

Customer engagement, Digital & messaging

How Dixons Carphone Group made a rapid shift to digital during the pandemic

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When the pandemic forced retail brands to close all brick-and-mortar stores with just a few days' notice, customer service leaders had to adapt fast. Discover how DCG quickly shifted customers to digital channels during COVID-19 lockdowns and find three best practice lessons from the project.

Throughout 2020, we worked closely with companies to ensure they had everything they needed to serve customers on digital channels without any disruption.

One of these quick-thinking companies is Dixons Carphone Group (DCG), a market leader in electronic goods and mobile devices across eight countries, with brands including Currys PC World and Carphone Warehouse. As its stores shut, DCG trained more than 100 agents for its live assist service and deployed a conversational virtual assistant (VA) to continue serving customers.

You can read DCG's full story to find out the impressive results the company achieved in such a short timeframe. Or, read on to get three best practice lessons from the company's successful project.

#1 Let customers choose how they engage with your brand

The term 'call deflection' is used a lot when talking about customer engagement, but it implies calling is the customer's first choice—and in a lot of cases, it isn't. Often, when brands start to offer digital engagement options to customers, they'll see many customers naturally shift away from the phone channel.

DCG experienced the shift first-hand. When, during the pandemic, the company made more agents available on its live assist service, it saw its volume of digital interactions rise to 400,000 each month—three times the pre-lockdown volume. And by moving engagements onto a more efficient channel, DCG reduced the impact on its contact centre, while its customers still received the highest standard of support.

But importantly, DCG kept its phone channel open for customers to use. The company didn't force anyone onto a channel they were unfamiliar with, and customers had complete control over how they engaged.

#2 Live Assist and VAs work better together

Using a live assist platform or VA can be a cost-effective way to satisfy customers—but the two technologies are even stronger together.

When the pandemic first impacted retail stores, DCG already had Nuance Live Assist deployed in its contact centre, which meant a lot of its customers were familiar with the company's digital channel. But with a conversational VA, DCG took its digital engagement to a new level.

The company's VA acts as the first point-of-call for customers engaging digitally, capturing their intent, and offering answers to simple questions about the company's services. During the national lockdown, the VA helped DCG's customer service team strategically manage the volume of customers reaching its agents, without compromising customer satisfaction.

Today, DCG's VA and live assist platform continue to offer customers convenient digital engagements—resolving around 80% of the company's 100,000 average weekly customer queries and supporting more than £2.7m in sales every week.

#3 Start small, expand later

There's a lot to consider when starting a VA project—including which topics it should cover, when it should hand customers over to live agents, and how much content it needs before deployment. But from our experience, the brands that see the most success start with a small, specific business objective, and expand their VA after deployment.

DCG had just two weeks to get its VA from initial design to go-live, so its team focused on providing automated answers to 20 questions, including those around support and how the retailer was addressing COVID-19. The strategy helped DCG serve its customers with fast information when they needed it most—and now, the company has the freedom to expand its VA further.

The company predicts that adding a feature as simple as responding to order status queries could help the VA resolve up to 30% of the interactions currently serviced by live agents.

Get the full success story

DCG's rapid shift to digital channels may have been in response to short-term challenges, but it's already delivering long-term gains for the company's contact centre. Read the full success story to find out exactly how the company came up with its quick digital strategy, and the compelling results it's achieving with Nuance Live Assist and Virtual Assistant.

Tags: [Retail](#), [Digital engagement](#)



About Sebastian Reeve

Seb Reeve is a customer experience industry leader who is always seeking to provide thought-leadership, lateral-thinking and decision-support for Fortune 1000 Enterprises who are both his customers and partners. Reeves has more than fifteen years of experience in deploying technologies to improve the user experience. In his current role at Nuance as EMEA Director of Product Management and Marketing, he is responsible for defining and evangelizing the Nuance customer care proposition across Europe, the Middle-East and Africa – sharing how companies can create extraordinary automated experiences which their customers actively choose to use rather than simply tolerate and complain about, promoting best practices in AI and Machine Learning to the world of Customer Experience.



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