6 Must-Haves for Agent-Facing Knowledge Base

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Every contact centre manager wants – in all honesty, desperately needs – to help agents deliver a much better customer experience. But unfortunately there hasn't been much originality in the solutions and practices to try and gear them up.

Soft skills training and call scripting are usually chosen to try and make agents deliver a better service, but it hasn't worked out well. Fresher and smarter approaches are needed to replace these traditional ways. Contact centre managers need to invest in **agent-facing knowledge** and **contextual guidance**. Technology is crucial to help enable this.

Most companies have CRM systems able to manage customers, incidents or interactions, but often miss a knowledge base or, even better, a CX platform that would allow the Customer and Case Management capability to be tightly joined up with the knowledge base.

I've seen contact centres use Dropbox to store troubleshooting guides, MS SharePoint to build wikis, Google Drive to hold how-to guides, and even gigantic MS Power Point documents with product FAQs and answers. Those tools can give the illusion of an internal and centralised knowledge base, but they are not even close to what needs to be deployed to actually give agents what they need.

A true agent-facing knowledge base needs to have certain capabilities that the aforementioned tools cannot deliver – because they were not actually developed to do so! And the end goal must be to increase agent productivity, and improve key performance metrics (such as FCRR or response time), leading to increase in key customer metrics (such as NPS and CSAT scores).

Here are 6 of the capabilities that a true agent-facing knowledge base must have:

1. **Content creation and authoring** – to allow the person responsible for the content (e.g. knowledge rep or manager) to manage content. Create, update or retire. This will enable an easier, faster and controlled deployment of knowledge throughout the organisation.
2. **Categorisation and scoring** – for content to be organised, structured, and linked to interaction drivers, as well as dynamically ranked by usefulness. This will enable presentation of the most relevant and effective content first, improving efficiency.
3. **Self-Learning** – automatic linking between answers based on search and usage, as well as manual association (by the knowledge rep or manager) of sibling or related answers will help agents find the right answer quicker.

4. **Step-by-step guidance** – embedded in knowledge base articles, step-by-step guides give agents the ability to easily and quickly reach the information they need by selecting responses from question branches in guides. Or even, for example, guide customers through a troubleshooting issue.
5. **Usage and management** – reporting on the usage and usefulness of each article, as well as the gaps (e.g. keywords search without a match) will allow the knowledge rep or manager to keep a fresh, ever-green, and up-to-date knowledge base.
6. **Keyword, intent and category search** – a keyword *Google-type* search (potentially enhanced by semantic search technology, linguistic dictionaries and advanced algorithms) will match searches to the most relevant content and deliver the right answers immediately.