uniphore

Understand and Improve Every Conversation

Uniphore Conversational Service Automation Transforms the Customer and Agent Experience and Reduces Costs

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Conversations:
The Gateway to Better Connections

Massive spikes in call volume. An unexpected pivot to work-from-home models. Revenue and budget cuts. The COVID-19 crisis has created intense challenges for customers, customer service and support operations, and agents.

Customers need and want to talk to people more than ever for assistance, but they're frustrated by longer hold times, slower resolutions, and agents who aren't able to quickly glean customers' emotional state and address their needs. Agents are equally frustrated as they try to handle complex, difficult conversations while juggling unique challenges around remote work.

The massive number of conversations happening between customers and organizations—digital, person-to-person, or a mix of both—is making it extremely obvious that the disconnected, archaic systems of yesterday cannot handle the demands of a rapidly evolving new normal.

To emerge stronger from challenging, uncertain times, brands need a way to make sure that all customer conversations are heard, understood, and augmented with artificial intelligence (AI) to deliver the ideal balance of human and machine responsiveness, convenience, and empathy—all while reducing operating costs and improving agent retention.

Conversational service automation (CSA) combines conversational AI, robotic process automation (RPA), and workflow automation in a conversation-centric platform that delivers on the promised future of a transformed contact center. With CSA, companies and their contact centers can overcome the challenges of operating during COVID-19 and beyond. Here's how.

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CUSTOMERS NEED MORE HELP AND ARE MORE FRUSTRATED

People have faced extreme upheaval in their lives at a level they've never before experienced. Some of your customers are now unemployed, and others are working from home (and may never return to the office fulltime.) Some are caring for family members who have been affected in some way. Many have small children at home with limited daycare options and schools closed. Seniors and others at higher risk can't safely leave their homes and must learn how to meet their needs with online services—doing more online than ever before, from banking to shopping to paying bills.

Everyone has been impacted in some way, large or small, and because of this, consumer needs, behaviors, and expectations have dramatically and suddenly shifted. Your customers need more help than they did in the past, and they want it quickly without having to wait for hours. Many of them want to speak with someone, rather than self-serve, because they need empathy, understanding, and a human connection.

In a survey conducted by Uniphore in April 2020, nearly 80 percent of people polled want to speak with an agent. Yet more than 33 percent of callers waited more than 30 minutes on hold, with 5 percent saying they waited more than 2 hours. Customer patience has limits: 72 percent of survey respondents say they ended the call while still waiting to speak with a live person.

The same survey also showed that more than 42 percent of respondents had called a contact center to resolve COVID-related issues around travel, employment, insurance, medical, or financial situations. This represents significant, additional call volume because of COVID at a time when contact centers and their employees face multiple challenges associated with working from home, including productivity, compliance with regulations, and handling increased channel usage.

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Customers Prefer Live Interaction During Times of Crisis

58% more customers prefer to solve urgent issues by calling for support rather than using other channels

Source: Accenture's Keep Me Index/Moments That Matter study, 2019. Global telecom industry. n=11,757.

BRANDS DON'T UNDERSTAND CUSTOMER CONVERSATIONS AND SO MUCH MORE

Focusing on the customer experience has long been recognized as critical for driving customer satisfaction and loyalty and increasing customer lifetime revenue. However, in today's uncertain and unpredictable environment, with all its inherent challenges, the crux of the customer experience, the conversation, is simply getting lost.

As they struggle to handle enormous call volumes, companies can't scale their current environments and processes to understand and act on caller needs and intent. They can't consistently deliver a quality experience and resolve issues quickly. Agents can't follow the conversation because they're distracted by menial efforts and are busy taking notes to summarize the call. They also aren't coached on how to respond conversationally based on the customer's intent and emotions, and often read from a script that comes across more machine than human in terms of conversation.

Because these organizations can't analyze and understand every conversation, they don't know:

- Whether customers are frustrated and, if so, why
- To what extent the work-from-home model of their contact center is impacting the customer experience
- How to improve the conversational experience to make it mutually beneficial for the customer and the brand
- Which opportunities exist to help control costs while delivering a high-quality customer experience
- How much the stress associated with the work-from-home model is impacting agent productivity

For companies to go beyond survival to thrive in the new normal, they must invest in understanding every conversation to deliver the best possible customer experience in the most efficient way.

FOCUSING ON CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IS A WINNING STRATEGY IN A RECESSION

Based on data from market research firm Forrester Research, McKinsey & Company determined that customer experience leaders had three times higher total returns to shareholders over the 2007-2009 recession than laggards.

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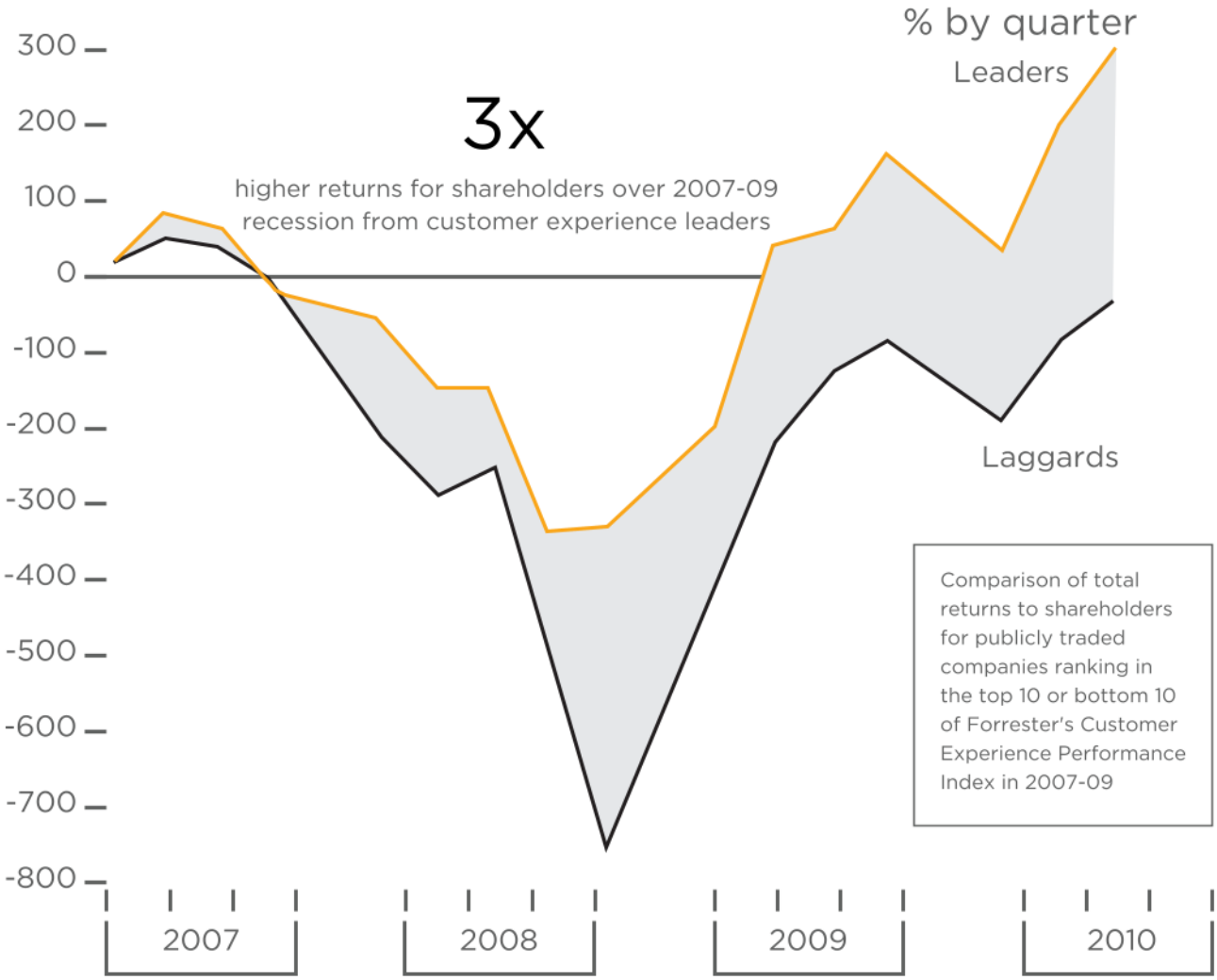
TOTAL RETURNS TO SHAREHOLDERS OF CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE LEADERS AND LAGGARDS



Source: "Adapting Customer Experience in the Time of Coronavirus," McKinsey & Company, April 2020

AI AND AUTOMATION IMPROVE EVERY CONVERSATION

Industry analysts have been predicting for years that AI and automation will completely change the contact center, eliminating agent jobs and impacting everything about how companies will staff, run, and manage their customer service teams in the future.

That futuristic vision never happened. Why? Because customer service will always be about conversations, whether they are digital or voice.

Until now, superficial or point AI and automation solutions ignored the meaning and value of customer conversation, delivering only minimal, incremental improvements in cost savings, often at the expense of the customer and agent experience. Without understanding the end-to-end conversation, these solutions are unable to bring about the type of contact center transformation needed today.

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Instead, solutions delivered on an AI and automation platform that are conversation-centric can drive transformation and deliver significant, measurable business value precisely because it understands every customer conversation, before, during, and after an agent is involved. We call this conversational service automation (CSA).

WHAT IS CSA?

CSA uses conversational AI, RPA, and workflow automation to bridge humans and machines and back office and front office operations throughout the customer conversation and across digital and voice channels.

SELF-SERVICE: First, CSA helps drive effective conversational experiences and increases self-service and automation rates using chatbots and voicebots or speechbots. Using unattended RPA, CSA further automates front office tasks if required based on the intent of the customer.

HUMAN-TO-HUMAN: During a call, CSA assists the agent with workflow automation, in-call coaching guidance, and predictions for the next best action based on real-time analysis of customer emotion, sentiment, and intent. Attended RPA augments and automates back-office tasks initiated by the agent.

POST-CALL: After the call, it automates the after-call work summary for the agent and uses post-call analytics to surface emerging trends and friction points to inform planning and operational improvements.

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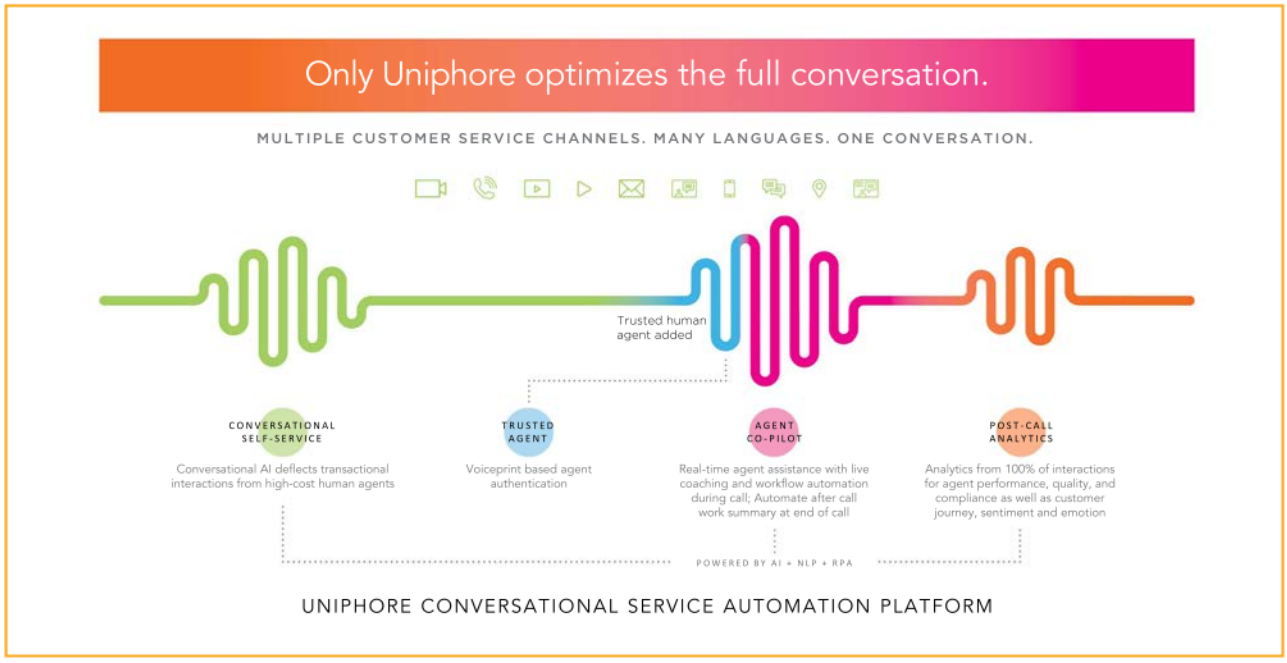

HOW IS CSA DIFFERENT?

CSA is the only platform that addresses the entire conversational experience for both customers and agents, using conversational AI, RPA, and workflow automation to drive demonstrable and sustainable business value across many areas, including:

Revenue:
Drives increased revenue with AI-powered recommendations for upsell/cross-sell opportunities

Customer experience:
Improves time to resolution, customer satisfaction, and loyalty

Agent experience:
Increases employee satisfaction and retention, accelerates agent onboarding, improves training, and enhances quality

Operational cost:
Reduces agent churn, reduces average handle time, improves agent productivity, and reduces call volume

Security and compliance:
Drives compliance both in contact centers and within work-from-home models

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What is Conversational Service Automation (CSA)?
CSA is the only platform that addresses the entire conversational experience for both customers and agents, using conversational AI, RPA, and workflow automation to blend front-office and back-office operations.

CSA TRANSFORMS THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND THE CONTACT CENTER

An end-to-end CSA platform helps contact centers transform to meet the new needs of customers while reducing costs and maintaining high quality despite rising call volumes. It does so by listening to and analyzing every call and using AI to automate and augment the conversational experience from self-service to agent-assisted service and blending the front and back office through RPA and workflow automation. And it does all this in over a hundred languages.

The following real-world examples and use cases demonstrate the benefits companies are seeing by adopting the Uniphore CSA platform.

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Example 1:

Analyzing every conversation to reduce call volume and costs

A global insurance company with operations in more than 80 countries has a business unit focused on travel, which handles more than 300,000 customer calls per month with 470 agents. Before CSA, the travel unit had only limited insight into call drivers, repeat calls, and misrouted calls, and experienced a high volume of call transfers. The cost to serve was also high compared to the revenue generated.

Using the CSA platform from Uniphore, the company identified caller intent, misdirected calls, low-complexity calls, and call driver opportunities for self-service. The insurer then implemented Uniphore conversational AI-powered self-service to reduce the cost to serve. The company also used conversational analytics to route low-complexity calls to lower-cost resources. Using the CSA platform's virtual agent self-service, conversational assistance, and analytics, the company achieved:

20%

Reduction in call volume

$9.2 million

Annual savings from self-service

$5.4 million

Annual savings by routing to lower-cost resources

Example 2:

Augmenting and assisting agents for faster resolution

A large healthcare organization with multiple contact centers handles more than one million calls annually with more than 1,000 agents. Large call volume, manual processes that spanned multiple applications, and lengthy after-call work distracted agents during calls and required considerable valuable, non-productive time between calls.

The healthcare organization used the CSA platform from Uniphore to automate mandatory tasks with RPA, introduce conversational AI chatbots to handle simpler transactional customer needs, augment agent capabilities with alerts and curated information from the knowledge base, and extract insights from post-call analysis. The Uniphore CSA platform enabled the healthcare organization to gain:

80%

Reduction in time required for after-call work

20%

Reduction in average handle time

$6 million

Annual savings through AI augmentation and automation

Example 3:

Automate post-work to improve agent productivity

A major telecommunications company supporting both wired and wireless customers handles more than 5 million calls per month with 16,000 agents. To document calls for later analysis, agents were using codes and abbreviations to document complex issues. The manually entered call summaries were difficult to understand and inconsistent from agent to agent. During calls, agents had to navigate between multiple applications to access information needed to resolve the issue.

With the CSA platform from Uniphore, the telecom can automate call summaries for agents using human-readable English. Augmentation, real-time coaching, and next best action reduces agent effort, shortens handling time, and improves the conversational experience. With Uniphore, the telecom estimates it can achieve:

60%

Reduction in agent wrap-up time

30 second

Per call reduction in time spent documenting the call

$38 million

Annual savings through automated call summaries

Conclusion

Customer experience leaders know that conversations are the ultimate drivers of customer satisfaction and loyalty, in good times or in times of crisis, whether digital or voice, human or AI. As consumers navigate their way through these challenging times, the conversations they have with your company will have a longer-term effect on how your customers feel about your brand and how long they stay with you.

To meet the new needs of customers with empathy and understanding, help agents be more effective and productive whether they are working from home or in the contact center, and continue to deliver a high-quality experience at a lower cost, it's time to transform the contact center with CSA. Only a conversation-centric approach to AI and automation can deliver the business value customer experience leaders need to position themselves to emerge strong no matter what the future brings.

Learn more about how Uniphore can transform your contact center and customer experience.

About Uniphore

Uniphore is the global leader in Conversational Service Automation (CSA), which combines the power of artificial intelligence, automation technology and machine learning. Uniphore is disrupting an outdated customer service model by bridging the gap between humans and machines by focusing on conversations. We make it possible for every voice, on every call, to be truly heard.

Uniphore delivers innovative solutions across a flexible platform to enable organizations to provide a better customer experience. This includes intelligent conversational self-service, real-time conversational analytics, versatile agent co-piloting, intent detection, agent coaching, quality assurance, regulatory compliance, and automated after call work. With Conversational Service Automation, enterprises can now engage their customers to effectively build loyalty, improve customer experience and realize operational efficiencies.

For more information,
please visit **www.uniphore.com** and connect with us on