5 technology trends that are changing business communication

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By Jason O'Brien

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There is no doubt that advancements in technology are going to have a big impact on how businesses will communicate in the future, whether internally, with customers, or with other businesses. Tried-and-tested methods will soon have to work alongside new technology that is already revolutionizing business communication.

In this article, we’ve enlisted the help of experts to find out what new technology trends, like the uses of artificial intelligence, are emerging in 2019 and beyond.

Chatbots

With the growth of social media, consumers have become more concerned with getting more authentic communication from brands and with reviewing businesses and products. This makes customer service and responding to queries increasingly important.

To meet this demand, many businesses have introduced the use of [chatbots](https://sproutsocial.com/insights/topics/chatbots/). An example of the success of this technology is KLM Royal Dutch Airline’s chatbot, known as Bluebot. This example of AI is used to assist people as they navigate the airline’s website, helping them book flights and addressing their queries. KLM has reported that more than 1.7 million messages from 500,000 passengers have been sent to Bluebot.

While this example shows how artificial intelligence is already changing business communication, it’s not without its challenges—like the fact that people don’t trust bots as much as they would a human. In fact, [research](https://lab.getapp.com/new-research-forget-chatbots-customers-still-want-to-talk-to-people/#more-2118) from GetApp reveals that 36.6 percent of people say speaking to a real person is the most valuable element of customer service.

Artificial intelligence uses machine learning to further its capabilities in interacting with people. As it becomes more intelligent and reliable, people will trust and enlist the help of AI more. That’s why it’s predicted to become a fundamental part of business communication.

Ketan Kapoor, CEO and founder of talent management firm Mettl, says: “The humble chatbot will turn out to be a competitive advantage in turning time in favor of businesses. You will be able to connect to customers in a relatively shorter time, reducing the chances of customer indecision, loss of interest, [or of]…them being captured by competitors. Mimicking human communication elements, the initial interactions done by chatbots will be smoother, seamless, and precise.”

Employing artificial intelligence in customer service will improve efficiency and cut costs for businesses, so if advancements in technology win further trust from consumers, then it’s inevitable that this will be a part of business communication in the future.

Artificial personal assistants

As artificial intelligence becomes more advanced, its capabilities are seemingly endless. Last year, Google announced the release of “[Duplex](https://www.digitaltrends.com/home/what-is-google-duplex/),” an AI-powered technology capable of making phone calls while adopting characteristics of human speech, so you wouldn’t even know you’re speaking to a robot. This could mean the end of the traditional personal assistant, with this form of AI used to coordinate administrative affairs.

Gabriel Shaoolian, founder and executive of DesignRush, predicts this trend will continue: “Looking past these consumer pathways, AI will radically transform how internal teams communicate and function. You can expect to see AI integrate itself into everyday operations, creating meetings, transcribing discussions and more. AI will eliminate the menial tasks around the office, leaving more time for employees to perform productive work.”

Companies will soon be able to utilize technology such as Google Duplex to produce all their internal communication. As the technology develops, AI will become increasingly efficient at doing so.

Alan Lafrance, marketing strategy manager at lawn service company Lawnstarter says, “Over time, the tools will learn and get better. They will eventually reach a point where most internal and external communications are fully automated.”

Hyper-personalized experiences

Businesses aren’t just using AI to communicate both internally and externally, but also to make outreach strategies more efficient. The concept of a hyper-personalized experience means AI is both understanding and learning from human responses to communication. An example of this would be AI technology using historical data, such as recent purchases made by users, to develop personalized messages that will interest them. This will spell the end of segmentation, a process that requires companies to split their audiences into certain demographics, as AI will be able to identify preferences individually.

AI is currently at the intersection of machine learning and sentiment analysis, and it could be said that it’s nowhere near its full potential. Chris Byrne, CEO of Sensorpro explained, “At its most basic, machine learning can be used to classify things: Is this sentence negative? Is that image a face? Is that email spam? Beyond that it can be used to make recommendations, cluster like-minded groups, ranking based on likes and interests and anomaly detection.”

We have all experienced basic elements of this in practice; for example, when you visit a website once or twice and suddenly you regularly see it advertised elsewhere online.

Sophie Miles, co-founder of elMejorTrato gave her insight on the future of hyper-personalized experience: “The main effect of the application of artificial intelligence is speeding the responses. Applied to email marketing, artificial intelligence works on opening emails, analyzing clicks and conversions, etc. The work is streamlined, and in many cases, the response rate to this email marketing campaign is higher than that obtained without using artificial intelligence.

“The challenge will be focused on designing an artificial intelligence system capable of responding, interacting and making decisions in a human way. Fortunately, you have companies working on that.”

Using AI to both analyze emails and supply personalized responses is an extremely useful tool. With companies working on adapting the technology to interact and make decisions the way a human would, there is no doubt this is a trend for communicators to watch.

Blockchain

Blockchain, once it’s perfected, it will have a lasting effect on business communication. In simple terms, blockchain is the technology that underpins digital currency. As we already know, digital currencies such as bitcoin are on the rise. Blockchain allows digital information to be distributed, not copied, meaning each individual piece of data can only have one owner.

It works like a database that is constantly updated and stored in multiple locations. William Mougayar, author of [*The Business Blockchain*](https://www.amazon.com/Business-Blockchain-Practice-Application-Technology-ebook/dp/B01EIGP8HG), described it like this:

“Imagine two entities (e.g. banks) need to update their own user account balances when there is a request to transfer money from one customer to another. They need to spend a tremendous amount of money, time and effort for coordination, synchronization, messaging and checking to ensure each transaction happens exactly as it should.

“With blockchain, a single ledger of transaction entries that both parties have access to can simplify the coordination and validation efforts because there is always a single version of records, not two disparate databases.”

The idea of blockchain is that it can keep a record of far more than just currency transactions. Braden Perry, a blockchain attorney for a financial firm, recognizes the potential blockchain has in the industry:

“Blockchain in industry, like blockchain technology itself, is in its infancy, but on the peak of rapid expansion. Businesses that see the potential and are proactive in its adoption will likely be the front-runners in innovation and ahead of the curve when the benefits are fully realized.”

Blockchain is still less commonly talked about than AI, but if the use of digital currency continues to grow, then it won’t be too long until we’re all talking about blockchain.

Virtual reality

Virtual reality technology allows the user to immerse themselves in an experience by combining real-time 3D vision, sounds, haptics (touch interaction), location data and even other human senses. This gives people the ability to alter their own virtual environment, and is something we could see used more regularly within business.

Rachel Henderson, vice president of marketing firm Warschawski, believes virtual reality could be a critical part of business communication in the future—but, she says, it could be some way off from being perfect: “Virtual and augmented reality is the most immersive communications technology to come along since the movies, but unless there is a 360-communications strategy behind it, brands are missing a huge opportunity for success.”

Many experts believe that virtual reality will have the biggest impact on nonprofit organizations such as charities, using the new technology to send powerful messages to their audiences.

Henderson supports this: “In the nonprofit industry, there is a huge opportunity with VR/AR marketing because it has the power to persuade—to create strong emotional connections that change attitudes, actions and policies that shape our world. VR/AR can be an incredible awareness, fundraising or advocacy tool.”

We are already witnessing the emergence of new technologies that are far from reaching their full capabilities. This says a lot about the changes to come in business communication and how these trends will continue into 2019 and beyond.