

Customer engagement

2018 predictions: Five ways AI will make you love customer service this year

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2018 will be all about effortless, meaningful conversations between brands and customers. Robert Weideman kicks off the year with five predictions on how AI will make you love customer service in 2018.

1. Your voice will be your password

2017 was a record year for hacks of personal customer details. These breaches give fraudsters access to our identities including the answers to those annoying security questions. One thing the fraudsters can't do much with? Voice data. And that is why banks and telcos are increasingly replacing security questions with biometrics.

With a few words of speech, voice biometrics can confirm you are who you say you are at accuracy and security levels better than pins, passwords and security questions. And it knows how to detect recordings from real, live speech – rendering the data useless to fraudsters in the case of a breach.

2. You will use a virtual assistant (VA)

for customer service, and it will work.

Conversational AI breakthroughs have led to a new generation of VAs specific to your bank, your telco and your pizza ordering, all providing personalized, concierge-like service. In 2018, this generation of VAs will be made even more effective, through technology called HAVA (Human Assisted Virtual Assistant). HAVA adds a human-in-the-loop capability, first to help answer new questions the VA may not know, but more importantly to provide a learning loop that updates the VA's "brain" in real time.

3. You will add a brand as your messaging "Friend" – and you will mean it.

In 2017, Facebook Messenger, Line, Kik and more added capabilities for their users to "friend" organizations and companies, and late in the year, Apple announced Apple Business Chat, which will do the same for Apple Messages. In 2018 [you will start engaging brands in the same way you talk to friends](#) – in your messaging app, through SMS and even inside your banking and telco apps. And AI will allow each brands' VA engine to respond to you in a personalized way, referencing past engagements you have had across other channels.

4. Prediction will let brands anticipate your needs

Customer service creates a ton of data. In 2018 this data will be harnessed more than ever to fuel new AI engines. Predictive customer service will let brands anticipate what you need or may do, before you even know, by analyzing and detecting the patterns of billions of customer engagements over time.

5. The "800" number will enter early retirement

Digital customer engagement combined with mobile devices, tablets and data lines will lead to less calls. A lot less. In 2018 you will engage with a virtual assistant and if they can't resolve an issue, you will be seamlessly texting with a live contact center agent. If the issue is really complicated and can't be resolved through messaging, you still won't call the 800 number. [In 2018, that step will be integrated](#) through advanced technologies like WebRTC and IVR-to-digital, allowing the contact center agent to connect with you by voice or video within the app, on your laptop, even through your TV screen or smart speaker.

Tags: [Voice biometrics](#), [Conversational AI](#), [Predictions](#), [Intelligent virtual assistant](#)

More Information

Our omni-channel customer service solutions are leading the way in 2018

Discover how Nuance engagement technology leads the way towards the 2018 innovations in customer service.

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About Robert Weideman

Robert Weideman is the executive vice president and general manager of the Nuance Enterprise Division, responsible for customer self-service solutions that are used by leading organizations around the world to automate and optimize the customer care experience. Robert is driving the team behind Nina, the virtual assistant for customer service, which delivers human-like customer service for contact centers, and mobile and web apps. In his tenure with Nuance, he has been the general manager for the Dragon and Imaging businesses, as well as SVP of international marketing in EMEA. Previously, Robert served as chief marketing officer for ScanSoft, and vice president of marketing for the Adobe Systems' portfolio company Cardiff Software. He has also held senior marketing and management roles at TGS.com and CA (Computer Associates). Robert holds a BS in Computer Information Systems and Software Engineering from San Diego State University.

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