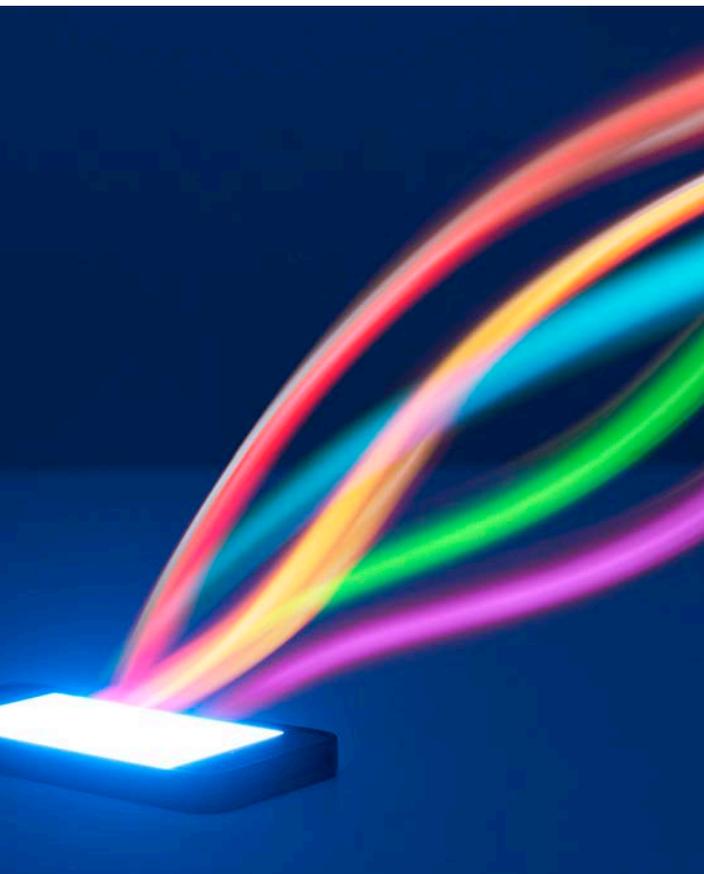


Mystery Shopping Research Series

Omnichannel Customer Service: 3 Takeaways for CX Leaders





Measuring customer service channel effectiveness

Digital transformation is a hot trend in the customer service arena, with brands continually adding new digital service channels to support customers. But how effective are those channels, and what are some best practices in omnichannel customer service?

To find out, we examined the effectiveness of some of the world's leading brands across multiple customer service channels. TTEC's research team mystery shopped a sample of top companies representing health & beauty, device manufacturer, financial services, pharma, logistics, retail, software, and travel/hospitality industries. We visited all customer service

channels and asked simple questions like "what is your product warranty" for device manufacturers and "can I book my trip online" for travel companies.

The results are anecdotal, but they provide key takeaways for customer service leaders about what works and what doesn't across customer service channels at leading enterprises.

We examined the effectiveness of some of the world's leading brands across multiple customer service channels

The findings

All companies we researched offered customer support in at least 5 channels – voice/IVR, live chat, Facebook, Twitter and email. Some also offered FAQs, automated chatbots, community forums, and mobile apps, though most mobile app services were available only to existing customers. Only one – a global retailer – offered a mobile messaging option.

Number of customer support channels



Despite the number of available channels, previous research has shown that consumers care most about **not having their time wasted** and **getting their issues resolved**. Therefore, we broke down the experience into four components and ranked each company on a Good/Neutral/Poor scale.



Customer service channel effectiveness

	CPG	Airline	Consumer lending	Pharma	Electrics Manufacturer	Cruise line	Logistics	Software	Electrics Manufacturer	Retail
Channel navigation										
Speed of response										
Channel availability										
Ease of resolution										

Channel navigation: how easy it is to find each channel

Speed of response: how quickly agents respond in those channels

Channel availability: are channels staffed and available when customers need them

Ease of resolution: resolution time take and how easy it is to get questions resolved

We then examined the effectiveness of individual channels, which produced some interesting results.



Fastest channels for response*:

1. Live chat
2. Voice
3. Facebook
4. FAQ & Chatbot

*based on individual company performance

Only 10% of companies responded to customer inquiries across every channel it offered.

The other companies did not respond in at least one supposedly available channel. Above are the top channels that produced no response to customer questions, most likely leaving customers frustrated and forced to choose another channel.



Slowest channels for response*:

1. Email
2. Facebook
3. Twitter

Our research found multiple instances of one channel that simply pushed customers to another. For example, responses to email inquiries at numerous companies only provided a link to the company's website or customer support phone number.



Top channels with *no* response*:

1. Facebook
2. Email
3. Twitter
4. Live chat
5. Voice

Overall, the research shows that most of the brands studied have more work to do to provide convenient, quick, and effective customer service across all the service channels they offer to customers.

INSIGHT ONE

If you build it, staff it

Only 10% of the companies studied provided responses in all of their customer support channels. **Channel availability does not automatically equal a good customer experience.**

And when support channels did produce a response, time was not a priority. Live chat and voice are measured on handle time, and the data shows that companies put a lot of effort into speedy calls. However, digital channels lagged well behind in most cases. Two different companies in different industries each took 57 hours to respond to a question on Twitter. Other companies simply never responded on Facebook or Twitter. These are channels where customers expect immediate responses. Email also became an abyss, where responses came in 12-13 hours later, or not at all.

In one case, a travel company only successfully resolved the customer's question on Facebook. Every other channel, including voice, produced no response to the same question.

We don't know why this happens. Perhaps companies hastily rush to add support channels without thinking through how to successfully operate in those channels. Or perhaps they find resource or skills gaps in providing support in those channels. Whatever the reason, a lack of response is worse than if the company had never offered the channel in the first place. Do it right, or don't bother setting up the service channel.



INSIGHT TWO

Close the customer journey loop

In nearly every instance, **customers hit roadblocks in their journey and were sent to another channel**. Social media and email were the biggest culprits, where some inquiries were greeted (eventually) with instructions on how to reach support via other means. Chatbots sent customers to live agents, which is a typical step. However, in one case, no one answered the voice transfer call for over 40 minutes, forcing the user to hang up.

Even some mobile apps resulted in frustrating customer experiences. Researchers spent time downloading apps for four brands only to find out they needed an account number or login to access any app features.

The customer journey involves more than just one channel in a siloed environment. Customers see one brand and expect one consistent experience across channels. Be sure to understand how customers interact with you and orchestrate journeys that match those journeys.

Customers see one brand and expect one consistent experience across channels

**INSIGHT THREE**

Reduce customer and employee effort in all channels

An effortless, frictionless customer experience is a goal for most service organizations. But too often **brands make it hard for customers to interact with them** (sometimes purposefully). Half of the companies studied had hard-to-find support channels or many steps in order for a customer to access them. If they can't find it, they won't use it.

Once connected to the service organization, researchers reported having to repeat information they provided already, or that the associate had no customer information available for more context.

Customers have a limit on their patience, and that limit is different for each channel. Customers using social media, live chat, or FAQ expect faster answers than if they call a phone number, for example. Be sure the speed and accuracy of the information provided in those channels matches expectations.

Employees, too, may be hindered by slow systems, multiple screens, or lack of product/service information available to them. It's critical that they have the right tools to be able to succeed.

Step up for omnichannel excellence

Customer service organizations are at an inflection point. They are embarking on digital transformation to meet customers where they prefer in lower-cost and more convenient channels. But the research shows there is more to be done by companies in terms of providing effortless, effective experiences across all channels.

TTEC works with some of the world's most iconic and disruptive brands to enhance and extend their customer support and sales operations. Contact us to learn how we can support your brand in this important transformation.

Contact Us to further the discussion

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About TTEC:

TTEC Holdings, Inc. (NASDAQ: TTEC) is a leading global customer experience technology and services company focused on the design, implementation and delivery of transformative customer experience for many of the world's most iconic and disruptive brands. TTEC Digital delivers outcome-based, human-centric, tech-enabled, insight-driven customer experience solutions. TTEC Engage operates customer acquisition, care, fraud prevention and detection, and content moderation services. These two offerings combined deliver flexible and extensible customer experience solutions at scale. Founded in 1982, with nearly 50K employees and offices on six continents across the globe, the company and its employees are proud to live by a set of customer-focused values that guide relationships with clients, their customers, and each other. To learn more about how TTEC is bringing humanity to the customer experience, visit [ttec.com](https://www.ttec.com).

