The Ultimate Guide to
Conversational AI

How Voice AI transforms interactions between your brand and your valued customers

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What is
conversational AI?

Conversational AI is a set of technologies that enable computers to understand and process natural language inputs so they can 'talk' with humans. Put simply, Conversational AI allows us to talk with machines in the same way that we do with other humans.

Artificial intelligence (AI) and voice recognition technology has been around for decades. But it's only in recent times that Conversational AI has evolved and improved to make it a mainstream tool for businesses and other organisations to use effectively.

21st century Conversational AI is powerful enough to be the technological backbone behind 'AI digital assistants', digital workers that can transform the efficiency of your team. These AI-driven assistants can:

- ✓ Talk to your customers and have meaningful conversations

- ✓ Send out emails, SMS messages or instant messages

- ✓ Forward customers to your website or FAQs

- ✓ Contact your customers to run surveys or ask for feedback

- ✓ Automate your low-level tasks to improve efficiency

Curious thing

What technology powers conversational AI?

Your AI digital assistant is driven by a number of different emerging technologies. Computers have used basic speech recognition functions to listen and interact with humans for decades. But we're only now at a point where conversational AI software can fully process and understand the complex ways that humans speak.

Conversational AI uses:

Natural Language Processing (NLP)

NLP is a set of techniques used in computer science, information engineering, and linguistics that deals with the interactions between computers and human (natural) languages. Your Conversational AI assistant uses NLP technology to interact with people and give natural-sounding responses and answers.

Natural Language Understanding (NLU)

NLU makes it easier for computers to understand human language. One of the most significant hurdles for NLU is understanding the meaning of words and the complexity of human speech. For example, the word 'bat' could refer to the winged animal, or to the sporting equipment. NLU helps the computer understand the context of our speech, so it can give accurate responses.

Automated Speech Recognition (ASR)

Machine Learning (ML)

ASR is a technology that converts speech to text. It's the next generation of natural language understanding, and can have a drastic impact on how you interact with your customers and end users. Instead of typing in questions and responses, your customer can simply talk to your AI assistant, and the assistant will convert this speech into usable data that can then be processed, understood and responded to.

ML is a key part of the evolution of artificial intelligence. It's a branch of computer science that uses algorithms to analyse data and make predictions based on the data it receives. This allows machines to learn and evolve without being explicitly programmed. Within Conversational AI, ML helps your AI assistant learn from its conversations with humans and become more useful over time. This helps it give better answers, gain greater understanding or become more natural in its speech.

These different technologies all work together in harmony, giving developers and engineers the foundations for creating ever-more powerful and flexible voice AI assistants.

Chatbots, live chat
and Voice AI

Conversational AI is the driving technology behind a voice AI assistant.

These assistants can listen, talk and hold natural conversations with your end customers. But what's the difference between a voice AI assistant and the more common chatbots and live chat functionality that we see on so many brands' websites?

Let's take a look at the some of the key differences:

Chatbots

AI-powered chatbots are a chat solution that's powered by AI technology.

Chats appear on the screen as a sequential exchange of text messages between the consumer and your AI chatbot – just like a text chain you'd have with a friend on your phone's messaging app.

The chatbot's aim is to complete an 'informational transaction' by asking simple questions and processing the answers to pull out the relevant information, data and feedback. It's good for basic queries, but can't cope with complex customer questions.

Live chat

For the consumer, a live chat solution looks very similar on screen to a chatbot solution.

There's the same chain of text exchanges between both parties and the same live nature to the conversation. The difference is that live chat is powered by a human agent and not driven by AI.

The responses your customer sees come from a member of your team, not from an AI bot. Because of this, your live chat capability is limited by the number of agents you have available, and the speed that they can process the customer enquiry.

Voice AI assistants

A Voice AI assistant, uses Conversational AI to talk with your customers.

The AI can construct high-quality open, scalable conversations. This means it's not limited to the pre-programmed questions and responses used by a basic chatbot.

Your Voice AI can make and take calls, allowing it to hold real-time conversations with your customers. For the end user, voice AI feels like talking to another human being, but with all the benefits of automation, efficiency and scalability that AI offers.

Why a voice AI assistant is the ideal digital team member

Voice AI assistants have incredible potential when it comes to improving your productivity, your customer service levels and your overall customer experience as an organisation.

In a market where growing your customer relationships is so important, having a flexible and scalable digital assistant on the team is a bonus for the whole company.

When properly customised and programmed, an AI assistant can:

Work around the clock to boost productivity and provide 24/7 support

Efficiently process customer conversations and queries without human error

Reduce the workload for your human agents and increase your performance levels

Free up time for your tier 2 customer service agents to focus on high-level tasks

Increase your customer touch points and drive better customer relationships

**Raise your customer satisfaction level and build brand loyalty**

How Voice AI can
help your organisation

A voice AI assistant that's driven by Conversational AI can be used in many different ways. The most common use cases are in customer communication, contact centre tasks and customer experience – any scenario where you need to talk to and interact with your customers.

Your AI assistant can be tailored and customised to become a valuable part of your wider team. And the benefits aren't just confined to basic FAQs. AI can have a positive impact across the whole organisation, helping you become more effective and productive.

Here are some of important areas of value that Conversational AI brings to your toolkit:

Scale up your customer interactions
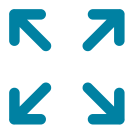
Scaling up your customer communications is an important part of any growth strategy. With an AI digital assistant on the team, you can quickly automate, expand and scale up your activity, achieving a productivity rate that would be impossible with a purely human customer service team.

Customise your digital AI assistant

Customising your AI digital assistant helps you tailor it to your brand. Choose the voice persona, gender or language of your assistant to create a unique assistant that reflects your business, your tone and the way you want to communicate with your customers and stakeholders.

Get deep insights from every interaction

[Getting insights](#) from your customer conversations helps you understand your end users. Conversational AI can record your AI calls, produce transcripts and generate the analytics and data insights you need to push your customer experience to new levels. This data is a goldmine, that's ready to be mined.

Collect payment from your customers

[Collecting payment](#) from customers is an essential part of the cashflow process. Instead of relying on your human agents to do this, use your AI digital assistant to contact late-paying customers, or take payment for forthcoming bills and subscriptions – with the added efficiency of automation.

Keep your data safe and secure

[Stay secure](#) and compliant with GDPR, ISO 27001 and HIPAA compliance by using the security features of your Conversational AI software. By using high-level data encryption and secure data storage, AI helps you keep your customer information safe, while also keeping the data at your fingertips.

If you're looking to grow your organisation, having Conversational AI powering your operations really is a no-brainer.

For minimal financial expenditure, you have access to your own unique voice AI assistant. And, the way you use this assistant is only limited by your own imagination. If there's a use case where better customer conversations sit at the heart of your operational goal, your AI assistant can pitch in and start making a difference.

Industry sectors using
conversational AI

Conversational AI works well in industries where there are plenty of repeatable, rule-based tasks that can be automated. Financial services, for example, was one of the first early-adopter industries to embrace the benefits of AI and system automation.

However, the NLP and NLU capabilities of Conversational AI mean that the technology can be customised to fit the needs of many different sectors and industry use cases. If there's an important need to talk with your customers, a voice AI assistant will become an asset to your business – helping you generate scalable customer conversations across the company.

Let's take a look at the different ways that Conversational AI has been used across different industry sectors:

Small and Medium-Sizes Enterprises

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have limited team capacities and competing priorities within the business. Many are now employing voice AI assistants to field inbound sales and customer enquiries, so they can capture every business opportunity and deliver consistent, round-the-clock support.

Financial Services

Financial services was one of the first industries to fully invest in AI. An AI digital assistant can send friendly payment reminders, conduct welcome calls and compliance checks or even ask questions about customer satisfaction and service feedback, etc.

Healthcare

Healthcare is another sector where AI is taking big strides forward. An AI can connect with patients when it matters most, helping to conduct wellness check-ins, ask about patient experience and send out appointment reminders.

Insurance

The insurance industry is another sector that's realised the benefits of AI automation. Companies have adopted voice AI assistants to streamline their claims support, troubleshoot commonly asked questions and keep customers in the loop with policy information, etc.

Contact centres

eCommerce

Contact centres are always striving for efficiency. An AI assistant adds automation and Conversational AI benefits to the centre's performance capabilities, improving key call metrics, cutting cost to serve and servicing a greater number of customers.

eCommerce is a growing sector, where smooth processes and a great customer experience are paramount. An AI assistant can ask customers questions, drive actions and deliver insights, as well as directing customers to your chosen payment platform.

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Conversational AI: the future of top-class customer experience

AI is continuing to transform the business landscape. Conversational AI technology is bringing smart thinking and effective automation to all kinds of different operational challenges – and at this point in AI's evolution, we're only at the very start of this technological revolution.

If you're an ambitious organisation with plans to scale up, improve your customer experience and connect with your customers, a voice AI assistant is a must-have tool to invest in.

Conversational AI helps you:

- **Have helpful and value-driven conversations with your customers**

- **Automate your repeatable tasks to boost efficiency**

- **Deal effectively with customer queries and sales enquiries**

- **Ramp up your touchpoints with customers and grow those relationships**

- **Have helpful and value-driven conversations with your customers**

Now's the time to explore what Conversational AI can offer your organisation – and how artificial intelligence can support and drive your long-term goals and targets.

About
Curious Thing

Curious Thing is a leading developer of customisable Conversational AI solutions.

We make Voice AI assistants that take your customer journey to the next level. Our Conversational AI gives you a new competitive edge by enabling proactive communication and automated support at any stage of the customer journey.

Have we made you curious?

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