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Taking Customer Experience to the Next Level With AI

Real world examples of artificial intelligence
in the contact center.

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Is artificial intelligence (AI) a buzzword in your business? Or a practical reality? It's one thing to grasp how powerful these technologies can be. It's another thing to know where or how to start putting them to use. At AWS our mission is to make AI accessible to data scientists, developers and business users. To help businesses easily leverage the power of AI, we create purpose-built solutions that embed AI and deep learning technologies directly into a business process to address real customer needs, rather than leaving companies to sort it out on their own.

One place where we have seen AI have an impact is within the contact center—the place, either physical or virtual, you receive and respond to customer inquiries and issues. Because of the growing role of customer experience (CX) and the increase in contactless commerce via phone or email, contact centers are vitally important in maintaining the human connections that businesses depend on. But with analog or outdated methods, it is difficult to address every customer need in an effective way that delivers timely resolutions, great experiences, and fosters customer loyalty.

Embedding AWS AI technologies into a cloud contact center solution decreases the friction of calls, chats, and other engagements. It also makes

it possible to automate outdated processes. I hear from our customers that these benefits have taken several forms.

Capturing customer sentiment in the moment—and learning from it

Supporting customers is a principal value of contact centers, but it isn't the only one. Contact centers are also an organization's direct window into customer feedback, trends, and sentiment. Is the caller content, confused, or upset? Is there a recurring issue with a specific product? Asking an agent to assess a customer's mood across hundreds of calls and report those consolidated impressions up the chain of command would make their job even harder than it already is.

But when an AI-powered contact center can automatically flag phrases like “not happy” or “cancel my subscription”—or even pick up on tone of voice—the company can gather a rich vein of data while contact center agents stay focused on the matter at hand. AI can transcribe calls, track customer sentiment, detect common issues and customer trends, or even pinpoint discrepancies—such as a price promotion in an email that doesn't match the promotion on the website. The result is an up-to-the-minute picture not just of what people are calling about, but also of how they feel about your

company and its service. These insights reports can also chart agents' performance to uncover coaching and training opportunities.

Resolving customer issues—faster and better

Improving the performance of contact center agents is another way AI can have tremendous impact. Historically, the process with which agents are expected to solve a customer problem is very error prone. Agents have to understand the customer problem based on what they hear in the customer conversation and then search across several data sources that act as "knowledge bases" to identify what is the best way to solve their problem. Now, using AI and machine learning speech analytics, companies can use the customer's own language to search instantly across connected repositories of relevant information, including both internal and third-party sources, surfacing the answers for an agent as soon as they're needed.

Streamlining customer experience without the friction

Another major benefit is that AI helps automate common tasks using intelligent understanding. Contact center agents spend countless hours on tedious and mundane actions that remove them from their most important role—serving customers. And there may be no task more tedious, or unwelcome for the customer, than verifying a person's identity and account status.

How many times have you had to repeat your name and identifying information over and over again during the same call? It may feel as if you've spoken your mother's maiden name more times than your mother ever did. The truth is, the agent on the other end of the line doesn't enjoy the process any more than you do.

AI-powered voice identification can dramatically streamline this process. It establishes a digital voiceprint associated with each customer's unique voice, then recognizes it at the beginning of each subsequent call. Because the customer is authenticated instantly and seamlessly, the real

conversation with the agent can commence without delay. It's even possible to recognize the customer's issue and route the call automatically. In addition to making agent conversations easier, it can also automate self-service capabilities to resolve customer issues quickly rather than waiting for a live agent. The process leverages the same smart voice assistant technology many people use in their homes.

Demystifying AI for practical use

These are some examples of the AI and deep learning capabilities we've built directly into Amazon Connect, AWS's omnichannel cloud contact center solution. With real-time analytics, caller authentication, and agent assistance, now contact center agents have all of the data and information to resolve customer questions and follow up when needed. And customers reap the benefits of a low-effort experience—because by the time the initial greeting happens, agents already know how to help.

To date, this scalable cloud technology is used by tens of thousands of customers, helping them handle about a quarter fewer calls, shortening the average call time by about 15%, and easing the burdens on system administrators and supervisors. Training time and costs go down too. All while businesses can have a faster, more accurate, and more responsive experience to offer their customers. But we're only getting started.

As we continue to innovate with AI, these experiences can also pave the way for additional applications of AI in other business applications. What we're finding in our experience with **Amazon Connect** is that what businesses need is increasing ease of use. It's no longer necessary to map out a huge transformation project to take advantage of these tools. Instead, it's not only easy but actually fun to apply them in high-impact places first, learn as you go, and ladder up to broader use cases with the flip of a switch.

To learn more about Amazon Connect, AWS's ML-powered contact center solution, [click here](#).

To read all the pieces in our "Contact Center in the Cloud" series, [click here](#).