

**W&K**



# No Customer Left Behind

How customer support automation is putting the focus back on humans, one task at a time

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# Glossary of Terms

## **Chatbot**

A virtual feature that leverages artificial intelligence (AI) to provide customers with automated responses to their questions. Chatbots function independently from customer support agents and can operate 24/7.

## **Customer support**

A subsegment of customer service, which primarily deals with problem solving, customer feedback and troubleshooting. Customer support plays an important role in enhancing customer satisfaction.

## **Live chat**

A virtual feature that enables customers to connect directly with a customer support agent through an online message application. With live chat, customers can communicate directly with a company representative in real time.

## **Natural Language Processing (NLP)**

NLP is an important element of chatbots and is responsible for helping computers better communicate with humans through the analysis and interpretation of text.

## **Sentiment analysis**

A feature in chatbot software, sentiment analysis is a machine learning technology that enables the interpretation of emotions through the analysis of text and conversation.

## **Support ticket**

When a customer reaches out to a company—whether by email, chat or phone—a support ticket is opened. The ticketing system helps customer support teams to manage incoming questions. Support tickets are closed when the customer request is resolved.

## **Wrk Action**

A simplified bot representing a single step in a business process. Wrk Actions can be drag-and-dropped into a Wrkflow to automate even the most complex processes.

## **Wrkflow**

A series of Wrk Actions can be connected to form a streamlined, automated Wrkflow that matches your business processes.

## **Wrkflow Builder**

A key feature in the Wrk platform, The Wrkflow Builder is where Wrk Actions can be dropped to form automated Wrkflows. The Wrkflow Builder provides you with the scope to scale and repeat the critical workflows.



## Executive Summary

Customers today have a plethora of ways they can reach out to businesses for service and support, including phone, email, chat, and various social media channels. But how can businesses keep up with this increasingly multifaceted customer service landscape while still maintaining a high degree of customer care and satisfaction? The answer is simple, really: customer support automation.

In this white paper, Wrk provides an in-depth look at changing customer behaviour in 2021 and how it is impacting customer support strategies across the board. We examine how cutting-edge automation solutions are vital to managing the accelerating trends in customer service, including online services and work from home (WFH). We also dive into the cutting edge of chatbot technology—with input from conversational support pioneer Intercom—and detail how Wrk's human-focused automation can provide customer support teams with tangible solutions to improve customer engagement and to foster superior customer experiences.

# Humanizing customer support with automation

**Customer support processes are in constant flux, continually evolving to meet changing customer needs and expectations. Nowadays, customers can connect with a business in a range of ways. From phone and email correspondence to online chat and a variety of social media channels, the options are endless. This is great in the sense that businesses can easily cater to their clients and meet them where they are most comfortable. But having many customer channels inevitably creates challenges for customer support teams. That's where customer support automation comes into the picture.**

Customer support automation is at the vanguard and is shaping the future of the profession. This white paper will illustrate how automation solutions, such as chatbots, are vital to managing the accelerating trends in customer service, including online services and work from home (WFH). We'll explore the current state of customer support strategies, take a closer look at the latest advances in chatbot technology with the help of Intercom, and map out how Wrk's human-focused automation solutions<sup>1</sup> can give customer support teams a boost as well as enhance the customer experience.

**Let's get to it!**



<sup>1</sup> <https://wrk.com/solutions>

# **Customer support and customer behaviour: A symbiotic relationship**

**Customer service is inherently tied to the customer: when customer behaviour and trends change, customer support and service teams must adapt. There is no way around that. When COVID-19 hit, customer behaviour was drastically altered. On the one hand, brick and mortar retailers and offices were subject to lockdown restrictions, and on the other hand, social distancing measures instructed people to stay at home as much as possible and minimize interactions—in both work and social contexts. On the ground, this meant that many B2C and B2B companies lost crucial avenues for conducting sales and connecting with their customer bases.**

Somewhat fortunately, COVID-19 shutdowns coincided with an era in business that had already begun to embrace and rely on digitalization. Specifically, many businesses were already adapting to growing trends in customer behaviour, including contactless payments, online shopping, BOPIS (buy online, pick up in store), virtual customer support, and more. COVID-19 can therefore be understood not as triggering changes in customer behaviour but in accelerating them. McKinsey reinforced this idea, revealing that trends like ecommerce deliveries had accelerated at a rate of 10 years within just eight weeks<sup>1</sup> due to COVID-19.

The good news about this acceleration in trends is that B2C and B2B companies have had the tools at their disposal to adapt to this new normal and set up digital platforms with comprehensive customer support solutions. Those with existing ecommerce solutions have had the tools to scale thanks to smart technologies like automation.

## Did you know

**“71% of IT decision makers believe that AI and automation can improve customer service in the pandemic.”**

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/mckinsey/industries/retail/our%20insights/how%20covid%2019%20is%20changing%20consumer%20behavior%20now%20and%20forever/how-covid-19-is-changing-consumer-behavior-now-and-forever.pdf>

One of the most important uses of automation for a business is in customer support—due to the simple fact that if a customer has a good experience with your company, they are likely to come back. They are also likely to spread the word. As Alok Kulkarni, Co-Founder and CEO of Cyara<sup>1</sup>, said:

“If businesses can show that they understand and empathize with their customers through the delivery of quality CX, their consumers will respond to that empathy with loyalty and brand evangelization.”

This common sense is backed by numbers too: Hubspot reported<sup>2</sup> that a whopping 93% of consumers are more likely to purchase again from brands with exceptional customer service. But that begs the question: what does exceptional customer service look like when in-person experiences are taken out of the picture and we are shifted to a predominantly digital reality?

Today, it looks like more than a user-friendly online platform with a “contact us” page. Live chat and chatbots are becoming the standard for customer service and support, and automation is playing a central role.



### Live Chat vs. Chatbots

**Live Chat enables customers to chat with a human customer support agent. Because live chat necessitates real-time responses, it is often only available during working hours.**

**A Chatbot connects the customer with an AI-driven software programmed to simulate human conversation. Chatbots can be integrated with your website and product pages to provide accurate information to customers. 24/7.**

**A third option, the Hybrid Chatbot, combines live chat and autonomous chatbot technology. Hybrid chatbots typically greet customers using AI and if needed, a human agent will pick up the conversation.**

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbestechcouncil/2021/02/09/covid-19-drives-contact-center-digitalization-and-automation/?sh=2d33e66f4195>

<sup>2</sup> [https://blog.hubspot.com/service/customer-acquisition-study?hubs\\_signup-url=blog.hubspot.com/service/customer-service-stats&hubs\\_signup-cta=null](https://blog.hubspot.com/service/customer-acquisition-study?hubs_signup-url=blog.hubspot.com/service/customer-service-stats&hubs_signup-cta=null)



## Fun Fact

**A tech-savvy generation, 63% of millennials begin their customer support journey online, with an increasing number relying on mobile devices. - Microsoft<sup>2</sup>**

Customers today expect real-time responses to their queries: whether they are looking for product information or for tracking updates. Waiting on hold on the phone to speak to a customer service rep or following an email chain wastes time, something that consumers value. According to a 2018 study conducted by Forrester<sup>1</sup>, 66% of adults think that the top priority for companies should be to value their time during a service interaction.

**Automation and chatbots are built to streamline customer support and, ultimately, save time—both on the customer side and for customer service agents.**

AI-powered chatbots offer immediate assistance to customers, providing automatic (and accurate) responses to simple queries—like tracking updates and FAQs. Previously, this type of question would clog up inboxes, and agents would have to spend valuable hours responding to these, letting more urgent questions and comments slip through the cracks.

The long and the short of it is this: consumers today are increasingly relying on digital services and products, so it is important to meet this demand. Implementing an automated chatbot and other customer support automation solutions is a sensible place to start.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.forrester.com/report/2018+Customer+Service+Trends+How+Operations+Become+Faster+Cheaper+And+Yet+More+Human/-/E-RES142291>

<sup>2</sup> <http://info.microsoft.com/rs/157-GQE-382/images/EN-CNTNT-Report-DynService-2017-global-state-customer-service-en-au.pdf>

**“Hi, welcome  
to Intercom!”**

**When you open Intercom's<sup>1</sup> home page, a friendly dialog box is there to greet you:**

"Hi there! What brings you to Intercom today?"

Send a message...



**Not only is this a prime example of how chatbots function, but it is also a key part of Intercom's product offering. The now-global company was founded in 2011 and has helped to pioneer conversational support solutions, including chatbots, live chat, ticketing, and inbox management, among others.**

Today, Intercom's technology is in use by over 30,000 customers around the world, who are benefiting from enhanced customer experiences enabled by automation. Global services, including Shopify, Facebook, AWS, and Microsoft, are among this customer base, and showcase the real power of implementing smart conversational support into their broader customer service offerings.

One of the key elements that has distinguished Intercom and its solutions is that it does not sacrifice customer experience for business efficiency. Doing the opposite is a potentially fatal flaw for a customer-facing business, thus balancing customer satisfaction and personalization with efficiency is paramount.

Fortunately, it's easier than ever to find this balance.

"Modern customers are used to living in an on-demand world, where their every whim can be met 24/7," Intercom writes<sup>2</sup>. "Customers expect that same speed, ease, and personal touch every time they interact with your business. Until recently, under the weight of outdated tools, most support teams struggled to meet those expectations—costing them loyal customers."

## Did You Know

**Great customer support doesn't have to consist of lengthy phone calls or round-the-clock live chat: chatbots combine engaging, relevant support with the efficiency of automation.**

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.intercom.com/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.intercom.com/blog/ultimate-guide-conversational-support/>



Intercom's chatbots are also an excellent example of how far the technology has come. Just a few years ago, chatbots had a bad rep for being impersonal and limited in their ability, greeting online customers with rigid, perfunctory messages and failing to understand the nuance of questions. By contrast, many of today's chatbots—including Intercom's—are remarkably versatile and articulate, conversing fluently in a casual, friendly way and adapting to the customer's tone in real time. This evolution mirrors the broader advancement of business process automation in recent years, driven by

pioneers like Wrk, whose solutions are breathing new life into not only customer support, but also sales, marketing and other departments through smart and human-focused automation.

Using machine learning and Natural Language Processing (NLP), chatbots can react appropriately to different types of language and gauge how successful a conversation is. For example, if a customer begins to express frustration, chatbots will quickly reroute them to a live agent. This feature is vital to successful customer interactions.

**A big part of today's chatbot success is owed to sentiment analysis, an AI technology that enables chatbots to understand the sentiment or tone of a customer's message.**

1 [https://media.bain.com/Images/BB\\_Prescription\\_cutting\\_costs.pdf](https://media.bain.com/Images/BB_Prescription_cutting_costs.pdf)

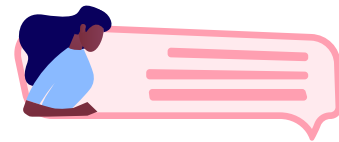
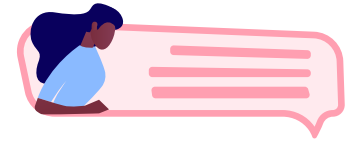
2 <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/economy/spotlight/economics-insights-analysis.html>

Intercom’s chatbot technology is designed to fulfil standard customer support tasks, like providing answers to FAQs and directing customers to knowledge base articles or product pages. But it also does a lot more. Intercom has a Task Bot which detects the customer’s recent activity on the website and acts accordingly. For instance, if a user has visited the business’ Help Center, the bot will refrain from redirecting the customer back to this resource, as it likely wasn’t helpful the first time.

Critically, Intercom’s conversational support solution recognizes the enduring need for person-to-person customer service. Businesses can choose to automatically direct certain types of questions—for instance about product pricing—to a customer agent, who is better equipped to make the sale. The chatbot will also route customer queries and conversations to relevant team members based on keywords the customer has used, circumventing teams that may not have the necessary answers and saving everyone time.

“At Intercom, we deeply embrace automation and bots to help businesses enhance their support experience and build conversational relationships with customers,” Bobby Stapleton, Sr. Manager Customer Support at Intercom, tells us. “Chatbots aren’t a replacement for real human interactions, though. To understand how bots and humans can work together, keep in mind that bots are best used for simple queries and to remove repetition. This allows teams to handle complex conversations, like product optimization or troubleshooting bugs. And teams can handle emotionally complex conversations, like a frustrated customer or sensitive escalation. As advanced as bots have become, they can’t offer a genuine ‘I’m sorry’ or make things right like a human.”

This hybrid approach is also a fundamental part of Wrk’s customer support automation solution. We recognize the value of human-centric customer support as well as the need for automation. Each has its role to play and, ultimately, we have always envisioned customer support automation as a tool to bolster customer service agents, not replace them.



# **An automation solution for every customer support task**

**While chatbots are an important cog in the wheel of customer support automation; there are also many other automated solutions that help to fulfill and optimize customer support tasks. At Wrk, we offer an array of tailored Wrkflows, all aimed at streamlining customer support operations and improving both the customer and employee experience.**

On the customer side, for instance, customers can benefit from automation whenever they forget their password—an all too frequent occurrence. Automation eliminates the need for any intervention from your customer service or IT teams when a client forgets their login information (saving valuable time), but also keeps things moving smoothly on the customer side.



From the perspective of customer support teams, automation is a massive boon. Our many Customer Support Wrkflows<sup>1</sup>—including automated ticket resolution, ticket routing, and review management—are designed to empower customer service teams by streamlining their day-to-day processes and strengthening customer interactions. Below are some of our Customer Support Wrkflows<sup>1</sup>:

- 1** Automated ticket resolution<sup>2</sup>: automate responses to recurring questions from customers, whether it's FAQs or order updates.
- 2** Password support<sup>3</sup>: simplify password resetting with automation, whether it's online, using voice recognition technology, or an RSA SecurID token
- 3** Review management<sup>4</sup>: streamline how your business handles and responds to incoming customer reviews.
- 4** Customer relationship management<sup>5</sup>: provide customer support teams with up-to-date customer data for optimal service.
- 5** Ticket routing and escalation<sup>6</sup>: route your customer support tickets to the right place, ensuring customers get a prompt response from the right department.

<sup>1</sup> <https://wrk.com/wrkflow-category/customer-support/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://wrk.com/wrkflows/automated-ticket-resolutions/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://wrk.com/wrkflows/password-resetting/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://wrk.com/wrkflows/review-management-responding/>

<sup>5</sup> TBD

<sup>6</sup> <https://wrk.com/wrkflows/ticket-routing-escalation/>

The advantages of automation are further amplified by the WFH trend. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) solutions serve as the backbone of customer service and are now easily accessed remotely. This means that customer service reps can just as easily help a customer from home as they would from the office, because all the client info is readily accessible through a centralized digital platform. Client information, like geolocation, purchase history, and website visits, provides valuable context to customer support teams and enables them to give the most complete and personalized answers.

Wrk's automation solution also funnels incoming customer requests from various channels into a single inbox. In other words, queries submitted to your business' website, Facebook page, Instagram inbox, etc. will be compiled as tickets into a single inbox. From there, our automated ticket resolution Wrkflow can automatically respond to certain types of request, such as recurring product questions or

tracking info. Other requests that need the human touch, will be automatically routed to the right team member.

Customer support teams are not only charged with maintaining customer questions and comments: they must also keep an eye on incoming reviews. Our review management Wrkflow takes the legwork out of this task: bringing together reviews from various platforms into a single location. For example, as soon as a new review is submitted via Google My Business, the Wrkflow will evaluate and categorize it based on topic, location, urgency, etc. Reviews deemed "urgent" will be flagged and passed directly to your customer service team, which can then respond. Wrk also has a unique offering to further automate this task (while maintaining a human touch!): businesses can turn to our human Wrkforce to write review responses that are nuanced and reflect your business' mission.

## Fun Fact

**According to Microsoft<sup>1</sup>, 72% of consumers expect customer service agents to know who they are, what they have purchased, and have insights into their interactions with the company.**

## Did You Know

**Google<sup>2</sup> says: consumers think that "businesses that respond to reviews are 1.7X more trustworthy than businesses who don't."**

1 <http://info.microsoft.com/rs/157-GQE-382/images/EN-CNTNT-Report-DynService-2017-global-state-customer-service-en-au.pdf>  
2 [https://www.google.com/intl/en\\_us/business/business-profile/](https://www.google.com/intl/en_us/business/business-profile/)



Integrating automation into your customer support strategy will also have a positive impact on your business' bottom line. Not by replacing existing customer support teams, but by giving them the tools they need to optimize their time and skills. Hours that were once eaten up by responding to every incoming message or sifting through hundreds of reviews, can now be dedicated to helping customers with more complex needs or requests.

Automation can also help ease the impact of a sudden influx in customer activity by bolstering your customer service teams without the need to quickly expand them. When COVID-19 hit and many businesses experienced a rapid rise in online demand, those that were best prepared had customer support automation tools at the ready and could manage customer requests. Automation is also useful in non-emergency cases: if your business is scaling up or expanding into new regions, customer support automation will ease the transition.

Our customer support automation solutions are designed for easy implementation, and can be integrated directly with existing customer support tools and platforms, like Zendesk, Salesforce, and ServiceNow, as well as organizational software like Asana and Basecamp. They can also be used in combination with our other automation solutions, targeting business processes like Marketing, Sales, and Human Resources.

At Wrk, we know how daunting the integration of automation can seem, especially with so many options out there. Wrk prioritizes the user and brings many automation elements together onto a single platform, meaning you can easily apply your automation tools of choice, including RPA (robotic process automation), APIs and proprietary bots.

This simplicity is achieved through our Wrk Actions: once you've selected the most relevant automation solutions for your business, all you have to do is drag and drop the corresponding Wrk Actions into the Wrkflow Builder and we'll take care of the rest by finalizing and optimizing the Wrkflow.

## Did You Know

**Ecommerce is on the rise: retail websites generated nearly 6 billion more visits<sup>1</sup> in June 2020 compared to January 2020, an increase of 37.5%**

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1112595/covid-19-impact-retail-e-commerce-site-traffic-global/>

## Help your customer support team help your customers

Ultimately, the real bottom line for most businesses is customer satisfaction. Naturally, product or service quality and cost are important parts of the equation, but so is customer support. Customer support teams are central to augmenting the customer experience, building brand loyalty, and, importantly, smoothing out any potential setbacks. It is therefore in every business' best interest to give their customer support teams the support they need. With customer support automation at their fingertips, they can ensure that customers are being met with the best level of care.

So, despite any preconceived notions about automation removing the human touch, our customer support automation solutions actually put the focus back on people: uplifting customer support teams and respecting the customer's input and time, whether it's through a friendly, helpful chatbot, a quick password reset or a resolved review.

**If you'd like to start empowering your Customer Support team with automation, contact us to kickstart a Free Pilot of your first Automated Wrkflow today.**

[Book Your Demo Today](#)

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