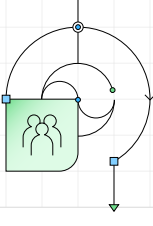# Data Story

AI-powered productivity: Customer service

AI-enabled automation in customer service is an untapped goldmine for pinpointing sales opportunities and tailoring customer interactions.

AI has become a transformative force in the business landscape, particularly in customer service. According to recent IBM Institute for Business Value (IBM IBV) research, while agentic AI may be new to their AI automation strategies, a growing number of customer service executives are recognizing its potential and how quickly it's becoming the hot technology topic of the day.

Currently, more than half report minimal automation in customer communications, with only limited use of self-service assistants for field services and customer service.

However,

49% have already adopted partial automation in customer feedback and support inquiries,

48% in retention, and

47% in onboarding.

Looking ahead, AI-driven customer service is set to evolve dramatically. **By 2027, executives forecast a shift toward fully autonomous automation, with 71% aiming for touchless customer support inquiries.**

An additional

47% foresee touchless automation in customer product and service training,

43% in communications, and

42% in feedback.

With agentic AI, organizations can drive breakthrough customer service and sales support.

The use of agentic AI in organizations can significantly enhance both customer service and sales support. Agents and multi-agent workflows can automate lead scoring, refine forecasting, personalize customer engagement, and curate sales content. Simultaneously, these agents can manage routine interactions through virtual assistants. By analyzing historical sales data and market trends, agents identify high-potential customer leads, enabling sales teams to concentrate on high-value opportunities that can fuel win rates and revenue growth.

In the realm of customer service, AI's impact is equally profound. Agentic AI can provide round-the-clock, multilingual global support with tailored, proactive responses. Moreover, it can interpret customer sentiment, allowing customer service representatives to refine their in-person engagement strategies accordingly.
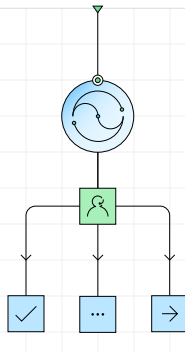
Executives expect AI-fueled self-service options to facilitate higher customer satisfaction.

The future of AI in customer service also holds promise for increased customer satisfaction and loyalty. Executives anticipate a **53% increase in the use of AI to power personalized self-service for customers and a 47% enhancement in self-service call resolution by 2027.**

They project a significant boost in customer service Net Promoter Scores (NPS) by

35%

However, to fully harness the potential of AI, organizations need to foster ecosystem expertise. Outsourcing is likely to play a crucial role in this transition.

The top areas executives expect to outsource include self-service digital assistants:

This strategic outsourcing can help businesses rapidly scale AI capabilities without the need for extensive in-house AI expertise.

86% field services

85% customer support inquiries

81% customer product and service training

81% customer communications

Key recommendations for customer service officers

Customer service is uniquely positioned, in any industry, to streamline operations, improve customer loyalty with higher NPS, and drive sales growth. As executives embrace agentic AI and leverage ecosystem expertise, they position their organizations at the forefront of this transformative shift, offering superior customer experiences and a competitive edge in the market. Based on IBM IBV research and analysis, here are key recommendations:

1.
Prioritize agentic AI to propel customer service.
When investing in AI automation, execs should emphasize multi-agent customer service to enhance forecasting, personalize customer engagement, and curate sales content.

2.
Start planning now, then plan some more.
With 71% of executives aiming for touchless customer service by 2027, it's crucial to plan now for technological readiness as well as strategic planning for resource allocation, process reinvention, and staff re-skilling.

3.
Foster agentic AI ecosystems expertise.
In seeking ecosystem expertise, execs should prioritize partners that specialize in agentic AI technology to help ensure successful implementation of AI systems capable of handling complex, context-aware customer interactions.

4.
Focus on personalization—customers demand it.
Executives should focus on using agentic AI to offer tailored, proactive customer service experiences, including round-the-clock, multilingual support.

5.
Measure and optimize with detailed KPIs.
To facilitate the successful implementation of agentic AI, it's essential to establish robust metrics for measuring success, such as increases in customer satisfaction scores (NPS) and improvements in win rates and revenue growth.

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