6 Killer Applications for Artificial Intelligence in the Customer Engagement Contact Center

If Artificial Intelligence (AI) for the overall business is a red hot topic in C-suites, AI for customer engagement is white hot. No wonder professionals, who had removed AI from their resumes, are scrambling to add it back in!

As a pioneer in AI for contact center customer service and customer engagement, eGain has not only developed cutting-edge technology but also best practices and proven use-cases over the last two decades. In this article, we discuss six killer applications and associated use-cases for AI that have already enabled blue-chip companies to transform—not just improve—customer service and engagement. We will also talk about an industry-first, innovative way that can get you going with AI in as few as 30 days! That being said, the paper is not a primer on AI nor does it get into defining what it is. We also encourage you to view our CEO's keynote speech at our Digital+AI conference to get a fundamental understanding of AI,

and eGain's viewpoint on how it can be leveraged for contact center customer service.

# 1. **Understand** natural language **and answer** customer questions

▸ Trick question: Who understands natural language, answers questions in a smart and fun way, gives website tours, pushes relevant web pages, and engages customers, while working 24x7x365 (366 in the case of leap years!)?

▸ Answer: Virtual assistant (VA)

Also called virtual customer assistants, chatbots, avatars, virtual agents, or concierges, VAs help businesses wow customers with distinctive self-service, while helping them cut costs and build brand equity. The best VAs are also multilingual and communicate in multiple modes—text-to-text, text-to-speech, speech-to-text, and speech-to-speech. Importantly, they know what they don't know. When unable to answer the customer's question, they escalate to human-assisted customer service with full context from the self-service interaction.

For the VA to be able to do this out of the box without integration work, it needs to be an integral part of an omnichannel customer engagement hub which consolidates omnichannel interactions, knowledge, AI, analytics, and administration into one platform.

eGain AI clients understand and answer

▸ One of the largest government organizations in the UK uses the natural language capabilities of eGain Virtual Assistant™ to understand and answer questions from taxpayers, with intelligent and seamless escalation to live chat when necessary. Deployed in time to support the critical tax returns period, eGain Virtual Assistant and eGain Chat™ helped deflect 77% of their phone calls within the first six weeks of the deployment!
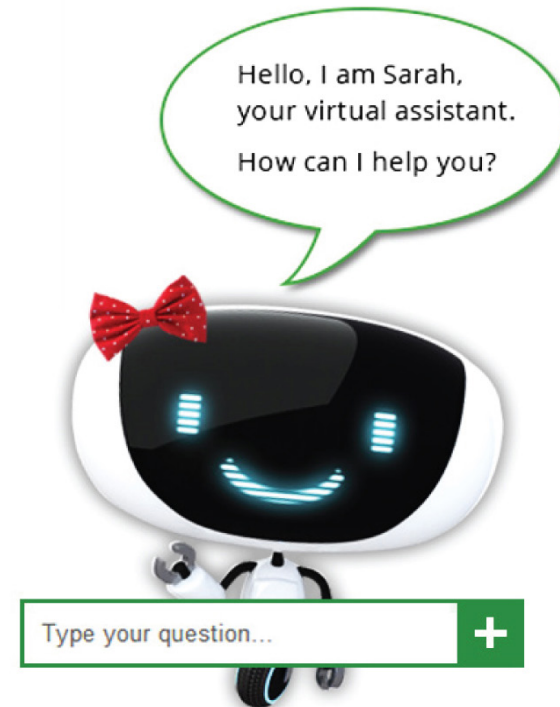
2. **Guide** search and service interactions

While VAs are good at answering questions of low to medium complexity, AI reasoning technologies are capable of guiding customers and contact center advisors through interactions of higher complexity. Reasoning can guide users to the next best steps in their search for the correct answer by asking the right questions to clarify intent, troubleshoot, or track progress across long-lived service fulfillment processes. This conversational, dialog-driven guidance is based on intelligent understanding of the problems faced by the customers as well as customer service expertise drawn from the best agents.

AI reasoning applies learnings from past cases to find solutions for new ones. Learning should be through a curated model rather than a fully automatic one to ensure process adherence—the AI will never go off-script on its own, but analytics will highlight to the business when the script needs to be changed or extended. The AI system can understand when information is missing, make best-fit decisions based on incomplete information or ambiguous circumstances, and can easily make mid-course adjustments when new information comes to light. When this flexibility is combined with an intuitive drag-&-drop process builder, it becomes easy to define, maintain, and extend complex processes and nuanced decision-making. Watch out

for pretenders like rigid scripting and rule-based systems—they tend to put agents and customers in conversation cul-de-sacs and dead ends, especially when the customer goes off-script (which is quite common). Moreover, such legacy systems are difficult and expensive to maintain.

eGain AI clients guide

▸ Global bank uses eGain's patented AI reasoning technology to guide a largely novice agent pool through best-practice interactions across 11 countries, while reducing training requirements by half and agent churn to <1%.

▸ Leading telco guides 10,000 contact center advisors and associates in 550 retail stores with eGain AI reasoning for a 37% improvement in First-Contact Resolution (FCR), 50% improvement in advisor speed to competency, and a 20% boost to their NPS (Net Promoter Score).

▸ Another leading telco reduces unwarranted "No Fault Found" handset returns and exchanges by 38% with AI-guided problem resolution in the contact center and website.

▸ White goods giant saved $50M per year by reducing unnecessary truck rolls through AI-guided problem resolution in the contact center.

3. **Decide** as output or as part of service process

According to an executive survey by Grove Critical Thinking, when presented with the proposition "bad decisions cost my organization time and money," 70% of survey respondents either agreed or strongly agreed. Moreover, 82% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "Bad decisions harm my organization's reputation in the marketplace." Decision-making for customer engagement is no different—it could spell the difference between delight (for the customer) and demise (for the business).

Again, unlike rule-based systems that start breaking down as decisions become more complex (these systems are also harder to maintain), AI reasoning helps make decisions with a flexible approach, working with incomplete or ambiguous information and by comparing similar decision-making scenarios from the past. The output could be the final decision or be one of the decisions in a larger customer engagement and contact center management process.

eGain AI clients decide

- Insurance giant decides how to precisely route customer queries to the right agent, with decision-making powered by eGain AI.

- Global media and legal services giant makes decisions on whether to take on malpractice lawsuits, based on multiple factors like the amount of damages, win rates in the past for any given topic, tendencies of specific courts/judges.

4. **Comply** with regulations

Enforcing compliance amidst ever-changing industry regulations, whether it is for content, content access, or customer interactions makes customer engagement challenging for companies, particularly in highly-regulated industries. In fact, keeping up with regulatory change is the top challenge for compliance professionals, with 60% expecting the compliance team budget to rise and 58% expecting increased personal liability[1]. This is where AI can add immense value by guiding agents through the compliance maze.

eGain AI clients comply

- A marquee global bank uses eGain AI to guide advisors through a step-by-step dialog, and industry-compliant questions, to qualify and onboard small business clients.

- Another bank serves wholesale clients in multiple countries with a single eGain-powered AI system that incorporates the global parent's best practices, while taking into account local regulations in those countries.

- Utilities clients use AI guidance not only to resolve customer problems but also help them avert safety hazards such as gas leaks, while complying with regulations on who asks and does what and when. This is not just mission-critical customer service—it is life-critical!

---

1   Thomson Reuters Cost of Compliance Report 2020

5. **Leverage** everywhere (and with everyone)

Clearly, the world has gone digital and omnichannel, with omnichannel penetration of commerce at anywhere from 35% (healthcare) to 65% (consumer electronics). It is no secret that the next generation of omnichannel, digital touchpoints like mobile, social, and IoT coexist with traditional ones like the call center, field service, kiosks, branch offices, and retail stores. Digitally savvy businesses leverage AI to deliver consistent and touchpoint-tailored service on any channel or any device.

eGain AI clients leverage everywhere

▸ A leading mobile operator has deployed knowledge-based AI to 10,000 contact center agents, and to associates across 550 retail stores, to guide customers to problem resolution and contextual upsell and cross-sell.

▸ Another telco giant bootstraps service interactions with data and context gathered from the device and calling number even before the agent starts the conversation, and also fixes problems remotely with the push of a button from the agent desktop!

"Everywhere" also means "everyone," not just customers or service agents. A global consumer goods manufacturer has deployed eGain's virtual assistant to engage thousands of its own sales reps and answer their questions on products, sales, and customer service.

6. **Synergize** with context and insight

When used right, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. AI-savvy companies use the synergy of AI and related technologies such as context aggregation and analytics-based insight to figure out the "who, what, when, and how" of customer engagement. Here's a digital insurance business example:

▸ **Who:** Analysis of past purchases by demographic groups shows that high-income professionals tend to buy home, auto, and life insurance from the same carrier. So a diversified insurance company decides to target this segment to maximize wallet share with them.

▸ **What:** Sell the complete insurance portfolio and not just the individual insurance policy for home, auto, or life.

▸ **When:** If the authenticated user has visited one or more of the product-specific web pages more than once, and has been on the website in the current session for more than the pre-determined time.

▸ **How:** Use AI to conduct a best-practice sales conversation with the customer, guided step by step with the next best question or step. For example, the sales conversation could focus on convenience rather than price, which is more important for this time-starved demographic.

Transform customer service and engagement!

This is not an application, but rather the end result when AI is done right. As you launch CX transformation initiatives with knowledge and AI, partnering with the right solution provider is critical to success. Beware of vendors that are new to AI, whether they are startups or "do it all" and "check the box" providers. You might wind up with a useless toy, or big iron AI system that can barely answer a basic set of customer questions after setting you back by millions of dollars in technology, implementation, and maintenance costs! Check out the vendor's experience and client proof-points in terms of scale, cost, business value, and speed to value. This is where eGain AI comes in—we have walked the talk when it comes to transforming customer engagement and contact center customer service operations for the world's leading companies with AI.

eGain AI clients transform

▸ Telco giant speeds up agent time to competency by 100%, First-Contact Resolution by 37%, and NPS by 20%, while reducing advisor training time by 43% across its 10,000 contact center agents and 550 retail stores.

▸ Leading global bank reduced call handle time by 67% and agent training time by 50%, while its subsidiary vaulted to the #1 position in customer experience in its market.

▸ Global media and legal services company deflected up to 70% of its calls, while making go/no-go decisions on high-profile litigation services projects.

▸ Leading North American telco reduced average handle time by 17% and incoming calls by 19%.

▸ Leading European telco reduced unwarranted handset returns and exchanges by 38% through better problem resolution in the contact center and website, while enhancing agent experience by 90%.

If this is not customer service transformation, what is?! You could transform, too, by taking the next step with eGain AI!
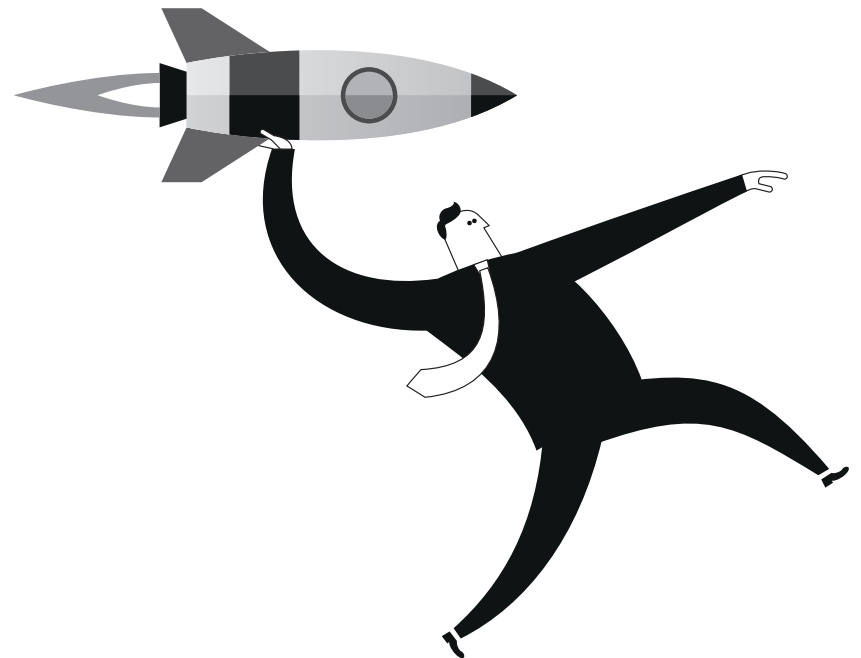
AI-powered CX transformation made easy (and fast!)

Out-of-the-box functionality, proven domain expertise, best-practice methodology, ease of trial, ease of deployment, and ease of optimization are critical to not only creating business value with AI but also doing it with speed and expanding it over time. Here's how eGain makes it easy and fast:

‣ Easy "riches": Unlike solutions from new entrants and do-it-all generalists, eGain AI offers best-of-breed functionality out of the box for rapid, cost-effective value creation. A pioneer in AI and knowledge management, consistently rated #1, eGain has developed the richest solution for customer service AI through sustained innovation and collaboration with world-class clients for over two decades.

‣ Easy to pilot: eGain Innovation in 30 Days™ for AI is a unique production pilot for AI in the cloud that enables contact centers to try our solutions—AI or other products—free of charge with no obligation to buy. Unlike traditional pilots, eGain Innovation in 30 Days also includes free assistance from domain experts to guide the pilot to success. You can start generating value with eGain AI in as few as 30 days like some of our clients have already done!

‣ Easy to deploy: eGain uses its proprietary eGain AI Method™ for rapid value creation with AI. The method includes time-tested best practices across scoping, content creation and consumption, training, value generation, measurement and optimization, and ongoing governance.

‣ Easy to optimize: eGain AI also offers slice-and-dice analytics out of the box for continuous optimization. For instance, knowledge managers can measure and fine-tune AI and knowledge effectiveness through a combination of machine learning and supervised learning, depending on what is appropriate for the queries (e.g., is the query for a mobile plan recommendation or for something more mission-critical such as a person's health or retirement investment mix), the company, the industry they are in (e.g., is regulatory compliance important), etc. Effectiveness and efficiency can be measured in areas such as answering customer questions, conversational paths to answers, scope of knowledge content, compliance enforcement, etc., and AI maintenance and enhancement tasks can be automatically created and tracked.

‣ Easy to expand: eGain offers digital transformation services to help you expand business value from our solutions—AI and others—through a jointly-developed roadmap and agile value creation through sprints.

eGain clients "ease" (into AI)

An integrated healthcare payer and provider in the US tried out eGain AI as an Innovation in 30 Days pilot where the solution

guided contact center agents through interactions with customers and patients in a way that it was consistent and compliant with HIPAA regulations. Happy with the results, the company has deployed the solution to over 100 advisors in its contact center.

A PC manufacturer and IT solutions giant in APAC also tried eGain AI as an Innovation in 30 Days pilot. The solution guided helpdesk agents to answers for rapid problem resolution and reduced truck rolls for unwarranted field service. eGain AI also ensured that in instances where the problem could not be resolved by contact center agents, field technicians carried the right parts so that they could fix customer problems in their very first field visits. The end-result has been the same—the company has deployed eGain AI for its helpdesk advisors after a successful pilot!

Next Steps

The best way to pilot AI is through a real-world trial in a production setting rather than playing with toy sand-boxes. That's exactly what eGain Innovation in 30 Days for AI offers, along with no-charge guidance to value by domain experts and no obligation to buy! That is walking the talk in putting skin in the game!

Contact us today to set up a 30-minute no-obligation phone meeting to see how we can get you going with eGain Innovation in 30 Days for AI.

About eGain

eGain customer engagement solutions power digital transformation for leading brands. Our top-rated cloud applications for social, mobile, web, and contact centers help clients deliver connected, knowledge-guided customer journeys in an omnichannel world. Businesses can try our solution in a risk-free production pilot with expert guidance to success. For more information, visit www.egain.com.

easy with eGain

Email: info@egain.com
Web: www.egain.com