Driving radical customer service innovation

How IT can help customer service adapt to changing demands in an unpredictable world
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Partnering for success

Disruptions to traditional ways of working have changed the way businesses deliver service. At the same time, customers’ expectations for quality service have continued to grow. To help customers adapt to a new reality, service teams are asking their IT organization to partner with them to provide a seamless service experience despite complex, remote working arrangements and distributed workforces. The stakes are high. Service is no longer an add-on or afterthought. It’s now the foundation for maintaining business continuity in the face of uncertainty and positioning the organization for future growth.

How does taking a proactive, collaborative approach benefit your organization? Doing so puts you in the position to:

- Ramp up service capacity when the unexpected happens
- Expand service offerings through self-service and virtual agent options
- Collaborate more effectively with middle and back-office personnel to address customer concerns
- Deploy field service more efficiently to enrich the customer experience
Today’s customer service imperatives

Customers have a lot of questions and need a lot of support—now more than ever before. To help them maintain continuity and respond to a crisis, companies are striving to upgrade service delivery and transform the customer experience. But in times of high service demand, customers can quickly grow frustrated with long hold times and delayed responses. To adjust to these new challenges, customer service organizations are exploring how to expand capacity despite unprecedented constraints, while still providing best-in-class support. This means rethinking how technology, data, and processes interact for effective service delivery.

On the following pages, you’ll learn:

• What’s now important to your customer service colleagues on the front lines of a business environment in flux.

• Five key things they need to succeed with today’s higher-than-ever customer expectations.

• How your IT organization can help them get there.
Customer service need #1: A modern, personalized customer experience

At one time, an omnichannel customer experience was a competitive differentiator. In this new environment, it’s a competitive necessity. Customers want the flexibility to engage over their channel of their choice—web, chat, telephone, text, or social media—and on their schedule. They expect seamless interactions, personalized support, and consistency across channels. And the quality of that engagement sets the tone for the entire customer relationship.

How IT can help:
Partner with your customer service team to deploy the tools that can help customers help themselves—and help agents provide added support when self-service solutions don’t address customer needs:

- Give customers access to resources such as a knowledge base, customer community, and virtual agents or chatbots.
- Create a service catalog to address the most frequently made requests.
- Deploy agent-assist tools that accelerate resolution times.

The ideal experience will consider the customer context—their history, purchases, and usage details—to deliver a customized, personalized interaction. Customers see only the most relevant content and will be quickly routed to the person who can help them best. Agents will have the tools and freedom they need to understand customers in their moments of need.
Customer service need #2: Organization-wide digital workflows

Research has shown that even when individual service touchpoints perform well, the overall customer experience can still be poor.* Most organizations don’t have the cross-departmental workflows that bring together different teams within the business to address customer issues. Breaking down traditional silos can create a more compelling experience. Great service requires tight coordination across field service, operations, billing, and every other aspect of the business. This connectivity creates the kind of end-to-end visibility and effective task assignment and resolution that can only happen when departments, processes, and technology work together.


How IT can help:

Digital workflows can break down information silos spread across systems, both back and front office, and automate collaboration among departments. Look for a solution that:

• Connects employees in real time to share ideas, work together, and make quick decisions.
• Provides easy-to-use tools that deliver full visibility.
• Allows easy prioritization of tasks and investigation of issues.
• Automates customer requests as they flow through the organization to drive them to completion.
Customer service need #3: Intelligent automation

The use of AI by customer service teams is projected to increase by 143 percent* as businesses look to automate key aspects of service delivery. In addition to chatbots and virtual agents to automate self-service, service leaders are seeking to automate the workflows that involve middle office, back office, and field service teams in service delivery. One of the key components in this effort is a service catalog backed by pre-built workflows that automate the assignment and execution of tasks. Intelligent automation helps to:

- Speed response time to customer concerns.
- Immediately route incoming service requests to the most appropriate agent.
- Send the right technician and equipment to complete work the first time.
- Clear service bottlenecks.
- Flag emerging issues so agents can reach out to customers proactively.

*https://www.zdnet.com/article/ai-is-revolutionizing-customer-service/

How IT can help:

Research AI use cases, identify areas where AI could benefit the organization, and educate customer service and supporting departments on how it could come to life. Seek out a solution with visual tools to enable the accessible, rapid assembly of contextual workflows, conversations, and business process automation. Business owners and subject-matter experts also need access to powerful analytics for anticipating trends, prioritizing resources, and identifying issues ripe for automation.
Customer service need #4: A flexible platform that scales

In this more fluid and unpredictable environment, service demand can spike at any time. Businesses need a solution that integrates with other systems out of the box, so they can accelerate response without waiting months for IT to build something new. And as conditions change and new needs arise, service teams need the flexibility to make changes to the system without involving IT each time. Creating and updating workflows is an important way to enable this kind of agility.

How IT can help:

The ability to quickly build custom applications using existing applications, services, and integrations is critical. Look for app development tools that are user-friendly, so anyone in the business, even outside of IT, can develop applications to meet their needs. The right platform provides data management, workflows, templates, scripting tools, and integrations to enable rapid development and deployment of applications for every department. It should also provide an application marketplace where companies can purchase additional, certified applications to accelerate internal deployment timelines, complement existing development, and rapidly solve complex business problems.
Customer service need #5: High-availability apps

Always-on service can provide a reassuring presence in an unpredictable world. Customer service apps—like customer service itself—can deliver this reliability across a globally dispersed customer base. Customer service organizations need redundancies so that customers never see the effects of outages. And they need the elasticity to spin up when customer loads are heavy, and back down when they are light.

How IT can help:

If you haven’t already, build a cloud strategy for your enterprise. Define security policies and cloud providers that meet your needs. Cloud architecture provides an advanced, high-availability infrastructure that affords instance redundancy between data centers in a chosen geography. It must also support the highest levels of compliance and global regulations and scale to meet your company’s needs. Multi-instance architectures give every customer their own unique application and database, which allows deployment and upgrading on a company’s own schedule, customization of the service, backup and recovery, and physical (not just logical) separation of their data from that of other customers.
Where to start

Customers and the businesses that serve them find themselves reinventing processes and relationships on the fly. But even in the midst of uncertainty and disruption, it’s possible to maintain the service quality that can strengthen existing customer relationships and attract new business. Here’s our expert guide to making it work:

- **Start with the business goals:** Designate a process expert on the customer service team to identify current challenges and goals of the customer service transformation.

- **Define the customer journey and key processes:** Identify what a customer goes through when using your product or interacting with customer service.

- **Map capabilities:** Use the goals established by customer service to help determine the technical requirements of the system, considering the systems that are currently in place.

- **Set your metrics:** Establish KPIs and how you will track them to prove the value of the transformation.

- **Establish an ongoing governance structure:** Set roles and responsibilities that support optimization and continued transformation.
The ServiceNow customer service solution

It’s time to throw out the old playbook for quality customer service. The rules have changed, and traditional CRM systems focused on managing customer contact and individual interactions aren’t up to the rigors of this new reality.

ServiceNow® Customer Service Management connects customer service teams to the rest of the organization through automated workflows. It helps them get ahead of customer issues and deliver personalized, self-service experiences. With ServiceNow, customer service agents are equipped to fix the root cause of issues, respond faster to concerns, and move beyond operational demands to deliver great experiences that drive business growth.

Built on the ServiceNow® platform, it helps your organization increase customer satisfaction while reducing costs by using AI and workflow to assign, manage, and resolve complex issues end-to-end. You can monitor trends and customers’ products and services to proactively identify and fix problems before customers know they have them. With the solution, you can instantly handle common customer requests.

Learn more about ServiceNow’s benefits, capabilities and integrations.
ServiceNow customers of every size and industry have reinvented their customer experience with Customer Service Management. Here are two of their stories.

**NICE**

NICE has 25,000+ customers and more than 5,000 employees doing business in 150 countries. Facing an escalating case load, they modernized their service capabilities and automated processes, leading to 80% of cases opened via self-service portal, cases opened 8X faster, and streamlined routing and reporting. Find out how NICE moved beyond CRM to drive customer service success.

**TN**

With a change of administration, the State of Tennessee established a new focus on delivering service to its constituents. After implementing ServiceNow Customer Service Management, they were able to reduce inquiry assignment time from 36 hours to 8 minutes to 100 seconds. Learn more about how the State of Tennessee created a consistent omni-channel service experience for residents.
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About ServiceNow
ServiceNow (NYSE: NOW) is the fastest-growing enterprise cloud software company in the world above $1 billion. Founded in 2004 with the goal of making work easier for people, ServiceNow is making the world of work, work better for people. Our cloud-based platform and solutions deliver digital workflows that create great experiences and unlock productivity to approximately 5,400 enterprise customers worldwide, including almost 75% of the Fortune 500. For more information, visit www.servicenow.com.