

Customer engagement, Voice & IVR

Be the MVP for Super Customer Service

[Nuance Communications](#)

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It's Super Bowl time! This Sunday the Philadelphia Eagles will square off against the New England Patriots. Each team will focus on a couple areas to help them win – how to best move easily down the field to score and not turn the ball over. Think those are only relevant to the big game? Incorrect. And whistle for a penalty on you! Customer service executives should examine the game for ways they can improve their service channels and create a great customer experience.

This Sunday will be the 52nd Super Bowl (that's Super Bowl LII if you read Roman numerals) featuring the [Philadelphia Eagles](#) vs. the [New England Patriots](#). Each team will focus on a couple areas to help them win – moving easily down the field to score and not turning the ball over. Both are apt analogies when thinking about customer service.

Are your service channels easy to move through quickly or do they act like the defense, always putting up blocks to your customers? Does a caller who wishes to move from one channel to another get lost or “fumbled” on the hand-off? Principles for success in the Super Bowl translate well to great customer service.

Finding the fastest route down the

field

Does a caller move freely through the IVR quickly and easily? Can they navigate your digital channels to find what they need as fluidly as Tom Brady when he moves the Pats offense effortlessly through opposing defenses?

Many times, companies develop their IVR or digital channels with added content and menus to better explain a topic or assist customers. It's well-intentioned but those extra steps may be acting like a defender getting all over a wide-receiver and preventing them from running their route. The goal for any customer service manager must be to remove as many barriers as possible in each channel.

In football, the fastest route down the field is the deep throw. "The Bomb". Fans love it, and it's a thing of beauty when it works well. Imagine this same approach when calling a company's IVR. You simply say one sentence as to why you are calling, then *BOOM!* You are taken immediately to the right location or agent. You are overjoyed! You are elated! You may even do a [fist pump like Tom Brady when he completes a long TD pass](#).

But most IVR menus and even digital channels don't allow for this type of direct connection to the desired location. Rather, they put up menu after menu or ask you to push buttons to slowly move forward. It would be like the Eagles running for two yards, passing for six, then being sacked, then passing for twelve. It may ultimately get you there, but it takes a long time, is frustrating, and isn't the most direct.

The right play call? Natural Language Understanding (NLU)

There is a winning play every time however – Natural Language-based solutions. With [Natural Language](#) your customer service channels can quickly and more efficiently determine what someone is trying to say and then get them to the right destination. NLU-based virtual assistants can smartly help visitors move to the desired location within your website. And adding NLU to the IVR takes the experience from "Press 1 for checking" to "Say anything you'd like, and I'll help you" – speeding the process and delighting customers.

Don't fumble the ball – or the customer

Moving quickly down the field, and through channels, is paramount to success. But so is keeping the ball. Fumbles and turnovers stop momentum and reduce odds of success. If Eagles quarterback Nick Foles doesn't make a clean hand-off to Jay Ajayi, it could spell disaster. The same holds true with customer service. Organizations that mishandle the customer experience may drop the ball and risk losing them.

This is easily done and likely occurs all the time. Often someone will end up calling the contact center when a live chat agent may be the best support option. Or someone may find that the wait times for an agent on the phone are a little too long. Trying to move between these channels is challenging, and many companies today force callers to hang up and go to the web – creating a poor experience and an unhappy customer.

A winning approach? IVR to digital solutions

There is an option as smooth as a well-executed hand-off from Brady to anyone in the Patriots backfield. IVR to digital solutions exist that allow organizations to help move the customer seamlessly from the [IVR to a digital experience](#). Targeted callers can be offered the opportunity to leave the IVR and go to a digital experience such as live chat or the web for more information. Choosing this approach allows callers to get their questions resolved faster and reduce call volumes into the IVR. A winning approach for both the customer and the company.

No matter who wins the Super Bowl, both sides will implement the same proven strategies for success – moving easily down the field while eliminating possibility of fumbling the ball. Customer service managers who seek high customer satisfaction will do the same.

Tags: [Customer experience](#), [Intelligent virtual assistant](#)

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