

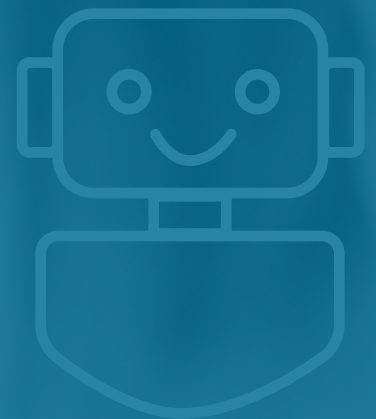


E-BOOK



The Benefits of Chatbots

6 Ways Chatbots Increase
Customer Satisfaction in the Contact Centre



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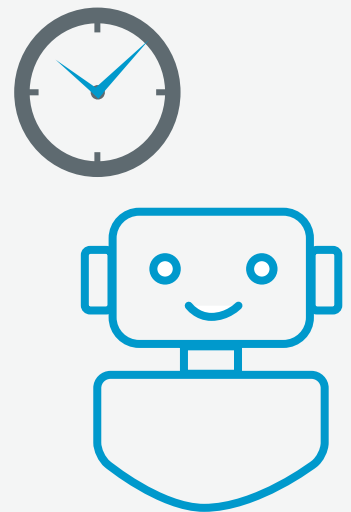
About the Author



Chris Key, CEO, Hostcomm

Chris is founder and Managing Director of hosted telephony provider Hostcomm. The business was one of the first of its kind in the UK and today offers an unrivalled VoIP network infrastructure. Chris's 20 years' experience in voice and data networking and pursuit of innovative new technologies ensure Hostcomm's services are stable, cost-effective and continuously evolving.

Why the time is right to bring chatbots into your contact centre



Across every industry, there's a lot of talk about chatbots and their potential to revolutionise the way we communicate with customers. However, the idea of computers interacting with humans and using natural text to answer questions is nothing new.

Long before Alexa and Siri, ELIZA was developed by MIT right back in 1966. Since then, we've all grown familiar with home assistants, automated live chat, and the idea of robots answering our frontline customer service questions.

So if you haven't already started using chatbots, why now? How has the technology matured and evolved to become truly compelling for contact centres of every size? What makes today the right time for you to consider adopting chatbots - and what would the impact really be on your contact centre?

Chatbots might not be new, but:

- + Your customers are ready to communicate with chatbots for faster, accurate answers to quick questions.
- + The technology behind chatbots is proven, well-established, and processes for implementation are structured.
- + Chatbots have become accessible to contact centres of any size, with approaches designed to keep costs controlled and deliver a significant return.

In this guide, you'll find out about the six biggest benefits of chatbots in the contact centre - the ways this new addition to your toolkit can have a transformative impact on your organisation. You'll also learn why the right partner is a crucial step in ensuring your implementation delivers the benefits you expect.

1. Improved contact centre productivity

In some ways, it's easy to think of a chatbot as just another agent for your contact centre. It's someone to answer incoming questions immediately and ease the burden on the rest of the team.



However, a chatbot implementation impacts productivity on a much bigger scale. Unlike the average agent, it's someone who can handle an endless number of questions at one time, happily giving your customers a consistent level of service with no interruptions.

Meanwhile, your chatbot has a positive impact on the productivity of every other agent.



Agents can focus on higher value work

Most frequently, chatbots are used at the frontlines of customer service to answer quick questions or send customers to the most relevant agent. Your customers simply type a question, this is interpreted by the chatbot, and then the chatbot provides an instant response unless a ready-made answer can't be found.

For your agents, this frees up time and resources to focus on the more complex tasks that a chatbot simply can't help with. They only become involved in chatbot interactions when the chatbot itself gets stuck. In this way, your agents are spending more of their time productively and where their skills are really necessary.



Agent motivation increases

As a result of being able to focus on more complicated - and often more interesting - tasks, your agents will become increasingly motivated. They can stop repeating the same few answers to the most common questions and enquiries, instead they can get involved with work that requires thought, consideration, and talent.

2. Reduced costs

Every contact centre knows that human beings are your most precious and most expensive resource. All of your investment in technology like your inbound contact centre solution pales in comparison to your spend on employing the people that deliver service to your customers.



A quick search around the internet reveals confusing, often misleading ideas that chatbots will replace your agents altogether and eliminate an entire cost area. The reality is a little more nuanced.

In practice, chatbots are an addition to your contact centre toolkit - not a replacement. However, they can unlock new opportunities to reduce the cost of engagement with agents and cope with increased call volumes without hiring.

Beyond implementation and configuration, the cost of a single interaction with a chatbot is negligible. Meanwhile, the cost of spending 15 minutes on the phone to an agent is considerably larger - not to mention the cost of lost business as your customers sit in queues or get inaccurate answers.

3. A 24/7 point of contact

Just ask your agents - no customer wants to be put on hold. When they're looking for an answer to a question or complaining about a service problem, they expect an immediate response.

It's a problem that's become increasingly worse in a climate of always-on, always-available everything. Smartphones and social media have played an important role in creating a culture of instant answers, not just for millennials but for just about every customer segment.

In this globally-connected culture, the 9-5 working day is decreasingly relevant. It's more important than ever that your contact centre is accessible wherever and whenever people want it to be.

A chatbot is a cost-effective way to offer round the clock service to your customers. At any time, they can simply contact your chatbot to get answers to their questions. In those occasions where the chatbot cannot help, they can be added to an outbound queue for calling when an agent is next in the contact centre.



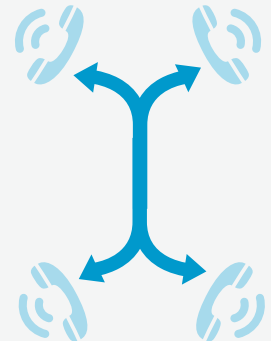
24/7

It's the ideal solution for:

- + Demonstrating to customers that you care and are always ready to help
- + Supporting customers in different timezones
- + Eliminating the early morning rush of inbound calls

4. More flexibility for unpredictable call volumes

In any contact centre, dealing with unpredictable spikes in activity is a big challenge. Until now, the best solution has been trying to preempt increased call volumes - something that's easy to do when you're launching a promotion or heading into an established busy period, but not easy to do when traffic grows as the result of external forces or sheer coincidence.



In addition, previous strategies for dealing with unpredictable call volumes have typically involved adding or removing agents at short notice. While inbound contact centre technology can help through advanced routing and remote access, this is rarely cost-effective. At best, you find yourself paying for agents that are underutilised. At worst, you find yourself unable to keep up with demand and potentially damaging your reputation and customer relationships irreversibly.

A chatbot is a simple, elegant solution - someone to ease the burden on your agents, without incurring any ongoing cost while they sit idle. Often, a chatbot is used to triage inbound customers before any agent is engaged, by:

- + Answering simple questions with no agent involvement
- + Pulling account information from your Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system for account enquiries
- + Only connecting customers to an agent when it is absolutely necessary

As a result, you can dramatically reduce your queue lengths and keep up with unexpected demand.

5. Increased availability and no queuing

When most people think of calling an inbound contact centre, the long wait in a queue has become part and parcel of the process. Your customers expect a certain amount of waiting and frustration - and removing that process altogether is a powerful opportunity to delight them with incredible service.



A chatbot doesn't just reduce queue lengths - as a first point of contact, it provides a way to speak to your contact centre with absolutely no queue at all. This gets interactions off to a far more positive start, helping your chatbot or your agents deliver great service without first needing to make up for a long wait.

At the same time, a chatbot can have a positive impact on queue lengths when speaking to an agent is absolutely necessary. With the right configuration and design, a chatbot can handle all of the most repetitive parts of a customer interaction, including:

- + Compliance statements (like asking for permission to record calls)
- + Security and identification checks
- + Finding customer accounts and details
- + Gathering information on the question or issue, and even making an initial diagnosis

All of this information can then be passed to your agents if they are required. As a result, call lengths can be decreased, allowing your agents to handle more calls per hour and progress through queues faster.

6. 100% accurate and precise answers

Finally, a chatbot comes with the advantage of precision that human beings simply can't offer, particularly when dealing with repetitive, monotonous questions.

When your provider helps to design and code your chatbot, they will work with you to source carefully worded answers to questions that you can check, circulate, and approve. Beyond the answers you have provided, there's no room for improvisation.

This means that, if it's a question that your chatbot can help with, the answer is 100% accurate and 100% complete, every single time. The risk of human error is removed entirely - unlike agents, a chatbot can't misunderstand your policies, forget his training, or be distracted by something on the other side of the contact centre.

Of course, there are numerous occasions when the improvisation and humanity of your agents is the most valuable asset that you have. But for every other question, there's a chatbot.



Hostcomm: delivering the benefits of inbound contact centre chatbots

Since 2004, Hostcomm has helped inbound contact centres, outbound contact centres, and other businesses with hosted VoIP telephony services and hosted cloud contact centre services.

Today, we're combining our unique level of contact centre experience with technical capability and coding knowledge for a fresh approach to chatbots. We don't simply provide a platform for building your own bot - we become active partners in understanding your processes, then designing an effective chatbot around your needs and the needs of your customers.

Crucially, we make it easier to unlock the big benefits of chatbots by demystifying the technology and making it simple to start small and grow your chatbot's capability over time.

Contact us on 0808168 4400 to find out more - or speak to our chatbot at

www.hostcomm.co.uk

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Let us know your requirements and we'll tailor a demo to fit your needs

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Business VoIP Solutions