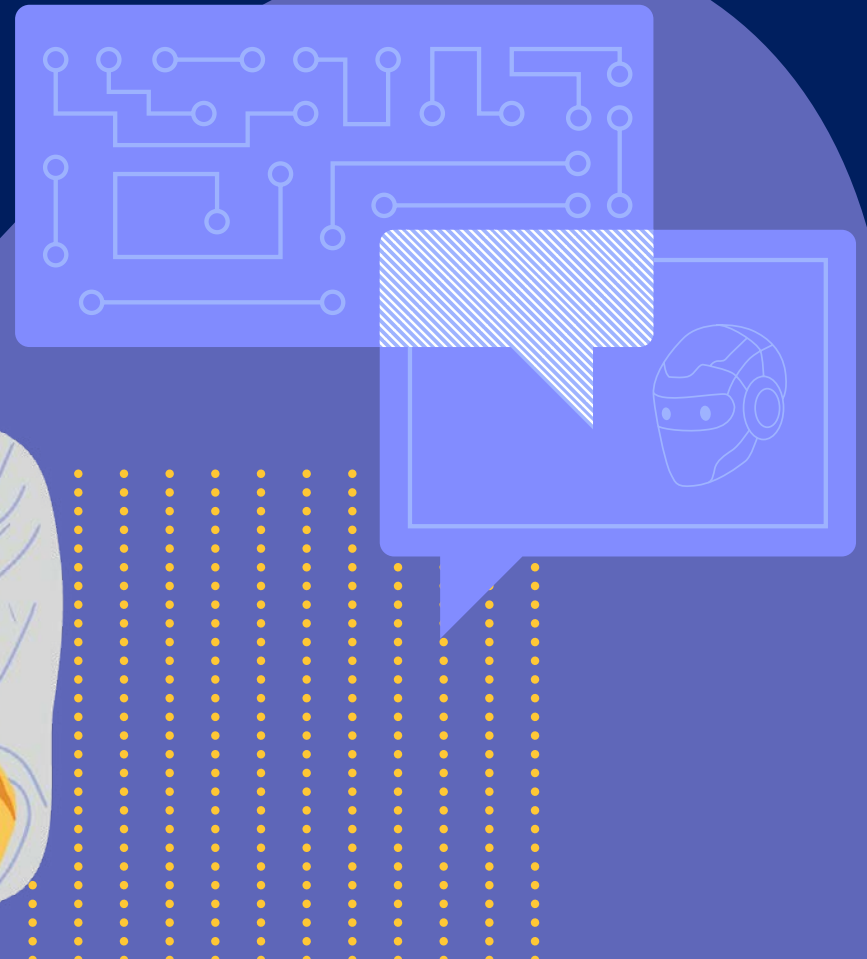# How conversational AI is simplifying the agent experience

The new customer service co-pilot

PEGA®

The shifting agent experience

The role of the customer service agent was already evolving when the global pandemic hit. As businesses started moving more rapidly toward digital-first models, agents continued to step up as knowledge workers to solve the toughest customer issues. Timelines accelerated as businesses grappled with new challenges, including distributed workforces, an expanding gig economy, surges in contact volume, and heightened customer needs. Agents, who had already been manning the front lines for brands, are now more important than ever. And with that comes enormous pressure.

With nearly 80% of customers now saying they will leave a brand if they receive poor service (up almost 10% in a single year), the stakes are higher than ever before. In a single interaction, agents must meet a customers' needs in the moment while also working toward building trust and long-term loyalty as a brand ambassador. At the same time, they are often forced to manage multiple legacy systems that still require manual, lengthy processes. Delivering exceptional customer service can be difficult when you're being pulled in so many different directions.

Let's face it: The agent experience in today's environment is more complex than ever. However, by adopting the right AI-powered customer service strategy, you can simplify experiences for agents and customers alike – while also delivering on your brand's promise.

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Service friction leads to serious frustration (and high costs)

Contact centers are continuing to adapt to meet today's needs, however there are still many blind spots across customer and employee journeys that cause service friction and frustration for agents and customers.

According to **Pega's latest Customer Service Insights report,** agents listed their top three frustrations as the following:

1. **Repetition:** Needing to prompt customers for information they've already supplied on another channel

2. **Manual data entry:** Having to manually enter the same information in various places

3. **Lack of context:** Experiencing a lack of historical context on the customer's past interactions with the company

Agents aren't the only ones feeling the pain as customers also ranked repetition as their #1 frustration. It makes sense – customers aren't looking for drawn out conversations; they're looking for convenience and fast resolution. Disconnected systems and channel silos are frequently to blame for these frustrations. They slow down processes – ultimately increasing costs and eroding both employee and customer loyalty. This can have significant consequences as contact centers are seeing higher employee attrition rates than ever before. And when you factor in a changing labor force, with newer agents that require more training and onboarding to get up to speed, the process slows down even further.

The new role of self-service and conversational AI

It's no secret that conversational AI has been widely adopted in recent years. **These digital technologies, including contextual self-service, intelligent virtual assistants (IVAs), and interactive voice response (IVR) systems, can remedy many service frustrations, while also taking some of the strain off contact center employees.** These tools are critical for reducing call volume, improving time-to-resolution and offering customers 24/7 support - while opening the door to all new autonomous experience where an agent isn't required for resolution.

However, there will always be certain circumstances where an agent still needs to get involved. As knowledge workers, these employees are handling the most complex problems and escalations that frequently require a higher degree of empathy. Now, the very same conversational AI technology is transforming the way that agents work and interact with customers.

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Make every agent your best agent

Conversational AI is now improving live agent interactions, in addition to self-service. Major innovations in unified AI and automation are transforming the world of previously analog voice and legacy web chat tools.

Imagine if every agent in your contact center could:

- ☑ **Always be at their best and understand how to respond to every customer's unique situation**

- ☑ **Be a product/services expert regardless of training and tenure**

- ☑ **Have lightning-fast data entry or not have to enter anything at all**

- ☑ **Provide consistent service across every call**

Businesses are making this a reality today with Pega's Voice and Messaging AI serving as a co-pilot for every agent across every conversation. This is much more than traditional post-call analytics as agents have access to real-time insights and automation in the moments that matter.

Automate and elevate every conversation with Voice and Messaging AI

Using a combination of real-time AI, natural language processing (NLP), speech-to-text analytics, and intelligent automation, contact centers are transforming and modernizing their phone and chat-based service.

These advanced technologies analyze customer interactions and dialogues as they are happening in real time. Pega Voice and Messaging AI automatically surfaces new insights and guidance to agents while automating manual tasks.

By understanding intent and sentiment across conversations, businesses can eliminate journey blind spots - even when facing the most complex issues. Voice and Messaging AI helps businesses automate more work than ever before (while still leaving the agent in complete control), at the same time providing real-time coaching, context, and insight. This allows agents to focus on the customer instead of the system, all while up-leveling service.

Each of these benefits eliminates many of the frustrations and challenges that contact centers are facing today – in addition to **reducing overall training time, improving average handle time (AHT), increasing first contact resolution (FCR) rates, and boosting overall customer and employee satisfaction**. This is a win-win for everyone.

"By understanding intent and sentiment across conversations, businesses can eliminate journey blind spots - even when facing the most complex issues."

A co-pilot for every agent, on every call

How it works
Driving faster resolutions and simplifying experiences

Customer

Voice AI & Messaging AI (PEGA)

- Reduced average handle time (AHT)
- Increased first contact resolution (FCR)
- Improved customer satisfaction (CSAT)

Human Agent

- Initiate cases automatically
- Surface knowledge content
- Script adherence
- Automate "hands-free" form fill

By infusing Pega Voice and Messaging AI into agent-based service, businesses gain access to powerful capabilities, including:

- **Automated service case initiation:** Automatically suggests and launches cases that orchestrate customer journeys from end-to-end.

- **Hands-free data entry:** Auto-populates digital forms during interactions. This is all done without an agent having to lift a finger or re-key information – significantly freeing up time by reducing repetitive manual work.

- **Real-time contextual knowledge:** Surfaces contextual knowledge content so that agents can resolve issues faster. Businesses no longer need to rely on institutional knowledge, removing much of the guesswork from the agent experience.

- **Script adherence:** Real-time script guidance across live calls, empowers agents to uphold the brand's promise to customers through delivering consistent service and making any required disclosures across every conversation. This reduces training time and ensures that agents are providing the right level of service, regardless of if they're working inside a contact center or at home.

Pega Voice and Messaging AI sits between a customer and an agent in a live interaction, transcribing the conversation in real time. Serving as a co-pilot for every agent on every call, Pega's Voice AI amplifies the agent experience, reduces training time, and improves overall efficiency.

Easily customized for your business

Even with its ability to handle complex contact center challenges, getting started with Voice and Messaging AI is easy. Unlike other mainstream voice and text AI technologies that often require "Frankenstack" integrations across various siloed systems and tools, Pega's Voice and Messaging AI is pre-integrated into a unified Customer Service platform that includes best-in-class case management, automation, and real-time AI. Built on top of Pega's Center-Out™ architecture that enables businesses to build centrally and activate logic and decisioning across all service touchpoints, the customer journey becomes the focal point rather than the channel.

Businesses can easily customize AI models to meet their specific needs (industry, use cases, dialects, terminology, etc.) with the power of Pega's industry-leading automation and real-time decisioning. This significantly reduces complexity and cost of implementation.

Supporting your entire agent population

Pega's Voice AI works with your existing soft phone and can be implemented across an entire agent population rather than just a subset or sampling. This allows every agent to have access to the very same benefits – significantly up-leveling service across entire contact centers.

Similarly, Pega's Messaging AI works seamlessly across messaging and chat interactions, enabling agents to realize the benefits of AI across all channels – driving faster resolutions and orchestrating more work than ever before.

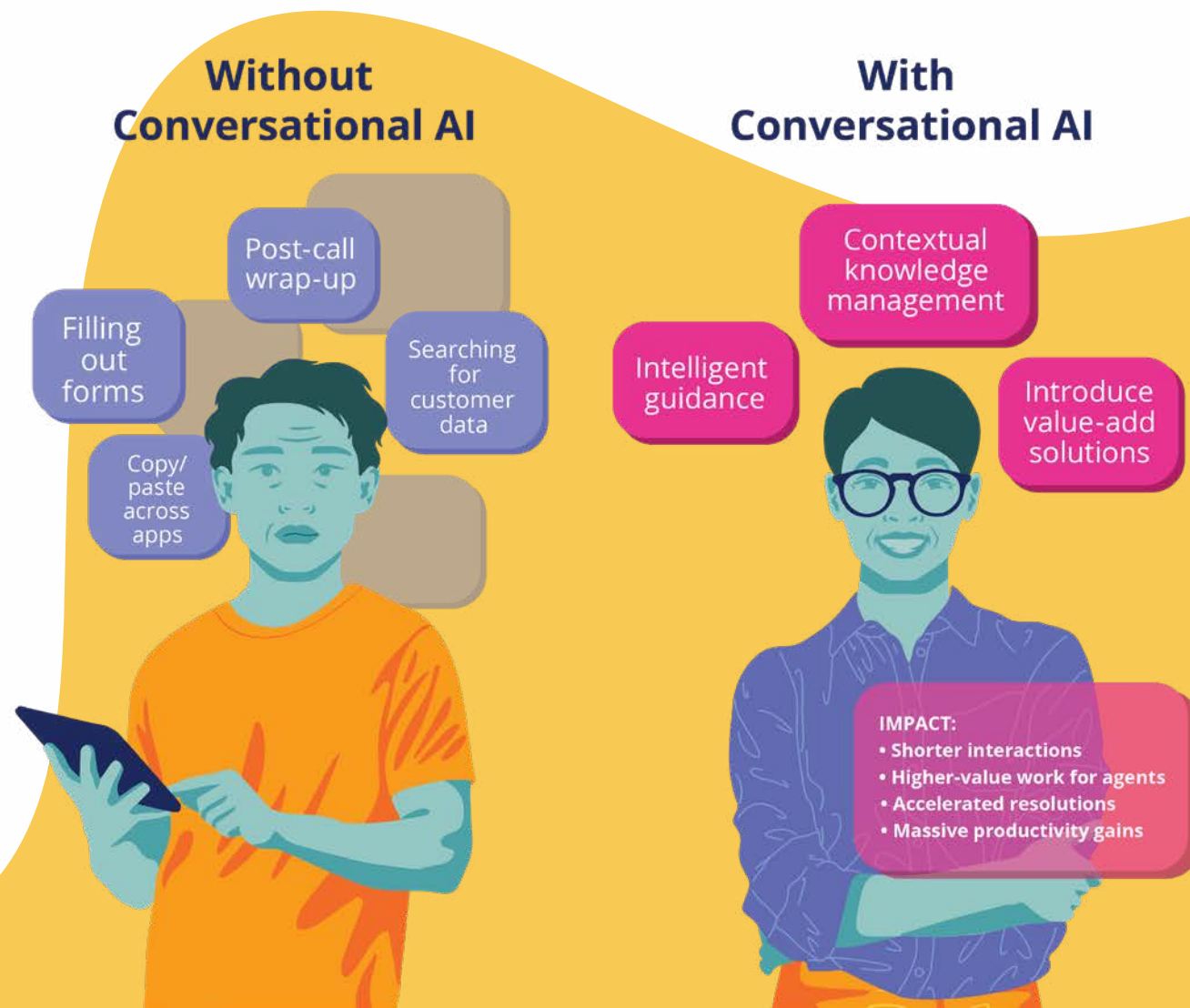# Changing the game: Unified AI, automation, and the future of service

The nature of work within contact centers has dramatically changed – and there's likely no going back. With Voice and Messaging AI, contact centers can achieve new levels of productivity that weren't previously possible. Rather than simply automating repetitive work, Pega Voice AI and Messaging AI seamlessly guides service agents to carry out the right conversations and better understand each customer's specific needs.
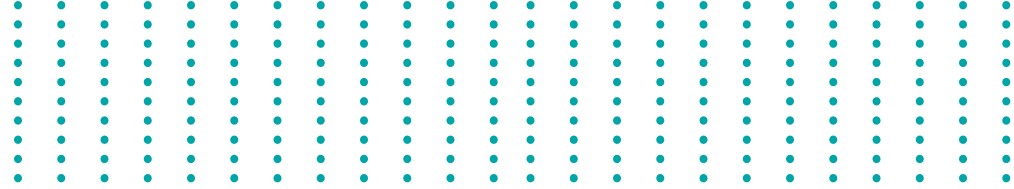
This shifts the paradigm of customer service to a new level where contact center agents can focus on higher-value work. Not only does this result in shorter interactions and accelerated resolutions, but it also fosters better employee engagement, opens new career opportunities, and makes for happier customers.

And in a world that is filled with more uncertainty than ever before, the new AI co-pilot may be the game-changer that your agents and customers have been looking for.

Ready to up-level your customer service with a next generation AI-powered agent co-pilot?

Learn more at **pega.com/service**

Without Conversational AI

Post-call wrap-up

Filling out forms

Searching for customer data

Copy/paste across apps

With Conversational AI

Contextual knowledge management

Intelligent guidance

Introduce value-add solutions

IMPACT:
• Shorter interactions
• Higher-value work for agents
• Accelerated resolutions
• Massive productivity gains

About Pegasystems

Pega delivers innovative software that crushes business complexity. From maximizing customer lifetime value to streamlining service to boosting efficiency, we help the world's leading brands solve problems fast and transform for tomorrow. Pega clients make better decisions and get work done with real-time AI and intelligent automation. And, since 1983, we've built our scalable architecture and low-code platform to stay ahead of rapid change. Our solutions save people time, so our clients' employees and customers can get back to what matters most.

For more information, please visit us at **pega.com**