The Definitive Guide to Scaling Customer Service Without Losing the Human Touch

Kustomer

We all know them. The winning brands. They're the ones on everyone's lips, the ones whose products shine on social media, who are practically synonymous with brand love, and who have customers that are loyal to the death. What do they all have in common? They have prioritized customer experience since their inception.

Whether this means they have incorporated customer feedback into product production, provided perks to early and loyal customers, or treated their customers like part of a community, they understand that making customers happy is more than just providing them with a good product. In fact, customer experience is becoming more important than price and product when it comes to loyalty.

The question becomes, when that awesome customer experience begins to pay off, how can you continue to execute on a high level of service without hiring an army of people, or sacrificing the human touch? During busy seasons, when your inquiries and orders quadruple, how can you make customers feel just as valued as on the slowest day of the year? When you expand globally, how will you be able to provide all customers with a local experience? In this guide we'll offer a few strategies on how to do just that.

The Scaling Conundrum

The unfortunate truth is that in 2020, we need to do more with less. Customer expectations have changed over the last fifteen years. Now we live on social media, we have computers in our pockets, and we expect everything on demand. And customer service expectations have shifted with these lifestyle changes. Brands must keep up.

While we'd all love to have unlimited resources to hire a plethora of new agents, outsource our work and buy every helpful tool on the market, that's not always possible. And we need to be smart about how we invest in scaling our service organization. Look for a solution that can execute on your customer's modern day expectations.

OMNICHANNEL SERVICE

> Hi! I would like to extend my reservation for this upcoming week an extra night.

> Hi Cathy! Of course, let me do that for you right now.

> Reservation #64578 has been updated, check-out is now July 26 at 11:00am. Enjoy your vacation!

It's no longer enough for brands to be available on a variety of channels. Customers now expect to be able to switch channels easily and seamlessly without losing context.
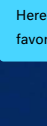
PERSONALIZATION

> Hello Cathy! We saw your favorite jeans on sale, we're going to send an additional 10% off.

> Thank you so much!

> Here's a code for an additional 10% off your favorite items.

Customers don't want to be treated like a transaction, they want to be treated like a valued member of your brand.

IMMEDIACY

> It looks as though I received the wrong pizza by accident. Could you send the one I ordered or issue a full refund?
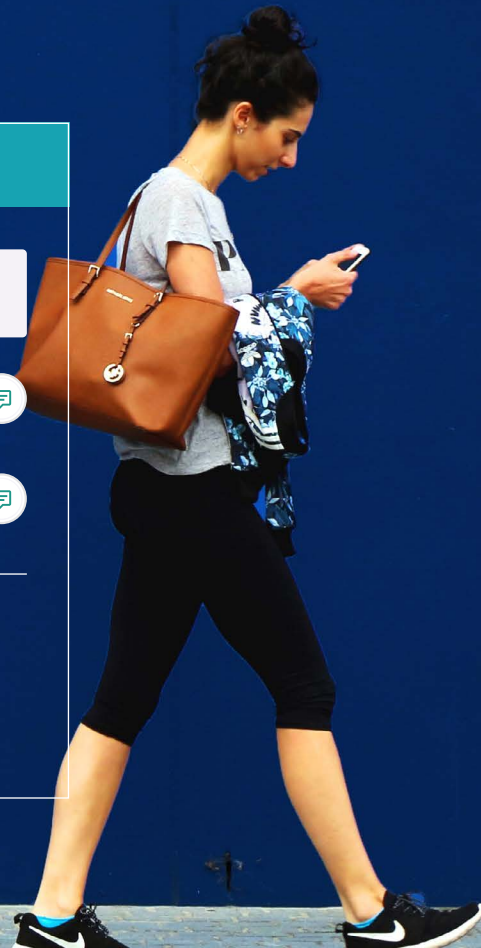
> Cathy, we're so sorry! We're contacting the restaurant immediately to send you a new pizza.

> Your new pizza is on the way, you should also see a full refund back in your account - pizza is on them!

Amazon has upped the game. Sameday shipping, instantaneous responses, services on demand... it's what your customers have come to expect.

AI and Automation as Man's Best Friend

Many folks still think of AI as a threat to their jobs....as robots taking over the world! Despite the doomsday rhetoric, the fact is that current day AI can actually make customer service professionals' jobs less time consuming and simultaneously more fulfilling.

Oftentimes the most tedious tasks on an agent's plate are manual and repetitive, and may not require human intervention. Luckily AI can automate much of this work. For example, when an agent needs to initiate a return, they may be talking to a customer in one system, looking up a customer's order history in another, and using a third system to create a return management authorization (RMA). A fourth system may send a message to the person who handles those returns asking to expedite for an important customer. With AI and automation, a single button click could start the RMA process, create the shipping label and notify a team to expedite.

I received the wrong item. Can I please exchange? My order number is #287390.

I'm sorry to hear that, Jen! I've gone ahead and processed the exchange. I'm also going to send you an additional 30% off your next order for the inconvenience.

Thank you so much!

Businesses also have the opportunity to provide more self-service opportunities with the help of AI. Think about chatbots. They are growing in popularity with both businesses and consumers, and can be used to collect initial information and direct customers to a help center if human intervention is not needed. While there is always fear of losing personalization when using AI and automation, with the right data, businesses can actually do the opposite. For instance, if a business leverages customer data properly, chatbots could ask personalized questions based on an individual's purchase or browsing history. These interventions save time for both the customer and agent, and increase the time spent on the actual issue rather than information gathering and low-level support.

Beyond freeing up agent time, AI can also be used to arm support agents with all the information they need to quickly and accurately service their customers. AI support technology can suggest messages to send to customers based off of historical conversations and customer attributes, which can become more accurate and personalized over time in conjunction with a machine learning model. Sentiment analysis is another benefit of AI technology. By looking at the words and tone in a customers' messages, the technology can identify how satisfied, or dissatisfied, a customer is, and escalate the issue accordingly.

ThirdLove needed an intelligent solution that automated time-consuming processes.

To deliver efficient customer service at scale, ThirdLove needed more than just customer data. They needed an intelligent solution that automated time-consuming processes as well as provided team performance insights to drive continuous improvement.

With Kustomer's powerful workflow engine, ThirdLove has built a two-tier intelligent routing system for conversations, which eliminates manual sorting and assigning while helping the CX team better understand customer needs, escalate high priority issues quickly, and identify any knowledge gaps.

Cut Down on Agent Friction

Every human being wants to be treated like a real person. That means receiving friendly, human support from the brands they choose to do business with. But personalized service relies on having a full view of the customer.

Traditional ticket-based systems can cause duplicative work for agents, and an unpleasant experience for consumers.

Whichever channel the customer contacts your business through, agents need to be able to view past history, order details and task status immediately. Customers can feel the friction that comes with being treated like a ticket. When agents ask for information they've already provided, and confirmed details the company already has on file, customers feel like a problem that needs to be solved instead of a valued part of the brand. Customers expect to be able to switch channels without losing context, and won't tolerate talking to two different agents who give two different resolutions.

Look for a customer service solution that removes these barriers through the use of intelligent context. Modern support platforms integrate all the data necessary for a smooth issue resolution, with each event integrated into a timeline that contextualizes conversations. With all the necessary data at their fingertips, agents can focus on building customer relationships.

Imagine trying to have a conversation in real life without being able to draw from your past experiences with that individual. How a customer feels, their previous complaints, and what they've ordered, all come together to build familiarity. Customer service in 2020 needs to be personal, human and genuine, while also remaining scalable. This is only possible when the platform you're using supports and creates connections.
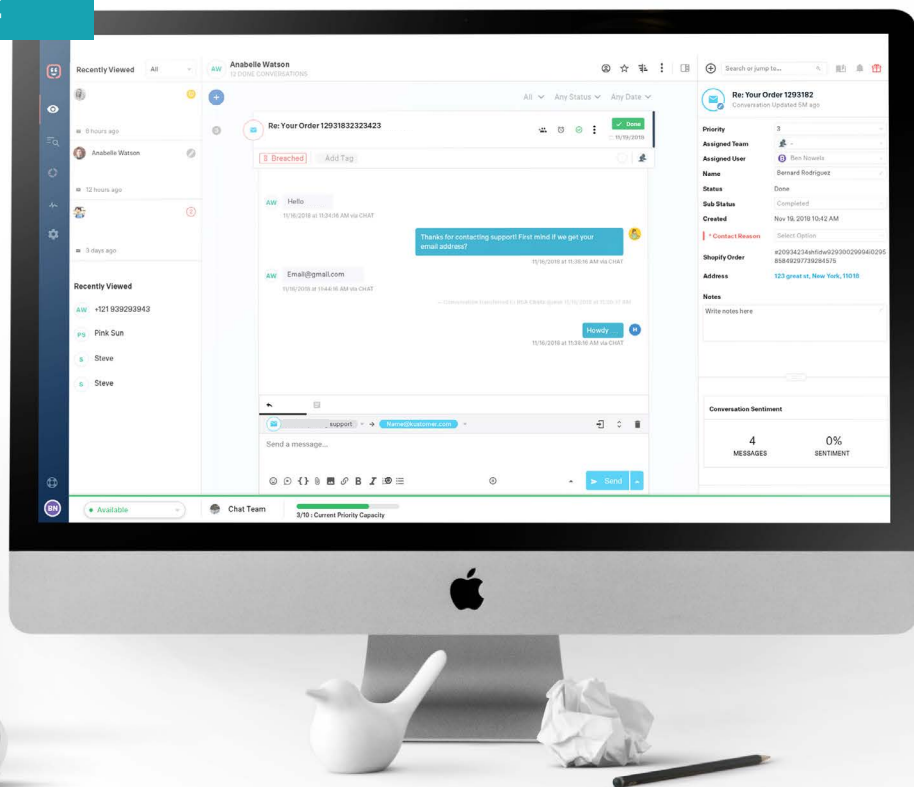
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UNTUCKit agents were continuously toggling between multiple systems, which caused inefficiency and a lot of headaches. Now the CS organization uses Kustomer to see all necessary information, making agents feel empowered and enabling them to handle more cases faster, improve CSAT and build more meaningful interactions.

After consolidating systems UNTUCKit saw a 25% overall improvement in efficiency and productivity from their support team, and a significant improvement in FCR rate.

Don't Let Customer Service Prevent You From Scaling Globally

As your business begins to expand globally, there is a lot to consider from a customer service perspective. How will you handle different languages? How will you route the right customers to the right agents? How will you deliver a local experience while remaining a global entity? How will you provide the same level of support no matter where your customers are located?

Look for a customer service solution that can intelligently route conversations to the most appropriate agent, whether the inquiry comes from a first time buyer in China or a lifelong customer in the US. Your customer service solution should be able to identify the language and automatically route the conversation to an agent that speaks their native language and is prepared to handle their issue.

With the help of artificial intelligence, businesses are also able to deliver standardized responses in a variety of languages. Based on customer's historical conversations and customer attributes (such as where they are located and what language they are using), AI support technology can suggest standard messages to send to customers around the globe. This allows a consistent customer experience, whether you are speaking with the first-ever Chinese customer or a VIP American one.

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Glovo improved its SLA attainment by 20%.

With Kustomer's intelligent queuing and routing capabilities, Glovo is assured that every inbound conversation, whether from a courier with a question in Spain, or a customer with an incorrect order in France, is automatically and instantaneously routed to a local agent that can solve their issue.

Since Kustomer is fully integrated with Glovo's order management system, the platform also identifies Glovo's high-value customers using order data, and routes those conversations to agents ready with appropriate compensation policies, keeping its best customers happy and ensuring their continued business.

As a result, Glovo not only continues achieving its aggressive service levels, but also has improved SLA attainment by 20% since switching to Kustomer.

Plan for the Future

The business value of great customer service can't be downplayed. According to a recent Kustomer survey, 74% of consumers are willing to spend more money for good customer service, and 78% would be less likely to shop with a retailer again if they experienced bad customer service.

Being able to measure the performance of your team, understand trends, and adjust your strategy accordingly is imperative for customer service success.

Look for a software solution that provides robust customer reporting and gives you the tools you need to understand your organization more thoroughly.

At a high level, information about your organization such as traffic across all teams, a breakout of which channels are getting the most traffic, and how much time you're spending

resolving customer issues, should be surfaced within your solution. By using predictive analytics, companies can forecast future conversation volume and staffing needs based off of historical data, preparing for busy shopping seasons and holidays. That means agents will avoid fire drills and customers will have quick, convenient and thorough support in their times of need.

How Kustomer Can Help

For better or worse, solving a customer's problem is no longer the only job of a customer service organization. Customer service is increasingly being thought of as a revenue driver and not a cost center, and customer service insights are being leveraged beyond the support organization to inform larger business decisions. Keeping a consistently high level of support as you scale your business could be the difference between rocketship growth and stagnancy.

All of this makes finding the perfect customer service software solution imperative. Delivering on growing customer expectations at scale, whether that means personalized and proactive support or true omnichannel experiences, is not optional. With Kustomer's customer service CRM platform, businesses are able to have a single view of the customer journey, seamless omnichannel communications, and the ability to automate complex business processes and knowledge management.

Don't believe us? Take it from some of today's most iconic, high growth brands like Glossier, Ring, ThirdLove, Rent the Runway, Sweetgreen, Glovo, Away and UNTUCKit. Learn how you can also expand globally, while still providing customers with a local experience. Visit **Kustomer.com/demo**.

Learn more at Kustomer.com