

Artificial Intelligence: friend or foe? 7 Ways to turn your agents into superheroes

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Far from replacing people, artificial intelligence (AI) has the power to enhance employee engagement and productivity and customer interactions in one go. Henry Jinman explores 7 ways to turn your contact centre agents into superheroes using conversational AI.

New technology inevitably changes lives. However, rather than fear robots replacing front line customer service representatives it's time to think differently and embrace automation to elevate the status of the contact centre agents and make their jobs more engaging.

The aim of AI isn't to replace people with robots. As former Oracle director Paul Reader said, "Automation is not the future, human augmentation is." (i) From contact centres to factories, AI tools such as bots can reduce costs and increase team efficiency in a matter of months. Automation can be a game changer for customer communication and overall job satisfaction.

Change the mindset, starting with your people and AI will soon become a friend, not a foe. View this technology as the strategic enabler of employee productivity and satisfaction and see service levels, customer loyalty and profits soar.

7 ways to turn your agents into superheroes

Use the latest AI technology to hasten your path to agent superstardom:

1. Eliminate the mundane - AI liberates agents by taking away the repetitive or mundane tasks, leaving them free to enjoy the challenge of tackling complex or emotionally sensitive calls that only humans can handle.

It's a smart move – by elevating the role of agents, you give them the career they deserve and in motivating them to train and hone their skills, they soon become the superheroes that every contact centre leader wants on their side.

2. Build caller context - this can take many forms, for example a bot sitting on the front of an IVR menu asking preliminary questions while the customer is waiting or analysing previous customer conversations to build caller profiles. This gives live agents the valuable intelligence they need to answer customer queries with greater speed and efficiency when a call is transferred to them from their virtual colleagues. The latest AI tools can even identify sentiment and notify the agent of a customer's emotional state of mind. Depending on the outcome of an interaction bots can direct the call to the best-skilled available agent at the appropriate moment.

3. Provide a warm handover - using Natural Language Processing (NLP), AI can understand the initial query and so provide a warm handover to a live agent who already knows what the person is calling about and doesn't have to ask any unnecessary questions, one of the biggest irritations for customers.

4. Good memory, good rapport - today's AI tools are so sophisticated that they can measure customer

satisfaction levels based on tone of voice and vocabulary. They speedily recognise repeat callers from voice and then use this intelligence to flag up pertinent information to customer service agents and alert managers to recurring issues that require multiple repeat calls. Memorising the customer experience based on historical evidence drives proactive call resolution and builds customer trust.

5. Deliver your best ever service - all forms of AI technology such as bots perform like the model employee – they never get tired, are never sick and because they don't suffer from emotions, never have a bad day and they don't need holidays! Always predictable, they offer customers a great, consistent service any time of day or night and there's no limit to the number of users one bot can talk to at once. No matter how many people are already talking to it, yours can answer them right away in natural language – leading to lifelong, positive customer relationships. Meanwhile, agents benefit from additional time to deal with more difficult and complex cases that only humans can handle or can even ask bots for advice on how to respond.

6. Humans and bots in harmony - when AI works hand in hand with the live agent team, contact centres benefit from all the perks of a human workforce plus the consistency of artificial intelligence to boost first call resolution for enhanced customer experience (CX).

7. Agent assistance - help new agents hit the ground running and become super heroes in a matter of days. The beauty of AI is that it acts as an agent's personal assistant. Let new joiners ask questions and allow experienced agents to share their customer success stories with an agent assistant to increase the company knowledge pool. Agents can even ask the bot questions while in conversation with a customer to deliver fast, efficient responses.

It's time to embrace AI as a friend. AI is here to stay and it's set to revolutionise the way businesses interact with their customers. Start by turning your agents into superheroes. For more information visit www.ebi.ai

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About EBI.AI

Established by EBI in 2014, Warwick-headquartered EBI.AI is among the most advanced UK labs to explore the mind-boggling potential of Artificial Intelligence for customer communication. It is changing the ways businesses interact with their customers by providing faster and better resolutions to customer queries using conversational AI technology.

The company has applied its collective 18 years' experience of working with big data, analytics and systems integration to create a range of innovative and natural tools for all businesses in multiple sectors including Transport & Travel, Property, Insurance, Public and Automotive.

EBI was one of the first IBM Watson Ecosystems Partners and EBI.AI's core platform was originally based on IBM Watson. This has evolved over 5 years and EBI.AI now selects the best AI and cloud services available from IBM, Amazon, Microsoft and others, combined with bespoke AI models to deliver its EBI.AI communication platform.

For more information, please visit EBI.AI (<http://www.ebi.ai>)

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