



The key to happy customers?

Happy employees

How customer service automation helps eliminate employee frustrations

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The employee experience matters. Big time

Organizations across the board are striving to provide effortless customer service experiences. But with such laser focus on the customer experience, business leaders often overlook a critical aspect of the service equation: the employee experience. Customer service agents are integral to the overall service experience. In fact, in our survey **2019 global customer service insights**, 48% of customers rated knowledgeable service agents as one of the most important aspects of customer service – second only to quick resolution of the issue (59%).

The survey sought to understand perceptions of customer service across three different audiences: business leaders, employees, and customers. We asked 12,500 respondents from the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, France, Netherlands, Japan, and Australia about what matters most, top common service frustrations, and the role of technology. From the results, we learned how vital engaged employees are to be able to meet customer service expectations.

Without the right training, processes, and tools, it's difficult for service agents to provide customers with the outstanding experiences they expect. And based on our survey results, many employees feel frustrated with the current customer service operations at their organizations. Fine-tuning your brand's internal customer service processes and introducing automation can help ease your employees' day-to-day roles, which will empower them to provide exceptional service to your customers.

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of customers rated knowledgeable service agents as one of the most important aspects of customer service



Customer loyalty? It's fragile

Did you know that 77% of customers consider service quality a determining factor in their loyalty to a brand? Or that three out of four (75%) customers have stopped using an organization's services because of a poor service experience? These figures illustrate how critical service is to the overall customer experience. Service can either lead to enhanced loyalty or cause customers to say goodbye. And employees are a key piece of the service experience. Remember, nearly half of customers consider knowledgeable service agents among the most important aspects of customer service.

With so much at stake, it's crucial that employees understand and deliver on your brand promise for customer experience. And yet, nearly half of employees (46%) are unfamiliar with their organization's brand promise. As a key competitive advantage for most companies (with 81% of leaders considering service as an important differentiator), **employees should understand their organization's brand promise on customer experience to appreciate how important their daily service efforts are to the company's overall success.**

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Agents are sick and tired of roadblocks

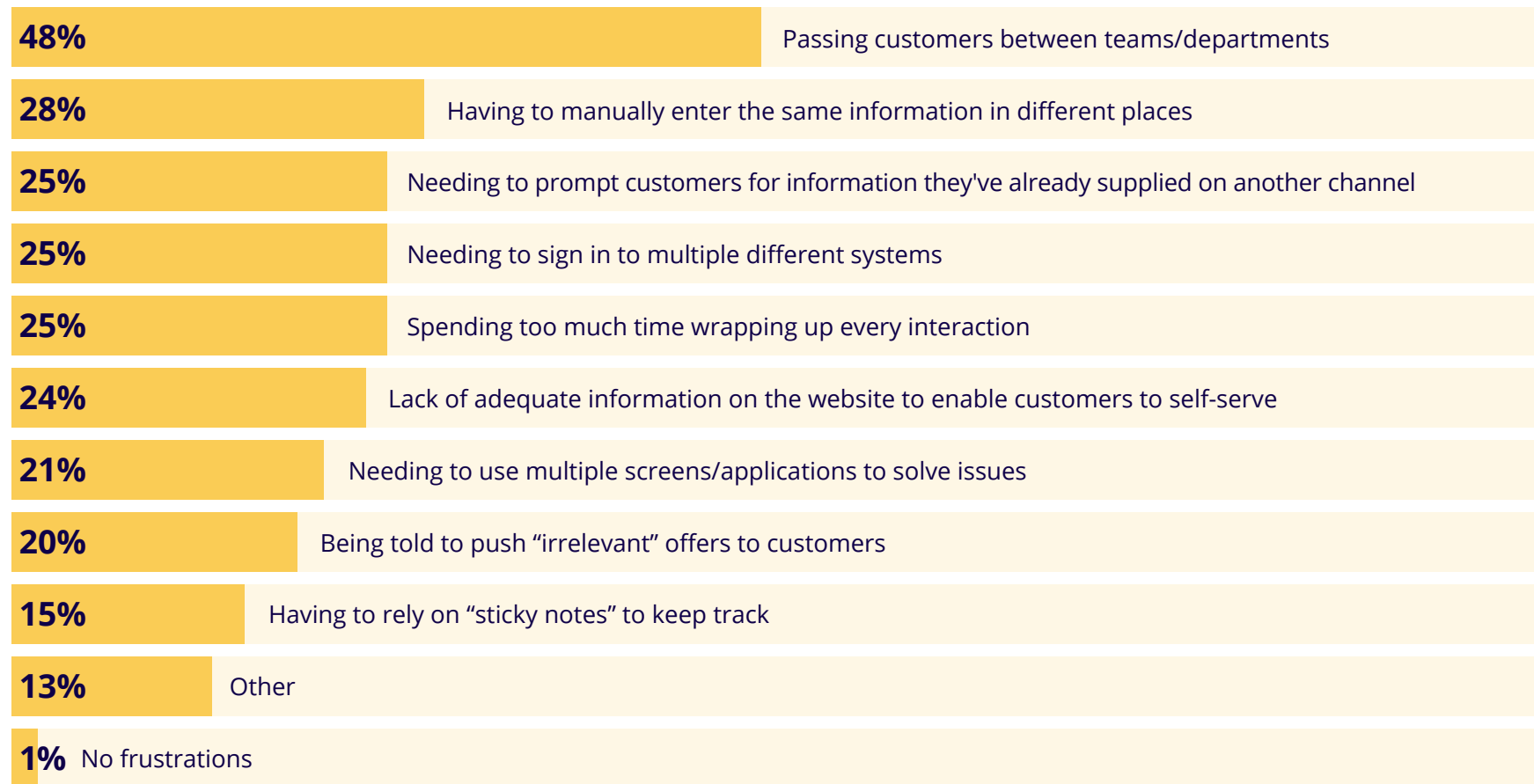
Let's face it, delivering an outstanding customer service experience is complex. Many organizations have multiple databases, siloed systems, or a whole slew of customer experience-related applications – both old and new. Thirty-eight percent of employees use between 4 and 12 different applications or IT programs to provide customer service. And even with so many apps and programs, 34% of employees do not feel they have the right software, applications, and technology to provide optimal service. If more than a third of employees don't have the right tools, how can they be expected to excel?

Beyond the issue of insufficient tools, 48% of employees agree that they experience many barriers to providing excellent customer service. Removing the pain points for your agents is a key piece to simplifying the customer experience. So, what are the major contributors to your agents' frustrations?



Top employee frustrations

Which of the following cause you frustration when servicing customers?

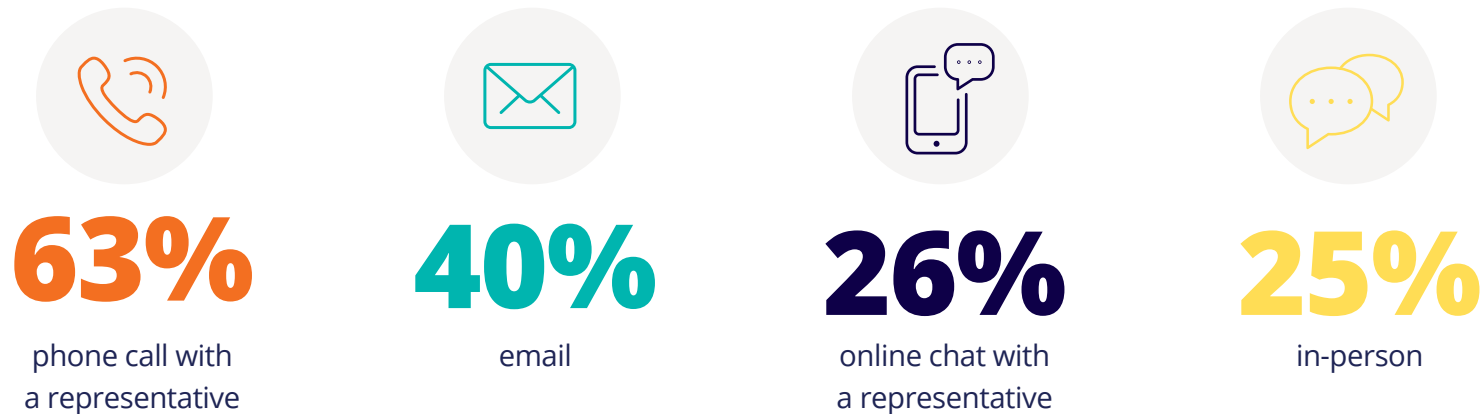


What many of these key frustrations show is that the customer service process is still challenging and complicated. From passing customers between agents and departments to needing to sign into multiple systems, the current lack of insight and automation makes for a poor employee experience – and that translates to a poor customer experience. **Brands must streamline processes to ensure that both employees and customers have a seamless experience that leads to real resolutions.**

Customers demand human-centered service

Despite how advanced many organizations have become in offering a wider range of digital channels, when it comes to seeking service, many customers still rely on traditional agent-assisted channels. When asked to rank which channels they have used to contact customer service based on quality of service, customers ranked human-centered channels among their top four: phone call with a representative (63%), email (40%), online chat with a representative (26%), and in-person (25%).

While it's important for organizations to continue to invest in digital channels, like chatbots, mobile apps, and web self-service, it's crucial they don't overlook the core of true customer engagement: their agents. **Since customers still consider those agent-assisted channels to be most dependable for quality service, brands must continue to invest in the customer engagement center – from training and onboarding, to advanced tools for better customer interactions.**



Forget the 360-degree customer view

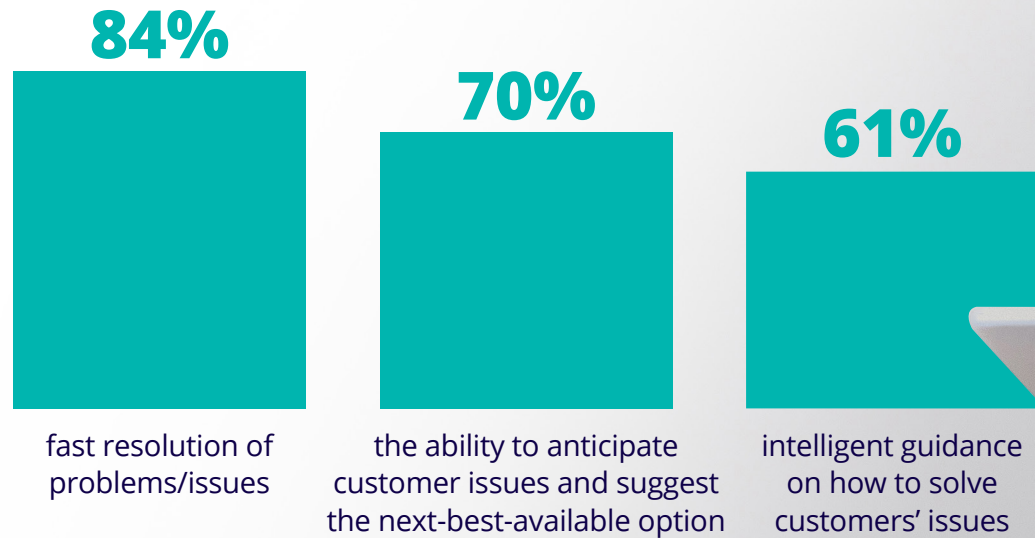
For years, customer service professionals sought after the elusive 360-degree customer view. Engagement center leaders strove to give agents complete visibility into customer data across all channels. But that's no longer possible. In today's digital environment, there is such a high volume of data coming from countless sources, that a complete customer view would overwhelm the agent and preclude them from making the best decisions. That's why having complete visibility into customer data across channels is not so important anymore. Only 39% of employees ranked a 360-degree view among the top three factors influencing service outcomes. Additionally, less than half of employees (46%) consider average handle time (AHT) among the most important factors, when it also used to be considered crucial.

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of employees ranked a 360-degree view among the top three factors influencing service outcomes.

So, what does matter to customer service outcomes these days?

Employees say



The focus on rapid resolution, proactive service, and intelligent guidance shows that employees understand that the demands of customer service have changed. **While the 360-degree view and AHT used to be considered essential factors in driving positive customer outcomes, the focus is now on making sure agents have the right information, at the right time, to truly solve the customer's issue – sometimes even before the customer realizes there is one. And this is where the ability to automate and use advanced analytics is key.**



The game changer: How customer service automation eliminates frustration

Agents need to be jacks-of-all-trades – they need to be knowledgeable, friendly, and fast and effective at customer service. For each agent to perform at this level, brands must fundamentally rethink their customer service processes. Agents seek real-time intelligent guidance to get to the right answer quickly. They want to provide customers with transparency, they want already-known information to populate across systems, and they want to be able to resolve customer interactions – fast. The key to unlocking these capabilities lies in **customer service automation**.

This term denotes the process of identifying steps in the customer’s service journey where tasks can be streamlined and automated to increase efficiency, reduce manual work, and ultimately deliver superior outcomes. And to live up to customers’ expectations these days, this automation must be infused with AI-driven insights to ensure intelligent engagement, every time. Combining the power of AI and automation enhances service interactions by integrating tasks and desired outcomes designed around a case management record. By implementing this customer workflow that enables personalized engagement, organizations can provide customers and employees with truly seamless experiences.

Through automated, intelligent service, agents can move toward proactive customer care. With an integrated solution that serves up the most relevant information, a customer service representative can contact a customer before an issue arises. Let’s say that an account is nearing overdraft, or a service is going to be terminated unless a bill is paid – with the right customer service process, these interaction opportunities could be flagged to an agent to proactively address, before a customer even reaches out.

Make every agent your top performer

What if each customer service agent could provide the same level of engagement as your top performers? With the right technology, they can. It requires AI, automation, and considering the customer experience from end to end. Improve employee and customer satisfaction by equipping agents with:

- AI-guided interactions, such as **next-best-action suggestions**
- **Case management**, orchestrating people and technology throughout the full journey
- Personal robots through **robotic desktop automation**

These capabilities remove the guesswork for agents and prevent them from having to bounce customers to different agents or departments, which is one of agents' top frustrations. Using AI and automation to integrate information from across disparate systems, employees no longer need to manually enter data in multiple different places, or prompt customers for information that was already supplied.



Think this is too good to be true?

Think again.

Check out how Cisco eliminated 4 million hours of customer wait time and up to 93% of human touch.

[Read the case study](#)

Simplify your agents' lives with AI and automation

While many organizations are advancing their customer service offerings to include digital, AI-enabled channels like chatbots and self-service, it's also important to consider how this technology can empower your customer service representatives. Arming your agents with AI and customer service automation can help alleviate some of the main barriers they face to providing excellent service. Without these roadblocks, employees can focus on delivering more superior service, helping to resolve customers' issues efficiently and effectively.



Your top five takeaways:



Customer service automation can help simplify your agents' lives and make it easier for them to deliver superior experiences to your customers.



The 360-degree view and AHT no longer dominate in terms of importance: a fast resolution, the ability to anticipate issues and suggest the next best action, and intelligent guidance matter most.



42%

of employees already consider well-informed service agents to be the greatest strength their business provides. So why not equip your agents with even more knowledge? If you get the employee piece right, they'll look after your business and your customers.

Global enterprises are revolutionizing their customer service with the help of Pega's advanced AI and automation capabilities.

Want to learn more?

Visit pega.com/challenges/customer-service

Methodology

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from Savanta Group Limited, a global intelligence business. The research was conducted using an online survey method between March 4, 2019 – March 25, 2019. The research was conducted across the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, France, Netherlands, Japan, and Australia with three audiences in each market:



Customers (representative of the population aged 16 and over, per market that have engaged with customer services in the last year) with a total sample size of 7,000 respondents



Employees (in a customer-facing job role and work in businesses with 100+ employees) with a total sample size of 3,600 respondents



Leaders (director level and above within businesses with 100+ employees) with a total sample size of 1,900 respondents

For those on the business side (employees and leaders), we surveyed respondents across several different industries, including, but not limited to, retail, manufacturing, healthcare, banking/investment, government/public sector, telecommunications and media, travel and hospitality, utilities/energy, and insurance.



About Pegasystems

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