IBM Software
IBM Watson Solutions

The Empowered Contact Center Agent

IBM Watson to help improve customer service by promoting faster, more consistent agent response

Overview
Agent assist for service and support

Solution Components

- IBM® Watson® Engagement Advisor
- IBM® POWER7® systems

"We're looking to IBM Watson to help us achieve our goal of responding to our clients' inquiries with greater speed and enhanced accuracy delivering an improved experience."
- Senior customer support executive

With a one-point change in customer satisfaction associated with a 4.6% change in market value[1], contact center employees are on the front lines of a critically important customer touch point. When customers have questions they expect answers quickly and accurately. Making this possible takes more than traditional approaches in this day of rising expectations and complexity.

The need

Information is growing at an astounding pace. There are 2.5 quintillion bytes of new data generated every twenty-four hours[2]. And about 85% of that data is unstructured[3]. Computers, however, are notoriously bad at making sense of unstructured data and putting it to productive work. This leaves human beings to bridge the gap with time-consuming, labor intensive work sorting through this data to find relevant, personalized information to help their customers.

Responding to customer requests takes expertise and the ability to rapidly changing information. Yet, contact center employees have a 20% turnover rate and 1/3 of them have been on the job less than a year[4]. Half[5] of 270B annual calls[6] that contact centers handle typically go unresolved or require escalation. Yet, 61% of the time, the failed calls could have been resolved with better access to information[5]. Agents frequently rely on their own custom "cheat sheets" to remind them where to find information they need. But this information is soon outdated and hard to share among colleagues leaving the center itself stuck with results that are too slow and inconsistent to meet customer needs.

The solution

A financial services organization is working with IBM to overcome this challenge beginning with its level-two support center which handles millions of annual requests from front-line employees. They plan to use the IBM Watson Engagement Advisor to help level-two agents speak knowledgably about a broad range of products and services, draw upon vast information sources, and keep up with quickly changing policies, procedures and regulations.

The expectation is for Watson to ingest information from sources like manuals, call logs, users groups, and government procedure documents and use it to give agents timely, consistent, accurate responses to queries through plain, conversational English dialogue. The hope is to expand usage from second-level support to front-line employees and eventually to end user customers.

The benefit

As Watson's transformative capabilities are deployed, the organization is looking to improve customer satisfaction through better accuracy and responsiveness of its support center operation. The organization also hopes to continue to scale its business through increasing products, customers, and volumes of data without overwhelming its staff. They want to use Watson to leverage today's tremendous volume, velocity, and variety of data to improve service to customers.

For more information

To learn more about IBM Watson, Watson Engagement Advisor, and Cognitive System, contact your IBM sales representative or visit ibm.com/watson

Sources:
1 – Journal of Marketing, January 2006; Customer Satisfaction and Stock; Prices: High Returns, Low Risk; Claes Fornell, Sunil Mithas, Forrest V. Morgeson III, & M.S. Krishnan Creating Impact in B2B
2 – IBM CMO Study 2011, a study of 1,734 chief marketing officers from 64 countries
3 - IDC 2012
4 -Dimension Data's Global Contact Centre; Benchmarking Summary Report 2011
5- Aberdeen Group. The Contact Center in a Profit-centric Service Organization May 2011
6 - Contact Babel US Contact center decision makers guide 2010