



Artificial Intelligence in the Age of the Customer

How businesses can harness the power of AI to revitalise the customer experience.

– By Mark Lunt

To those employees involved with daily customer service interactions, it's no secret that we are well into the Age of the Customer. Today's customers have exacting expectations of the brands that receive their business. For service staff, this results in the need to deliver ever quicker responses and to be alert to opportunities to upsell, while simultaneously personalising the conversation. Sending the right message at the right time is vitally important.

However, we're also in the dawn of the Artificial Intelligence (AI) era, which will alleviate the burden on staff. According to Gartner, 85% of customer relationships will take place without human interaction by 2020¹. Businesses applying innovative AI technologies such as chatbots and Robotic Process Automation (RPA) – software robots that handle

routine manual desktop tasks in a timely and accurate manner – will drive the customer service revolution in three key ways.

1. Unprecedented Efficiency

When fully integrated into backend systems, RPA increases the ability of chatbots to handle a greater volume of customer requests in real time. Software robots that operate at all hours complete routine tasks many times faster than their human customer service counterparts. This 24/7 self-service model provides the flexibility that customers crave. Instead of waiting on hold to talk to a customer service representative during their workday, they can handle tasks in their own time in the way that makes them most comfortable (i.e. over an instant message, on the phone, through email, etc.)

2. Increased Accuracy

When customer service employees are handling huge volumes of customer requests each day, it's easy for details to be missed and for problems to fall through the cracks. When businesses use RPA software, they can achieve 100% accurate, consistent, and policy-compliant results. Clerical errors become a thing of the past. They can say goodbye to angry follow-up phone calls from customers who received the wrong exchanged product or were shortchanged on their refund.

3. Better Productivity and Resource Allocation

While RPA technology handles routine tasks with 100% accuracy, team members are free to focus on those unstructured, problem-solving activities that may be too complex for AI software to take on. This leads to an increase in employee engagement, resulting in dramatic productivity enhancement. When situations arise that require a human and empathetic touch, RPA technology ensures that customer service agents have time to handle those situations in a manner that makes the customer feel valued.

According to a report from Forbes, 38% of organisations believe that AI and robots will be "fully implemented" in their companies within five years². The sooner companies can employ AI-powered solutions, the sooner they can achieve the clear competitive edge that comes with providing demonstrably better customer service.

Here at JOS, we have established a Digital Solutions Team to support the deployment of innovative technologies like AI, RPA, and chatbots. JOS's customer-centric solutions address business needs and enable our clients to lead their industry's digital transformation.

Most companies have different standard procedures that can be automated to improve efficiency. In the finance sector, JOS is working on applying RPA technology to quick approval services for leasing, validation and mobile force management automation. In operation functions, JOS has identified and helped automate invoice and delivery note matching, verification and ratification.

As we've gone through the process of helping a range of clients to identify and implement the most suitable AI technology for their needs, we've discovered a few central considerations that should be addressed before a business proceeds with AI:

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- First, contemplate which areas of customer service are best suited to RPA technology. Time-consuming tasks that don't require human involvement or judgment are ideal to take off your customer representatives' plates.

- Clearly define your business goals and expectations about how AI can make your company more efficient and profitable. Take this list to

potential tech vendors so that you can better access their solutions and compatibility with your company.

- Research what AI solution will best meet your customers' needs and expectations. Take note of any past customer feedback you may have received when thinking through your options and deciding priorities.
- Plan carefully to make the best use of the resources which the new technology is expected to free up for more productive and value creating work. 

¹ According to the data from Gartner Customer 360 Summit

² According to data from Forbes in 2017



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JOS, a division of the JTH Group, is a systems integrator, solutions provider and technology consultancy with extensive local and industry knowledge. With 2,000+ IT professionals in nine offices across Asia, JOS has improved the performance of more than 10,000 clients. JOS has experience in AI, big data, cloud computing, enterprise applications, enterprise security, IoT, mobility and next generation infrastructure.

