



# Accelerating AI during COVID: Getting more bang from your bots

June 18, 2020

AI, machine learning and other technologies allow today's business leaders to better leverage customer insights, deliver quality customer experiences while simultaneously empowering the workforce.

Even prior to the spread of the health crisis, organizations understood the valuable role that AI and chatbots could play in improving customer considerations. Consider these facts:

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proactive customer services by using AI-enabled process orchestration and continuous intelligence, according to Gartner

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<https://www.gartner.com/smarterwithgartner/improve-customer-experience-with-artificial-intelligence/>

- **27% of companies** [[https://www.opentext.com/info/information-advantage/customer-experience-ai-voc?ldsrc=Marketing%20%20Paid%20Inbound&elqcampaignid=42334&utm\\_source=google&utm\\_medium=ppc&utm\\_campaign=act-ia-idc-ppc-textad&gclid=CjwKCAjwnlr1BRAWEiwA6GpwNdggoOe3u2o1ulwgUo3xvSAN7AuoeJgHqZK-olM4c00Pz-osO45eYhoClskQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.opentext.com/info/information-advantage/customer-experience-ai-voc?ldsrc=Marketing%20%20Paid%20Inbound&elqcampaignid=42334&utm_source=google&utm_medium=ppc&utm_campaign=act-ia-idc-ppc-textad&gclid=CjwKCAjwnlr1BRAWEiwA6GpwNdggoOe3u2o1ulwgUo3xvSAN7AuoeJgHqZK-olM4c00Pz-osO45eYhoClskQAvD_BwE)] say improving their customer intelligence and data efforts are their highest priority when it comes to customer experience (CX).
- **30% of customers** [[https://www.opentext.com/info/information-advantage/customer-experience-ai-voc?ldsrc=Marketing%20%20Paid%20Inbound&elqcampaignid=42334&utm\\_source=google&utm\\_medium=ppc&utm\\_campaign=act-ia-idc-ppc-textad&gclid=CjwKCAjwnlr1BRAWEiwA6GpwNdggoOe3u2o1ulwgUo3xvSAN7AuoeJgHqZK-olM4c00Pz-osO45eYhoClskQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.opentext.com/info/information-advantage/customer-experience-ai-voc?ldsrc=Marketing%20%20Paid%20Inbound&elqcampaignid=42334&utm_source=google&utm_medium=ppc&utm_campaign=act-ia-idc-ppc-textad&gclid=CjwKCAjwnlr1BRAWEiwA6GpwNdggoOe3u2o1ulwgUo3xvSAN7AuoeJgHqZK-olM4c00Pz-osO45eYhoClskQAvD_BwE)] will leave a brand and never come back because of a bad experience.

Now, as the COVID-19 virus continues to spread, it is disrupting businesses and causing an unprecedented uptick in call center inquiries. That is left many businesses scrambling to learn all they can about AI call center solutions that can help them meet customer demand for information.

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## 5 ways AI improves CX during a crisis

~~[<https://hbr.org/2017/01/kick-ass-customer-service>] have already taken the lead in automated service experiences, leveraging self-help portals or chatbots before contacting a live agent. With the emergence of COVID-19, it has become more important than ever to accelerate implementing AI-powered solutions.~~

During these COVID times, today's customer experience executives are asking critical questions:

1. What are our customers saying about COVID and the brand externally and internally?
2. How do we capture COVID-related comments from all channels?
3. How do we compare CSAT scores pre-COVID and post-COVID and associate with customer verbatims?
4. How do we identify the appropriate channel for COVID comments?

Traditionally companies use NPS to measure customer experience. As indicated in **this joint white paper** [<https://www.hgsdigital.com/measuring-voice-of-your-customer-in-an-ai-driven-world>] between HGS & AWS, NPS is not the best indicator. Rather, capturing omni-channel interactions (including customer speech, email and chat text) is the best way to measure the **voice of**

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your-customer-in-an-ai-driven-world]. As illustrated below, HGS has a comprehensive strategy to capture the omni-channel interactions of the customer that will stand as the ultimate Voice of the Customer.

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**Yasim Kolathayil** [<https://www.linkedin.com/in/yasim/>] (Yas), HGS Digital Vice President – Data and Insights, outlines five ways AI can improve customer experience during a crisis.

- 1. Deeper understanding of customer needs.** AI and voice of customer solutions help businesses gain deeper and contextual understanding of customers and support efforts to create personalized and tailored experiences during times of crisis. Often, customers contact the brand before they vent their frustration on social media. Therefore, it is critical to address the needs of the customer proactively to protect the brand and its reputation.
- 2. Channel identification.** AI can identify the channel where most COVID comments are initiated (chat, email, phone, text, social etc.). As a recent WSJ article [<https://www.wsj.com>], texting customers is no longer taboo when everyone is stuck at-

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during crises, adding to the multitude of channels the brand already supports.

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- 3. Proactive issue resolution.** AI-enabled, real-time speech analytics can identify COVID-related concerns of the customer during the call and proactively address them before the call is disconnected. Intent recognition is a component of AI that helps address nuances of communication. Using natural language processing (NLP) tools, virtual agents can analyze communications to determine what customers are trying to say. Even more importantly, AI platforms can help chatbots recognize the user's intent.
  - 4. Customer sentiment assessment and proactive call routing.** AI techniques can be used to determine the live customer sentiment and the call drivers during the COVID-19 crisis for deeper insights. AI-based voice analysis tools, for example, can uncover customer insights that don't show up in usual call center KPIs. The AI-based tools can check whether the customer sentiment is negative during the middle of the call and proactively escalate the call to the team lead for immediate or fast resolution.
  - 5. Facilitation of COVID-19 remedial action.** AI techniques can be used to determine the products and processes linked to COVID so that quick remedial action can be taken by the product owners. This is particularly important for brand impacting issues such as fraud.

The COVID-19 pandemic has helped widen global usage for AI technology. An automation-first strategy that includes smart, AI-powered solutions helps provide customers with the support they are desperate to access while providing support staff a chance to focus on

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McKinsey mentioned noted in an article about [digital strategy at scale \[https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/mckinsey-digital/our-insights/digital-strategy-in-a-time-of-isis\]](https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/mckinsey-digital/our-insights/digital-strategy-in-a-time-of-isis), now is the time for bold learning at scale. The question is – “Are you ready”?

Is your organization AI-ready? **HGS [https://www.teamhgs.com/]** is a leader in CX business and serves the back office and contact center for many Fortune 500 organizations. As the pandemic hit, HGS **proactively [https://www.teamhgs.com/covid-19]** moved its agents to work from home and embraced AI tools. HGS Digital, the digital arm of HGS, **recently partnered with AWS [https://hgs.cx/webinars/measuring-voice-of-your-customer-in-an-ai-driven-world]** to discuss how AI can measure the voice of customer to improve CX and increase revenue during crises. **Learn more [https://www.hgsdigital.com/services/digital-customer-experience/chatbot-development]** about HGS Digital's AI solutions or request a consultation.

**Tags:** AI, chatbot, COVID-19, Customer Experience, DCX

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