



Seamless Customer Service

Using Integrated Communications

Background

For many organisations, a sudden shift in working arrangements has sped up the decision-making process for those considering adopting cloud-based communications. With these new working practices likely to become a permanent fixture, this decision is not one to be taken lightly.

Regardless of your working practices, consumers expect your agents to have a complete overview of all previous interactions they've had with your organisation, irrespective of platform or timescales.

Many have responded to this by enabling multiple channels throughout their operations, although not all are getting this right. According to Dimension Data, fewer than 10% of organisations have all their channels connected, leading to silos and inconsistency across the customer journey.

Through integrating communication platforms such as Twilio seamlessly into your organisation, you can begin to develop higher quality customer service, while achieving business efficiencies.

This isn't just about being able to work from home, but an opportunity to deliver on technology's promise to enable extraordinary customer experience. And for that you should first look inwards to develop a better toolset.

With a number of tools currently in use across multiple departments, it is often a challenge to identify which steps should be taken to bring the customer service experience together, to provide a consistently excellent service to your customers.

Shift to Remote Working

With the recent move to home working for most organisations with an office function, this has been frequently identified as a potential area for improvement, and a focus point for ongoing success within the customer service department.

Developing a platform integrated within your existing tools can quickly enable your customer service team to work remotely, without reducing the high level of service currently provided.

Opportunities

There are two key areas to drive the success of improved communications within your internal customer service team.

- 1) Deflecting calls from the contact centre
- 2) Providing a better agent experience

Through focusing on each of these, you should be able to not only enable your organisation to deliver a higher quality service to customers, but also reduce the level of impact into the organisation through deflection and self-service.

Deflecting Calls from your Contact Centre

Inbound Phone Calls

For customers calling into your organisation, there are a number of options available to answer enquiries before getting an agent involved.

Basic IVR

A simple IVR (interactive voice response) can help guide a caller to the correct department, enabling them to get the answers they need.

By configuring options based on pressing buttons on the number pad, callers can choose their desired destination with the call routing through.

Intelligent IVR

Upon calling into the organisation, an intelligent IVR can be used to determine the intent of the caller request.

Instead of the traditional "Press 1 for Sales, 2 for Accounts" options, an intelligent IVR is able to ask the caller upfront what they are calling in about.

Through Twilio's Autopilot functionality, AI can identify what the caller has asked for and route the call through to the correct department, or better still, trigger a custom workflow to aid the caller throughout the IVR process.

This could be providing an automated order update within the IVR, capturing additional information such as contact details or additional context; or it could involve an entire end-to-end ordering process, taking payment and placing the order without even speaking with an agent.

The level of detail and complexity of an intelligent IVR is up to you to decide. If you're focused on a more personal approach to your customer service, perhaps you should look to call routing to an agent quickly, ensuring information is passed upon receiving the call.

Or if you're more interested in handling larger volumes and automating the process, you may look to add detailed workflows within the IVR – the choice is yours. Below are some examples of intelligent IVR use cases which you could look to explore.

Customer Request	IVR Response
"Where is my order?"	Order number 12345 was dispatched at 14:25 on 28th of January
"I would like to place an order"	Please could you state the product number followed by the quantity of what you are looking to purchase?
"My latest order is faulty"	I'm sorry to hear that, are you able to provide me with the order number so I can help you further?
"I need to pay my bill"	Could you please start by stating your account number so we can confirm your identity, before taking payment over the phone?
"I have a query with my account balance"	As of today, your account balance is £1,234, with a payment due in 2 days time – how can we help?

Customer Self-Serve Portal

An increasingly popular method of providing valuable, real-time updates to customers without the need for reaching an agent is creating a self-serve, online portal.

This could function as a tracking page for delivery updates, a central hub for online orders or a source of information such as user guides or FAQs for your customers.

A customer portal will enable your customers to receive relevant information without the need to contact your organisation. For any queries which need further assistance, providing a web chat on your site can help.

SMS/WhatsApp/Facebook Messenger Chat

Providing your customers with contact details for multiple channels enables you to connect with your customers on the platforms they use.

By publishing a number on your website, you can encourage individuals to send in SMS or WhatsApp messages to interact with your organisation. These can either be directed straight to your agents, or lead to an automated workflow taking the place as your chatbot.

Conversations can be held between two or more participants, and can even be made available across multiple channels so each user can participate within the same conversation, on the platform of their choice.

Chatbots

Organisations are increasingly turning to use conversation platforms such as web chat to provide a communication outlet for their customers. According to a recent study by ContactBabel, 1 in 4 UK contact centres are expecting to implement web chat in the next 12 months.

Automating responses from channels is by no means new, but providing an intelligent, AI-driven chatbot within each of these channels will provide a new level of customer interaction.

With the correct setup and training of the model, an intelligent chatbot could be used to answer customer queries directly, without the need for an agent. Another use could be to allow the bot to take bookings, scheduling appointments directly with the customer to free up agent resource.

Alternatively, customers could log support tickets through the chatbot, first asking a general question and then requiring additional detail beyond the capability of the chatbot. This would provide the agent with all the information already provided to the customer, ensuring that no messaging is repeated.

Intelligent chatbots can act as a standalone web chat made available on your site, or work within alternative channels such as WhatsApp, SMS or Messenger. The same workflows can be used throughout each channel, ensuring that customers are able to reach you on the platforms they use.

Considerations

1

What are the key challenges faced by customer service at the moment?

2

What volumes do you currently face in customer service?

3

How many tickets per month / year?

4

Is there a split by department / business function?

5

How do customers currently get in contact?

6

What is the split between channels?

7

Are there any particular channels which you would be most interested in exploring?

Providing a better Agent Experience

Single Customer Record

Having a centralised store of all the information held on each contact is vital in enabling the agent to complete their job with ease.

With data stored across many tools and platforms, it is often difficult for both agents to understand a complete overview of the customer record, as well as it proving extremely difficult for management to get an accurate understanding of satisfaction rates across the business.

Ensuring that the agents are able to quickly navigate through a centralised customer record, will reduce the level of context switching and limit the number of tools actively in use by the agent. As a result, the role of the agent becomes easier, with all relevant information being provided directly to the agent at the time when it is required.

Whether this is through opening up the caller's record within an existing CRM or by providing the agent with responses captured within the IVR, any opportunity to simplify the customer record can lead to a more personal and informative service provided by the agent.

Data Capture & Display

One of the most frustrating examples of poor customer service can be found in a significant number of IVRs. While asking the caller for information before routing through to an agent can be incredibly valuable, when the data being collected is ultimately ignored, or not made available to the agent, the customer is left frustrated when they are inevitably asked to repeat the same information.

Ensuring that the correct questions are answered and the data is collected and presented to the agent can lead to a huge win for both the customer and the agent, as valuable time on the phone

is no longer spent re-capturing data, and the customer is satisfied that the agent understands the reason behind the call.

With a combination of Twilio Programmable Voice and Task Router, data can be captured throughout the IVR stage and presented directly to the agent through a CRM system to ensure that all information is made available.

Data such as caller ID, order numbers or enquiry type can be presented, and shown as either a summarised topic, or detailed transcription of what the customer asked for, to really drive excellent customer success.

Training

With any customer service platform, training is vital to ensure the ongoing success of the implementation.

The benefits of integrating your communication channels into existing platforms is that they become seamlessly linked, reducing the levels of training required.

Basic click-to-dial functionality, along with intuitive caller functions can be built to fit directly into your existing CRM, prompting records to open and vital customer information to be displayed to the agent upon answering an inbound enquiry.

Engage with Zing

At Zing, we offer three types of engagement.



Twilio Integration

Discrete projects to solve a specific contact centre problem – anything from reducing customer waiting times to improving the customer interface. Our team works fast to understand the problem and implement Twilio seamlessly.



Enterprise Solutions

Transformative solutions designed to put customer engagement at the heart of your business.

Projects typically last from 2–6 months and are delivered in a series of sprints through our RapidValue™ methodology.



Managed Services

A partnership approach where we work with you to fully embed solutions that are part of a digital transformation journey.

We'll ensure ongoing development and maintenance of Twilio solutions and keep your contact centre running smoothly.

What does a typical engagement look like?

1 Discovery Call

All Zing engagements look to start with an initial discovery call to outline an overview of requirements.

This session will be used to gain an understanding of the current challenges and opportunities faced by the client, as well as an overview of the tools currently in use.

We will provide expert advice on similar implementations and outline product options and/or considerations where appropriate.

The outcome of the discovery call will be to identify whether a more indepth process review is required to fully understand the details of the requirements.

2 Process Review

Following on from the discovery call, a review of existing processes and tools is undertaken.

The review process enables us to gather a detailed overview of the current systems in place, and provides the client with an opportunity to pinpoint any specific challenges from the user or customer perspectives.

Where appropriate, the team at Zing will fully immerse themselves in the current operations, shadowing key individuals as they undertake their day-to-day responsibilities.

This review will provide the foundations of the overall solution architecture required to implement a rejuvenated solution. Where required, any proof of concept requirements will be identified and documented.

3

Proof of Concept Build

If further validation is required, a Proof of Concept may be delivered as part of the engagement.

These are typically treated as discrete projects, aimed at combating one or two of the challenges faced by the client. Work is usually undertaken over the course of 1–2 days and the output usually provides the basis for the main development project.

Proof of Concept builds are typically used for Enterprise Solutions, where a number of processes are undergoing significant changes.

4

Development Engagement

Once the challenges have been identified, the project outcomes are clearly defined and any proof of concept work has been undertaken and validated, the next stage is to begin development.

For Twilio Integrations, these are typically short term, discrete projects, managed on a time and material basis. Our Twilio-accredited development team will work alongside you to build, deliver and implement your solution.

Longer term development engagements are recommended for larger, Enterprise Solutions. These typically include a dedicated agile development team, managed by Zing, to work through the deliverables.

The client is placed at the heart of our development teams by enabling them with the product owner role, to ensure that value is being delivered with every iteration.

6

Continued Support & Reporting

Where required, maintenance and support can be provided throughout the duration of the project, with different levels of support available depending on the use cases.

Support can be provided on a 24x365 "follow-the-sun" basis, or within office hours depending on the requirements. Formalised SLA agreements will be confirmed throughout the implementation phase of the project, if necessary.

For those organisations with their own development resources, support and maintenance can be handled in-house where appropriate.

Managed Service Agreements are subject to frequent account reviews to monitor performance of the implementation against objectives, and outline upcoming implementation requirements based on current market conditions.

Let's start a conversation...

We're here to help you unlock the power of Twilio and make your contact centre a point of differentiation. That starts with a conversation about your needs, so get it touch to talk more.



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zing.dev/contact-us



Transform Experience

We are on a mission to put contact centres at the heart of customer engagement; to deliver on the promise that technology can enable an extraordinary customer experience.

Our team offers consultancy and managed services for Twilio, a market leading cloud communications platform. Twilio enables you to bring all your conversations into one place, optimise workflows and give your agents the tools they need to provide amazing service.

But you need a partner who can understand the software and your challenges, whether that's to solve a specific problem or work on a digital transformation project.

This is what we're here to do. We'll work with you to help your agents become more productive, your customers happier and your comms infrastructure more efficient by moving to the cloud.

For more information, check out [Zing.dev](https://zing.dev)

