The Strategic Role of Customer Service Offerings

Topics of Discussion:

- The evolution of customer service

- The best and worst of support touch-points – phone, email, chat, and self-service

- A detailed look at the features, benefits, and business implications of self-service

Key Findings:

- Consumer purchasing trends are increasingly being determined by self-service availability.

- Knowledge sharing between channels is critical in delivering consistent messaging to customers.

- Self-service provides measurable ROI and is significantly less expensive than traditional support channels.

- Self-service proves to be an effective solution internally at the call center and externally through customer-facing websites.

- Ease-of-use and maintenance are key considerations when selecting a self-service solution.

September 2003

Self Service: Providing Economical and Effective Customer Service

The Evolution of Customer Service

Less than ten years ago, **tiered-customer service** referred to the different levels of phone support available from a company's call center:

- *Tier 1:* Standard call representative
- *Tier 2:* Supervisor
- *Tier 3:* Technical expert.

With a host of post-internet support channels available, customers now expect multi-tiered, multi-channel customer service from companies. In addition to standard phone support, companies must provide support alternatives. These additional offerings include savvy websites, email support, chat solutions via the web, search utilities, FAQ tools, and automated agents.

The face of customer service continues to change as automated service options become more commonplace. Ideally, automated service offerings provide Tier 1 support, at much lower cost structures. This should also provide an increased volume of contacts to the Company as users repeat their interactions due to higher quality conversations. The effect is reduced customer support costs and increased business activity. The *catch* is that the automated service offerings must be effective. They should be well thought out and properly implemented, and most importantly, must provide customers with the answers to their questions.

Satisfying your Customers and your Budget

Customers now expect multi-tiered, multi-channel customer support.

It is widely known that customer service is a key factor in determining retention and satisfaction – it has a direct impact on revenues and repeat business. Smart companies should consider customer expectations and available technology when determining its service offering. More importantly, the solution should be both economical and effective. To satisfy your customers and your budget, the following should be considered:

- **Multi-channel access.** By providing a number of options – phone support, email support, self-service, and web navigation, users can determine what channel best suits their needs.

- **Automated and Live support.** As people have become more accustomed to the anonymity that the web provides, many actually prefer automated support to live support. Not only is it oftentimes quicker to search for the answer, many feel more comfortable researching information via the web – especially if the information is personal in nature.

- **Consistency across channels.** A chief complaint of consumers is inconsistency across channels. Just as people are frustrated when different prices are quoted online, in a catalog, and on the phone, the same frustration is generated when service is not consistent. Companies have multiple sources of knowledge, both structured and unstructured, that support solutions must leverage. Call center and chat representatives should be privy to any information offered via your website, knowledge management system, or self-service solution.

- **Reducing Live Support Costs.** There is a progressive cost increase for each channel and tier of service. For example, it might cost a company $1 to answer a

self-service question on the web, $7 to answer the same question via email, and $15 to answer the question over the phone. With this in mind, it is important to determine a strategy that maximizes the use of less expensive alternatives to live support.
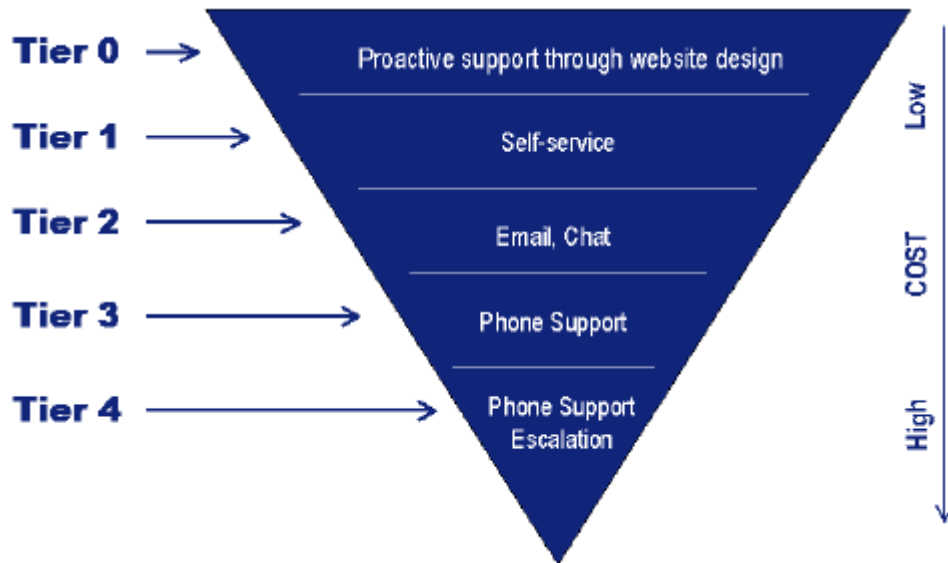
Customer Service Today

Today's snapshot of tiered-customer service involves channels and support touch-points. The objective is to address the customer inquiry with the most appropriate level, based on their need and value to the Company. Typically, the least expensive level to address the majority of inquiries is through an automated service solution.

Companies should guide or *suggest* its users find help through Tier 0 and Tier 1 solutions (see chart below). The levels of support should be able to identify if customers are "high-value customers" and escalate the contact accordingly, based on the Company's business rules. Live support via chat, email, and phone support should be used as secondary support and escalation handling. The ideal Customer Service solution is a mix of automated and live support, with escalation and knowledge sharing between channels.

The graphic below outlines the new face of customer support. Costs increase with each level. Automated support is represented by Tier 0 and Tier 1, and in some cases, automated email response handling. Live support is represented by phone support, chat and the more typical email support.

Note: Costs per incident change depending on industry and support expertise required.

The ideal Customer Service solution is a mix of automated and live support, with knowledge sharing between channels.

Tier 0 →	Proactive support through website design	Low
Tier 1 →	Self-service	
Tier 2 →	Email, Chat	COST
Tier 3 →	Phone Support	
Tier 4 →	Phone Support Escalation	High

Analyzing Today's Support Tools

Traditional Phone Support – a Support Mainstay

No matter the advances in technology, there may always be a need for the person-to-person contact provided through traditional phone support. Although the percentage of inquiries addressed via the call center may decrease or be deferred to another channel, it is still very important to offer this "last line of support" to your customers. Otherwise, customers may feel limited by the assistance they can receive, which affects their perception of the company and its products. At the same time, it should be every company's goal to maximize the customer experience, improve customer satisfaction levels, while minimizing the cost structure to achieve these goals.

Depending on the number and quality of customer service representatives, the effectiveness of a call center can vary. If the representatives are well trained and the tools being used enable accurate and timely responses, the call center can serve as an excellent form of customer support. It is critical that call center representatives provide customers with the most up-to-date information possible. Although traditional classroom training is excellent for addressing introductory skills such as how to use the phone system, escalation handling, and phone etiquette, it is oftentimes not suited for ongoing product or technical training. Using a knowledge management or self-service solution in conjunction with your call center is highly recommended to guarantee the latest and most accurate information is delivered to the customer.

A Self-service solution used in conjunction with your call center is highly recommended to provide the most accurate information to the customer.

Positives of Phone Support

- **Easy for customers to use.** Customers feel comfortable communicating via the phone, and can typically find numerous numbers to reach the Company.

- **Immediate response.** Often, albeit with seemingly decreasing rates, users can get through to the Company and obtain answers quickly. Sometimes the response might be to *wait* or *I will transfer you*, but it still makes the customer feel as if progress is being made.

- **Great communication medium.** The telephone is a great way to communicate simple solutions. It allows for a conversation or dialog to ask qualifying questions to better understand the request. Often times, complex or technical details are better left to written documentation.

- **Customer control.** Unlike email or other support options, a customer feels that they have some control over the end result. Although they may have to wait awhile or endure transfers to other departments, if they push hard enough while they have someone on the phone, they can eventually get an answer.

Negatives of Phone Support

- **Cost, Cost, Cost.** The average cost for a service inquiry addressed over the phone is $33 according to Forrester Research[1] or even $192 per incident from a more recent study by Reservoir Partners[2]. In addition, many of the questions addressed at call centers are considered Tier 1 questions (standard, repeat questions), and could easily be addressed by an automated solution.

- **Personnel requirements.** Call center representatives must be trained on the subject matter they will be addressing, the software and phone system they will be using, and any company policies. In addition, keeping call centers open 24/7 drives costs higher and call centers require support personnel including management, network and IT staff, and technical experts.

- **Response time.** As customers are becoming more accustomed to electronic support channels (self service, email, and chat), they are less patient with the wait times or queues associated with phone support.

- **Message Consistency.** It is nearly impossible to ensure consistent messages are delivered to customers via phone support. Based on the phone representative's knowledge, along with a number of other variables, the information provided to the customer may not be consistent or up-to-date.

Email Failing to Meet Customer Expectations

Email support has been a roller coaster ride for both companies and consumers. The initial expectations of cost savings and apparent ease of email correspondence have been overshadowed by the mounting problems. Companies have found that instead of an email coming into support requiring a single response for an answer, an email dialog occurs, with each interaction costing more and taking more time.

A study conducted by *ASPnews*[3] reported that, "88% of consumers surveyed expect a response to email inquiries within 24 hours. The problem is that only 54% of companies meet that expectation – the same percentage as in 2001, despite an increase in Customer Relationship Management (CRM) spending."

Jupiter Research believes that, "Companies that fail to get serious about their management of customer service email now, will pay the price with higher customer service costs and lost revenues down the line."[4] Simply put, developing an effective email support system is not an easy task.

Many companies offer a guaranteed email response time of 1-3 days, which is simply too long for time-sensitive issues.

Positives of Email Support

- **Automated email responses.** In high volume situations, there are automated tools available to companies that can respond to standard, repeatable, questions. In this case, a live person is not required, thus reducing the cost.

- **Cheaper than phone support.** According to Forrester Research, an email inquiry averages a company $9.99 – again, costs vary depending on numerous factors.

- **Good option for people online.** Email support is a great option when live support is required and the individual feels more comfortable online. In addition, many home computer users access the Internet via dial-up, cutting off access to the phone. Email provides a workable alternative.

Negatives of Email Support

- **Unpredictability.** As with phone support, companies try to prepare for adequate volume through hiring, but many times, simply miss the mark. This oftentimes creates unsatisfied customers due to long response times and response quality.

- **Potential Costs.** Although Email support can cost less than phone support, poor email support can cost a company much more. In cases where repeated correspondence or phone support escalation is required, the price jumps dramatically. It is easy to lose a customer's business when email overload occurs.

- **No Immediate Response.** One of the primary complaints of email support is the response time. Many companies offer a guaranteed response time of 1-3 days, which is simply too long for time-sensitive issues. Since there is no way to say "this is very important – read it first," people have become somewhat discouraged by this support option.

- **Personnel requirements.** As with phone support, the personnel requirements are a significant disadvantage to email support. Not only must you staff to accommodate an ever-changing email volume, email customer support representatives tend to be more senior individuals with strong writing skills, raising the costs.

- **Inconsistent Responses.** With individual email CSRs responding to inquiries, inconsistency occurs between responses. Keeping CSRs updated with the latest information is also an ongoing challenge.

Not Everyone Likes to Chat

For those used to the concept of "instant messaging", live chat is becoming more available as a support touch point. While results are mixed, both by users and companies deploying chat, it seems to have an appeal to a certain market. Chat typically requires a download and some segments of the population do not feel comfortable with this concept. It may be cheaper than phone and email, but still requires a live rep waiting for customer inquiries.

As with other live channels, it is hard to anticipate volume, so costly agents can be either waiting for the demand to rise, or be inundated with requests resulting in numerous simultaneous conversations occurring. As such, inconsistencies occur and scalability becomes an issue. If positioned incorrectly, live chat could increase demand for live support versus self-service channels

Some advantages and disadvantages of customer service via chat:

Positives of Chat Support

- **Least expensive form of live support.** Chat is significantly less expensive than both phone support and email support, according to Forrester Research. An estimated customer inquiry handled via chat costs $7.80.

- **Good option for people online.** As with email, chat is a great option when live support is required and the individual feels more comfortable online. Even better than email, customers can get their answers immediately, as with phone support. In addition, chat serves as an excellent escalation channel from self-service.

- **Leverages Existing Content.** As high-caliber CSRs are responding via live chat, they are able to use and leverage content that exists on their website by providing links in responses to users.

Negatives of Chat Support

- **Software Requirements.** Oftentimes, specialized software must be downloaded to chat with a customer service representative. This seems especially painful now, but will dull as standardization of chat tools occurs. The time it takes to download makes hesitant users opt out to alternative, more expensive support channels.

- **Lag Time and Down Time.** Due to unpredictable chat volume, it is very difficult to have the "right" amount of representatives available for chat support. When volume is low, representatives will experience down time. When chat is especially busy, representatives become overloaded, and lag times for customer is inevitable. In addition, it is difficult for chat representatives to conduct multiple conversations simultaneously, which is often required, creating a scalability issue.

- **Inconsistent Answers.** It is nearly impossible to ensure consistent messages are delivered to customers via chat. Based on the support representative's knowledge, understanding of the customer's request, and chat volume, information delivered to the customer can vary greatly.

- **Personnel requirements.** As with phone and email support, the personnel requirements are a significant disadvantage to chat support. Not only must you staff to accommodate an ever-changing volume, chat representatives must be of a caliber to have very good communication skills.

- **Limited Audience Appeal.** Chat has a limited appeal to its audience, and is historically more popular with the younger generation. Over time, this may change, but currently, the majority of the population would select another channel over chat –email, phone support, or self-service.

Self-Service:
The Effective and Economical Alternative

Self-service is a form of automated customer support that simulates live support. Self-service is a rapidly growing industry that enables users to find answers to their questions via the web, kiosks, automated phone systems, and more. For this discussion, keyword search utilities are not considered self-service. While effective for its own purpose, is not designed to provide a direct response to customer inquires or mimic human conversation.

A primary purpose of self-service is to address commonly asked questions, and greatly reduce the number of Tier 1 inquiries being answered via more costly support channels – primarily email and phone. Although some customer inquiries require person-to-person assistance, and some companies want to drive high-value customers to personal interactions, the great majority of inquiries are derived from a relatively known subset of information and can be answered by an automated solution.

According to Doculabs' *Market Focus Report*[5], "A highly automated, rapidly deployable web-based customer self-service solution can significantly and quantifiably reduce the cost of customer service operations while giving customers faster access to the information they require."

With lower costs and unlimited scalability, automated solutions can provide an integral component to customer support implementations. As a first line of inquiry / response, as a method to ask clarifying questions to better understand the users' real need, to automatically escalating and routing users, an efficient self-service solution can provide a rapid on ongoing ROI.

Some advantages and disadvantages of customer service via self-service:

Positives of Self-service

"Web-based Self-service provides a distinctly high ROI in the CRM market space."

- **Reduces Call Center and Email Volume**. By answering many Tier 1 support questions, the number of emails and incoming calls are reduced, therefore reducing the cost of live support. According to Doculabs report, "Web-based self-service solutions proved to be highly effective in delivering answers to customers without the intervention of call-center operators, at an estimated average total deployment cost of $1.17 per customer response compared to an estimated average call-center cost of $32.74 per response."

- **Incredible Cost Savings.** Self-service is much less expensive than the other support channels, including phone support, email support (automated or live), and chat. According to Doculabs, "A web self-service approach is the most economical, because it is an autonomous system that requires no training for end-users and little intervention for companies. With such a huge difference in cost between call centers and web self-service, even small shifts can yield huge cost savings."

- **High ROI Across Industries.** In the same report by Doculabs, it states that self-service was evaluated in over 22 different vertical markets, which "clearly indicates that web-based self-service provides a distinctively high ROI in the CRM market space." A primary reason that self-service performs well across industries is due to the highly customizable lexicons, which enables companies to add industry or company-specific terminology to the tool.

- **No Software or User Skills Required.** Web-based self-service agents are deployed through standard Internet Browsers – requiring no software downloads. In addition, self-service agents are designed to be intuitive to users, and users are encouraged to communicate normally with the agent – asking their questions in the same way they would ask a live agent. For example, a user would ask an agent "How does this work" or "I need help!" Because true self-service solutions analyze the grammatical structure of the user statement, they are not relying on keyword searches or pattern matching to deliver an answer.

- **Autonomous Implementation and Maintenance.** Unlike many CRM tools, implementation of a self-service solution can be an autonomous and efficient process. Although you can use the information stored in other databases (call center, marketing, etc) or your website, the implementation process is not directly tied to these functions. In addition, as the self-service agent is asked questions, it will retain this knowledge for future use.

- **Leverage Enterprise Data.** Good self-service solutions can pull structured or unstructured data from a wide variety of data sources, enabling companies to leverage their data. Agent responses can go directly to specific instructions buried in documents or manuals or to specific web pages as needed.

Negatives of Self-service

- **New to Users and Marketplace.** In comparison to phone and email support, self-service is a new concept in terms of customer service. The majority of consumers and companies are only beginning to understand the purpose and direction of self-service. Oftentimes, companies do not fully understand the potential ROI from a self-service solution. As users become more accustomed to using self-service tools, including how to communicate with an automated agent, self-service agents will quickly become an essential support component.

- **Confused with Search.** Because the concept of self-service is relatively new to the industry, it is often confused with Search or Search Engines. Users associate Search with two things: 1) entering keywords, and 2) a long list of results to sort through. Self-service conversational agents communicate using natural language techniques and typically deliver a single appropriate response.

A Closer Look at Self-service

Self-service is fast becoming a necessity for successful retail and consumer-oriented organizations. As companies are directing more business to their websites, driving eCommerce revenues upward, consumers expect quality customer service on the web – including immediate answers to their questions. They do not want to make a call, send an email, or sort through a laundry list of search results.

The availability of self-service is a deciding factor in a consumer's decision of who to shop with.

Customers Want Self-service

The availability of self-service at a company's website is a deciding factor in a consumer's decision of who to shop with. According to Jupiter Research, "25% of online buyers said the existence of a self-service solution would determine which sites they would make future purchases from. The attitude that drives do-it-yourself behavior is borne from a desire for convenience. Ultimately, self service frees consumers from having to wait for an answer to a query.[6]"

Self-service Spending

It is estimated that companies will spend $1.1 billion this year in self-service initiatives, and $2.8 billion by 2007, which accounts for 15% of total CRM spending[7]. Companies are increasing their spending on self-service, not only to provide convenience for their customers, but also to curtail their support costs. Self-service, which is designed to mimic live Tier 1 support, is considerably less expensive than other support options According to Forrester Research, the average cost for a customer inquiry is:

Channel	Avg Cost Per Inquiry
Telephone	$33.00
Email	$9.99
Chat	$7.80
Self Service	$1.17

Selecting a Self-service Solution

Not all self-service solutions are built alike. Consider the following when selecting a self-service solution for your company:

- **Answers vs. Lists.** Smart self-service solutions using linguistics produce a single answer and/or a small list of related topics, whereas keyword search utilities provide a long list of hits. Users do not respond well to expansive lists, but prefer seven or fewer options.

- **Natural Language Understanding.** Make certain the self-service solution is not limited to simple FAQ / Q&A, but can also handle dialog. Users respond more positively to a natural language search, and consequently will use the tool in the future. According to Jupiter Research, "Using Natural Language search to process queries and guide business rules that present this enriched user experience is a best practice."

- **Dialog Capabilities.** As users ask questions, strong self-service solutions will ask qualifying questions to fully understand the intent of the user. Solutions can even follow the entire conversation to control the conversation as required. This dialog capability is key for users to have the positive experience they require to come back and use the solution repetitively.

- **Flexibility in Terms of User Input.** Users should be able to inquire about a topic by using keyword phrases, partial sentences, or a full sentence. Many systems can handle either keywords or grammatically correct sentences, but not both, or a mix of the two. Because you cannot control how the user asks his question, and research suggests that partial sentences are the *norm* in terms of user input, it is important to select a system that can handle this type of interaction.

- **Accurate Content.** On average, 46% of customer inquiries are not answered by current self-service solutions, which includes standard keyword search tools.[8] This poor statistic has led to slow adoption of this technology. Make sure that you select a vendor that can provide a much higher response rate as newer technologies can deliver up to 98% accuracy.

- **Flexible Interface.** The look and feel of a self-service solution should flow seamlessly into a company's website. The vendor should not dictate the design options for a self-service solution. A consumer should not notice the transition from the main site to self-service.

- **Ability to Use Existing Data.** A self-service solution should not force duplication of current data and should leverage data from a wide variety of sources. A quality solution should allow you to use existing data, including structured and unstructured documents, web pages, and files.

- **Channel Independence.** Although most self-service solutions are currently deployed over the web, other channels are quickly following suit. Select a solution that is touchpoint independent, as well as language independent, enabling your company to expand automated support to other channels, such as the phone.

- **Integrated Customer Support.** Self-service cannot answer all customer inquiries. The goal is to answer the customer's question, and if it cannot, recognize this, and escalate the customer to the appropriate channel. Escalation methods such as providing phone numbers, conversation transcripts, sending an email, passing the user to a chat representative or a call center representative, are also key success contributors. An important feature of a self-service solution is its ability to easily integrate with other support channels.

- **Maintenance.** Select a self-service solution that can be easily maintained and does not require technical resources to update the agent's knowledge base. The goal is to quickly evaluate user questions, and make updates to the agent's scope of knowledge when necessary.

- **Cross- and Up-Sell Capabilities.** As conversational agents understand what users are looking for, they can deliver information, product and payment information, supply forms, and ask additional questions to move the user to a purchase situation. **The ROI from cost savings has now become a revenue generation opportunity.**

The Importance of Implementation:

Although the potential benefits of self-service are great, we cannot emphasize enough the importance of the implementation and maintenance process. According to a study of Bank of America customers, 60% of customers who were unsatisfied with self-service made a phone call, and 23% of the unsatisfied customers sent an email.[9] To avoid any increases in support costs, you should consider the following:

- Do you have a process defined for handling updates to your self-service knowledge base?

- Do you have an adequate staff supporting your self-service solution? This includes IT staff, web developers, and content authors.
  Note: IT and Web Development duties can easily be outsourced.

- Do you have the proper hardware and software to support the use of your self-service knowledge base? Speed and availability are important to users. Make sure your network and systems are set up for optimal performance.

- Do you have a good working relationship with the self-service vendor? Timely solutions are important –especially when it comes to your customers.

What Makes RealDialog Unique

At **LiveWire Logic**, we believe the only way you can accurately answer a question is to understand the question being asked. **RealDialog** is the only agent-based self-service solution that uses computational linguistics to engage users in a two-way dialog to understand and correctly answer their inquiries. This provides your customers with direct responses, resulting in better customer self-service experiences, higher customer satisfaction, increased customer retention and lower costs.

The Power of Computational Linguistics

At the core of RealDialog is **computational linguistics**, which is the field of computer science that deals with natural language processing. Computational linguistics provides much more accurate, precise responses to customers than pattern matching or keyword search technologies. Unlike pattern matching, RealDialog's computational linguistics approach enables our conversational agents to understand customers' intents and solve their problems. Unlike Search Engines, which return pages of irrelevant links, RealDialog engages customers in dialog to quickly answer their questions.

RealDialog is the only agent-based self-service solution that uses computational linguistics to engage users in a two-way dialog to understand and correctly answer their inquiries.

Features and Benefits of RealDialog

Listed below are some of the features and benefits that can be realized through the deployment of a RealDialog agent:

- **Accurate and Consistent Responses.** Customers want answers, not links. They demand and expect accurate answers to their service requests. RealDialog provides the most accurate responses in the market today, delivering quality self-service with the familiar and personalized service of a live customer service representative -- at a fraction of the cost. RealDialog delivers consistent answers to questions, ensuring that your customers get the right information from your business. Although RealDialog is often compared to pattern matching and keyword solutions, these approaches cannot produce the same level of accuracy and consistency in responses.

- **Lower Costs and Improved Efficiencies**. RealDialog greatly enhances your customers' ability to "help themselves" by providing direct answers to their issues. By accurately responding to user needs, RealDialog reduces the number of routine call center email and phone requests, allowing more costly live representatives to handle more specific issues. A RealDialog agent can easily handle thousands of simultaneous conversations, delivering answers and improving customer satisfaction for a company on a large scale, without call center staff intervention, freeing staff to handle more complex, higher-value tasks.

- **Continuous Customer Experience.** If a customer asks a question unknown to the automated agent, they can easily move to another support channel without being required to retell their story. RealDialog provide seamless integration into existing CRM and support systems, allowing escalation when appropriate. Escalation can be to a live call center, to email, live chat, or a search engine.

- **Increased Customer Satisfaction.** By quickly answering common questions, customer satisfaction levels will increase. Users will also seek repeat service through the RealDialog agent service channel.

- **Valuable Customer Insight.** RealDialog captures and analyzes the content of customer questions to identify new opportunities, increasing and improving service. The result is access to customer preference data that is often only available through costly focus groups and customer surveys. RealDialog provides web based reporting to analyze user conversation data, revealing valuable information about your customers and prospects.

- **Streamlined and Efficient Implementation.** A typical RealDialog implementation takes weeks not months. The authoring process is designed for the business user through a user-friendly interface, making setup and maintenance manageable for non-programmers. In addition, there is no scripting and no duplication of existing content. Depending on where the content is derived from, the complexity of the agent, and the agent's scope of knowledge, the implementation time varies.

- **Ease of Maintenance.** Using RealDialog's workflow-designed maintenance tools, you can easily update your agent's scope of knowledge based on user input. Authors of all levels can quickly update RealDialog through a drag-and-drop interface. The web worksheet enables content communication and updates across the enterprise. No scripting is required, so non-programmers can easily manage the solution and maintain an accurate, up-to-date knowledge base.

- **Leverage your Website Investment.** RealDialog integrates seamlessly you're your existing website infrastructure. Although valuable information exists on your website, it is often difficult for users to locate. Instead of forcing users to navigate through multiple pages and links to find the information they are looking for, a RealDialog Agent delivers the functionality to navigate a user, immediately, to the appropriate web page or supporting document.

In Conclusion

More and more business activity is being pushed to the web. While building an eCommerce aspect to an existing business helps increase revenues and profits, it is critical that companies provide a good experience for their customers, or they risk losing their business – a very costly and avoidable situation.

As companies strive to deliver higher-caliber customer service for less cost, they are increasingly turning to self-service solutions that can integrate into and leverage their existing customer support touchpoints. Early self-service solutions didn't deliver on their promise, but a new, disruptive technology is available that delivers the level of service expected from industry-leading companies.

A new solution, RealDialog, engages and interacts with customers to provide what they are looking for – information, products, services, or even assistance with completing forms or help with a purchase. These automated "conversational agents" are delivering quality solutions for businesses and their customers.

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[1] Tier 0 Customer Support (The Forrester Report) 1999

[2] Next-Generation Self-Service (Reservoir Partners) July 2003

[3] Study: Companies Failing at Online Customer Service (ASPNews) February 2003

[4] Self-Service Strategies: Creating Value with Natural Language Search (Jupiter Research) 2003

[5] Market Focus Report (Doculabs) June 2001

[6] Self-Service Strategies: Creating Value with Natural Language Search (Jupiterresearch) 2003

[7] Consumer Survey Report: The State of Customer Service, 2003 (*Jupiter Research*)

[8] Self-Service Strategies: Selecting a Natural Language Vendor (Jupiter Research) 2003

[9] Consumer Web Use Study (Bank of America) 2002