AI playing a leading role in the customer experience is no longer news; it's becoming the status quo in 2019, because customers more than ever expect to have useful and contextual conversations with brands. Sophisticated, industry-leading AI, IBM Voice Agent with Watson offers a new world of customer support experiences.

IBM Voice Agent with Watson uses Nexmo, the Vonage API Platform, to enable voice interactions between an AI voice agent and customers. The new voice agent is nothing like the robotic IVRs of yesterday. With Watson artificial intelligence behind it, this voice agent speaks conversationally and can handle more complex interactions.

**Automation Doesn’t Mean Frustration**

The customer experience is important, and it can make the difference between keeping and losing customers—62% of customers will run to your competitors after just one or two negative interactions. The experience of yesterday is no longer acceptable.

In the old days, we all struggled with clunky IVRs, robotic voices spitting out options but never listening to the customer's feedback. We sat through lengthy menus, shouted numbers into our handsets only to be misunderstood, pressing buttons and hoping something would lead us to a human service agent. Watson has changed all that, and automation no longer has to come at the expense of customer satisfaction. On the contrary, it's improving the customer experience and amping up the ability of companies large and small to truly
delight their users with stellar customer support—all without the expense of hiring more people. Instead, the people you already have will be elevated and empowered to do far more satisfying, skilled work, because your virtual agent will handle all the rest.

The question isn’t *why should a robot do the work of humans*; it’s *why should your talented, experienced, and highly-trained human agents do menial work better handled by robots*?

**Nexmo Voice API and IBM Voice Agent with Watson**

With the help of Nexmo’s Voice API, Watson can now join a voice call to carry out any number of tasks. Key use cases include replacing or automating some of those frustrating older IVRs, or providing tier-one customer support.

Nexmo’s Voice API gives IBM Voice Agent with Watson a leg up via Nexmo’s global connectivity reach and per-second billing. It’s easier than ever to reach all of your customers, wherever they are, with Watson-enhanced voice support.

The potential for AI in customer experience goes well beyond voice, though. Nexmo gives you the power of omnichannel communication—addressing customer inquiries in real time, on the channel of the customer’s choice, whether that be voice, SMS, MMS, or an OTT chat app like WhatsApp.

**Verticals and Use Cases**

Nexmo’s suite of APIs offers a true omnichannel experience, made even more valuable with the addition of Watson-level AI. For example, if a customer submits a support request via Facebook Messenger or WhatsApp, a virtual agent can “triage” that customer via the app in question, solving most problems itself and escalating to voice calls with a live agent only as needed. What’s more, that live agent can have instant access to the entire conversation between the customer and the AI agent, bringing themselves up to speed instantly without having to ask the customer to repeat everything once again.

If live voice support isn’t cutting it, Nexmo enables escalation to live video conferencing, allowing support agents to not only hear the problems but see them, as well. Customer satisfaction can then be collected via a survey sent over WhatsApp.

**Financial Services**

Financial services companies are using AI’s ability to parse and learn from huge quantities of data to help consumers make informed decisions. H&R Block, for example, uses Watson to help consumers find tax deductions. AI can know and remember every deduction available to a teacher, a farmer, or a police officer, without relying on human memory and knowledge. This arms tax agents with complete information, enabling them to serve as true experts in their field.

**eCommerce**

Say you’ve ordered a dress through an ecommerce app. The dress arrives, and it’s the wrong color. You might first reach out via the app you shopped on, perhaps using in-app messaging, or you may reach out on Facebook Messenger or WhatsApp, if the ecommerce company offers you those options. The virtual agent will begin the conversation by asking in natural, conversational language how it can
help. It will be able to understand your complaint, apologize for the inconvenience of receiving the wrong color, and offer to initiate a return and replacement. Most of the time, this is exactly what you were looking for, so you leave happy.

If for any reason you’re not satisfied with this, the smart virtual agent may choose to escalate your inquiry. It will tell you to please hold for a live agent. That agent will join the existing chat and attempt to solve your problem. If the agent responds that their shipping system shows the correct color was sent, you may then be escalated to video so you can show the agent exactly what you received—a dress that is clearly red, and definitely not the blue you ordered.

But the good news here is that nine times out of ten, that live agent will never be needed. Common problems like this are easily solved by virtual agents, keeping the customer experience smooth and seamless.

Healthcare

AI in healthcare can also offer omnichannel messaging and automatic escalation as needed. Maybe you use your healthcare provider’s app to message your pediatrician about your child’s cough. In years past, a child with a fever and a bad cough would always need to be bundled up and driven to the doctor’s office. I remember taking my toddler daughter out in the rain, crying and uncomfortable, then sitting with her in a waiting room trying in vain to keep her happy, and finally seeing a doctor who looked at her for thirty seconds and told me to give her cough medicine and plenty of fluids. In 2019, a virtual “advice nurse” may send you links to helpful articles or collect pertinent information about your child’s condition to give to the doctor. The doctor may then choose to call you or even video conference with you so he can hear the cough for himself and advise you on how to treat it, all without moving your sick and cranky child.

The Future is Now

AI is here to stay. In 2019, we predict major growth in the use of AI, as well as major strides in customer acceptance of AI in place of human interactions. And why wouldn’t they accept and even embrace this technology, if you use it wisely to make their experience more delightful?

We can help you do that. You can get started now with Nexmo Voice API and IBM Voice Agent with Watson.

Please fill out the form and we will be in touch with you shortly.

1.844.324.0340

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