Why Your Business Needs **Omnichannel Customer Service**

Customer service is a top decision driver for today's consumers.

Over the course of the last few years, exceptional customer service has gone from being appreciated to being largely expected by consumers, and for good reason. With incredible innovations and new vendors emerging left and right in every industry, buyers don't have a shortage of exceptional products and services to choose from. But finding a vendor that also pays attention to their individual case and provides them with the customer service they need to make the right buying decision or utilize the product successfully is much harder. As a result, customer service has become one of the top considerations in vendor selection and the number one driver of customer loyalty.

88% of those polled said the customer experience a company provides is just as important as its product or services.

60% of consumers are willing to abandon a brand after just one bad customer experience.

Source - Salesforce

To gain a competitive edge, many big-box vendors have stepped up their game, not only increasing the number of different types of support they offer to their customers or the hours of the day that support is available, but also the types of channels customers can utilize. They enable clients to start conversations on one channel and seamlessly continue on another. This omnichannel approach facilitates personalized service, even if they are juggling thousands of clients. So, it must come as no surprise that consumers have gotten used to this exceptional service and have come to judge all companies, including yours, based on the high standards set by leaders in customer experience.

So, what is good customer service in 2023?

Before we delve deeper into the ways you can improve the experience for all your clients, let's define what good customer service means.

It's Consistent.

83% of customers say they're more loyal to companies that provide consistency across departments and channels than those that don't.[1] The quality of care should be the same, no matter how or when customers reach out to your company.

It's Seamless.

Customers use a wide variety of channels to communicate with a company – texting, calling, emailing, web chat, social media, and more. They expect to start a conversation on one channel and be able to continue it on another – without missing a beat.
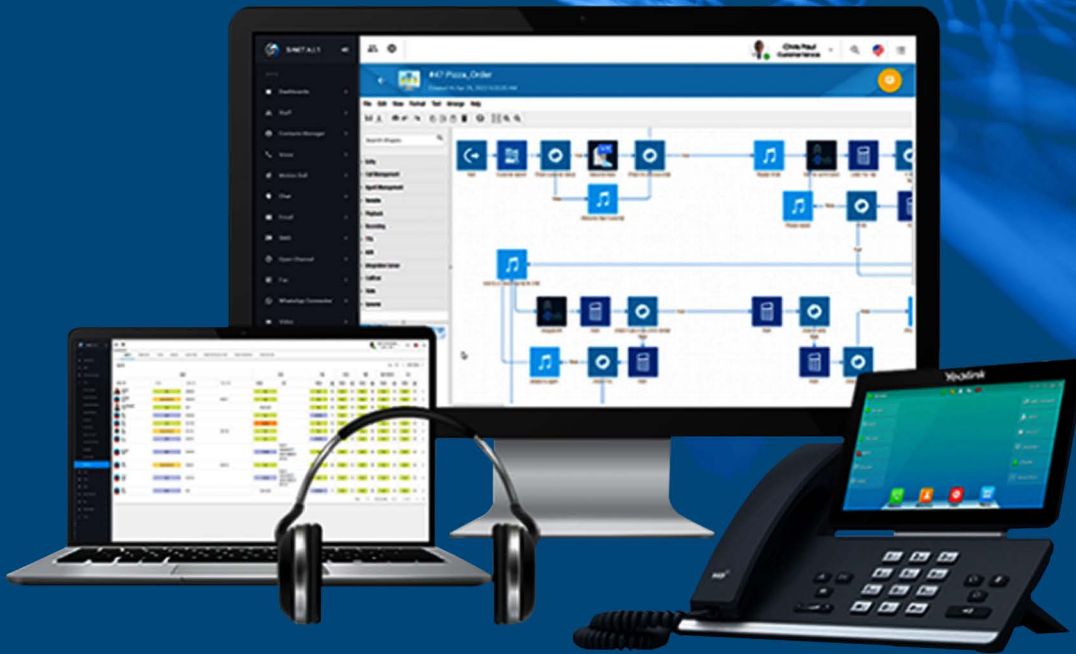
USE CASE EXAMPLES

CONSISTENT
Recognizing a Spanish-speaking repeat customer by their phone number and automatically routing them to another Spanish-speaking agent – or better yet, the same agent they spoke with last time they called.

SEAMLESS
Giving customers waiting on hold the option to continue the conversation more conveniently via text message.

PERSONALIZED
Giving a restaurant guest a gluten-free menu at arrival because they inquired about gluten-free options when they made the reservation.

It's Personal.

No one wants to feel like a number. Your customers want to feel like they are your top priority. They expect your staff to know their history with your brand and tailor the interaction to their unique needs.

How can you provide exceptional customer service?

As many businesses lack the resources to hire a large team of customer service agents or continue to struggle with talent shortages, meeting these continuously increasing client expectations is more challenging than ever before. So how can you compete with businesses that are twice your size or have hundreds of customer service reps on staff?

The answer is simple: *invest in an omnichannel customer service solution.*

- **It keeps you competitive.** You'll be able to provide the same quality of service as bigger brands with a fraction of the resources.

- **It increases efficiency and productivity in existing teams.** Thanks to time-saving automation, you can get more done with less. No need to increase, or overwork, your staff.

- **It's not just for big business;** the right omnichannel solution can support 2 to 200+ customer service representatives.

- **Fits B2B and B2C business models.** B2C customers are already used to fast, convenient service – this helps you meet their expectations. And B2B clients are as busy as can be (who has the time to repeat complex issues to multiple agents?), so giving quick, efficient support will go quite a long way.

- **It's industry agnostic.** Omnichannel customer service isn't just for tech companies. It can benefit businesses in industries such as healthcare, hospitality, retail, and many more.

What is Omnichannel Customer Service?

Before we tell you what omnichannel customer service is, we must cover what it isn't.

It isn't single-channel. Single-channel customer service gives consumers the option to reach out to a business via one communication channel only, whether that's by phone, email, or web chat. In today's increasingly digital world, this type of support limits a customer's ability to get quick and effective support, so thankfully it's fading fast.

It isn't multi-channel. Multi-channel customer service provides consumers with multiple communication channels to contact a representative. But since these channels are not integrated, they can make your team's jobs much harder. As they log into multiple platforms to gauge a customer's full history, service is slowed, your clients are asked to repeat information multiple times, and the overall result is a frustrating and tiring experience for both the client and agent.

Now we get to omnichannel. A true omnichannel solution takes all the communication channels your customers use and integrates them into a single platform – allowing your agents to access and manage customer conversations all from one, user-friendly interface. No more hunting through email inboxes, chat logs, or voicemail recordings to give personalized customer service!

Not only that but omnichannel solutions are also equipped with advanced AI capabilities, making it even easier to streamline your customer communications through automated workflows and chatbots. Some examples of this include reducing your team's workload with self-service chatbots for clients that are looking for a quick and simple answer or collecting important customer information before the client is routed to an agent to help your staff offer a better customer experience.
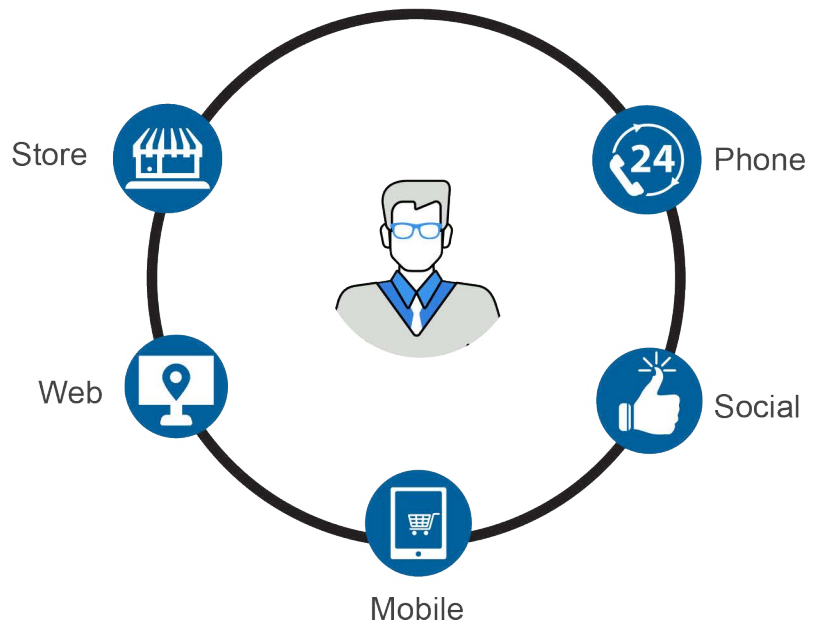
Multi-Channel　　　**Omnichannel**

Store　　　Phone

Web　　　　Social

Store　Web　Mobile　Social　Phone

Mobile
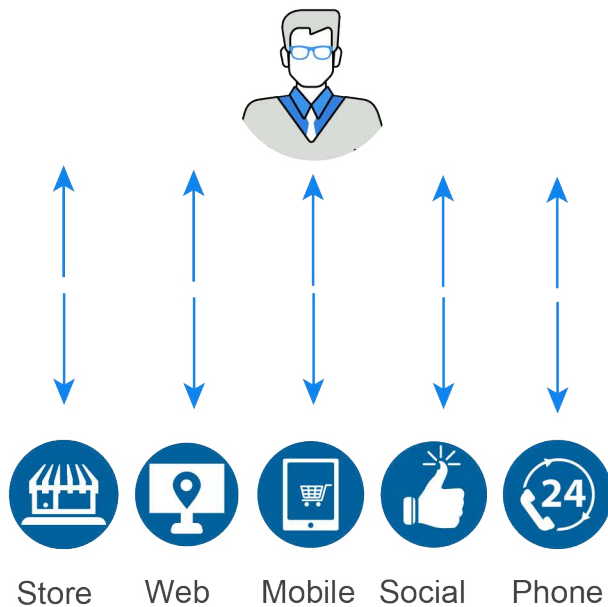
All Channels available to the consumer but are not integrated.

All Channels available to the consumer and they are connected.

The Benefits of Omnichannel Customer Service

Now that you know what omnichannel customer service is, let's talk about how it can positively impact your customer, your business, and your employees (especially those on your customer service team).

1. Speeds Up Response Times & Issue Resolution

76% of customers still expect to engage with someone immediately when contacting a company, such as an agent or chatbot. [2] Omnichannel customer service solutions allow you to speed up response times by offering self-service options for customers when agents are unavailable or can't respond right away. They also place the entire customer history at your team's fingertips, enabling them to find important information and resolve customer issues much more quickly and efficiently.

Did You Know?
66% of Millennial consumers and
61% of Gen-Z consumers prefer self-service when they need help with a simple case.

(SalesForce, State of the Connected Customer Report, 2022)

6

AI-Driven Chatbots. For customers who just have a few quick questions, an AI-powered chatbot can provide immediate answers 24/7/365. The chatbot can also act as a gatekeeper for your customer service team, determining when to transfer a customer to a live agent and collecting important customer information to ease your team's work. When transferred, the agent can review the chat transcript and properly address the issue at hand.

Advanced IVRs. These types of IVRs can understand full sentences and provide answers to open-ended questions. Much like a chatbot, advanced IVRs allow visitors and clients to solve their own issues without talking to an agent.

But what about customers with more complex challenges who need to speak with agents? You can simply add a "speak with live agent" option to your IVR or chat script, so that customers can be routed to an agent when needed. Or set up AI-powered sentiment analysis to detect when a customer is frustrated based on their language use or tone of voice and automatically route them to a live agent.

2. Improves Customer Service & Satisfaction

With quicker responses and faster resolutions, you'll be well on your way to boosting customer satisfaction. But there's one important factor you don't want to miss: consumers might want fast care, but they don't want transactional care.

This means that they don't want to repeat themselves over and over or feel like they're starting from square one every time they contact your business. Instead, they want personal service that considers previous conversations they've had with your brand. Omnichannel customer service platforms like S-NET Engage provide that.

Complete Customer Histories. Over 74% of consumers expect agents to have access to all relevant information.[2]Omnichannel customer service makes this possible by uniting all communication channels into one platform and giving your team easy access to a customer's entire interaction history. This enables your workers to offer the personal touch your customers crave.

Repeat customer, Ms. Nguyen, rented a 70ft Azimut yacht last month – ask her if she'd like to try a catamaran or pontoon this time.

When Mr. Dellmar calls again to order his Friday-night takeout, ask him if he would like his usual for a quick, easy, personalized customer experience.

Sentiment Analysis. Personal care doesn't just mean knowing your customers' history, though. It also means responding to your customers' needs appropriately. Sentiment analysis can assess how your customers are feeling during automated interactions, giving your staff a virtual heads-up to make sure agents can start the conversation on the right foot once the client is routed to them.

Sentiment analysis can also be used to uncover important trends in customer satisfaction – did you have more positive interactions this month or more negative ones? When did the negative interactions occur and how were they handled? This type of data helps you detect problem areas and reward your team for a job well done – keeping your quality of service as consistent as possible.

3. Reduces Workloads for Customer Service Agents

Omnichannel customer service doesn't just benefit your customers – it benefits your agents too! Its self-service IVRs and chatbots reduce the number of requests agents receive – freeing them up to handle more complicated issues. These self-service capabilities also help smaller companies get more done with less.

Having all relevant customer data in one easily accessible location is also a major time saver. Instead of logging into multiple platforms, or digging through dozens of messages, now agents can monitor and manage all customer communication – and information – from one central hub.

And that's just the tip of the iceberg!

4. Improves Workload Management

In a multi-channel solution, companies may assign different teams to different communication channels: one team handles social media, the other team handles online chats, and yet another handles phone calls. And while it's a decent system, it's not the best system. Because the number of customer questions or requests are never equal between channels. While your call center team may be scrambling to answer every call before customers get tired of waiting and hang up, your chat team could be bored silly or is logging in and out of platforms to lend their colleagues on phone assignments a helping hand.

But with omnichannel customer service, all client questions from all communication channels come in through one queue. Agents can field calls, chat messages, social media questions, and more in the order they're received all from one source. No matter how your customers contact you, your agents will be able to handle it with ease.

Your Call to Action

Today, customers expect brands to meet them on their preferred channels of communication, and they expect every interaction to be easy, fast, and personalized. But delivering the same customer experiences large corporations provide with a fraction of the staff and resources can be challenging, to say the least. An AI-powered omnichannel customer service solution can help you boost the speed and quality of the customer support your staff delivers, whether you've got a team of five agents or a team of five hundred. It expands the number of communication channels available to your clients, simplifies personalization, and eases workload management for better agent retention so that you can hold on to the top talent that keeps your clients happy.

So don't wait! Experience all the benefits of omnichannel customer service today!

Interested in learning more about omnichannel communications?

Get in touch with us:

💬 Chat on snetconnect.com

✉️ Email at sales@snetconnect.com

📞 Call 866-404-7638

f Connect on facebook.com/SNetCommunications/

We practice what we preach!

About S-NET Communications

Founded by industry veterans Alex Fayn and Eugene Likhovid in 2006, S-NET Communications has grown from a regional telecommunications provider to serving thousands of businesses nationwide. Large enough to deliver state-of-the-art cloud communications and networking solutions, but small enough to provide each client with personalized customer support, S-NET continues to maintain a client retention rate of 99%.

S-NET's fundamental mission to provide exceptional customer support to each client has served as the inspiration behind S-NET Engage, an AI-Powered Omnichannel Contact Center solution that helps organizations deliver best-in-class client experiences and optimize the customer journey.

REFERENCES

[1]*SalesForce Research Team.* (2022, March). State of the Connected Customer Report 2022. SalesForce. Retrieved September 23, 2022, from https://www.salesforce.com/resources/research-reports/state-of-the-connected-customer/

[2]*Zendesk Research Team.* (2022, April 4). The Zendesk Customer Experience Trends Report 2022. Zendesk. Retrieved September 23, 2022, from https://www.zendesk.com/customer-experience-trends/#report