BUILD SMART SELF-SERVICE FAST

Leveraging AI and machine learning to move from reactive to proactive self-service.

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Build Smart Self-Service Fast

Leveraging AI and machine learning to move from reactive to proactive self-service.

Customer expectations continue to evolve, with increasingly complex demands for personalized, seamless experiences across a growing number of channels.

At the same time, contact centers are challenged to find and retain the qualified agents needed to maintain assisted service, making the ability to offer self-service more important than ever before.

Today's contact center has a wide variety of tools and channels at its disposal to enable self-service, but companies are struggling to implement them effectively. In recent research by Aberdeen, self-service ranks among the top planned channels for adoption, but 56% of contact center leaders say customer needs are too complex to be addressed by self-service. One-third say that customers are unaware of self-service capabilities, while 30% say self-service portals are too hard to navigate.[1]

The reality is that traditional self-service is falling short. It's no longer enough to wait for a customer to reach out to your company with a question or an issue. Today's customer service landscape requires that you expand how you think about self-service. Only in moving from traditional self-service to smart self-service can contact centers deliver the 24/7 convenience and personalization customers now demand.

In this eBook, we'll detail what smart self-service is, why self-service needs to be smarter, and the building blocks that enable contact centers to make the most out of their self-service investments.

[1] Aberdeen Research, The ROI of Smart Self-Service, Oct. 2021.

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What Is Smart Self-Service?

Traditional self-service often takes the form of interactive voice response (IVR), a company website to help customers address their own needs or rudimentary chatbots that can increase customer frustration.

There's not a lot of automation involved; it's really about offering tools and hoping customers can solve their issues with minimal support from the company.

But more self-service is happening through a Google search, which raises several important challenges:

? How can you provide the right answers and have a search engine optimization (SEO) rank that positions your company at the top of that Google search?

? How can you put your brand into native mobile in a way that provides a consistent experience for the customer?

? Once the consumer clicks through to your website, how can you guide them to self-service and the ideal outcome?

? As more chatbots and virtual agents handle these conversations, how can you make them smarter?

Smart self-service takes the customer experience to the next level with artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning. A contact center with smart self-service improves CX with more customer friendly, technology-driven interactions, enabling businesses to delight customers even through self-service channels.

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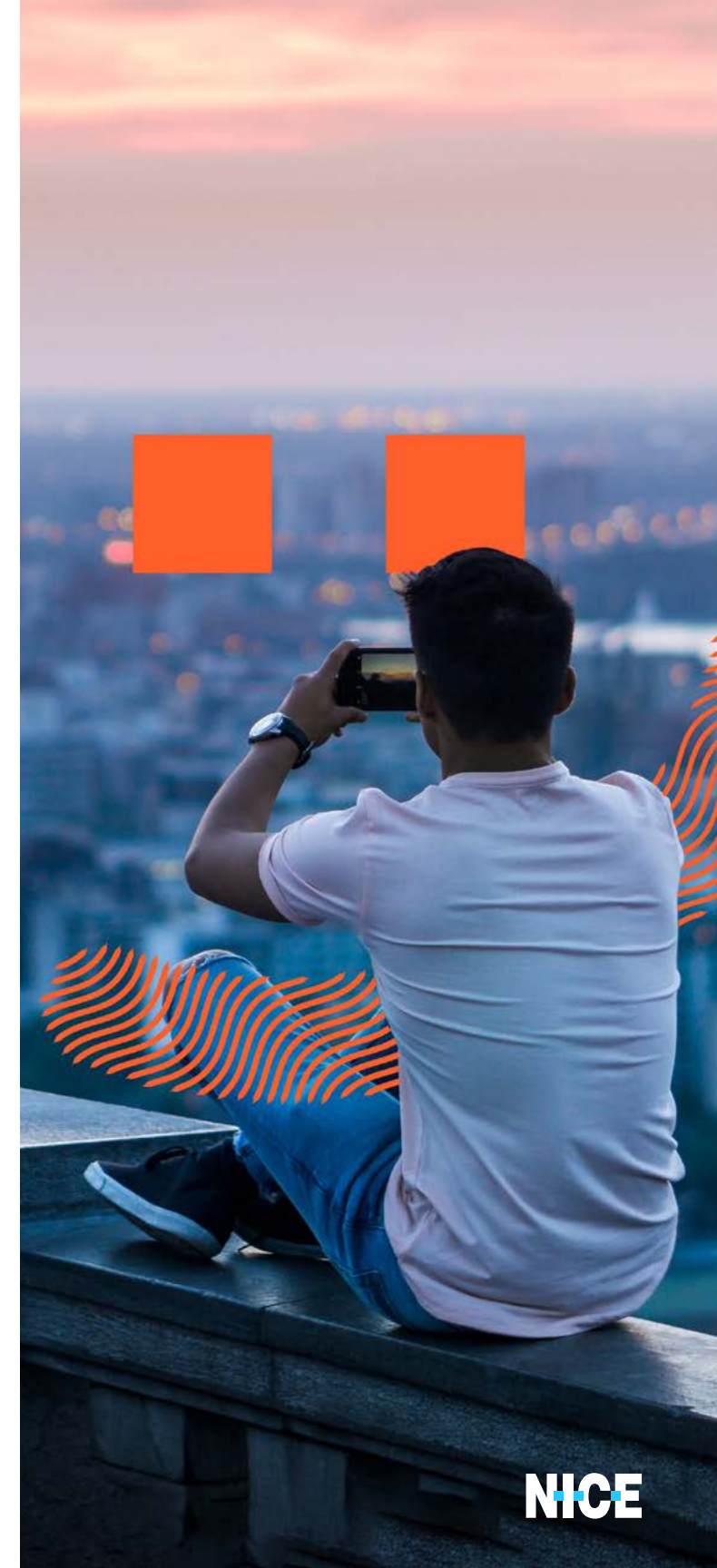
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Smart Self-Service Makes the Most of Data

While traditional self-service often relies on a narrative approach to finding opportunities for automation—a brainstorm, for example, of customer needs and how self-service could be used to solve them—smart self-service takes an empirical approach by automatically harnessing experience data to make self-service smarter.

A data-driven strategy fuels the move to smarter self-service and includes different types of data, for example:

SEMANTIC DATA, which sheds light on the nuances of conversation and the context of questions to really make it rich and meaningful.
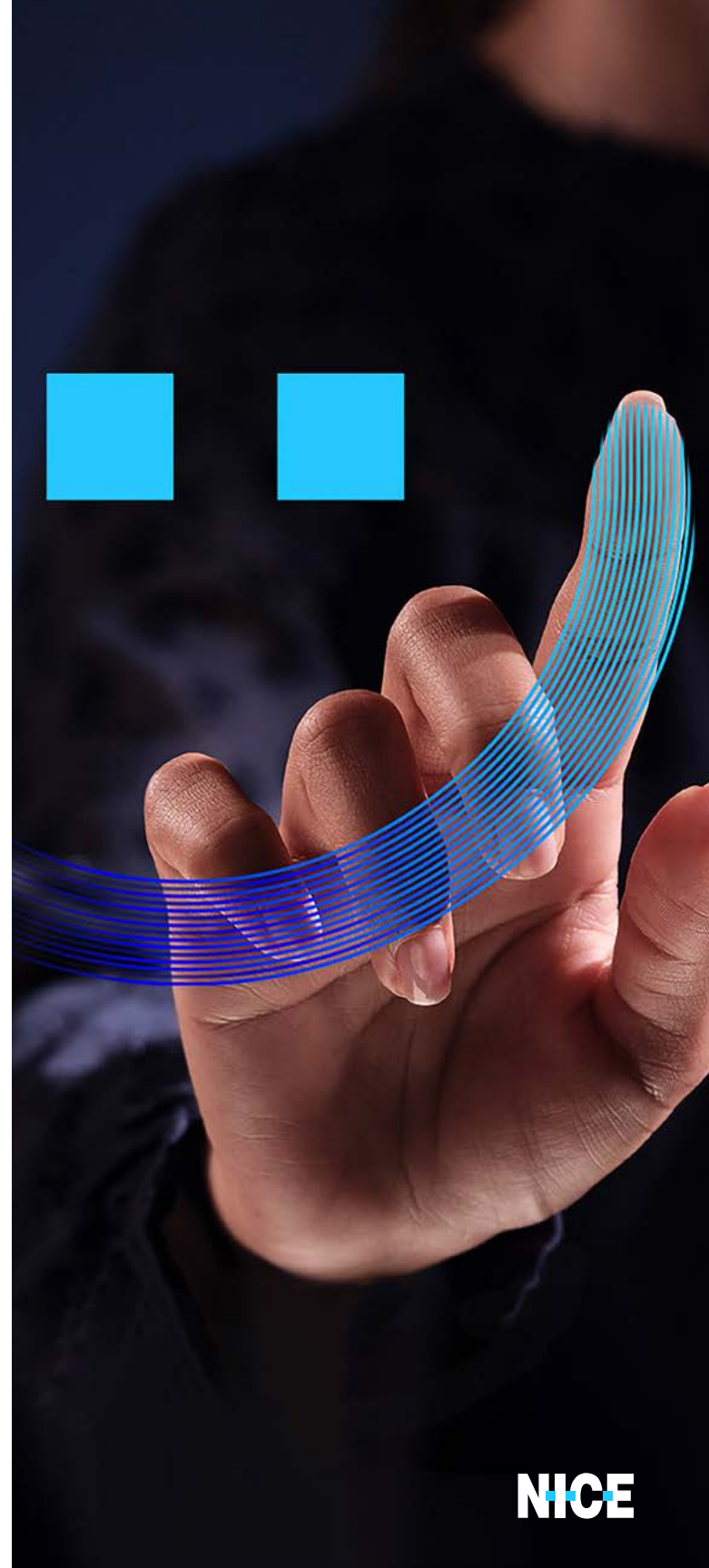
EPISODIC DATA, which enables brands to intelligently learn from past experiences with customers to create more hyper-personalized connections and reshape the conversations customers have with self-service applications.
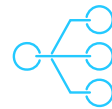
PROCEDURAL DATA, which provides insight into the next best action or series of actions to achieve effective automation for customers' needs.

Together, this data can be leveraged by AI to consider all the different scenarios and outcomes of the past and identify the best next action to take. This empirical, automated approach takes the guesswork out of self-service and increases resolution rates as well as customer satisfaction.

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The Types of Companies Driving the Shift to Smart Self-Service

The brands that are already using smart self-service typically fall into one of two categories: an expectation setter or a disruptor.

Expectation setters offer self-service that works. They have a data-driven strategy for their business that builds lasting customer relationships. Perhaps they start off with a virtual agent and divert interactions from voice. Then, once they've confirmed that digital channels save money and create better experiences, they invest in further self-service capabilities, expanding their definition of self-service to go beyond chatbots and proactively provide guidance to the customer.

Disruptors, for their part, tend to be newer companies that were born digital—smart self-service is in their DNA. They may not have the same volume of data an expectation setter has (if only because they haven't been in business as long), but they know how to use the data and do so quickly. They have an automation-first attitude. For example, instead of seeking to hire more staff to handle a common customer challenge, they ask themselves how they can automate it on a self-service channel.

Just because someone in your industry isn't disrupting self-service doesn't mean customers won't expect you to provide the same type of experience as they receive from other industries.

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Why Now is the Right Time: The Business Case for Smart Self-Service

Customers who are using smart self-service report significant benefits over contact centers that do not, including a:

39%
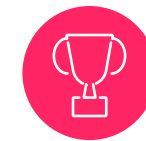improvement
in customer
satisfaction rate

2x
reduction in
service costs

2.2x
increase in annual
company revenue

2.2x
improvement
in customer
effort score[2]

In short, smart self-service is powered by data and analytics, and continuously improves.
Transforming self-service into smart self-service is turning market contenders into market winners, regardless of the industry.

[2] Aberdeen Research, The ROI of Smart Self-Service, Oct. 2021.

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Transforming Self-Service

Imagine offering self-service that actually works. Taking the leap from traditional to smart self-service can help you continuously improve your CX with every interaction.

So, what are the steps can you take to deliver seamless experiences on digital channels?

1. Enhance digital CX across all touchpoints with conversational data

2. Leverage the right tools to analyze highly complex data at scale with AI and machine learning

3. Strengthen knowledge management resources to maximize self-service efficiencies

4. Drive proactive outreach to anticipate and resolve potential service issues

5. Understand every customer's intents

6. Empower digital channels to handle more complex issues

7. Configure your self-service channels to evolve continuously

8. Prioritize digital CX to improve first-contact resolution and customer satisfaction

Customers' accelerating expectations for resolutions anywhere is a key driver for better self-service, and technology makes it happen. Data, AI and machine learning are critical for implementing and managing smart self-service programs effectively. **The smartest businesses have universally adopted these tools to automate repetitive manual processes and to satisfy today's digital-first customer.**
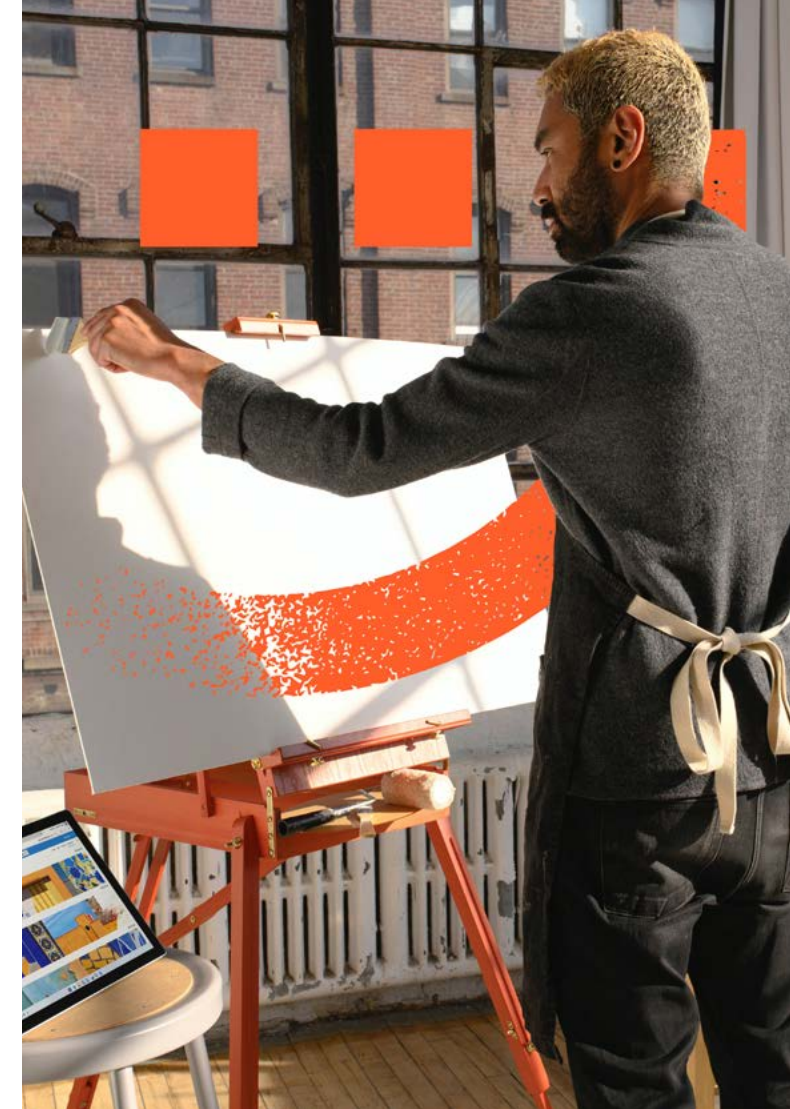
"Intelligence, AI and machine learning are table stakes for implementing and managing smart self-service programs."

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Conclusion:
Meet Customers on their Digital Doorsteps

We know that self-service ranks at the top of the list of planned channel adoption, but traditional self-service doesn't go far enough to meet the expectations of today's increasingly digital consumer.

Customers want fast, convenient digital self-service, and that will require the ability to effectively harness AI and analytics. A scalable, AI-powered next-gen CX cloud platform like CXone can help you deliver on the promise of smart self-service: **better CX**, **improved operational efficiency**, **lower costs**, **higher revenue and more**.

NICE's Enlighten XO empowers contact centers to build and evolve self-service channels with a data-driven, empirical approach that gets smarter with every interaction. This leading-edge solution is powered by Enlighten AI, the first comprehensive framework of AI technologies built specifically for CX.

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About NICE

With NICE (Nasdaq: NICE), it's never been easier for organizations of all sizes around the globe to create extraordinary customer experiences while meeting key business metrics. Featuring the world's #1 cloud-native customer experience platform, CXone, NICE is a worldwide leader in AI-powered contact center software. Over 25,000 organizations in more than 150 countries, including over 85 of the Fortune 100 companies, partner with NICE to transform - and elevate - every customer interaction.

www.nice.com

Only CXone uses Enlighten XO to build smart self-service fast:

• Analyze all customer conversations

• Extract, map and prioritize the highest-value topics to automate

• Capture all the ways people communicate

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Make experiences flow