

EBOOK

CONTACT CENTER SCALABILITY:

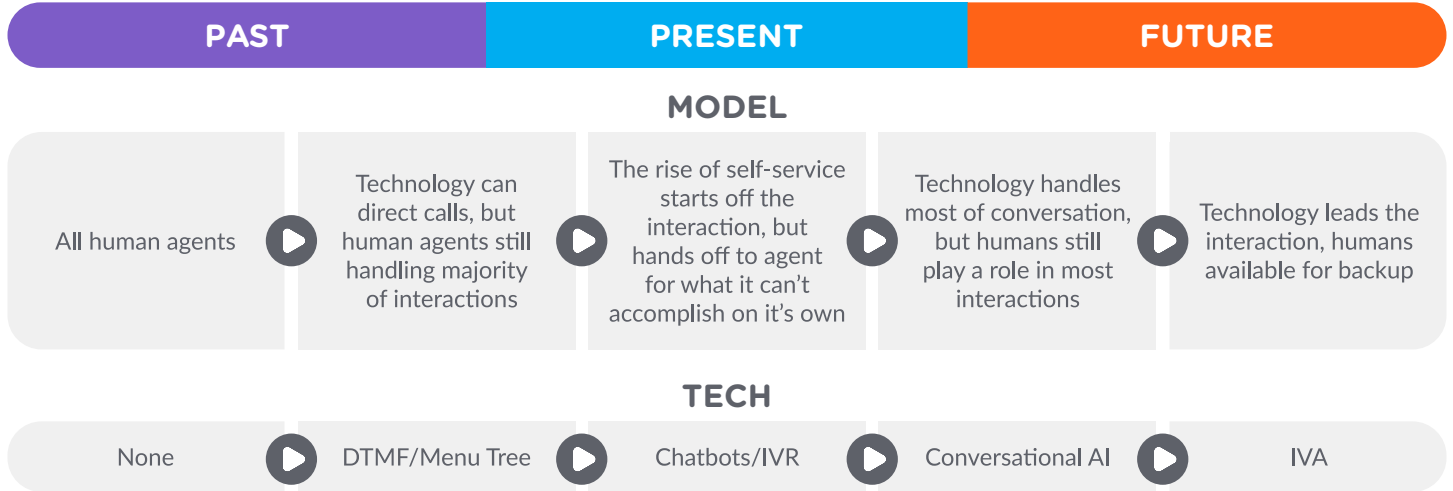
How Conversational AI Leads the Way





DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN THE CONTACT CENTER

Technology has advanced, but the way that we run contact centers has not changed.



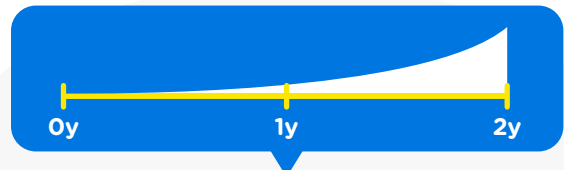


The past few years have seen technology, namely Conversational AI, advance to a place where many interactions, including those with complicated intent, can be handled by automation. However, because the model of the contact center has not shifted to fit this capability, the end result still falls short.



65%

Most consumers (65%) are comfortable speaking with an AI-powered customer service solution, provided they can speak normally and get their problem resolved quickly.¹



85%

According to IDC, 85% of enterprise decision-makers say they have a time frame of two years to make significant inroads into digital transformation or they will fall behind their competitors and suffer financially.



THE EVOLVING STATE OF CONTACT CENTER DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Contact centers used to rely on human agents for every customer interaction, which was costly and difficult to scale. Technology reduced the need for human involvement but still required an agent to complete every interaction, affecting cost savings and customer benefits. Self-service technology handled simple tasks but could not comprehend customer intent and maintain context, causing customer frustration.

Recent improvements in Conversational AI technology enabled automation of many complex interactions. However, the current contact center model does not fully apply these capabilities, resulting in suboptimal outcomes.

COVID-19 forced a drastic change on contact center operations, leading to work-from-anywhere (WFA) agent environments. While this reduced the costs of on-premise infrastructure and physical locations, contact centers must now be even more diligent in protecting customer PCI from theft and fraud. This paradigm shift also accelerated the need for digital transformation and acceptance of AI to solve problems in the contact center.





Here are four primary considerations that can set up a project for success:



Holistic Technology

An AI solution must be holistically integrated to be successful. Read our whitepaper by analyst firm Omdia to see why Conversational AI requires a holistic approach.



Channel Optimization

Optichannel optimizes the channel the customer is in, guides the customer to the optimal channel for their task, and respects their channel choice for their optimal customer experience.



Merging Expertise

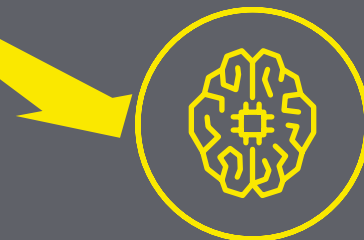
While you may be an expert in your business, partnering with experts in AI and contact center technology is essential for a successful digital transformation initiative.



Balancing Humans and AI

Too much reliance on human agents leads to higher operational costs. However, failure to properly implement technology can create frustration for customers. Finding the ideal balance between humans and AI will separate a good solution from a great one. Read on to see how leading with AI using a precise balance of humans and AI can deliver the best results for your technology implementation.

WILL HUMAN AGENTS BECOME IRRELEVANT?



Not quite. Humans will always be integral in the contact center equation. However, the role that they will play will look very different. Instead of technology supporting agents, agents will be trained to support technology.



LEADING WITH TECHNOLOGY

To understand the ideal balance between humans and AI, we must look at where humans fail and how humans and technology can join together to fill those gaps.

Over the years, technology has become a bigger player in the contact center. However, it's role has always been to support humans, versus lead the interaction. In this model, the limitations of human agents still come through and limit the overall success of the contact center.



Where do humans fail?



Human agents...



... have a limited capacity to handle customers.

Not to mention, certain events can hinder the already limited capacity, such as the pandemic, poor management, human error, and sick days.

... can provide incorrect information and may not properly follow business rules, compliance, and regulation.

... are expensive.

And, when agent churn occurs, it is an additional cost to train new agents.

... can only work so fast when searching for information or completing processes.



By flipping the model to where humans are simply supporting the technology versus leading the interaction, these opportunities for error are eliminated. With technology leading:

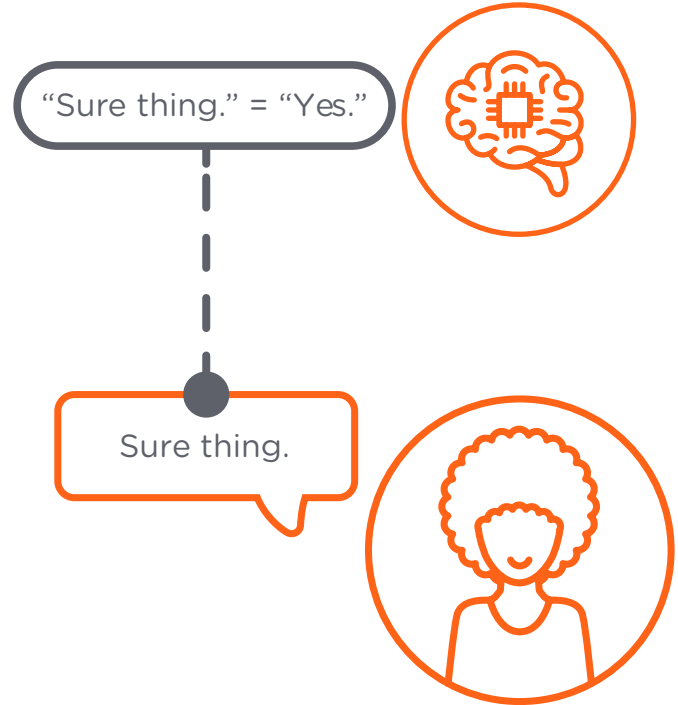
- ✓ An unlimited number of customers can be handled at once.
- ✓ Operational costs are lowered because technology is able to handle the vast majority of customers without the need for a human agent.
- ✓ Business rules, compliance, and regulations are always followed.
- ✓ Huge amounts of data can be filtered, sorted, and analyzed in the blink of an eye.





Both humans and AI are needed for the optimal experience. Humans still play a vital role in supporting technology, such as tuning and training the AI, making sense of new slang or unique phrasing that the technology may not be familiar with, and managing systems.

The current model of a contact center where humans lead and technology supports, to where technology leads and humans support, will best align with each of their strengths and minimize the gaps of weaknesses.





Let's imagine a contact center where technology leads:

The Conversational AI asks questions. If there are phrases or wording that the Conversational AI cannot understand or a situation that requires human judgement, a human agent seamlessly can interpret. The human never talks with the customer and the conversation never misses a beat.

In this model, the limited scalability of humans is minimized because they are only needed to support where the AI cannot comprehend. This keeps costs low but still maintains human-like conversation.

Also, AI takes over the majority of the interaction, and because of its limitless scalability, customers will never have to wait to be helped.



A customer calls with a query

I need to update my auto insurance.



The customer responds with their issue

How may I help you?



They are greeted by Conversational AI



CONCLUSION

With this model, customers can begin to see a future where calling customer service is not a dread, but rather a quick, painless, and productive experience. As contact centers modernize, they will soon realize that it is not just an upgrade, but a true transformation that will deliver the results that customers deserve.



START

FINISH



About Interactions

Interactions provides Intelligent Virtual Assistants that seamlessly assimilate Conversational AI and human understanding to enable businesses to engage with their customers in highly productive and satisfying conversations. With flexible products and solutions designed to meet the growing demand for unified, omnichannel customer care, Interactions is delivering unprecedented improvements in the customer experience and significant cost savings for some of the largest brands in the world. Founded in 2004, Interactions is headquartered in Franklin, Massachusetts with additional offices worldwide.

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