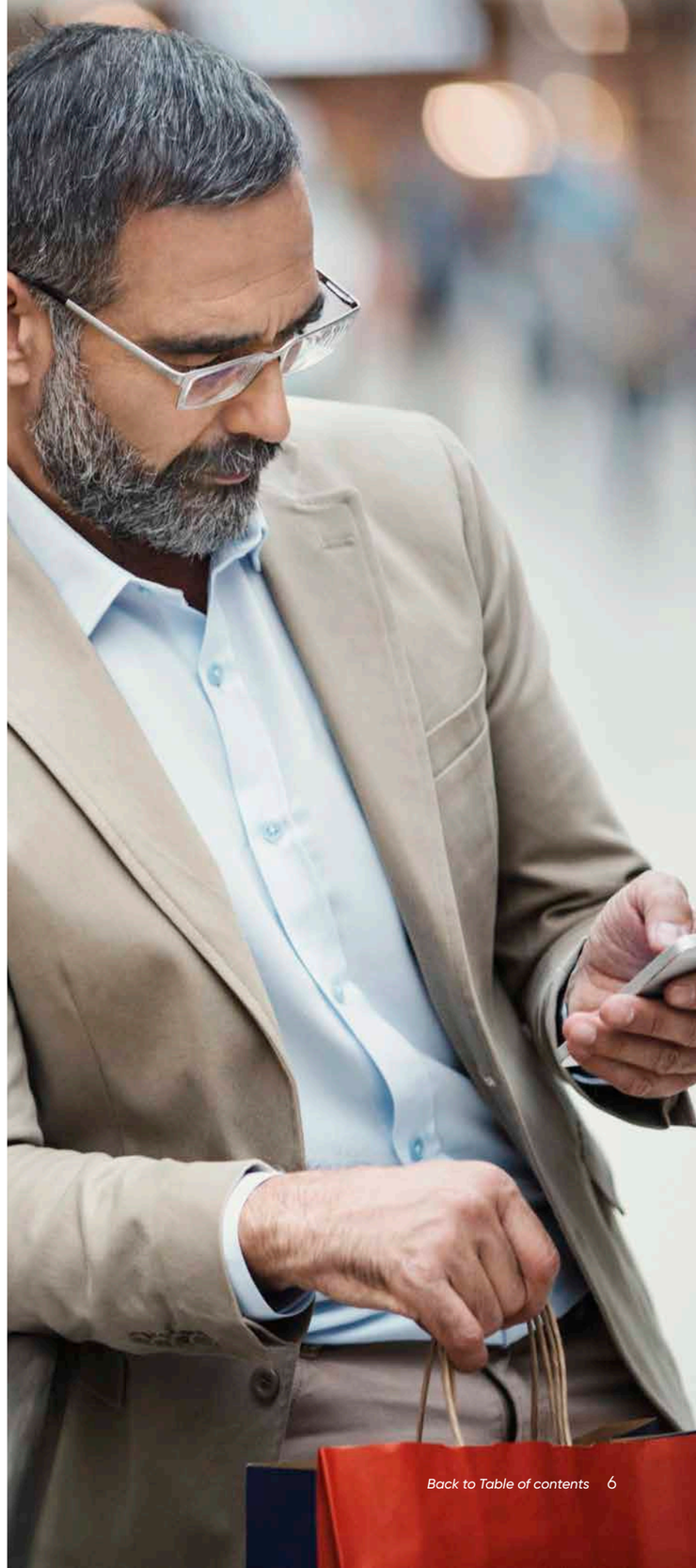
Customer expectations for great service experiences have only increased, which means getting it right has never been more important. While customers are often presented with a multitude of options to resolve an issue themselves, sometimes what they really want—or need—is a live human connection. But in an era when resources are thin and budgets are tight, reaching a live agent is an issue in and of itself.

44% of customers say their biggest issue is the inability to reach a live customer service agent quickly and efficiently

2. Customer service agents are overburdened

Despite investments in self-service, chatbots, and other customer engagement capabilities, live agents are still the backbone of customer service—and their job has never been harder. Complexity persists across the front, middle, and back offices, and agents continue to be the glue that holds these disparate areas together.

44% of agents say their biggest challenges are difficulty communicating with other departments and delays resolving customer issues



3. Customer experience leaders are under pressure

Today's leaders are urged to deliver great customer experiences while reducing costs. This is no small undertaking when they're also balancing the competing demands of customer requests, agent needs, and bottom-line business requirements. While most organizations have deployed workforce optimization and integrated with systems of record, leaders acknowledge that their agents continue to carry a heavy burden and, in fact, now tackle more cases rather than fewer.

23% of leaders indicated a lack of resources/capacity is their biggest challenge as they struggle to address the increased volume of cases

4. AI and GenAI are delivering real value in customer service

Given the lack of resources, capacity, and agent availability, customer experience leaders have increasingly turned to AI, and now to generative AI, as vital capabilities for improving all facets of the customer service process. Leaders say AI is the No. 1 capability for reducing costs, case volume, and resolution time. And their AI investments—in chatbots, sentiment analysis, recommended knowledge articles, and more—are paying off.

27% of leaders say AI is the capability providing the greatest reduction in customer effort

5. Next steps in the future of customer experience

Customer expectations have already risen to new heights in the past three years, and leaders predict they will go even higher over the next three. Customers will demand faster resolutions, higher quality of service across channels, and improved ability to resolve issues on first contact. As leaders plan and build new capabilities, they are seeking the advantages that system intelligence and automation can provide, such as increased service efficiency and quality with an eye toward agent performance.

78% of leaders view workforce optimization as the most important capability to deploy in the next three years



KEY FINDING 1:

Customers feel disconnected and discontented

Do you want good service or fast service? It's the classic question. For today's customers, the answer is "yes" to both. While surveyed customers report being frustrated with the inability to get quick, complete resolution from a human agent, they also indicate they're resistant to self-service and help from a virtual agent.

The responses clearly show that even though organizations are investing in technologies that empower customers to self-serve, there's nothing like the human touch for resolving customer service requests. This is especially true for requests that are technical, complex, or require coordination across departments for satisfactory resolution.



Customer Viewpoint

What makes the best service experience?

"A live agent who was able to quickly understand the problem, see my history on his screen, and immediately resolve the issue for me...I didn't have to switch to multiple people or answer a lot of questions repeatedly—just straight to the point and quickly resolved."

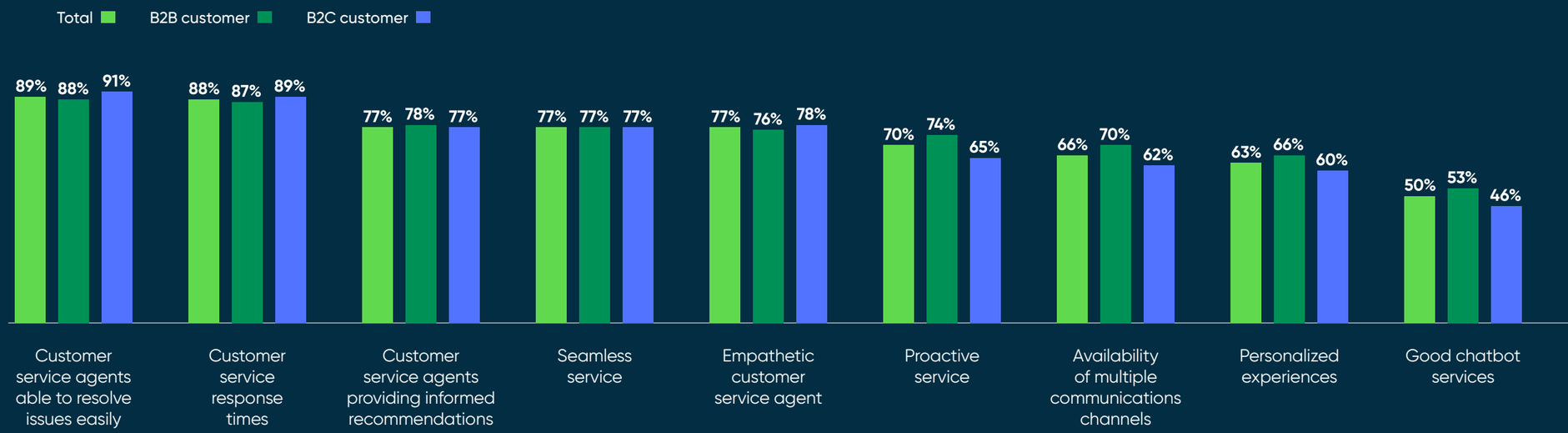
– B2C Customer, United States

3 characteristics of a great service experience

In a world of increased expectations, limited time, waning patience, and easy access to volumes of information, surveyed customers have clear opinions on what matters most in their service experiences: speed, efficiency, and empathy. Both B2B and B2C customers want service reps who can resolve their problems quickly, seamlessly, and sincerely, offering knowledgeable recommendations along the way. This is no small feat for today's already overloaded agents.

However, there are some notable differences between B2B and B2C buyers. B2B buyers see greater value in proactive service, multiple communication channels, and personalized experiences. Yet both groups indicate that good chatbot services are least important to them—despite organizations' hope that their investments in virtual agents will improve experiences.

Most important aspects of a customer service experience





4 frustrations that derail service experiences

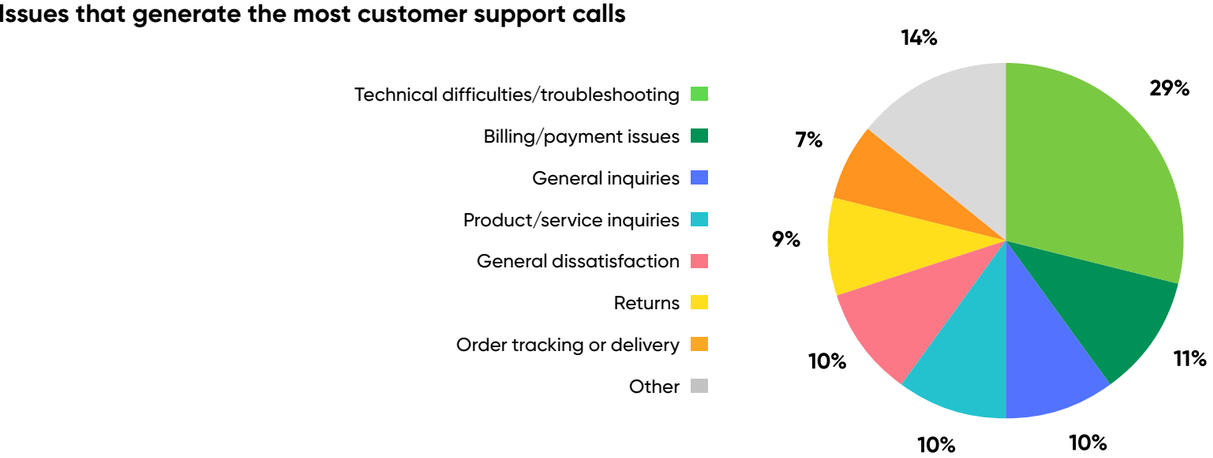
Customers value fast resolutions that don't require a lot of effort. So it's not surprising that their biggest service complaints are not being able to reach a live agent, repeatedly being punted from one department to the next, and needing to contact support multiple times to get an issue resolved. Customers also resent being forced to go through a chatbot that doesn't comprehend the problem.

The exasperation level over not being able to reach a live agent is markedly higher among B2C than B2B customers—by a full 10%. This is presumably because B2B customers are more likely to have a dedicated account contact, whereas B2C customers go into the general queue with longer wait times. B2C customers are also slightly more likely to feel that chatbots don't understand their request.

The most common customer service frustrations



Issues that generate the most customer support calls



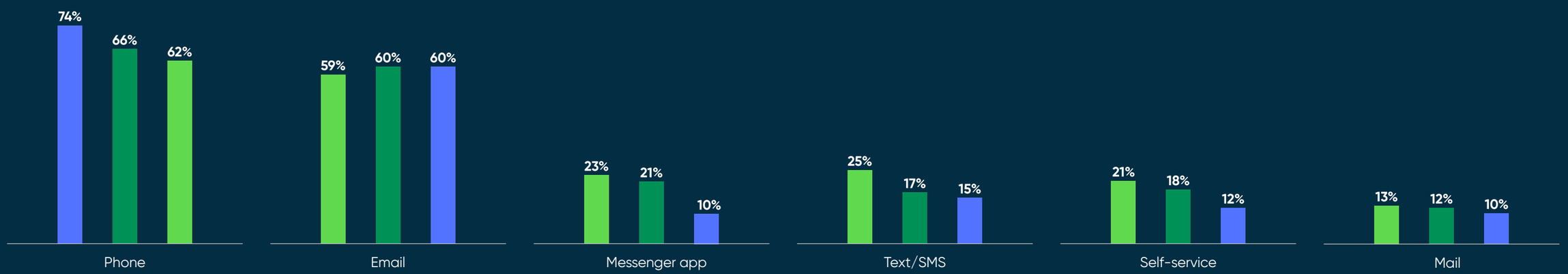
Customers prefer hands-on communication

Although there are more ways than ever to contact customer service, most customers still reach for the keypad or keyboard to make requests. The phone followed by email are the favored methods across all age groups to connect to customer support.

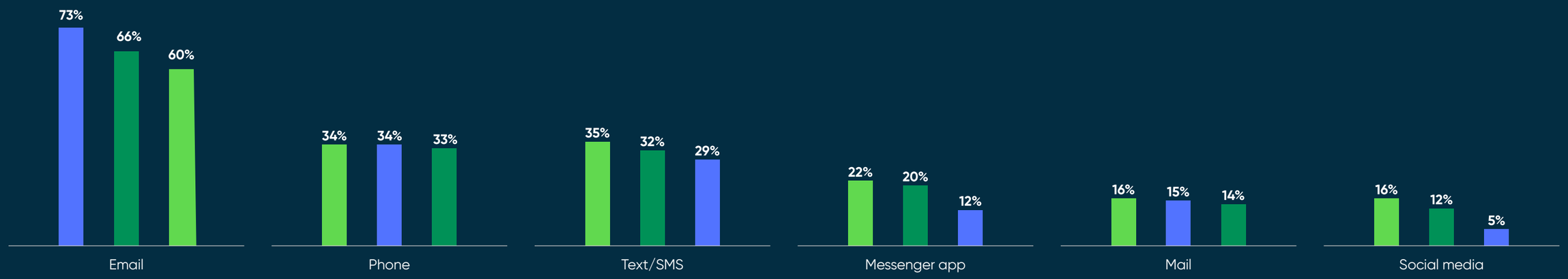
Yet it's worth noting that younger generations are more likely to also consider modern channels such as messaging applications, text messaging/SMS, and self-service. In fact, the 18-to-34 age group prefers self-service at nearly twice the rate of respondents 55 and older.

When it comes to proactive alerts or notifications, preferences flip: All age groups are more comfortable receiving emails rather than phone calls. Notably, text messaging/SMS is highly preferred for this category of contact, indicating an interest in timely as well as asynchronous communication.

Preferred channels for reaching out to customer support by age group



Preferred channels for receiving customer service notifications and alerts by age group



Customers generally find chatbots underwhelming

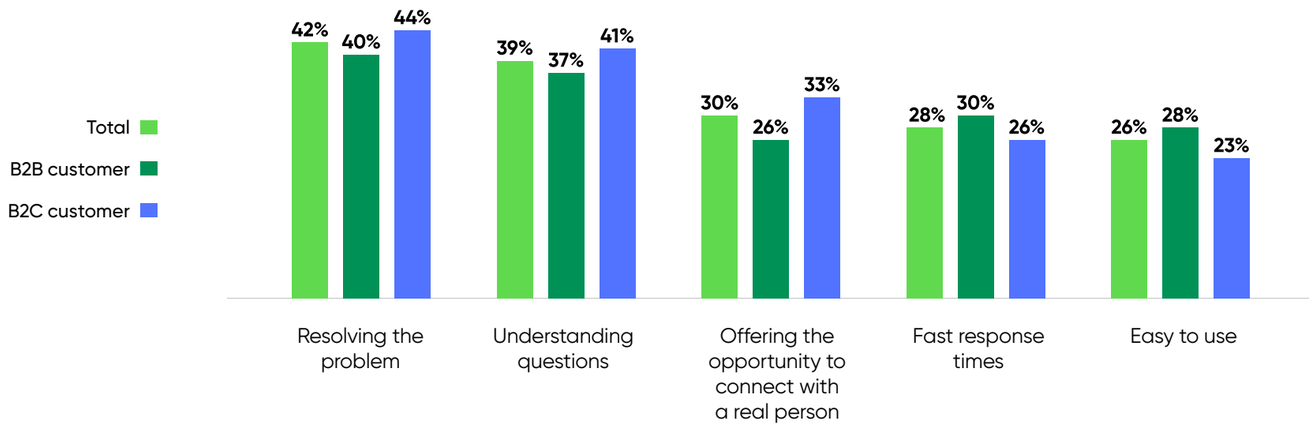
Organizations have invested heavily in making chatbots and virtual agents available through web, mobile, and messaging apps in the hope of increasing self-service, reducing case volume, and gathering enough information from customers to triage calls to the most helpful live agent. But the results have been lukewarm at best.

While B2B and B2C customers agree on the most important chatbot capabilities overall, B2B customers place higher value on a chatbot's ability to connect them with a live agent. B2C customers put more emphasis on fast response time and ease of use.

Even though virtual agents can help with quicker resolution or getting to the right agent faster, most customers say they're not huge fans. Customers prefer live agents over chatbots, fail to recognize the full picture of chatbots' value, and aren't seeing much improvement in chatbot capabilities over time. Much work is needed to improve chatbot performance, and recent advances leveraging generative AI hold promise to do just that in the not-so-distant future.



Most important chatbot capabilities according to customers



Chatbot Snapshot

69%

of B2B and B2C customers prefer live agents over chatbots

50%

say good chatbot services are important

37%

say chatbots are getting better



Takeaways

To meet customers' rising expectations for easy, fast, and knowledgeable service—delivered by live agents, not chatbots—organizations should consider how to:

- Empower agents with real-time information and business intelligence so they can solve cases quickly and with empathy.
- Enable self-service options in addition to chatbots to shorten time to resolution, especially for technical support needs.

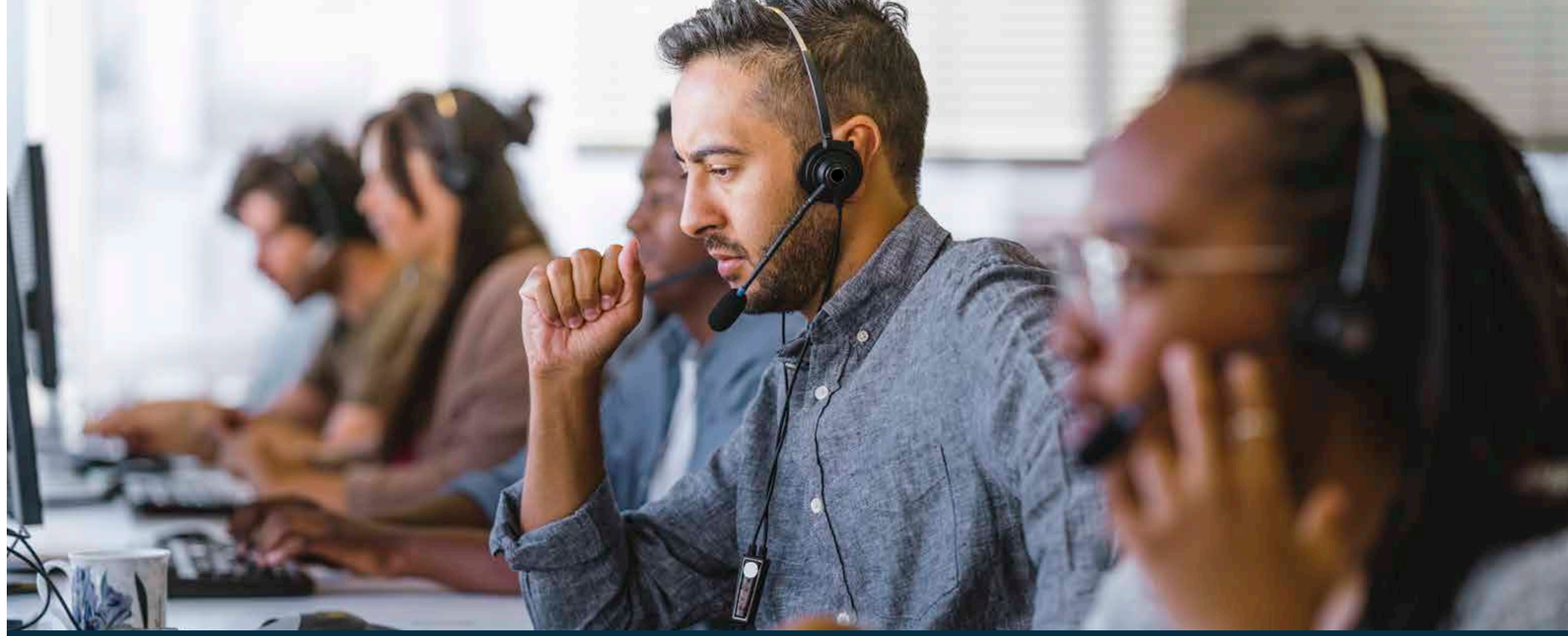
At the same time, as organizations evaluate and evolve their chatbot strategy, they should focus on issue resolution and question comprehension—a potential role for generative AI—to improve the value of chatbots.

KEY FINDING 2:

Customer service agents are overburdened

Agents remain the cornerstone of customer service. But despite investments in self-service, chatbots, and other customer engagement capabilities, live agents' jobs have never been harder. Not only do customers often prefer connecting with a live agent, but their expectations for great service experiences have never been higher.

At the same time, complexity in the front, middle, and back offices requires agents to work across and link these areas, and it's not an easy role to play. Equipping agents with the processes and tools to reduce customer effort and increase customer satisfaction is vital.



Agent Viewpoint

What's your biggest challenge in resolving customer issues?

"Communication difficulties between the different company departments."

– Customer Service Agent, Italy

"Having to go to higher departments and wait on them to approve or fix the issue."

– Customer Service Agent, United States

"Customer frustrations often boil over, and we must remain helpful whilst being verbally abused."

– Customer Service Agent, United Kingdom

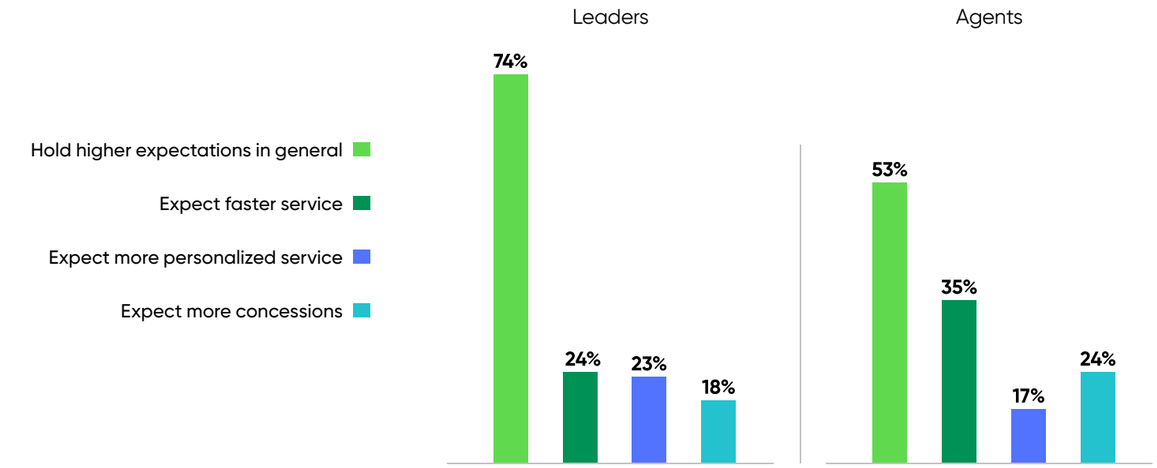


Customer expectations soar to new levels

Agents and customer experience leaders agree that customer expectations for service experiences have only increased over the past three years. Customers want faster, more personalized service and more concessions to satisfy the issues they have encountered. And for the most part, these demands fall on the shoulders of the customer service agents working the front line of support.

Agents say they struggle with customers who hold overpromised expectations by the company or wider community and become upset when their request cannot be resolved quickly—or at all.

How customer expectations have changed in the past three years



Agent Challenge

> "Finding a solution that is satisfying to a customer without compromising a store's rules of conduct is [difficult]."

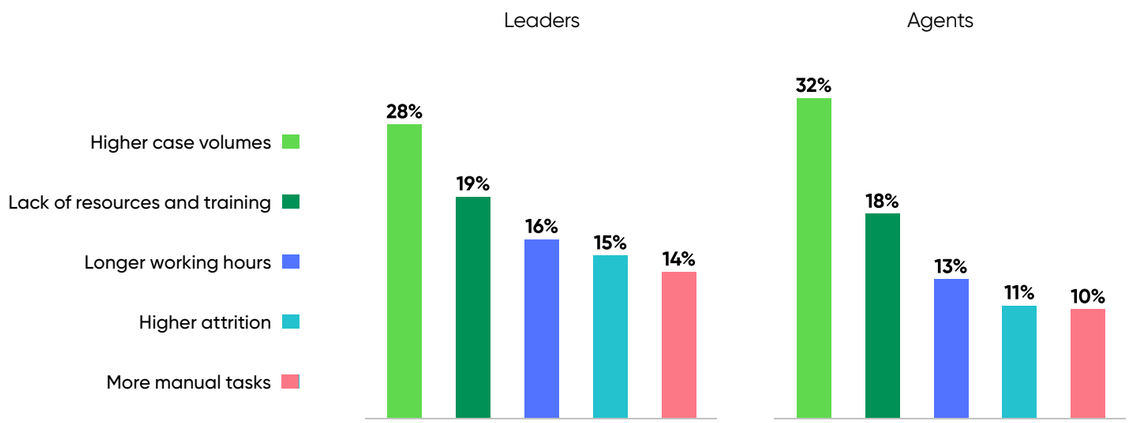
– Customer Service Agent, United States

The agent's job has become harder

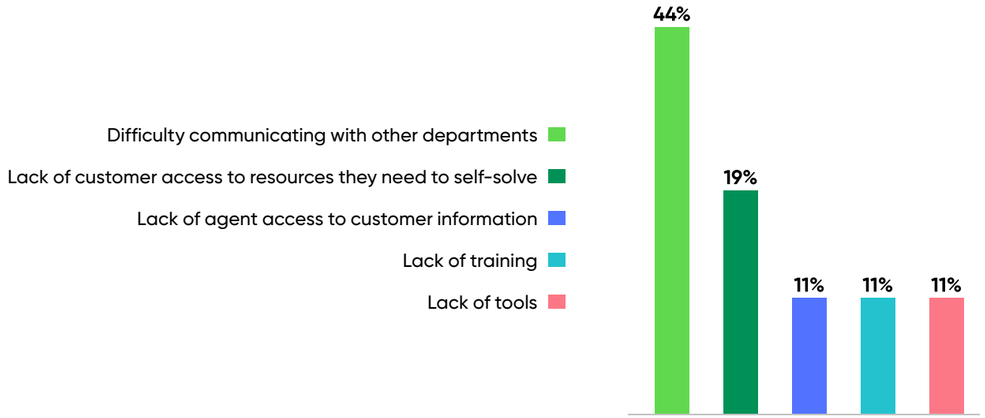
With challenges ranging from a lack of effective self-service tools to an abundance of demanding customers, the role of today's customer service agent is not getting easier. Compared to three years ago, agents carry higher case volumes, work longer hours, and lack the resources and training that would help them perform better. Given these burdens, perhaps the biggest surprise is that attrition did not rank higher in agents' changing roles.

Even as case volumes have increased, the complexity of agents' jobs remains—yet problem-solving capabilities fall short. Adding to the pressure, agents face difficulty communicating with other departments to resolve customer issues. Furthermore, agents perceive that customers don't have access to helpful self-service resources, nor do agents themselves have the customer information, training and guidance, or other tools to effectively solve customer issues.

How the agent's role has changed in the past three years



Challenges that make it difficult for agents to resolve customer issues

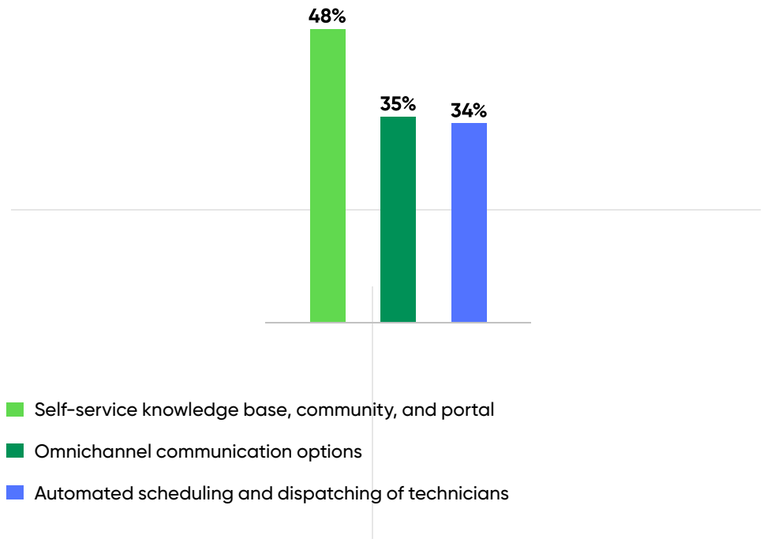


Agents want automation and optimization

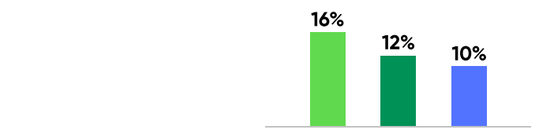
Considering that agents identified the second-biggest challenge in solving customer issues as customers' lack of access to self-solve, it's not surprising that agents believe equipping customers with a self-service knowledge base, community sites, and portals would lead to the greatest improvement in customer service.

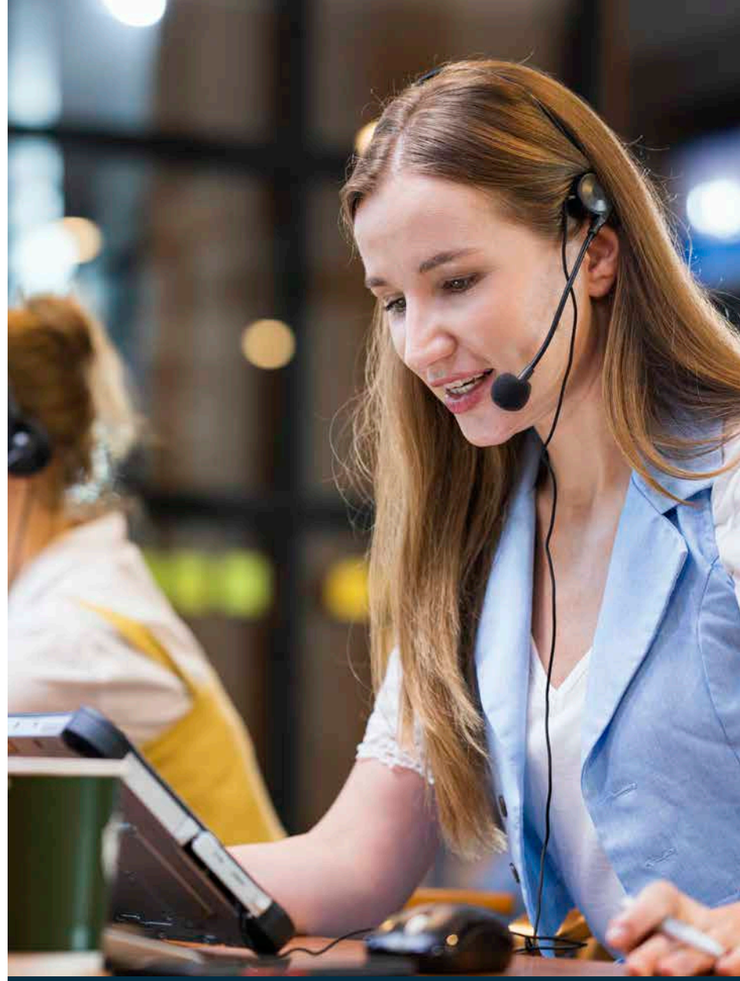
And while self-service tools and chatbots rank high on the list, if agents could wave a magic wand, their wish would be to immediately implement workforce optimization. They feel that this capability would surely improve workloads while providing the coaching and training guidance to make them more productive.

Capabilities agents feel would provide the greatest improvement in customer service



Agents' most-desired capability for immediate implementation





Agent Challenge

70%

of agents say they require 4 or more applications to resolve customer issues



Takeaways

To unburden agents, organizations should:

- Consider workforce optimization solutions to improve work distribution, scheduling, and productivity.
- Optimize or deploy self-service capabilities to better enable customers to solve requests on their own.

For organizations with field-based technicians, investing in automated scheduling and dispatch may also reduce the problems that hinder worker productivity.

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KEY FINDING 3:

Customer experience leaders are under pressure

Providing exceptional customer experiences has never been more challenging, and leaders are facing three tensions. First, the frustrated customers who want live agents. Second, the overwhelmed agents who want customer self-service and more efficient processes. And finally, the leaders themselves who need to bolster workforce productivity even as they lack the resources and capacity to deal with growing caseloads.

If adding people resources by hiring and training more agents isn't possible, the solution then becomes to make customer self-service easier and employ workforce optimization. It's a complex exercise in stitching together a multitude of departments, processes, and tools to create a seamless front line—and it can be aided by tapping into the power of AI and generative AI.



Leader Viewpoint

How customer experience impacts the business?

"Customer satisfaction is essential to the sustainability of our business. The need for immediate response has become the rule."

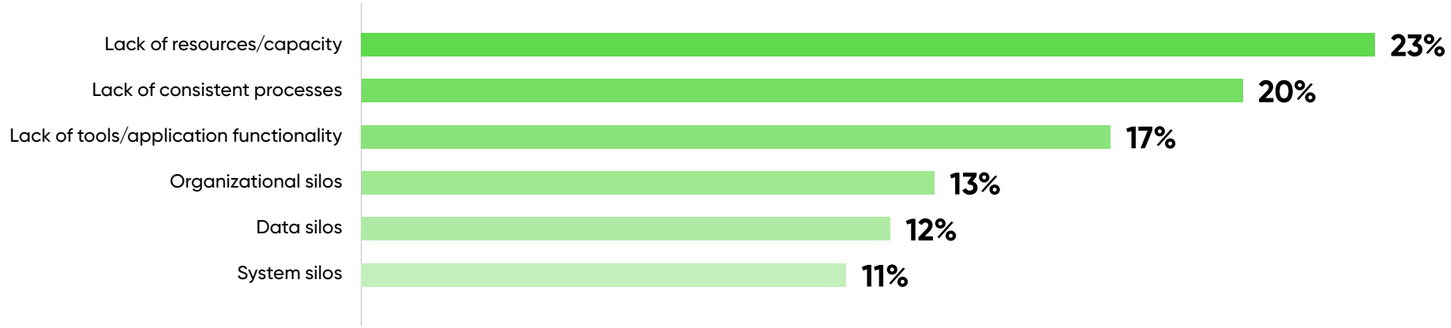
– Customer Experience Leader, France

Leaders feel under-resourced and overcommitted

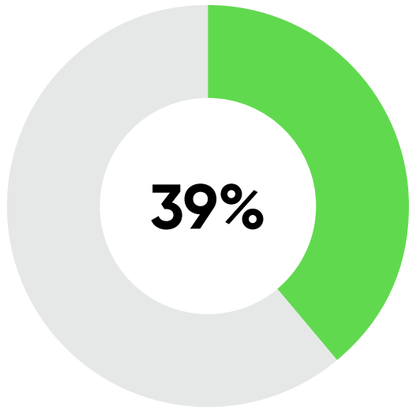
Customer experience leaders find themselves in what feels like an irreconcilable situation. They're expected to handle increased case volumes despite a lack of resources, capacity, processes, and tools to drive much-needed transformation.

Complicating matters even more is the nature of customer service. It's a team sport that spans departments—creating the additional challenge of finding and eliminating the bottlenecks caused by organizational silos. And sometimes, the customer service department is its own worst enemy. Leaders call out customer service itself as the function that leads to the greatest delay in resolving customer issues.

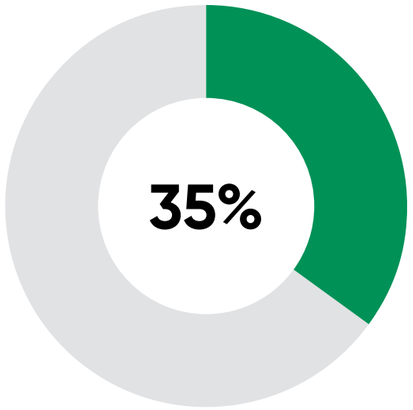
Leaders' biggest challenge to resolving customer issues



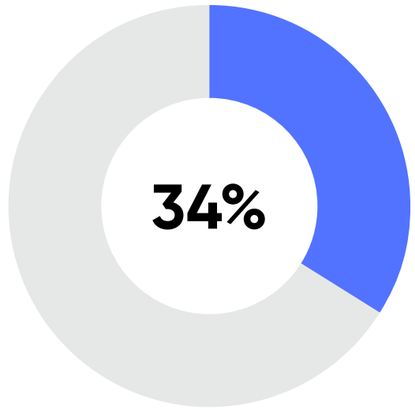
Internal functions leaders say delay customer issue resolution



Business's own customer service/contact center



Order processing



Billing/accounting



How leaders are measuring success

Customer experience leaders have made significant investments in people, processes, and technology to support a modern customer service experience. Now, they are eager to measure the effectiveness of their efforts to improve service operations.

Customer satisfaction ranks as the top metric for assessing the success of both overall customer experience and the performance of front-line agents. It's noteworthy that employee satisfaction comes in next—indicating leaders recognize that happy, satisfied agents are important to help deliver great customer experiences.

Top metrics leaders use to measure overall customer experience success



Top metrics leaders use to measure success of front-line customer service agents



Leader Viewpoint

"A good knowledge of the product or service being offered is critical to responding to customer inquiries and providing correct information."

– Customer Experience Leader, Germany

"Anticipating customer needs and providing timely updates or solutions can enhance the overall customer experience."

– Customer Experience Leader, Australia



Leadership Challenge

Metrics in the era of multiple workplace locations

Measuring success can be tricky in today's distributed workforce environment. Agents are spread across many work sites, which adds complexity when leaders need to collect performance metrics and evaluate employee job satisfaction.

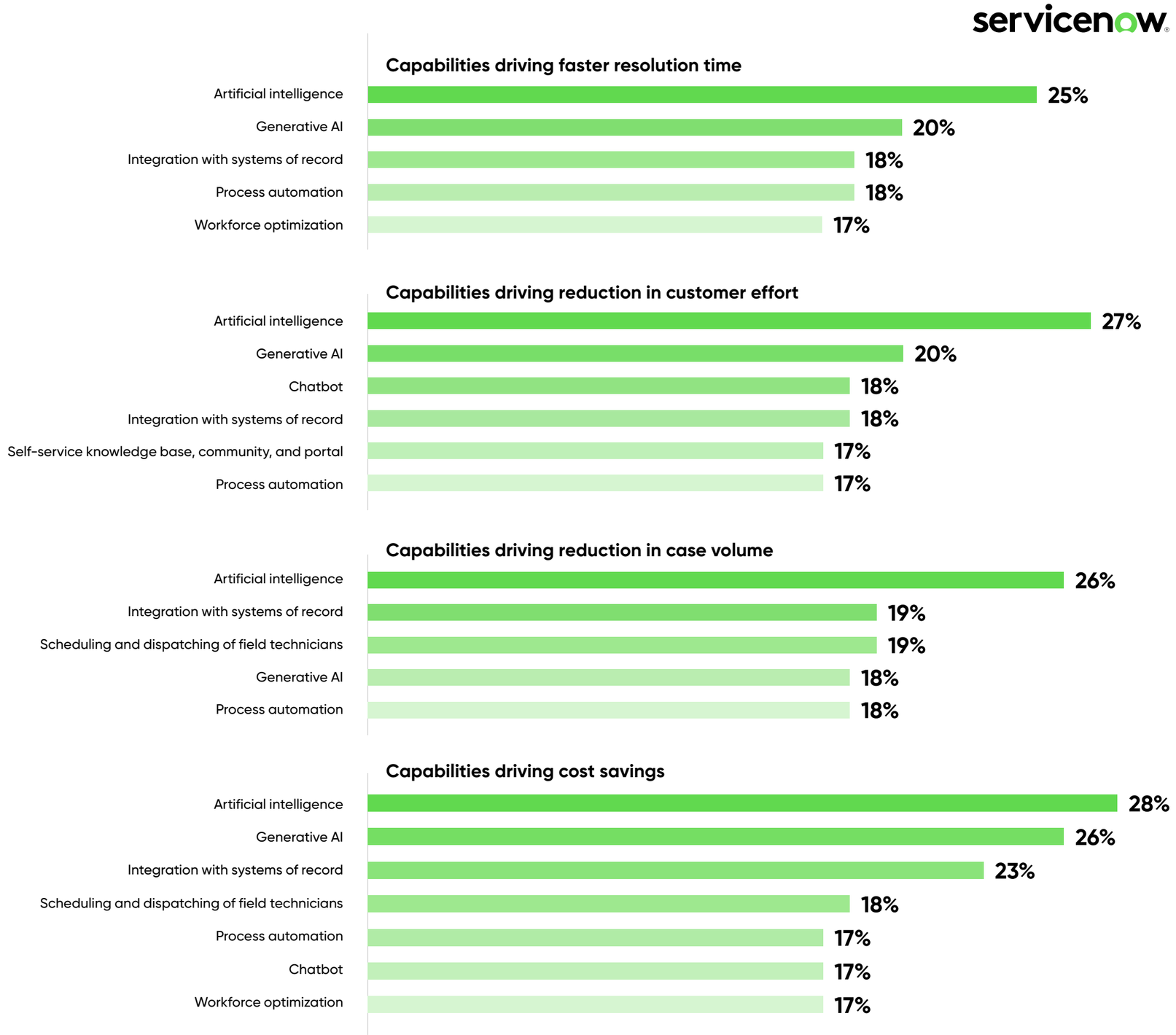
Locations where front-line customer service agents work



Core capabilities that drive improvement of metrics

Customer experience leaders are accountable for achieving two goals that largely compete with one another: improving the quality of customer service and reducing costs. Can technology solve for both of these? Leaders seem to think so.

For the critical metrics that drive faster resolution time, reduction in customer effort and case volume, and cost savings, leaders cite the following capabilities: artificial intelligence and generative AI, integration with systems of record, and process automation. They also point to automated scheduling and dispatching of field technicians as a top capability for reducing case volume and increasing cost savings.



Leaders turn to technology to upgrade customer experience

Despite resource constraints, process and tool gaps, and departmental-level coordination challenges, customer experience leaders have been on a path of launching advanced technology solutions that improve productivity and reduce costs. Most organizations report that they already use industry-standard tools to improve the workload and efficiency of their workforce, such as scheduling and dispatch of technicians, workforce automation, and integration with systems of record.

But what's next? Leaders are in the planning stages of implementing more modern, transformative capabilities. They're preparing to roll out artificial intelligence, generative AI, and process-mining technologies. Many leaders also see an immediate need to deploy workforce optimization technologies, and this aligns with agents' needs as well.

Clearly, leaders see that the promise of AI, along with process improvements and training of skilled workers, can re-balance the service-expectation to service-delivery equation.

Technologies leaders have already deployed

54%
Scheduling and dispatch of field technicians

51%
Workforce optimization

51%
Integration with systems of record

48%
Self-service knowledge base, community, and portal

Leaders' list of most-wanted technologies for immediate deployment

22%
Artificial intelligence

20%
Workforce optimization

19%
Generative AI; integration with systems of record; and self-service knowledge base, community, and portal

16%
Process automation



Takeaways

There is clear tension among these three needs: customers' desire for live agent support and their dismissal of chatbots, overwhelmed agents' eagerness for workforce optimization and self-service to reduce their burden, and customer experience leaders' belief that AI and generative AI can best drive business value.

To reduce the pressure on customer experience leaders, organizations should:

- Deploy workforce optimization to enhance scheduling and capacity planning toward meeting shifting customer needs, as a critical productivity-enabling capability.
- Lean into unleashing the benefits of AI and the promise of generative AI to quickly transform both the customer and agent experience.

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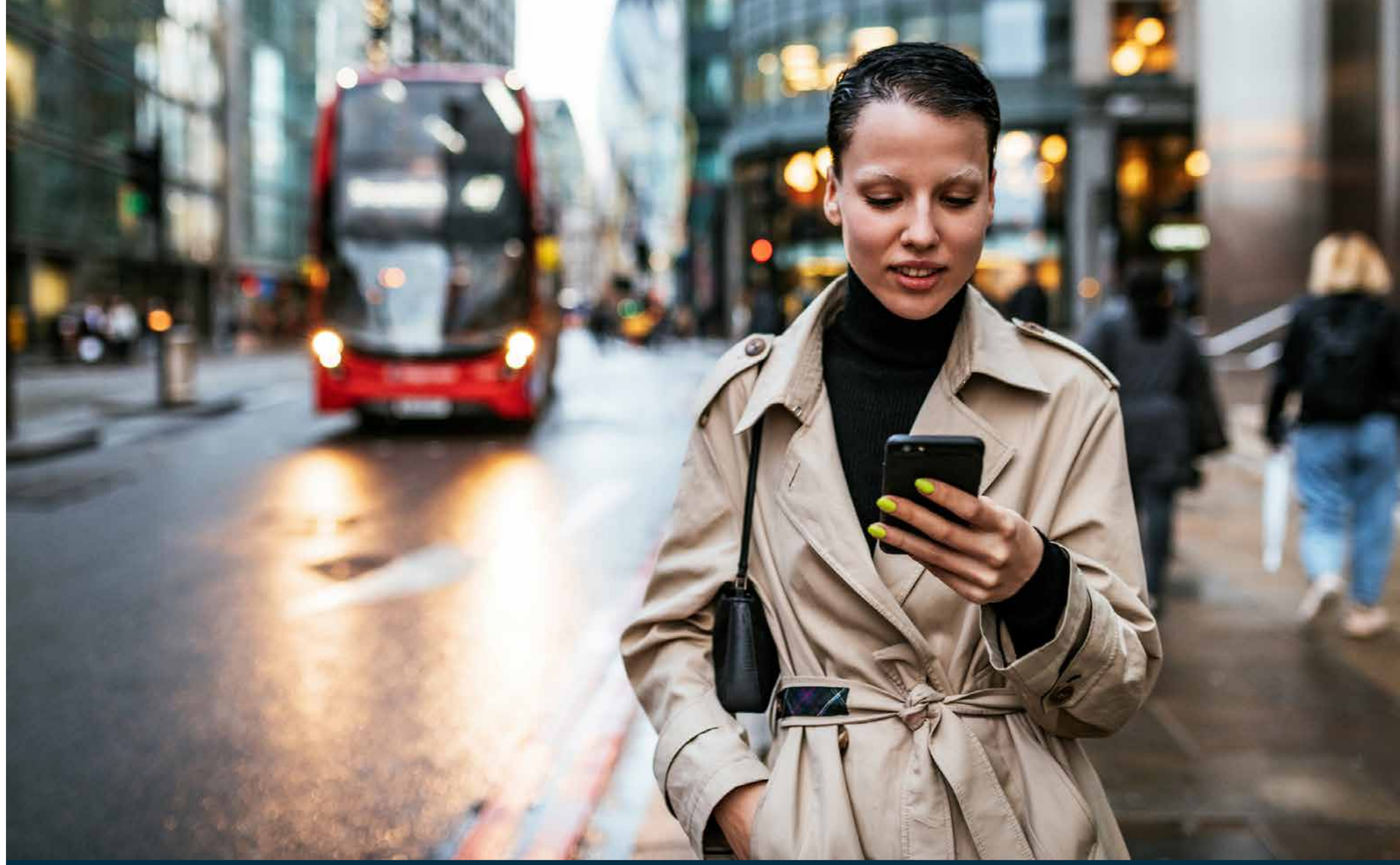
KEY FINDING 4:

AI and GenAI are delivering real value in customer service

To cope with resource shortages and overloaded agents, customer experience leaders have increasingly turned to AI as a key capability to improve all facets of the customer service process. Functions such as intelligent routing, language detection, recommendation systems, and automated document processing are alleviating some of the strain on agents. Process mining is helping leaders see bottlenecks, while predictive intelligence is anticipating customer patterns as well as preventing potential problems. That's why leaders cite AI as the top capability for driving business value in multiple areas.



Leader Viewpoint

What's your opinion of AI in customer service?

> "Rely more on AI and think of it as a way to please your customers."
>
> *– Customer Experience Leader, Japan*

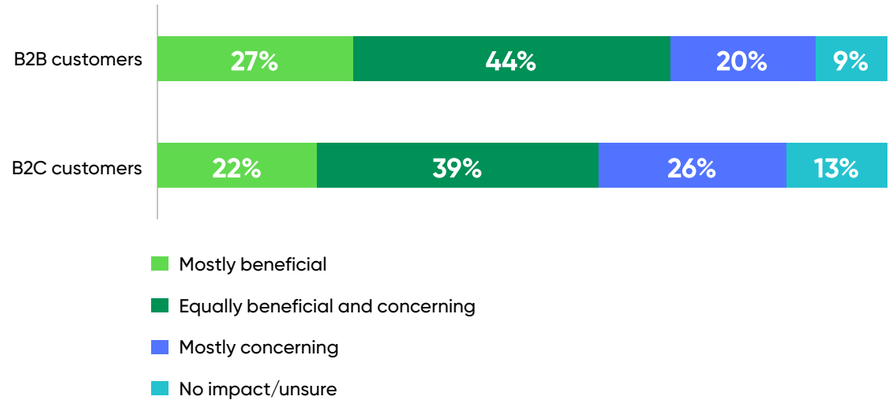


Customer perspectives on AI

Customers indicate they prefer live agents over chatbots, but they're open to having AI play a role in their service experiences. However, they're conflicted about what impact AI may have.

Overall, customers seem equally divided about whether AI is beneficial or concerning, but it's interesting to note that B2B customers are slightly more comfortable with AI than B2C customers. These differences can guide how organizations deploy and communicate their use of AI to support the customer experience.

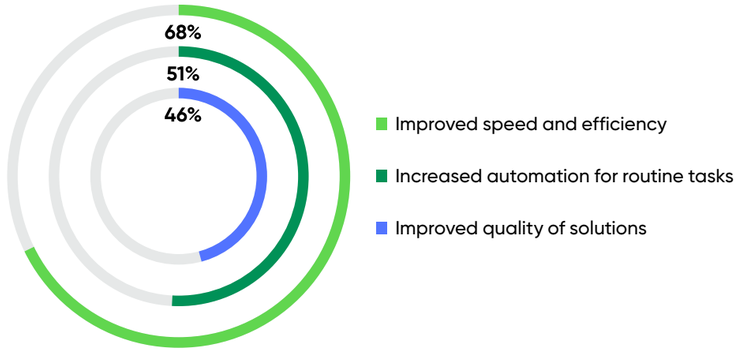
Customer views on the potential drawbacks of AI



Customers contemplate whether AI's benefits outweigh its concerns

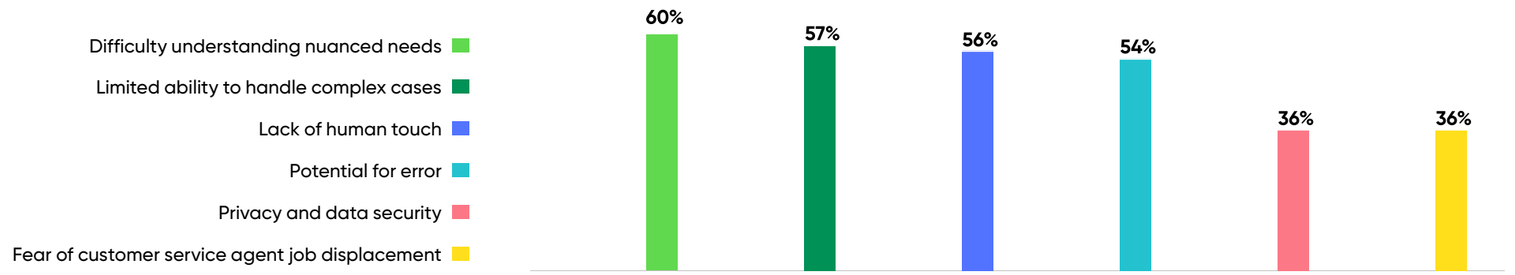
Although customers aren't impressed with current chatbot capabilities, they still see promise in AI to improve service experiences. Interestingly, they are more concerned about the quality and effort level of their experience than about the expected worries of privacy, data security, or agent job replacement.

Customer perceptions of AI's biggest benefits





Biggest customer concerns about AI



AI Snapshot: Chatbots must evolve toward a more human touch

> "[My best service experience was] the speed of the response, the empathy of the agent, and the way in which she sorted matters out to my satisfaction."
>
> *– B2C Customer, United Kingdom*

> "[My best working experiences are] when I really help a customer, and they are very satisfied. It makes me feel happy and proud of the service I provide."
>
> *– Customer Service Agent, Nordic Region*

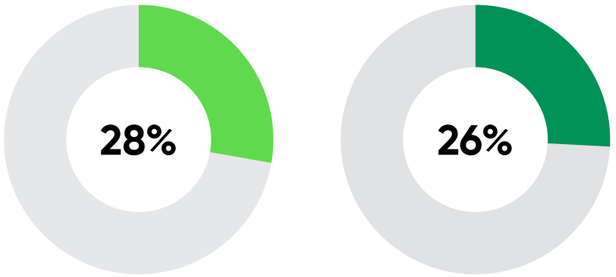


Leader perspectives on AI

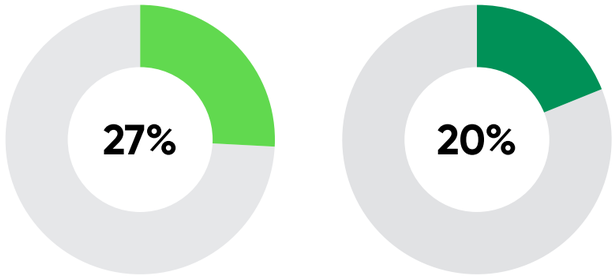
Even with their perceived shortcomings, AI and generative AI are recognized by customer experience leaders as the two most significant business value drivers across multiple key performance indicators (KPIs), including reducing costs, case volume, resolution time, and customer effort.

Areas where leaders perceive AI and GenAI drive the greatest business value

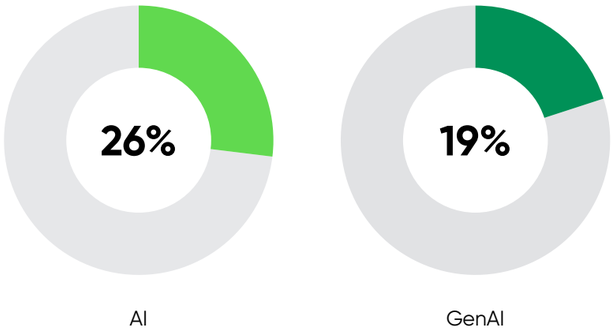
Increase in cost savings



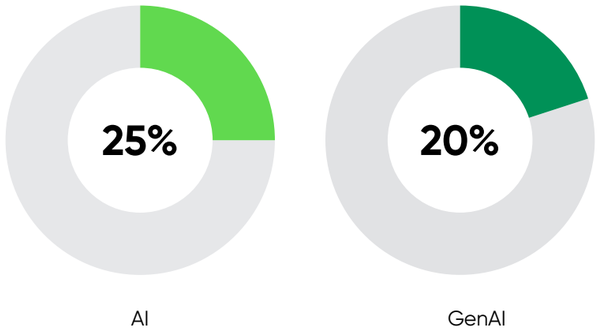
Reduction in customer effort



Reduction in case volume



Reduction in resolution time

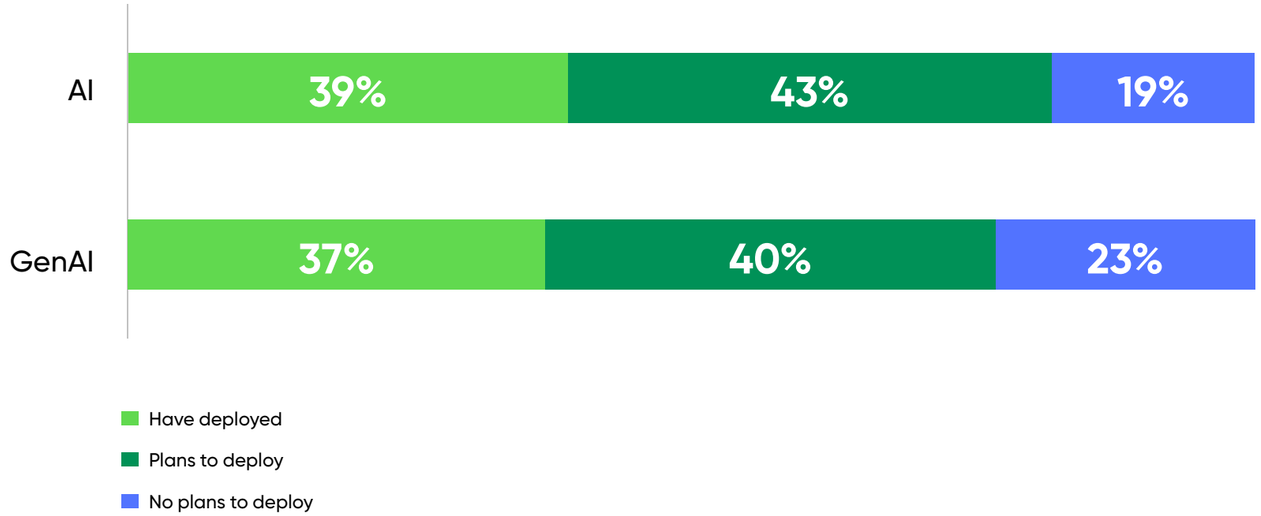


Leaders have yet to tap AI's full potential

Because AI and generative AI are viewed as business value drivers, they're also among the top three capabilities customer experience leaders say they most want to deploy right away. Despite this desire, surprisingly few leaders have actually put it to work in a purposeful, cohesive way. One reason may be that these technologies have yet to become strategic priorities for many organizations.

However, leaders aren't uncomfortable with this lack of AI focus, and many feel they're either ahead of or on the same level as their competitors. This sentiment suggests there's opportunity for organizations that build AI into their strategy to get ahead of the competition and reap the business value they attribute to AI and generative AI capabilities.

Leaders' AI desire does not equal AI deployment





AI Snapshot

CX leaders rate their AI adoption

47%

of CX leaders say their organization is implementing AI tools in an ad hoc fashion

Yet when it comes to GenAI...

33%

of CX leaders feel they are ahead of the competition

48%

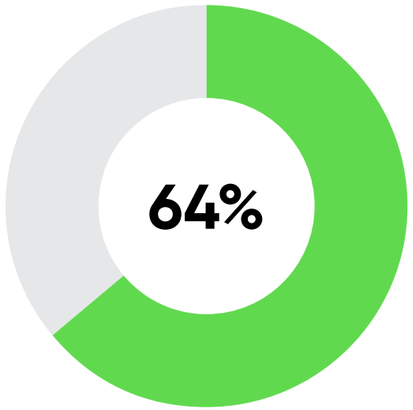
feel they are about the same as the competition

The state of GenAI adoption

Generative AI is a relative newcomer to the AI scene, but leaders already have distinct perceptions about its value and challenges. When leaders were asked which capabilities they believe will be enhanced by generative AI, their answer was, clearly, "all of the above." Notable differences were revealed only when looking across countries (for a comparison of countries, see page 41).

Despite their enthusiasm, leaders acknowledge that there are obstacles to generative AI adoption. As more organizations seek to unleash the perceived high value of generative AI, they need to consider strategies to overcome potential barriers to success.

Top capabilities leaders think GenAI will enhance most



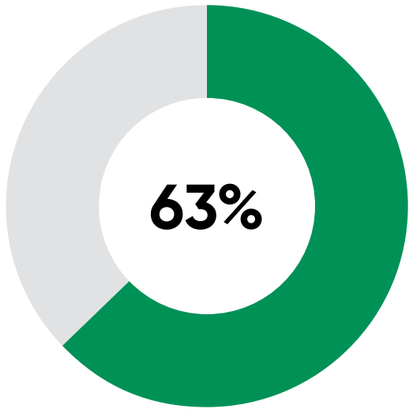
Knowledge-base enrichment

Customer sentiment analysis

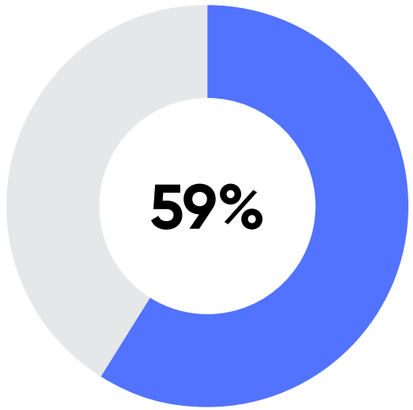
Customer self-service

Agent productivity

Reporting efficiency



Language translation



Coaching and training



AI Snapshot

What do leaders see as the biggest roadblocks for GenAI?

About 1/3 say...

- User acceptance and trust
- Privacy and security risks
- Need for specialized skills
- Cost and resource constraints

About 1/4 say...

- Ethical concerns and biases
- Legal and regulatory constraints
- Lack of interpretability and transparency
- Computing power requirements



Takeaways

Customers and leaders agree that AI and generative AI can speed resolution, increase quality of service, and reduce customer effort. And guess what? These same capabilities can also reduce customer service costs.

With so much upside, the only question is how quickly organizations can move from improvised to intentional. To deliver real value in customer service, leaders must devise cohesive AI and generative AI strategies to:

- Improve customer self-service
- Drive agent productivity
- Secure a competitive advantage

KEY FINDING 5:

Next steps in the future of customer experience

Leaders and agents alike anticipate that already-high customer expectations will increase even more in the next three years. But how are organizations preparing to meet those demands? While agents and leaders agree on the problems, they're not as in sync on the solutions.



Future-Forward Viewpoint

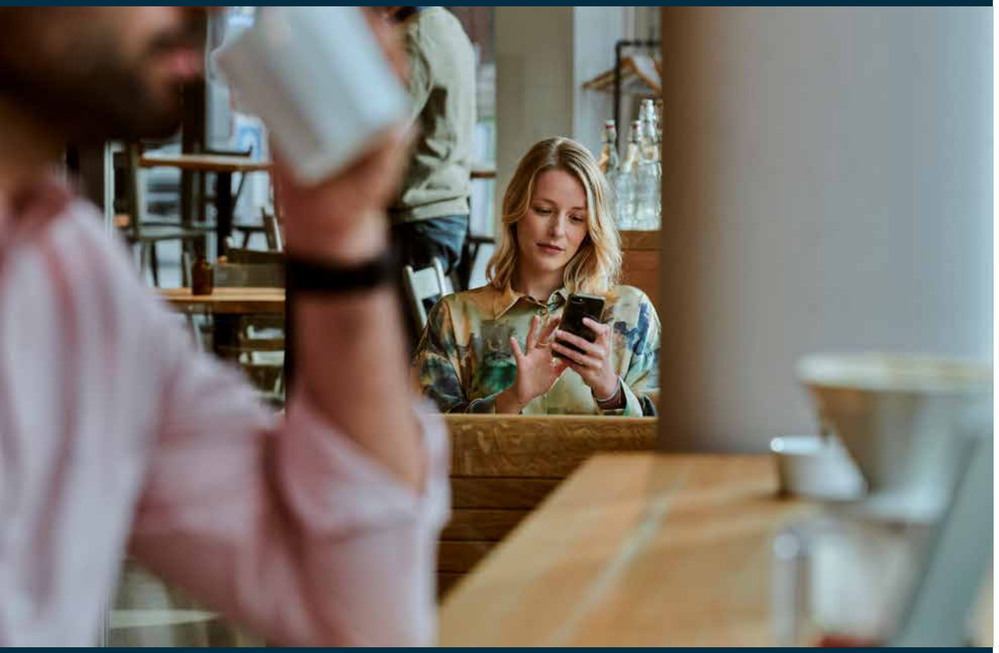
What's next for the customer service environment?

"The future of assistance lies in automating the service by using AI."

– Customer Experience Leader, France

Customer expectations will continue to climb

For the most part, leaders and agents are aligned on their convictions about what customers will continue to demand in service experiences: faster resolutions and increased quality across channels, first-contact resolution, proactive service, and self-service.



Top 5 projected customer expectations for the future

	Customer experience leaders		Customer service agents
1	40% demand faster resolutions	1	45% demand faster resolutions
2	38% expect increase in quality of service across channels	2	39% expect increase in quality of service across channels
3	35% expect first-contact resolution	3	35% expect first-contact resolution
4	32% expect proactive service	4	27% use self-service channels more frequently
5	31% expect substantial self-service improvements	5	24% expect proactive service

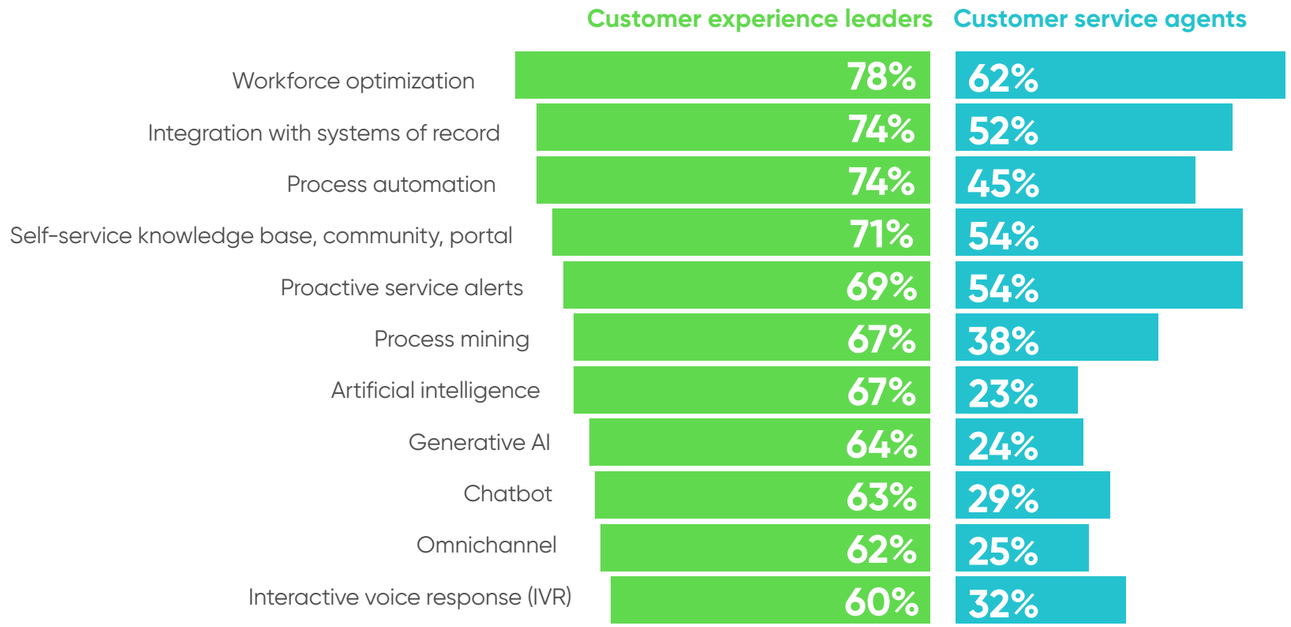
Priorities for future development

To meet rising demands, leaders are planning their technology investments while carefully considering which organizational capabilities they need to develop. They're pursuing the efficiency advantages that predictive intelligence and automation can provide to make things easier for live agents. And there's good news: Agents generally agree with the direction of leadership's thinking.

One area where opinions diverge is AI and generative AI. Even though customer experience leaders named these capabilities as important future developments, agents did not see the same value and actually rated AI and generative AI as the lowest priorities.



Important capabilities for the future



Driving quality and efficiency—a role for AI

While leaders and agents generally agree on priorities for future development, there's a significant difference of opinion on specific business value drivers for quality and efficiency. Leaders are leaning in on AI, but agents are calling for automation and workforce optimization.

These stark differences may come from contrasting degrees of understanding. AI and generative AI technologies are often embedded within capabilities such as workforce optimization and process automation. Agents may see the benefit of the technology in the solution, yet not understand AI's role behind the scenes.

AI is becoming more prevalent and more likely to emerge in the agent experience through capabilities such as chat and case summarization. Leaders may want to increase awareness to overcome any acceptance and trust issues that could pose potential barriers.



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Top 3 capabilities driving service quality

	Customer experience leaders		Customer service agents
1	17% AI	1	25% Workforce optimization
2	14% Generative AI	2	15% Self-service
3	13% Workforce optimization	3	10% Process automation

Top 3 capabilities driving service efficiency

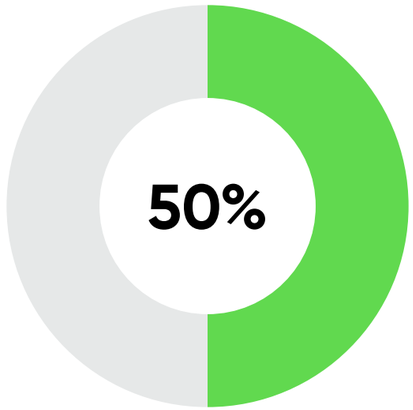
1	18% AI	22% Workforce optimization
2	14% Generative AI	16% Self-service
3	12% Workforce optimization	10% Process automation

Supporting the human agent experience

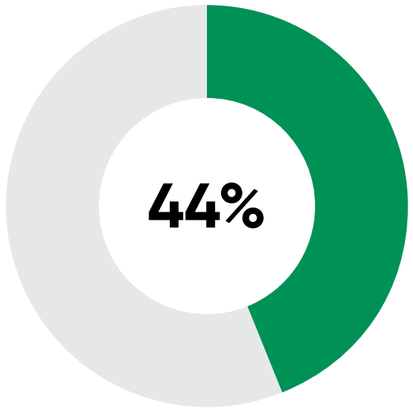
No matter what levels of technology and automation are deployed, live agents remain the core of customer experience. Given the importance of human interaction to customers and the necessity of agent engagement to handle complex issues, supporting agents to develop the skills they need to meet rising customer expectations will be critical. And soft skills matter, too: 3 in 10 leaders suggest that empathy is another important trait for agents to develop.

The upshot for leaders is that the best way to support customers is to support agents—with foundational technologies such as AI and generative AI that can be embedded within daily communication, case management, and knowledge management tools. By reducing agent overload and frustration, organizations can lower attrition and ensure a more consistent customer experience.

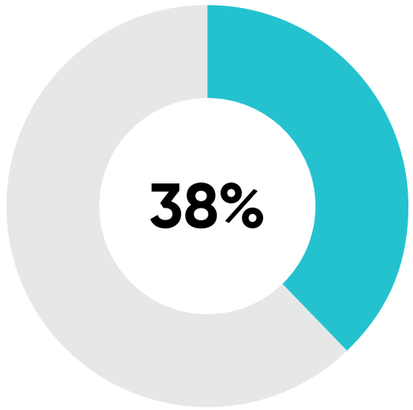
Leaders' view of the most important agent skills over the next 3 years



Problem-solving



Productivity



Training on emerging technologies



Customer Viewpoint

Empathy matters

"When I feel heard and understood, it can make all the difference in my experience. Taking the time to be listened to, being offered effective and relevant solutions, and being followed up with shows me they care."

– B2B Customer, Australia



Takeaways

Driven by demands for faster service, higher quality, and increased first-time resolution, customer expectations will only increase moving forward. Workforce optimization, integration with systems of record, customer self-service, and process automation are foundational capabilities that drive future customer service success.

At the same time, customer experience leaders looking to achieve higher levels of service efficiency and quality should invest in AI and generative AI capabilities to help organizations:

- Better enable self-service and reduce agent case volume
- Empower agents to be more effective and productive
- Streamline workflow across the front, middle, and back offices

Organizations will see results with faster resolution, reduced customer effort, and increased customer satisfaction—and be poised to move into the future of customer experience.

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FINAL THOUGHTS:

Put AI to work for customer service with an intelligent platform from ServiceNow

Today's environment of spiraling costs and shrinking budgets makes it increasingly difficult to deliver the top-notch service experiences that reduce customer effort, build loyalty, and differentiate you from the competition.

ServiceNow can help you improve customer experiences with curated solutions and product offerings so work will work better for everyone. Empower your whole organization to serve the customer and deliver seamless experiences with automation, AI and generative AI, proactive service, self-service, and more.

The Now Platform® brings the power of AI to your organization—delivering all the capabilities, security, and analytics you need to help people work easier, faster, and smarter. Our platform includes **generative AI**, machine learning frameworks, natural language understanding, search and automation, and analytics and process mining that align to enhance employee abilities and customer experiences.



What's Next

Learn more about ServiceNow Customer Experience solutions.

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ABOUT THE SURVEY:

Participant profiles and country metrics

From July 12 to August 8, 2023, ServiceNow partnered with Dynata to conduct a consumer insights quantitative survey across Australia, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, the Nordic region (Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden), the UK, and the U.S.

Participants were members of Dynata's online survey panel and consisted of two main groups:

- B2B (n=2,167) and B2C customers[2] (n=2,075) who have interacted with customer support[3]
- Customer experience leaders (n=1,541) and customer service agents (n=616) who are employed full time

The objectives for this study included:

- Exploring customer service experiences, perceptions, and attitudes among B2B and B2C customers.
- Understanding customers' perspectives of artificial intelligence and chatbot usage for customer service, assessing their preferences versus live agents.
- Exploring customer service practitioners' experiences and perceptions regarding challenges, expectations, and capabilities of the customer service offered in their organizations.

[2] B2C customer data was weighted to match census age distribution for each region.

[3] Status as a ServiceNow customer was not a demographic question or a criterion for selection to participate in the survey.



Survey Summary

What's the best part of working in customer service?

"There is always the opportunity to communicate with so many different and wonderful people."

– Customer Service Agent, United States

Customer participant profiles

Sample size across regions = 4,242

Country/Region	n
Australia	**509**
Germany	**543**
Italy	**542**
Japan	**544**
France	**581**
Netherlands	**175**
Nordic Region	**287**
United Kingdom	**553**
United States	**508**



Demographics

Age

18–24	**8%**
25–34	**19%**
35–44	**23%**
45–54	**21%**
55–64	**15%**
65–74	**11%**
75+	**2%**

Gender

Male	**57%**
Female	**43%**
Nonbinary/ prefer not to say	**<1%**

Employment status

Employed full time	**60%**
Employed part time	**10%**
Self-employed/contractor	**9%**
Not employed	**5%**
Attending school full time	**2%**
Retired	**11%**
Stay-at-home spouse	**3%**
Prefer not to say	**1%**

Customer firmographics

Industry	
Manufacturing and Industrial	**13%**
Retail and E-commerce	**11%**
Technology	**11%**
Finance/Insurance/Banking	**8%**
Professional Services	**8%**
Healthcare, Life Sciences, or Medical Devices	**7%**
Education	**7%**
Government and Public Sector	**6%**
Travel/Transportation/Logistics	**5%**
Consumer Services	**3%**
Energy and Utilities	**3%**
Telecommunications/Media	**2%**
Other	**15%**

Number of employees	
Fewer than 10	**16%**
10–19	**6%**
20–99	**18%**
100–499	**21%**
500–999	**11%**
1,000-2,999	**9%**
3,000–4,999	**4%**
5,000–9,999	**5%**
10,000–24,999	**4%**
25,000 or more	**6%**

Job role	
Information Techology (IT)	**20%**
Operations	**18%**
Customer Service	**15%**
Sales/Business Development	**13%**
Customer Operations	**12%**
Finance/Accounting	**11%**
Customer Experience	**9%**
Human Resources	**9%**
Product Management	**8%**
Order Management	**7%**
Marketing	**6%**
Purchasing	**6%**
Public Relations/Communications	**5%**
Supply Chain	**5%**
Other	**12%**

Job title	
Middle Management	**20%**
Senior Management	**15%**
Staff or Specialist	**14%**
Admin or Support Staff	**11%**
Mid-level Executive	**10%**
Other Management	**9%**
High-level Executive	**5%**
Customer Service Agent/ Representative	**5%**
Field Technician	**4%**
Other	**7%**

Practitioner participant profiles

Sample size across regions = 2,157

Country/Region	n
Australia	**509**
Germany	**543**
Italy	**542**
Japan	**544**
France	**581**
Netherlands	**175**
Nordic Region	**287**
United Kingdom	**553**
United States	**508**

Demographics

Age

18–24	**6%**
25–34	**24%**
35–44	**32%**
45–54	**20%**
55–64	**15%**
65–74	**3%**
75+	**<1%**

Job title

Senior Management	**31%**
Customer Service Agent/Representative	**29%**
High-level Executive	**22%**
Mid-level Executive	**18%**

Role

Customer Service	**62%**
Customer Experience	**47%**
Customer Operations	**41%**
Information Technology	**23%**
Order Management	**22%**
Operations	**20%**
Sales/Business Development	**20%**
Product Management	**19%**
Supply Chain	**17%**
Human Resources	**1%**
Purchasing	**17%**
Marketing	**165**
Finance/Accounting	**15%**
Public Relations/Communications	**13%**
Other	**<1%**

Practitioner firmographics

Tenure	
Less than 1 year	**3%**
1–3 years	**11%**
4–5 years	**23%**
6–10 years	**32%**
11–19 years	**16%**
20 years or more	**14%**

Industry	
Customer Service	**14%**
Retail and E-commerce	**13%**
Professional Services	**11%**
Finance/Insurance/Banking	**11%**
Manufacturing and Industrial	**10%**
Technology	**8%**
Travel/Transportation/Logistics	**7%**
Energy and Utilities	**6%**
Healthcare/Life Sciences/Medical Devices	**5%**
Government and Public Sector	**4%**
Telecommunications/Media	**4%**
Education	**4%**
Other	**5%**

Number of employees	
Fewer than 10	**7%**
10–19	**4%**
20–99	**13%**
100–499	**23%**
500–999	**16%**
1,000-2,999	**13%**
3,000–4,999	**5%**
5,000–9,999	**7%**
10,000–24,999	**6%**
25,000 or more	**6%**



Country metrics: **Australia**

Importance of customer service

- **73%** of respondents say they're likely to switch brands based on poor customer service experience
- **86%** of respondents say they're likely to recommend a brand based on great customer experience

Key finding 1: Customers feel disconnected and discontented

Most important aspects in a customer service experience (top 3)

- **90%** customer service agent able to resolve problems easily
- **90%** customer service response times
- **83%** customer service agent providing informed recommendations

Most common frustrations (top 3)

- **54%** being passed between teams/departments
- **50%** (average) inability to reach a live customer service agent quickly/efficiently
- **41%** being required to have multiple interactions before full resolution is achieved

Key finding 2: Customer service agents are overburdened

How customer expectations have changed in the past 3 years

	CX leaders	Agents
Higher expectations in general	**73%**	**67%**
Expect faster service	**26%**	**39%**
Expect more concessions	**17%**	**34%**
Expect more personalized service	**15%**	**8%**

How the agent's role has changed in the past 3 years

	CX leaders	Agents
Higher case volumes	**25%**	**37%**
More manual tasks	**21%**	**7%**
Lack of resources and training	**20%**	**18%**
Longer working hours	**16%**	**12%**

Key finding 3: Customer experience leaders are under pressure

What do leaders see as the biggest challenge in resolving customer issues?

Among total customer experience leader respondents	Australia
Lack of resources/capacity	**26%**
Lack of tools/application functionality	**19%**
Lack of consistent processes	**16%**
Organizational silos	**14%**
System silos	**14%**
Data silos	**11%**
Other	**<1%**

Internal functions that leaders say delay customer issue resolution

- Their own customer service/contact center **47%**
- Billing/accounting **39%**
- Fulfillment/delivery **36%**

Leaders' most-wanted list for immediate deployment (top 3)

Among those whose organizations have not deployed the capability yet—base varies	Australia
Artificial intelligence	**25%**
Integration with systems of record	**25%**
Generative AI	**22%**

Key finding 4: AI and GenAI are delivering real value in customer service

Benefits of AI usage (top 3)

Chosen among top 3 benefits	Australia
Improved speed and efficiency	**63%**
Increased automation for routine tasks	**51%**
Improved quality of solutions	**45%**



AI tool implementation strategy: Planned vs. ad hoc

	Australia CX leaders
Total	**100%**
Planned AI strategy	**51%**
Implementing AI tools ad hoc	**49%**

Biggest roadblocks for generative AI (top 3)

Among total customer experience leader respondents	Australia
Privacy and security risks	**35%**
Ethical concerns and biases	**32%**
Cost and resource constraints	**31%**

Key finding 5: Next steps in the future of customer experience

Top 3 projected customer expectations for the future: Australia

Customer experience leaders	Customer service agents
Expect substantial improvement in self-service **38%**	Demand faster resolutions **53%**
Demand faster resolutions **35%**	Expect increase in quality of service across channels **49%**
Expect first-contact resolution **35%**	Expect first-contact resolution **44%**

3 most important capabilities for the future: Australia

Customer experience leaders	Customer service agents
Workforce optimization **79%**	Workforce optimization **56%**
Process automation **79%**	Self-service knowledge base, community, portal **56%**
Artificial intelligence **78%**	Integration with systems of record **47%**

What leaders cite as the most important skills for agents over the next 3 years

- Productivity **48%**
- Problem-solving **47%**
- Critical thinking **41%**

Country metrics: **France**

Importance of customer service

- **75%** of respondents say they're likely to switch brands based on poor customer service experience
- **83%** of respondents say they're likely to recommend a brand based on great customer experience

Key finding 1: Customers feel disconnected and discontented

Most important aspects in a customer service experience (top 3)

- **86%** customer service agent able to resolve problems easily
- **86%** customer service response times
- **77%** customer service agent providing informed recommendations

Most common frustrations (top 3)

- **39%** (average) inability to reach a live customer service agent quickly/efficiently
- **39%** being passed between teams/departments
- **34%** having to provide information you have already supplied on another channel

Key finding 2: Customer service agents are overburdened

How customer expectations have changed in the past 3 years

	CX leaders	Agents
Higher expectations in general	**71%**	**65%**
Expect more personalized service	**25%**	**18%**
Expect more concessions	**25%**	**28%**
Expect faster service	**23%**	**42%**

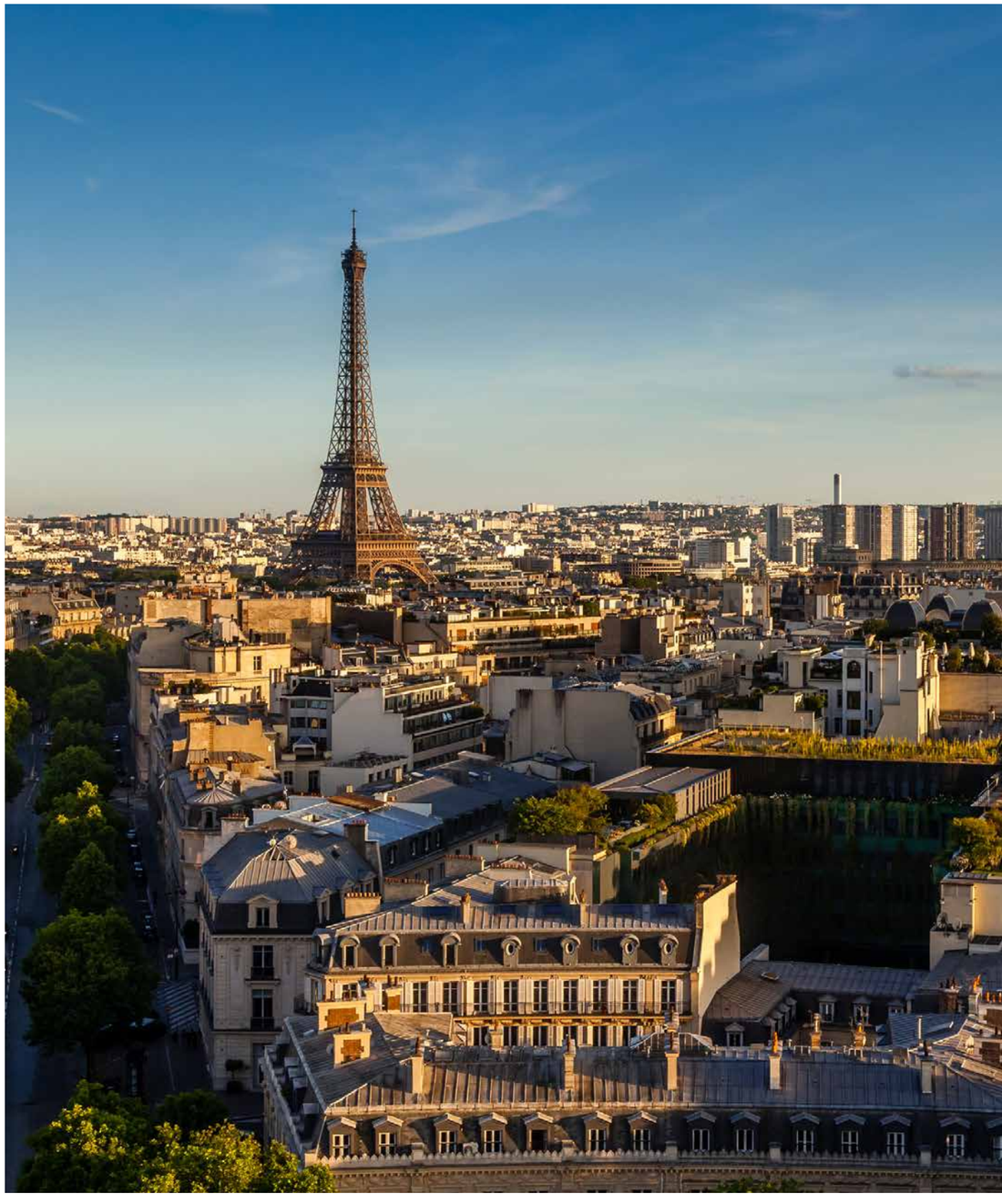
How the agent's role has changed in the past 3 years

	CX leaders	Agents
Higher case volumes	**33%**	**39%**
Lack of resources and training	**22%**	**17%**
Longer working hours	**15%**	**16%**

Key finding 3: Customer experience leaders are under pressure

What do leaders see as the biggest challenge in resolving customer issues?

Among total customer experience leader respondents	France
Lack of resources/capacity	**26%**
Data silos	**17%**
Lack of consistent processes	**15%**
Organizational silos	**15%**
Lack of tools/application functionality	**13%**
System silos	**12%**
Other	**2%**



Internal functions that leaders say delay customer issue resolution

- Their own customer service/contact center **36%**
- Billing/accounting **32%**
- Fulfillment/delivery **30%**

Leaders' most-wanted list for immediate deployment (top 3)

Among those whose organizations have not deployed the capability yet—base varies	France
Workforce optimization	**19%**
Self-service knowledge base, community, portal	**17%**
Integration with systems of record	**17%**

Key finding 4: AI and GenAI are delivering real value in customer service

Benefits of AI usage (Top 3)

Chosen among top 3 benefits	France
Improved speed and efficiency	**62%**
Increased automation for routine tasks	**54%**
Improved quality of solutions	**45%**



AI tool implementation strategy: Planned vs. ad hoc

	France CX leaders
Total	**100%**
Planned AI strategy	**56%**
Implementing AI tools ad hoc	**44%**

Biggest roadblocks for generative AI (top 3)

Among total customer experience leader respondents	France
User acceptance and trust	**43%**
Ethical concerns and biases	**28%**
Cost and resource constraints	**28%**

Key finding 5: Next steps in the future of customer experience

Top 3 projected customer expectations for the future: France

Customer experience leaders	Customer service agents
Demand faster resolutions **49%**	Demand faster resolutions **49%**
Expect increase in quality of service across channels **39%**	Expect increase in quality of service across channels **38%**
Expect first-contact resolution **31%**	Expect first-contact resolution **33%**

3 most important capabilities for the future: France

Customer experience leaders	Customer service agents
Workforce optimization **74%**	Self-service knowledge base, community, portal **60%**
Integration with systems of record **69%**	Workforce optimization **51%**
Process automation **69%**	Proactive service alerts **51%**

What leaders cite as the most important skills for agents over the next 3 years

- Problem-solving **54%**
- Productivity **49%**
- Training on emerging technologies **37%**



Country metrics: **Germany**

Importance of customer service

- **62%** of respondents say they're likely to switch brands based on poor customer service experience
- **84%** of respondents say they're likely to recommend a brand based on great customer experience

Key finding 1: Customers feel disconnected and discontented

Most important aspects in a customer service experience (top 3)

- **92%** customer service agent able to resolve problems easily
- **89%** customer service response times
- **85%** seamless service

Most common frustrations (top 3)

- **36%** (average) inability to reach a live customer service agent quickly/efficiently
- **36%** being passed between teams/departments
- **32%** having to enter the same information in multiple places

Key finding 2: Customer service agents are overburdened

How customer expectations have changed in the past 3 years

	CX leaders	Agents
Higher expectations in general	**73%**	**36%**
Expect faster service	**28%**	**NA**
Expect more concessions	**25%**	**NA**
Expect more personalized service	**18%**	**NA**

How the agent's role has changed in the past 3 years

	CX leaders	Agents
Higher case volumes	**32%**	**25%**
Longer working hours	**20%**	**11%**
Higher attrition	**19%**	**27%**

Key finding 3: Customer experience leaders are under pressure

What do leaders see as the biggest challenge in resolving customer issues?

Among total customer experience leader respondents	Germany
Lack of tools/application functionality	**23%**
Lack of resources/capacity	**22%**
Lack of consistent processes	**22%**
System silos	**11%**
Organizational silos	**11%**
Data silos	**7%**
Other	**3%**



Internal functions that leaders say delay customer issue resolution

- Their own customer service/contact center **41%**
- Billing/accounting **39%**
- Fulfillment/delivery **34%**

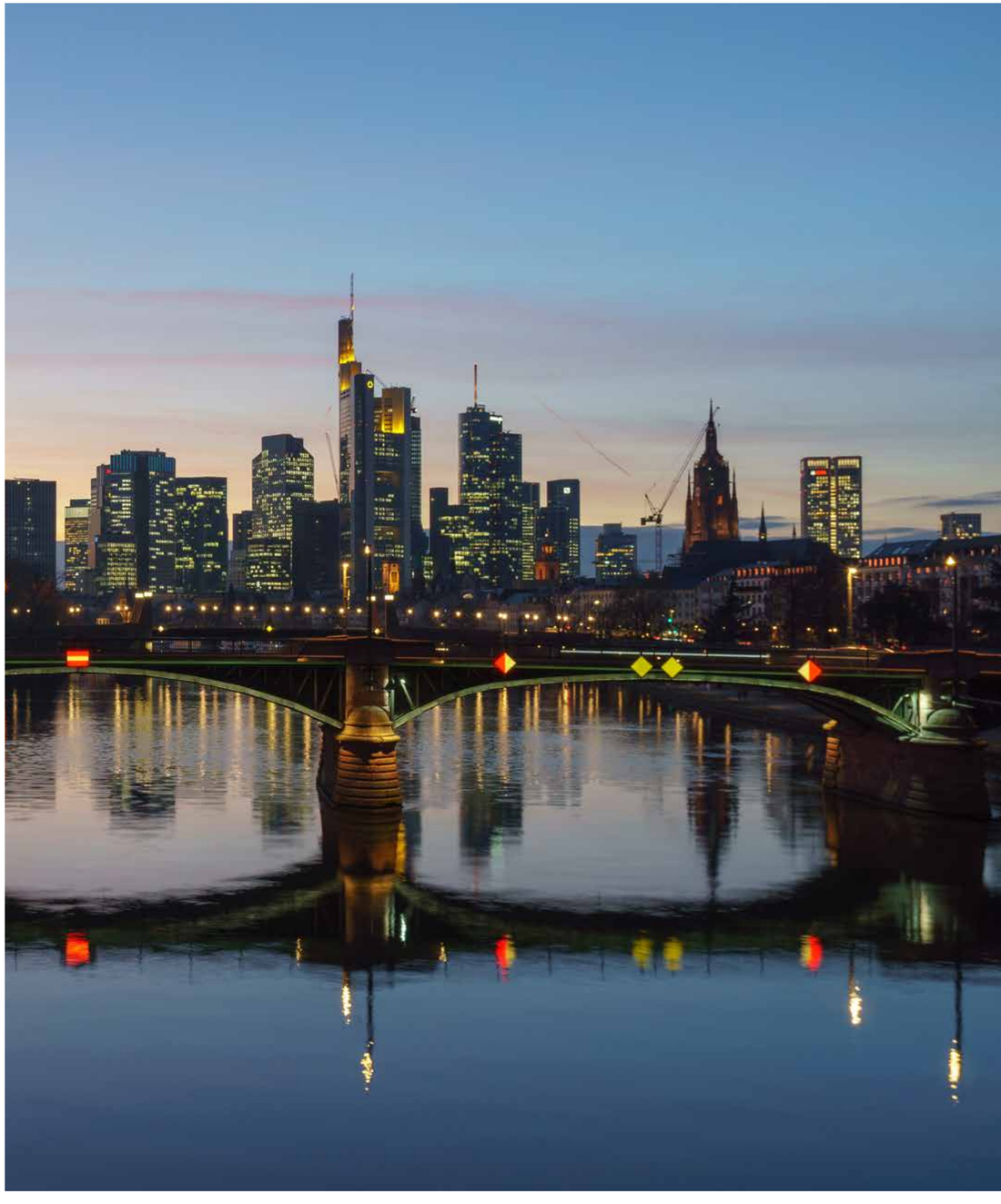
Leaders' most-wanted list for immediate deployment (top 3)

Among those whose organizations have not deployed the capability yet—base varies	Germany
Artificial intelligence	**30%**
Integration with systems of record	**27%**
Artificial intelligence	**24%**

Key finding 4: AI and GenAI are delivering real value in customer service

Benefits of AI usage (top 3)

Chosen among top 3 benefits	Germany
Improved speed and efficiency	**68%**
Improved quality of solutions	**52%**
Increased automation for routine tasks	**46%**



AI tool implementation strategy: Planned vs. ad hoc

	Germany CX leaders
Total	**100%**
Planned AI strategy	**66%**
Implementing AI tools ad hoc	**34%**

Biggest roadblocks for generative AI (top 3)

Among total customer experience leader respondents	Germany
Privacy and security risks	**41%**
Need for specialized skills	**38%**
User acceptance and trust	**35%**

Key finding 5: Next steps in the future of customer experience

Top 3 projected customer expectations for the future: Germany

Customer experience leaders	Customer service agents
Expect increase in quality of service across channels **43%**	Leave business more quickly if recipient of poor customer service **39%**
Expect first-contact resolution **40%**	Demand faster resolutions **36%**
Leave business more quickly if recipient of poor customer service **35%**	Expect quality service across all channels **33%**

3 most important capabilities for the future: Germany

Customer experience leaders	Customer service agents
Workforce optimization **84%**	Workforce optimization **70%**
Process automation **82%**	Self-service knowledge base, community, portal **58%**
Self-service knowledge base, community, portal **81%**	Proactive service alerts **58%**

What leaders cite as the most important skills for agents over the next 3 years

- Productivity **49%**
- Problem-solving **49%**
- Collaboration **42%**



Country metrics: **Italy**

Importance of customer service

- **73%** of respondents say they're likely to switch brands based on poor customer service experience
- **91%** of respondents say they're likely to recommend a brand based on great customer experience

Key finding 1: Customers feel disconnected and discontented

Most important aspects in a customer service experience (top 3)

- **90%** customer service agent able to resolve problems easily
- **89%** customer service response times
- **86%** customer service agent providing informed recommendations

Most common frustrations (top 3)

- **43%** (average) inability to reach a live customer service agent quickly/efficiently
- **36%** being passed between teams/departments
- **35%** being required to have multiple interactions before full resolution is achieved

Key finding 2: Customer service agents are overburdened

How customer expectations have changed in the past 3 years

	CX leaders	Agents
Higher expectations in general	**73%**	**59%**
Expect faster service	**34%**	**39%**
Expect more personalized service	**23%**	**16%**
Expect more concessions	**13%**	**25%**

How the agent's role has changed in the past 3 years

	CX leaders	Agents
Higher case volumes	**42%**	**36%**
Lack of resources and training	**19%**	**24%**
More manual tasks	**19%**	**13%**

Key finding 3: Customer experience leaders are under pressure

What do leaders see as the biggest challenge in resolving customer issues?

Among total customer experience leader respondents	Italy
Lack of resources/capacity	**25%**
Data silos	**22%**
Organizational silos	**15%**
Lack of tools/application functionality	**14%**
System silos	**11%**
Lack of consistent processes	**9%**
Other	**4%**



Internal functions that leaders say delay customer issue resolution

- Their own customer service/contact center **32%**
- Billing/accounting **33%**
- Fulfillment/delivery **34%**

Leaders' most-wanted list for immediate deployment (top 3)

Among those whose organizations have not deployed the capability yet—base varies	Italy
Workforce optimization	**29%**
Artificial intelligence	**24%**
Integration with systems of record	**15%**

Key finding 4: AI is delivering real value in customer service

Benefits of AI usage (top 3)

Chosen among top 3 benefits	Italy
Improved speed and efficiency	**67%**
Increased automation for routine tasks	**50%**
Improved quality of solutions	**47%**





AI gool implementation strategy: Planned vs. ad hoc

	Italy CX leaders
Total	**100%**
Planned AI strategy	**41%**
Implementing AI tools ad hoc	**59%**

Biggest roadblocks for generative AI (top 3)

Among total customer experience leader respondents	Italy
Privacy and security risks	**38%**
User acceptance and trust	**35%**
Need for specialized skills	**33%**

Key finding 5: Next steps in the future of customer experience

Top 3 projected customer expectations for the future: Italy

Customer experience leaders	Customer service agents
Demand faster resolutions **41%**	Demand faster resolutions **43%**
Expect first-contact resolution **39%**	Expect first-contact resolution **40%**
Expect increase in quality of service across channels **30%**	Expect increase in quality of service across channels **39%**

3 most important capabilities for the future: Italy

Customer experience leaders	Customer service agents
Workforce optimization **80%**	Workforce optimization **79%**
Integration with systems of record **71%**	Proactive service alerts **61%**
Process automation **71%**	Process automation **53%**

What leaders cite as the most important skills for agents over the next 3 years

- Problem-solving **48%**
- Productivity **40%**
- Training on emerging technologies **40%**

Country metrics: **Japan**

Importance of customer service

- **54%** of respondents say they're likely to switch brands based on poor customer service experience
- **70%** of respondents say they're likely to recommend a brand based on great customer experience

Key finding 1: Customers feel disconnected and discontented

Most important aspects in a customer service experience (top 3)

- **80%** empathetic customer service agent
- **78%** customer service agent able to resolve problems easily
- **77%** customer service response times

Most common frustrations (top 3)

- **55%** being required to have multiple interactions before full resolution is achieved
- **39%** being passed between teams/departments
- **38%** (average) inability to reach a live customer service agent quickly/efficiently

Key finding 2: Customer service agents are overburdened

How customer expectations have changed in the past 3 years

	CX leaders
Higher expectations in general	**76%**
Expect more personalized service	**23%**
More self-service options	**21%**
Expect faster service	**17%**

How the agent's role has changed in the past 3 years

	CX leaders	Agents
Higher case volumes	**22%**	**13%**
Lack of resources and training	**21%**	**20%**
Attrition	**15%**	**15%**

Key finding 3: Customer experience leaders are under pressure

What do leaders see as the biggest challenge in resolving customer issues?

Among total customer experience leader respondents	Japan
Lack of consistent processes	**22%**
Lack of resources/capacity	**21%**
Lack of tools/application functionality	**18%**
System silos	**18%**
Organizational silos	**10%**
Data silos	**8%**
Other	**3%**

Internal functions that leaders say delay customer issue resolution

- Sales/marketing **39%**
- Their own customer service/contact center **38%**
- Order processing **33%**

Leaders' most-wanted list for immediate deployment (top 3)

Among those whose organizations have not deployed the capability yet—base varies	Japan
Artificial intelligence	**23%**
Workforce optimatization	**21%**
Generative AI	**19%**

Key finding 4: AI and GenAI are delivering real value in customer service

Benefits of AI usage (top 3)

Chosen among top 3 benefits	Japan
Improved speed and efficiency	**76%**
Increased automation for routine tasks	**48%**
More accurate and relevant recommendations	**48%**



AI tool implementation strategy: Planned vs. ad hoc

	Japan CX leaders
Total	**100%**
Planned AI strategy	**49%**
Implementing AI tools ad hoc	**51%**

Biggest roadblocks for generative AI (top 3)

Among total customer experience leader respondents	Japan
Need for specialized skills	**37%**
Cost and resource constraints	**35%**
User acceptance and trust	**28%**

Key finding 5: Next steps in the future of customer experience

Top 3 projected customer expectations for the future: Japan

Customer experience leaders	Customer service agents
Demand faster resolutions **43%**	Demand faster resolutions **42%**
Expect companies to identify and solve issues before they reach out **37%**	Expect increase in quality of service across channels **27%**
Expect increase in quality of service across channels **34%**	Expect companies to identify and solve issues before they reach out **27%**

3 most important capabilities for the future: Japan

Customer experience leaders	Customer service agents
Workforce optimization **79%**	Workforce optimization **57%**
Integration with systems of record **77%**	Integration with systems of record **40%**
Process automation **68%**	Proactive service alerts **37%**

What leaders cite as the most important skills for agents over the next 3 years

- Problem-solving **59%**
- Training on emerging technologies **54%**
- Productivity **40%**



Country metrics: **Netherlands**

Importance of customer service

- **66%** of respondents say they're likely to switch brands based on poor customer service experience
- **84%** of respondents say they're likely to recommend a brand based on great customer experience

Key finding 1: Customers feel disconnected and discontented

Most important aspects in a customer service experience (top 3)

- **88%** customer service agent able to resolve problems easily
- **88%** customer service response times
- **81%** empathetic customer service agent

Most common frustrations (top 3)

- **41%** chatbot/automated tool not understanding my problem
- **35%** (average) inability to reach a live customer service agent quickly/efficiently
- **33%** being passed between teams/departments

Key finding 2: Customer service agents are overburdened

How customer expectations have changed in the past 3 years

	CX leaders
Higher expectations in general	**77%**
Expect more personalized service	**31%**
Expect more self-service options	**18%**
Expect faster service	**16%**

How the agent's role has changed in the past 3 years

	CX leaders
Higher attrition	**23%**
Higher case volumes	**20%**
Lack of resources and training	**18%**
More manual tasks	**18%**
Longer working hours	**15%**

Key finding 3: Customer experience leaders are under pressure

What do leaders see as the biggest challenge in resolving customer issues?

Among total customer experience leader respondents	Netherlands
Lack of resources/capacity	**27%**
Lack of consistent processes	**20%**
Lack of tools/application functionality	**18%**
Organizational silos	**18%**
Data silos	**8%**
System silos	**8%**
Other	**2%**



Internal functions that leaders say delay customer issue resolution

- Their own customer service/contact center **36%**
- Fulfillment/delivery **35%**
- Order processing **32%**

Leaders' most-wanted list for immediate deployment (top 3)

Among those whose organizations have not deployed the capability yet—base varies	Netherlands
Self-service knowledge base, community, portal	**32%**
Artificial intelligence	**27%**
Generative AI	**25%**

Key finding 4: AI and GenAI are delivering real value in customer service

Benefits of AI usage (top 3)

Chosen among top 3 benefits	Netherlands
Improved speed and efficiency	**58%**
Improved quality of solutions	**50%**
Better understanding of customer needs and preferences	**47%**



AI tool implementation strategy: Planned vs. ad hoc

	Netherlands CX leaders
Total	**100%**
Planned AI strategy	**56%**
Implementing AI tools ad hoc	**44%**

Biggest roadblocks for generative AI (top 3)

Among total customer experience leader respondents	Netherlands
Legal and regulatory constraints	**36%**
Cost and resource constraints	**35%**
Privacy and security risks	**33%**

Key finding 5: Next steps in the future of customer experience

Top 3 projected customer expectations for the future: Netherlands

Customer experience leaders
Expect quality service across all channels **41%**
Expect companies to identify and solve issues before they reach out **38%**
Leave businesses more quickly if they receive poor customer service **33%**

3 most important capabilities for the future: Netherlands

Customer experience leaders
Integration with systems of record **79%**
Workforce optimization **77%**
Process automation **77%**

What leaders cite as the most important skills for agents over the next 3 years

- Problem-solving **50%**
- Empathy **44%**
- Collaboration **37%**

Country metrics: **Nordic Region** (Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden)

Importance of customer service

- **67%** of respondents say they're likely to switch brands based on poor customer service experience
- **81%** of respondents say they're likely to recommend a brand based on great customer experience

Key finding 1: Customers feel disconnected and discontented

Most important aspects in a customer service experience (top 3)

- **89%** customer service agent able to resolve problems easily
- **89%** customer service response times
- **74%** empathetic customer service agent

Most common frustrations (top 3)

- **42%** (average) inability to reach a live customer service agent quickly/efficiently
- **39%** Chatbot/automated tool not understanding my problem
- **36%** being passed between teams/departments

Key finding 2: Customer service agents are overburdened

How customer expectations have changed in the past 3 years

	CX leaders	Agents
Higher expectations in general	83%	54%
Expect more personalized service	30%	20%
Expect faster service	24%	23%
Expect more concessions	13%	20%

How the agent's role has changed in the past 3 years

	CX leaders	Agents
Higher case volumes	24%	32%
Lack of resources and training	21%	27%
More manual tasks	20%	13%
Longer working hours	19%	9%

Key finding 3: Customer experience leaders are under pressure

What do leaders see as the biggest challenge in resolving customer issues?

Among total customer experience leader respondents	Nordic Region
Lack of consistent processes	23%
Lack of resources/capacity	22%
Organizational silos	17%
Lack of tools/application functionality	15%
Data silos	14%
System silos	10%
Other	1%

Internal functions that leaders say delay customer issue resolution

- Their own customer service/contact center **46%**
- Billing/accounting **46%**
- Order processing **36%**

Leaders' most-wanted list for immediate deployment (top 3)

Among those whose organizations have not deployed the capability yet—base varies	Nordic Region
Generative AI	**34%**
Artificial intelligence	**24%**
Chatbot	**24%**

Key finding 4: AI and GenAI are delivering real value in customer service

Benefits of AI usage (top 3)

Chosen among top 3 benefits	Nordic Region
Improved speed and efficiency	**70%**
Increased automation for routine tasks	**59%**
More accurate and relevant recommendations	**46%**



AI tool implementation strategy: Planned vs. ad hoc

	Nordic Region CX leaders
Total	**100%**
Planned AI strategy	**61%**
Implementing AI tools ad hoc	**39%**

Biggest roadblocks for generative AI (top 3)

Among total customer experience leader respondents	Nordic Region
Need for specialized skills	**34%**
User acceptance and trust	**34%**
Privacy and security risks	**33%**

Key finding 5: Next steps in the future of customer experience

Top 3 projected customer expectations for the future: Nordic Region

Customer experience leaders	Customer service agents
Expect increase in quality of service across channels **42%**	Expect increase in quality of service across channels **48%**
Demand faster resolutions **40%**	Demand faster resolutions **43%**
Expect companies to identify and solve issues before they reach out **39%**	Use self-service channels more frequently **46%**

3 most important capabilities for the future: Nordic Region

Customer experience leaders	Customer service agents
Workforce optimization **80%**	Self-service knowledge base, community, portal **68%**
Artificial intelligence **76%**	Proactive service alerts **66%**
Generative AI **76%**	Integration with systems of record **64%**

What leaders cite as the most important skills for agents over the next 3 years

- Productivity **47%**
- Empathy **44%**
- Collaboration **36%**



Country metrics: **United Kingdom**

Importance of customer service

- **75%** of respondents say they're likely to switch brands based on poor customer service experience
- **86%** of respondents say they're likely to recommend a brand based on great customer experience

Key finding 1: Customers feel disconnected and discontented

Most important aspects in a customer service experience (top 3)

- **95%** customer service agent able to resolve problems easily
- **92%** customer service response times
- **81%** (tie)*

Most common frustrations (top 3)

- **56%** (average) inability to reach a live customer service agent quickly/efficiently
- **55%** being passed between teams/departments
- **46%** having to provide information you have already supplied on another channel

Key finding 2: Customer service agents are overburdened

How customer expectations have changed in the past 3 years

	CX leaders	Agents
Higher expectations in general	**74%**	**66%**
Expect more personalized service	**27%**	**16%**
Expect faster service	**25%**	**39%**
Expect more concessions	**14%**	**20%**

How the agent's role has changed in the past 3 years

	CX leaders	Agents
Higher case volumes	**27%**	**41%**
Longer working hours	**22%**	**19%**
Lack of resources and training	**21%**	**13%**
More manual tasks	**11%**	**8%**

Key finding 3: Customer experience leaders are under pressure

What do leaders see as the biggest challenge in resolving customer issues?

Among total customer experience leader respondents	United Kingdom
Lack of consistent processes	**25%**
Lack of resources/capacity	**20%**
Lack of tools/application functionality	**15%**
Data silos	**15%**
Organizational silos	**14%**
System silos	**8%**
Other	**3%**

* seamless service; customer service agent providing informed recommendations; empathic customer service agent

Internal functions that leaders say delay customer issue resolution

- Order processing **40%**
- Their own customer service/contact center **37%**
- Fulfillment/delivery **36%**

Leaders' most-wanted list for immediate deployment (top 3)

Among those whose organizations have not deployed the capability yet—base varies	United Kingdom
Self-service knowledge base, community, portal	**23%**
Generative AI	**22%**
Artificial intelligence	**17%**

Key finding 4: AI and GenAI are delivering real value in customer service

Benefits of AI usage (top 3)

Chosen among top 3 benefits	United Kingdom
Improved speed and efficiency	**67%**
Increased automation for routine tasks	**57%**
Improved quality of solutions	**43%**



AI tool implementation strategy: Planned vs. ad hoc

	United Kingdom CX leaders
Total	**100%**
Planned AI strategy	**54%**
Implementing AI tools ad hoc	**46%**

Biggest roadblocks for generative AI (top 3)

Among total customer experience leader respondents	United Kingdom
Privacy and security risks	**38%**
User acceptance and trust	**36%**
Need for specialized skills	**34%**

Key finding 5: Next steps in the future of customer experience

Top 3 projected customer expectations for the future: United Kingdom

Customer experience leaders	Customer service agents
Demand faster resolutions **46%**	Demand faster resolutions **47%**
Expect increase in quality of service across channels **46%**	Expect organizations to resolve issues on first contact **38%**
Expect substantial improvement in self-service **33%**	Expect increase in quality of service across channels **36%**

3 most important capabilities for the future: United Kingdom

Customer experience leaders	Customer service agents
Workforce optimization **78%**	Integration with systems of record **59%**
Integration with systems of record **78%**	Self-service knowledge base, community, portal **54%**
Process automation **76%**	Workforce optimization **54%**

What leaders cite as the most important skills for agents over the next 3 years

- Problem-solving **49%**
- Critical thinking **39%**
- Productivity **38%**



Country metrics: **United States**

Importance of customer service

- **74%** of respondents say they're likely to switch brands based on poor customer service experience
- **90%** of respondents say they're likely to recommend a brand based on great customer experience

Key finding 1: Customers feel disconnected and discontented

Most important aspects in a customer service experience (top 3)

- **94%** customer service agent able to resolve problems easily
- **92%** customer service response times
- **84%** seamless service

Most common frustrations (top 3)

- **52%** (average) inability to reach a live customer service agent quickly/efficiently
- **50%** being passed between teams/departments
- **44%** being required to have multiple interactions before full resolution is achieved

Key Finding 2: Customer service agents are overburdened

How customer expectations have changed in the past 3 years

	CX leaders	Agents
Higher expectations in general	67%	56%
Expect more concessions	24%	29%
Expect faster service	22%	13%
Expect more personalized service	21%	22%

How the agent's role has changed in the past 3 years

	CX leaders	Agents
Higher case volumes	29%	35%
Longer working hours	15%	15%
Longer working hours	15%	15%
Lack of resources and training	13%	15%
More manual tasks	12%	14%

Key finding 3: Customer experience leaders are under pressure

What do leaders see as the biggest challenge in resolving customer issues?

Among total customer experience leader respondents	U.S.
Lack of resources/capacity	21%
Lack of consistent processes	30%
Lack of tools/application functionality	18%
Organizational silos	8%
Data silos	5%
System silos	8%
Other	11%



Internal functions that leaders say delay customer issue resolution

- Their own customer service/contact center **36%**
- Billing/accounting **33%**
- Fulfillment/delivery **26%**

Leaders' most-wanted list for immediate deployment (top 3)

Among those whose organizations have not deployed the capability yet—base varies	U.S.
Workforce optimization	**23%**
Self-service knowledge base, community, portal	**18%**
Artificial intelligence	**15%**

Key finding 4: AI and GenAI are delivering real value in customer service

Benefits of AI usage (top 3)

Chosen among top 3 benefits	U.S.
Improved speed and efficiency	**74%**
Increased automation for routine tasks	**51%**
Improved quality of solutions	**47%**

AI tool implementation strategy: Planned vs. ad hoc

	U.S. CX leaders
Total	**100%**
Planned AI strategy	**42%**
Implementing AI tools ad hoc	**58%**

Biggest roadblocks for generative AI (top 3)

Among total customer experience leader respondents	U.S.
User acceptance and trust	**45%**
Privacy and security risks	**36%**
Cost and resource constraints	**35%**

Key finding 5: Next steps in the future of customer experience

Top 3 projected customer expectations for the future

Customer experience leaders	Customer service agents
Demand faster resolutions **49%**	Demand faster resolutions **53%**
Expect increase in quality of service across channels **39%**	Expect increase in quality of service across channels **50%**
Expect first-contact resolution **39%**	Expect first-contact resolution **41%**

3 most important capabilities for the future

Customer experience leaders	Customer service agents
Workforce optimization **71%**	Self-service knowledge base, community, portal **68%**
Integration with systems of record **71%**	Proactive service alerts **64%**
Process automation **67%**	Workforce optimization **63%**

What leaders cite as the most important skills for agents over the next 3 years

- Problem-solving **61%**
- Critical thinking **49%**
- Productivity **44%**

For a deeper exploration of ServiceNow solutions, we recommend the following content:

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When things change in an instant, can your customer experience engine keep up? See five ways intelligent, AI-driven automation on a single platform helps you deal with customer service disruption.

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