

# Humans want human touch in customer journey, not bots

New UK research indicates that consumers value human interaction in the customer services process, with 87% reporting they tend to stay more loyal and increase their business with companies that offer a real person to talk to at the right stage of their customer journey.



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The research, conducted by Yonder Digital Group, aimed to test whether forsaking all human interaction in favour of total automation is a cost-effective, silver-bullet solution. The result completely debunks the myth that customer experience can be managed entirely via automation technologies and spells out an important caveat to businesses: scrimping on customer experience can severely damage the bottom line.

With technology rapidly responding to customer appetite and offering an increasing number of channels and ways for customers to get in touch with companies to make enquiries or complaints, it is not surprising that many businesses find justification in opting for cheap, fully automated solutions to managing the customer experience.

However, research confirms this is no area to make shortsighted cuts, as one analyst confirms that 60% of consumers have not completed an intended purchase based on a poor customer service experience and another notes that 52% of consumers have switched providers in the last year due to a poor customer experience.

## Summary of results

- I tend to stay more loyal and increase my business with companies who offer a real person to talk to when I need it – 87%
- I tend to stay more loyal and increase my business with companies who offer a choice of ways of getting in touch with them – 84%
- I tend to stay more loyal and increase my business with companies who resolve my queries and enquiries quickly and effectively, however I get in touch with them – 92%
- If I can't get through to a real person when I have a query with a company, I tend to take my business elsewhere – 69%
- If my queries aren't answered quickly and effectively by a company, I tend to take my business elsewhere – 81%

Human interaction, therefore, takes a key role in the channel mix required by today's customers. 84% of respondents confirm that having a choice of channels to get in touch with a company is key to ensuring their repeat custom, while speed and effective resolution of the issue, be it a query or a complaint are of course vital to growing and retaining the customer base.

Chris Robinson, Yonder Digital Group, comments, "Consumers today have come to expect a choice of channels to get in touch with companies. They may like to receive promotions over email, browse on an app but make enquiries over the telephone. However, they choose to get in touch with a company, they also expect that the answer to their question, or the resolution to their complaint, is dealt with quickly and effectively and technology alone cannot always do that.

"Savvy businesses are combining the undoubtable power of artificial intelligence (AI) technology with well-informed live agents and are thus able to make the crucial difference and retain and grow custom as a result. Ensuring that live agents are able to access information on customer behaviour across channels helps ensure that this human interaction is speedy, informed and effective for both the customer and the business."

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