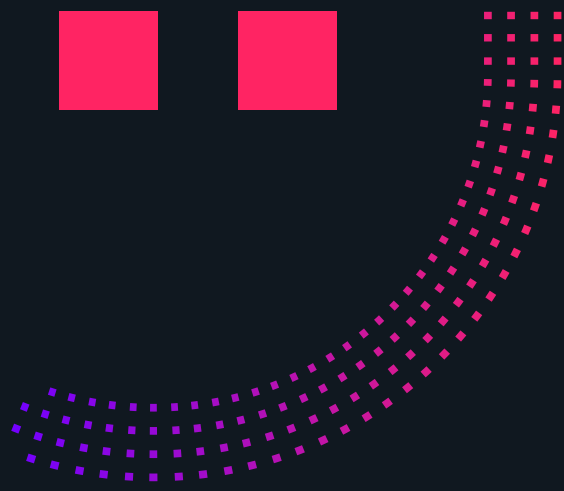# Case Study

SONY

Sony Electronics Achieves Highest-Ever Response Rate with NICE

Sony Electronics' contact center provides sales and support for a wide range of consumer and professional technology products, and callers are frequently looking for assistance on topics handled by another arm of Sony Group Corporation. As part of a larger effort to take better control of data and customer experience outcomes, Sony Electronics reimagined the top of the customer contact funnel across voice, chat, and SMS with a virtual agent provided by Enlighten Autopilot. In live contacts, NICE also provides the infrastructure for a true omnichannel experience.
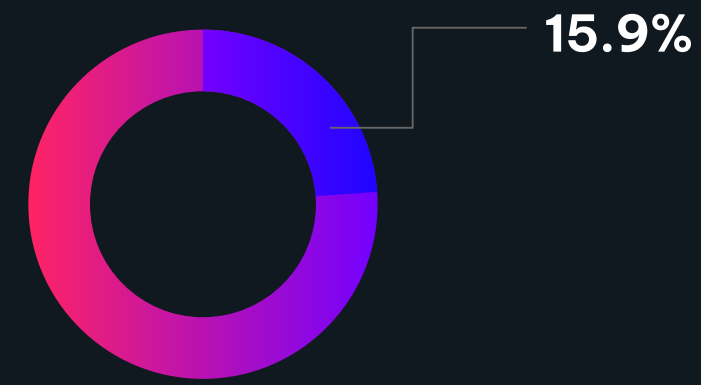
NICE

RECORD LEVEL
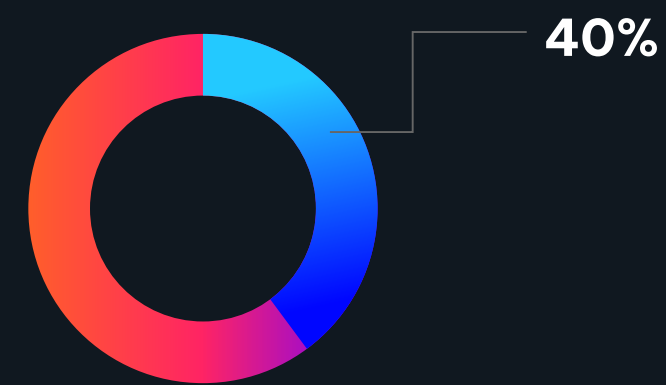customer satisfaction increase over FY23 period: 13.5% chat, 19% call, and 34.8% SMS

15.9%
Process containment to self-service and automated channels (initial results)

15.9%

40%+
Automation potential for customer inquiries

40%

8.75X-11.25X
Increase in feedback response rate for voice customers

22.5X
Increase in feedback response rate for chat customers

4.75X-5.75X
Increase in feedback response rate for SMS customers

SMS

CUSTOMER PROFILE

ABOUT
Sony Electronics is a subsidiary of Sony Corporation of America and an affiliate of Sony Group Corporation, one of the most comprehensive entertainment companies in the world, with a portfolio that encompasses electronics, music, motion pictures, mobile, gaming, robotics, and financial services. Sony Electronics is a leader in electronics for the consumer and professional markets and creates products that innovate and inspire generations.

INDUSTRY
Consumer electronics

WEBSITE
www.sony.com

LOCATION
Headquartered in San Diego, CA

AGENTS
700 agents

GOALS
- Improve self-service outcomes
- Improve call routing
- Improve operational efficiency
- Improve customer experience

PRODUCTS
- CXone
- Interaction Analytics
- Digital Experience
- Enlighten Autopilot
- CXone Feedback Management

FEATURES
- Virtual agent
- Customer intent analysis
- Process automation
- Omnichannel agent communications
- Voice of the customer

Case Study

01 THE BEFORE

A global brand's goals for simplicity and efficiency

As part of one of the world's largest and most diverse brands, Sony recognized that customers regularly struggled to contact the appropriate Sony division to address their needs. This created frustration and delays for customers in both pre-and post-sales services and added costs for Sony as many of its live agents handled calls that should have gone to a different division. In addition, much of the data about customer interactions was stored by BPO vendors, who also controlled the first touch IVR system. Manual compilation of customer feedback on spreadsheets made it cumbersome to maintain a list of necessary closed-loop actions, analyze the voice of the customer, and make adjustments to the customer experience.

02 DESIRE TO CHANGE

An executive call-to-action

Sony's senior management commissioned a benchmark study comparing the organization's customer experience ratings to competitors. The study revealed several opportunities for improvement, including self-service capabilities, operational efficiency, and customer feedback response rates. "We believe our products are second to none, and that our support experience needs to be second to none as well," said Roger Brewer, Director of Service Tools and Technology, at Sony.

Following the discussion, the service team made call containment their top priority and began by streamlining the live agent experience with a true omnichannel approach to provide agents with more information earlier in the process. "All of these findings pointed us to develop a chatbot," Brewer said. "We felt it would be a solution where we could define realistic, achievable ROI that would garner executive support, and make the best use of our existing resources and skill sets."

03 THE SOLUTION

A smarter customer experience

In collaboration with NICE, Sony has overhauled its contact center experience on CXone with Digital Experience workflow. "Tying calls, chat, and SMS into a cohesive and effective experience was important to us, to 'boldly go where no one has gone before' and to have our best agents positioned to handle every inbound channel and react in real time to customer feedback," Brewer said.

To build upon their newly optimized digital experiences, Sony also approached building a chatbot in a new way. Instead of guessing customer intents, Sony partnered with NICE to process 60,000 previous interactions through Enlighten XO, which leverages AI to identify improvement opportunities for self-service. From the analysis, Sony gained insight that 40% of their inquiries were candidates for automation. In addition, Sony's team used the ROI data from Enlighten XO to prioritize the best opportunities based on volume and cost-to-serve.

To leverage the insights from Enlighten XO in their conversational AI, Sony deployed Enlighten Autopilot to act as the virtual agent as the first point of contact for all incoming queries. Today, Autopilot handles a significant number of inquiries without involving a live agent, or, if agent assistance is required, efficiently routes customers to the most appropriate resource.

Brewer's team continues to mine insights through Interaction Analytics, including voice and SMS, to look for top customer intents and key verbs to identify the next avenues for automation and inform updates to agent workflows, in collaboration with internal subject matter experts on both technical product details and business processes. "It's a dynamic way to find new ways to get customers to the best solution in the most efficient way, and is going to drive success going forward," said Brewer.

The team is now also acting on VOC insights gained through NICE CXone Feedback Management, enabling the capture of feedback across every channel, rather than relying on just email surveys, resulting in response rates increasing by over 40%. "With Feedback Management, we're now truly getting more of the voice of the customer. We're seeing more granularly the types of issues, as well as positive things customers are experiencing," said Brewer.

04 THE RESULTS

Call containment, timelier customer insights, and a new record

With the virtual agent now handling all first contacts, initial results show that at least 15.9% of contacts are successfully contained by Autopilot and other self-service options. With finer analysis, the company plans to confirm that all contained calls lead to the best customer outcomes. Sony can now directly route callers to other Sony divisions like Playstation or Sony Music as a seamless, no-cost transfer based on the caller's main need. With customer satisfaction surveys, customers can opt into a survey much earlier in the process
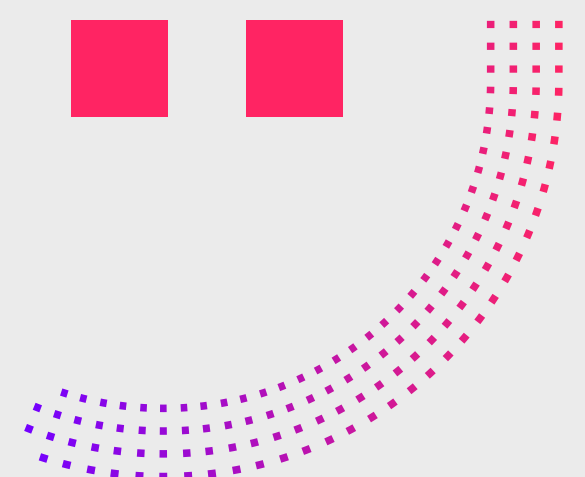
rather than receive it after the case is closed. Sony revised agent workflows to start with clearer customer intent based on omnichannel insights, improved self-service options, and by closing the loop to address customer concerns more efficiently . As a result, by the end of FY23 customer satisfaction rates were significantly higher across all channels, and at historic peaks. "Working with NICE, we've achieved the best customer satisfaction ratings that we've ever seen," Brewer said. "And we've learned that by setting realistic expectations for leadership, we can show signs of success as our systems evolve."

Analysis of agent transcripts has helped identify both new automation opportunities as well as improved workflows which will lead to better and faster resolutions. "Interaction Analytics gives us more visibility and quality assessment on the fly, flagging opportunities we may not have found until a customer complained or we manually reviewed that call," Brewer said. "And the NICE team has been phenomenal at rallying the right resources to jump on our issues and help us work through challenges."

05 THE FUTURE

### Better call workflows, streamlined customer feedback, more opportunities

Sony expects that the combination of Interaction Analytics, Autopilot, and Feedback Management will reveal more opportunities to improve customer experience, both through better call workflows as well as potentially flagging product issues. The company also plans to roll out a modified Autopilot workflow for after-hours inquiries, queueing up a voice, chat, or SMS session for the next open window. The solutions are also expected to scale easily to new channels as Sony requires. "When the business needs a new digital channel, we know it will be easy to add," Brewer said.

NICE CXone Expert is also under consideration to enhance the self-service experience. "We're exploring situations when customers call because we don't offer them a good knowledge base solution," Brewer said. "NICE Expert looks to have the capabilities to create and auto-suggest what we might need."

"We believe our products are second to none, and that our support experience needs to be second to none as well. **Working with NICE, we've achieved the best customer satisfaction ratings that we've ever seen.**"

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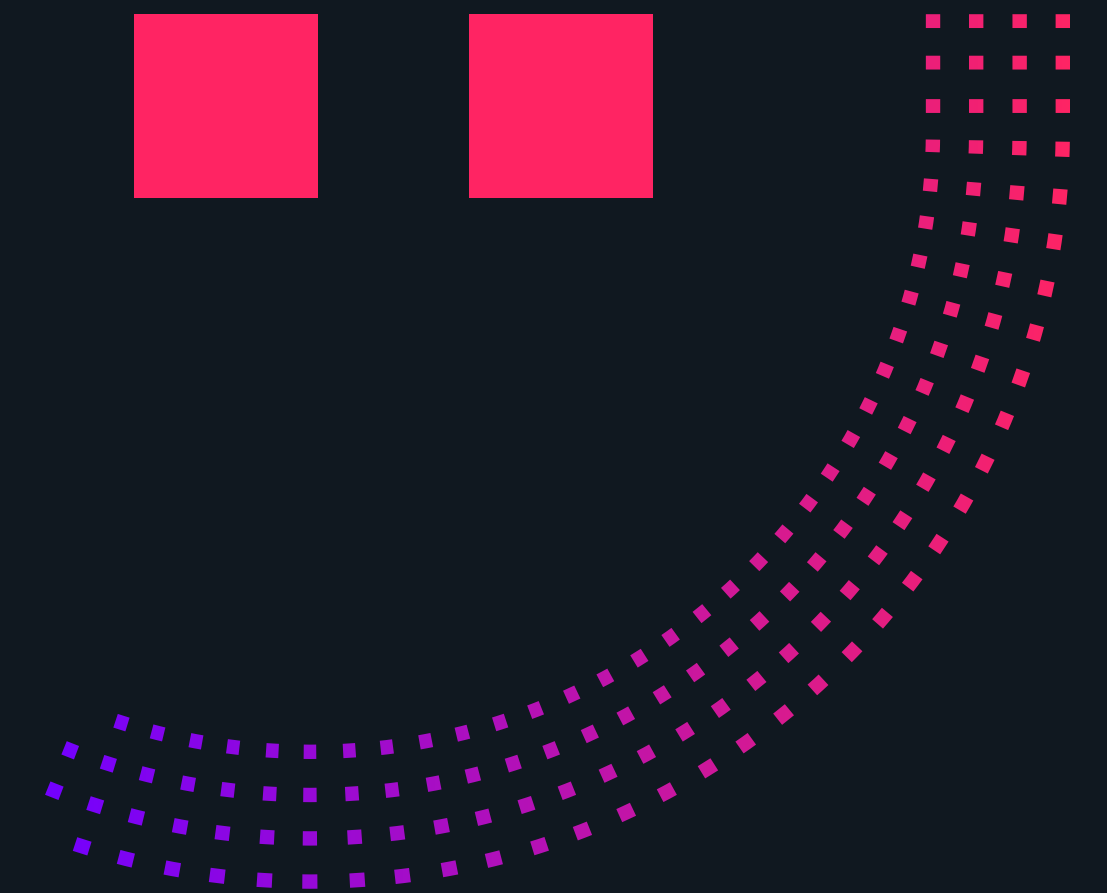
About NICE

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 self-service and agent-assisted CX software for the contact center—and beyond. 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.

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