

## How AI is Saving Customer Service

As a customer, if you've tried to contact any businesses that you patronize lately, whether it be your bank or your favorite retailer, you've most likely benefited from artificial intelligence (AI). There's a reason for that. The use of AI to deliver better customer service has been on the rise.

So what is AI exactly? As defined by [Encyclopedia Britannica](#), "Artificial intelligence is the ability of a digital computer or computer-controlled robot to perform tasks commonly associated with intelligent beings." And just like all technology, AI is improving with time. But what makes AI unique from other technologies is that researchers have created software that borrows the Darwinian concept of "survival of the fittest," meaning that AI programs can improve generation after generation without human input.

More specifically, AI algorithms are built to create neural networks that mimic the structure of the brain. After learning from draining data, the networks alter the strength of the connections between artificial neurons. Smaller subcircuits of neurons carry out specific tasks.

So how does AI relate to customer service? AI adds a new customer service channel – chatbots. Using natural language processing (NLP), chatbots offer customer support with no human input. Chatbots are designed to deliver experiences that can transform everyday tasks, like billing and payments, into rich customer touchpoints. As the chatbot algorithm processes more messages, it gets smarter and smarter, making responses even better.

And the usage of AI in customer service can only be expected to grow even more. In the State of Service research report in 2019 conducted by [Salesforce](#), over 3,500 customer service decision-makers and agents were surveyed worldwide. Even pre-pandemic, the numbers showed that 56% of decision-makers say that their organizations are actively looking for ways to use AI. AI adoption was forecasted to surge by 143% over the ensuing 18 months.

Additionally, in a recent survey by [Forbes magazine](#) of 1,092 executives, marketing, customer service, and sales were listed as the top three functions where AI can realize its full potential. NLP has made more benefits possible with AI – sentiment analysis, automation, and personalization. So it's no surprise then that 90% of organizations are using AI to improve their customer experience. Already, investors have put over \$5B in over 1,400 AI-powered sales and technology companies.

### Executive Summary:

Artificial intelligence (AI) was already on a meteoric rise in the transformation of customer service as we know it. Now that the global pandemic has placed additional pressures on businesses, it's important to take a look at what AI means to tomorrow's customer service. Businesses can take advantage of benefits such as expansion of customer service hours and productivity and efficiency gains.

*Alacriti is here to assist in providing solutions and help businesses with best practice guidelines and the use of our chatbot for free for 6 months.*

The pandemic, of course, has had a serious impact on how consumers view AI when it comes to customer service. The effects of COVID-19 have led to a surge in call volume and customer frustration across many industries and business types. In fact, a [study](#) showed that 66% of calls result in customers contacting over three communication channels before finding the right person.

## **AI can deliver the following benefits that are especially needed during these times:**



### **Always on Service**

Expand your customer service hours beyond agent hours to 24/7 service. Customers will appreciate the opportunity to connect with your business when it's convenient for them, and many support inquiries can be answered or resolved literally overnight before your agents come in to work.



### **Allows Businesses to Scale Their Teams**

Even if your business has the funds to onboard and train agents, it will still take significant time to get them trained, which won't work when there is an immediate need. AI can handle the common questions that are taking up so much of support staff's time, allowing them more time to handle more complex inquiries. The efficiency and productivity gains can be immense – allowing businesses to do more with less time and less resources.



### **Stay Competitive**

With so many businesses taking advantage of AI, it's important to stay competitive. Given the progress of AI, it won't be long before AI is table stakes. Organizational spending on AI software is expected to go above \$125B by 2025. This is especially important for the banking sector, which has the fastest adoption of AI tech than any other.



### **Be More Proactive with Customer Service with Valuable Data**

With AI, now you can know what questions most of your customers are asking. You can always make an educated guess, but making data-driven decisions is key to providing great service and retaining customers.



### **Improve Work Experience for Employees**

Having less volume can make the working environment less frenetic for employees. But they are also empowered to focus on more advanced problems instead of being buried in repetition. Since customer service has one of the highest attrition rates, being able to provide a better employee experience is key.

Implementing AI is not just a solution that only large companies can use. Community banks, credit unions, insurance, and utilities providers just to name a few can use a solution like Alacriti's AI-powered chatbot ([Ella](#)) that can be integrated on their company website in less than a week. Of course, AI will not replace human agents, but it will drastically change the way customer service is conducted globally.

Alacriti is committed to helping credit unions weather the COVID-19 storm and is offering a [6-month trial](#) of Ella's FAQ capability, which is rapidly deployable (2 weeks or less). This enables members to quickly get answers to commonly asked questions.

*To talk with an Alacriti EBPP expert about implementing any of these suggestions, please [click here](#). You can also reach one of our experts at (908) 791-2916 or [info@alacriti.com](mailto:info@alacriti.com).*