

Words that characterise Live Chat

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Most consumers surf the web (vendor websites, fan pages, forums, etc.) trying to resolve their issues before picking up the phone or start writing an email. Once they are online, Live Chat offers them a quick and low-effort way of interacting with a brand or company. Either it is for sales, customer service or technical support.

The millennials (or generation Y) like Live Chat because of its immediate and text-enabled nature (we know how youngsters are into SMS, WhatsApp, and other text messaging apps). The older generations like it because of its simplicity and easiness to use, as well as for the fact that you can do other stuff while chatting.

The 4 words that characterise Live Chat from a consumers' point of view are therefore:

Easy

Multi-task

Immediate

Text-based

But there are also a few words (and advantages) that characterise Live Chat from a brand or company standpoint:

Feedback – There is no doubt in executives and board-members minds, that voice-of-the-customer should be captured and used to improve products and services. It is much easier to capture that feedback immediately after a Live Chat conversation (trigger exit surveys) when a customer is still engaged and things are fresh in his/her mind, than after a phone or email interaction.

Training – One of the ways of training or coaching agents in a contact centre is to go through past interactions, point out what went wrong and teach how and what could be done better. It is much easier and quick to go through a Live Chat transcript than a 15-minute phone conversation. It will take much longer to hear the recording than to read a few transcripts.

Efficiency – There is no better way of reducing costs than increasing efficiency. Live Chat helps companies reduce operational costs by allowing agents to handle more than one interaction at the same time (typically 3 to 4, tops). The possibility of concurrency lets Live Chat agents handle much more interactions than an agent dealing with phone calls or emails, and changes companies perspective when it comes to capacity.

Effectiveness – One of the most important KPIs in a contact centre is FCCR (First Contact Resolution Rate). For obvious reasons, FCCR is much higher in Live Chat than in email, for example. It is true that email is a key channel, but it takes several exchanges (back and forth messages) to resolve an issue that can be easily handled in one Live Chat session.

Web Self-Service: Another great way of reducing costs is to give consumers the possibility to help themselves. Whilst many companies have websites full of content, not many are able to say they are being used as expected. In a Live Chat session agents can provide hyperlinks to consumers, guiding them to the right content for resolution, in the website, making consumers engaged with the website and teaching them where to find answers in the future, driving web self-service.

The only perceived “downside” for the company that is going to roll out Live Chat as a channel is the technology licensing and implementation cost. From that point of view, it is a case of companies choosing cloud solutions, and preferring a strategic multi-channel platform that supports all channels (phone, email, chat, web, social media...). Rather than going for siloed and on-premise solutions or trying to integrate multiple point solutions, ultimately impacting Customer Experience (seamless interactions as consumers jump from a channel to the other).