If You're Not Using Chatbots, You're Letting Customers Down. Here's Why.



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As a growing number of consumers shift to online shopping, businesses are having to invest in customer service technology that can handle large volumes of inquiries efficiently. Chatbots are an emerging solution for businesses looking to expand their reach and boost conversions online. In the next five years, the chatbot market is set to grow by 23% from its estimated market size of $7.76 billion.

This projected growth can be attributed to the competitive advantages online businesses gain by using chatbots. One of the biggest draws of this innovative technology is its ability to improve customer service.

How can chatbots improve customer service?

Chatbots are ideal for companies that want to grow their consumer base without hiring additional customer service agents. These automated support workers can handle a variety of routine questions and offer a number of benefits, including:

Fast response times

Online businesses have a very short window of opportunity to capture the attention of potential customers browsing their websites. In fact, most people spend less than 15 seconds on each webpage they click on.

Given how impatient the average internet user can be, chatbots are a useful tool for keeping potential customers engaged. They can respond almost instantly to customer queries and keep visitors from abandoning your site.

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Multilingual communication

Chatbots can be programmed to serve customers from around the world in their native language. By implementing multilingual chatbots, businesses can reach a broader audience and retain customers who may not have made it to checkout without assistance in their own language.

Even though many people visit foreign language websites, the majority still prefer to access websites in their mother tongue. According to the European Commission, 44% of internet users feel that they are missing out on important information because the websites they use are written in a language they are not familiar with. In addition, 82% of internet users refuse to buy products in a foreign language.

This means that it is absolutely vital for businesses targeting global markets to increase the number of languages they offer on their websites. Chatbots are a simple, cost-effective way of making website content accessible to customers who speak a different language.

Multi-tasking capabilities

Unlike human customer service agents, chatbots have the capacity to conduct multiple conversations at once. They enable businesses to serve more customers at a lower cost than human workers.

Although this can raise concerns about job security for customer service agents, the fact remains that humans are still needed for more complex customer queries and issues. By using chatbots, you can free up your employees to manage more detailed requests and save them from the monotony of answering the same basic questions repeatedly.

Personalized recommendations

Chatbots can provide new and repeat customers with personalized product recommendations based on their browsing history and past purchases. For example, if you own an online clothing store and recently sold a set of pajamas to one of your customers, the next time they visit your site, a chatbot can greet them by name and recommend a sleep mask to go with their sleepwear.

Tailored interactions like this can increase customer satisfaction and promote brand loyalty. As a matter of fact, a whopping 81% of customers would rather purchase products from a company that provides a personalized experience. This means that using AI-powered chatbots with advanced analytical capabilities is a good move for companies looking to boost customer satisfaction.

24-hour availability

One of the most striking differences between chatbots and human customer service agents is their availability. Employees need to take breaks and sleep in between shifts, which limits customer service to certain times of day. Chatbots, on the other hand, never take breaks and can perform indefinitely, enabling businesses to serve customers in different time zones and increase their reach.

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Limitations of customer service chatbots

While chatbots offer a number of benefits and are continually improving in their ability to handle the nuances of human interaction, there are limits to what these programs are able to do. They sometimes have difficulty handling detailed or unexpected questions, lack the emotional intelligence of a human customer service agent and are susceptible to technical glitches.

Using a human workforce to tackle more complex customer service issues and provide support in case of technical failure can mitigate these challenges and maintain a positive customer experience. Moreover, reserving human customer service agents for complex issues can make their work more engaging and potentially increase retention rates.

What to expect moving forward

In the not-too-distant future, we can expect to see more innovative applications for chatbots in customer service, including multi-modal interactions.

Chatbots can enable multi-modal interactions by processing non-written methods of communication. For example, certain

healthcare chatbots can analyze photos of skin rashes and other visible symptoms of disease to provide patients with an initial diagnosis. This takes the strain off doctors and allows them to provide care for more urgent, complex conditions.

Multimodal chatbots can also improve accessibility in customer service by allowing visually impaired customers to send audio recordings instead of typed questions. This opens up an exciting realm of possibilities for AI-driven solutions to diverse customer needs.

Final thoughts

Chatbots are a valuable addition to online customer service. They can assist more website visitors than human agents and play an important role in conversational marketing through the creation of personalized product recommendations. Moving forward, their capacity to handle complex queries will likely improve as AI becomes more advanced. Various industries will be able to use them to improve accessibility and reduce the workload of human employees. All that remains is for you to decide whether your business will join this growing movement of automated interaction.

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