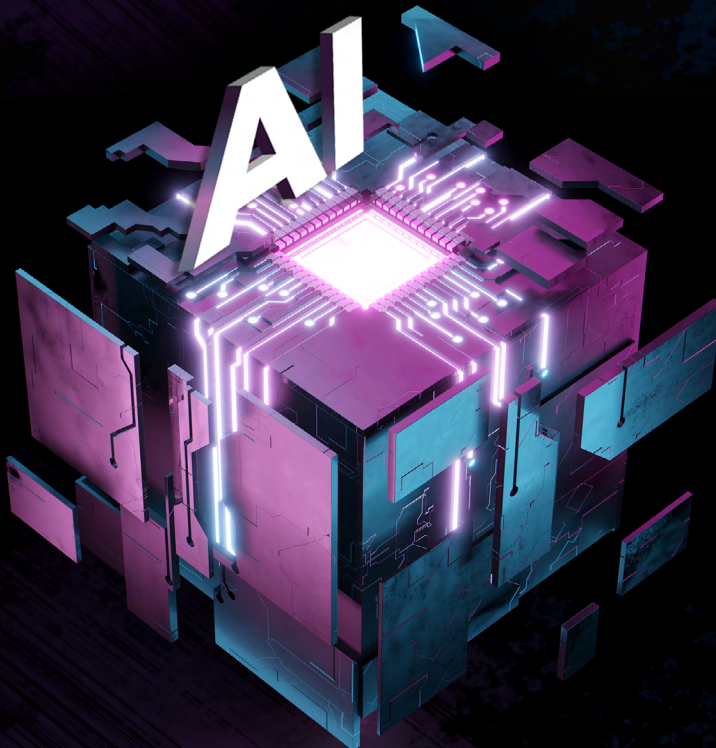


Effectively Elevate Customer Engagement with AI



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CHAPTER 1:

Introduction: Understanding Customer Engagement

When determining how AI most effectively elevates customer engagement and business workflows, it's best to remember the foundational importance of customer engagement itself.

This understanding, and providing customers with the tools they need to elevate the customer journey, is equally foundational. That's why we survey customers annually through the **Vonage Global Customer Engagement Report**. The most-recent survey, which reached over 7,000 customers across 17 global markets, provided some key feedback and insights.

For example, customers expect convenient conversational experiences based on their personal communication preferences. Messaging and voice channels remain popular for customer self-service. Customers use the voice channel for self-service with natural speech and use voice to communicate with businesses on messaging and social apps.

But there's a defined trend of those using chatbots also being more likely to use automated phone support, voice personal assistants, and in-app calling. These emerging methods all have an AI element. In other words — customers are comfortable with AI. In fact, nearly 80% of global consumers have recently used AI-assisted tools and over 60% have a positive attitude about using AI to improve CX.

Customers expect immediacy

Customers want their questions to be immediately understood and answered. They want to see that any issues are quickly resolved. And though they seek immediate engagement, not all asks require extensive conversations.

AI adds depth to channel interactions

Customer preferences, purchases, and history drive more targeted future experiences. AI can capture customer data and encourage customers to stay engaged in the channel in ways that work best for them.

Customer preferences and customer engagement trends

Using AI as a means to digitize and elevate workflows is a powerful way to enhance customer engagement. Key factors contributing to AI growth include:

- Adoption of proactive customer engagement through AI with elevated “emotional intelligence” — which turns simple interactions into conversations with context.
- Generative AI — and associated large language models — to drive more context-driven conversations and turn notifications into conversations at greater scale.
- Low-code/no-code tools that make it easier to deploy AI-powered customer engagement.

Pro Tip: How Vonage AI Studio Can Help

Vonage AI Studio delivers faster, more powerful, and more positive customer outcomes. It starts with a proprietary natural language understanding engine and smart generative AI integration built into an omnichannel no-code conversation flow builder.



The Generative AI Opportunity

Generative AI – and associated large language models such as ChatGPT – drives conversations that are more context-driven and delivered at greater scale, which complement conversational AI-powered two-way communications.

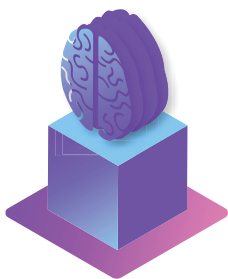
- Conversational AI is associated with generating automated responses, powered by natural language processing. It is task-oriented and provides direct answers to questions that are input manually.
- Generative AI can automatically generate content using data inputs and machine learning algorithms. This not only delivers more nuanced responses, but also can be used for entity extraction, classification, reasoning, and action taking.

When you put these two AI disciplines together, there can be a “best of both worlds” result. With conversational AI and generative AI working together, you can easily create more natural conversation flows at greater scale.

In conjunction with a complete conversational AI platform, you can ensure conversations stay “on-script” and mitigate the tendency for bot “hallucinations.”

Pro Tip: How Vonage AI Studio Can Help

Vonage AI Studio offers an entire infrastructure that analyzes various parameters and knowledge bases to verify if a model returned an answer that makes sense. AI Studio uses context understanding and analyzes responses as key elements of a whole conversation, while also providing safeguards such as fallback to live agents or more traditional AI dialog flows.



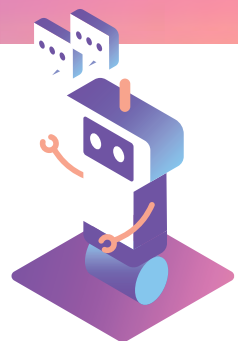
Generative AI

Generative content through imputed data & ML algorithms



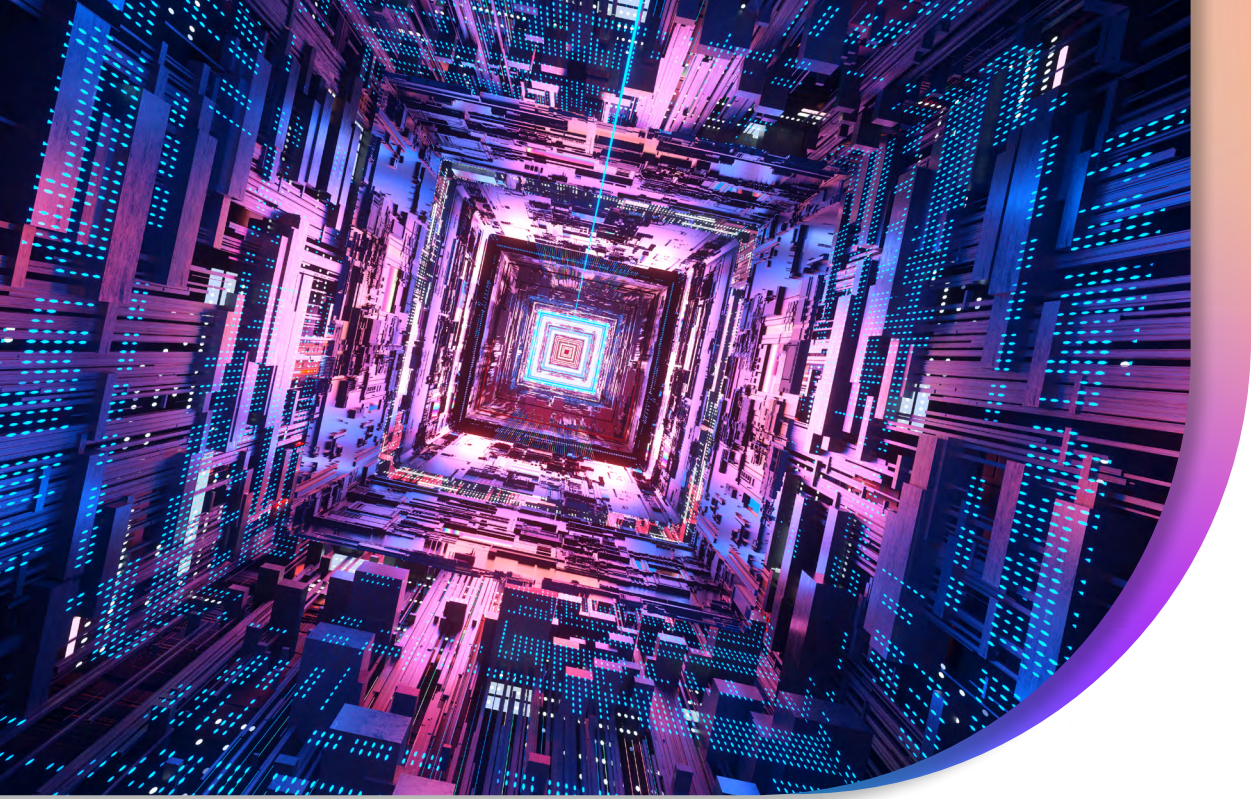
Together

Easily deployed, natural conversation flows at scale with responsible, safe, guided use



Conversational AI

NLP-automated conversations simulating human interaction



At the core, generative AI has the capability to:



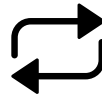
Create



Summarize



Discover



Automate

And generative AI excels in four applications:

Chat: Chat is a natural way for customers and employees to interact with powerful generative AI models. You can use it to improve customer interactions, enhance product capabilities, train employees, and more.

Content generation: The ability to generate high-quality text, images, speech, and code has enormous potential to elevate products, tools, and workflows. It can speed up processes or help employees turn ideas into output faster. And AI summarization tools can take large amounts of content and consolidate into more concise output.

Search: By combining generative AI capabilities with search, you can anchor on a knowledge base – either internal or external – for more tailored and targeted interactions.

Associative reasoning: This is the ability to suggest associations in information based on context. For example, generative AI could identify the three most common reasons that a support interaction ends negatively by parsing the large amounts of transcribed conversations.



CHAPTER 3:

Drive Customer Loyalty With Personalized AI-Driven Engagement

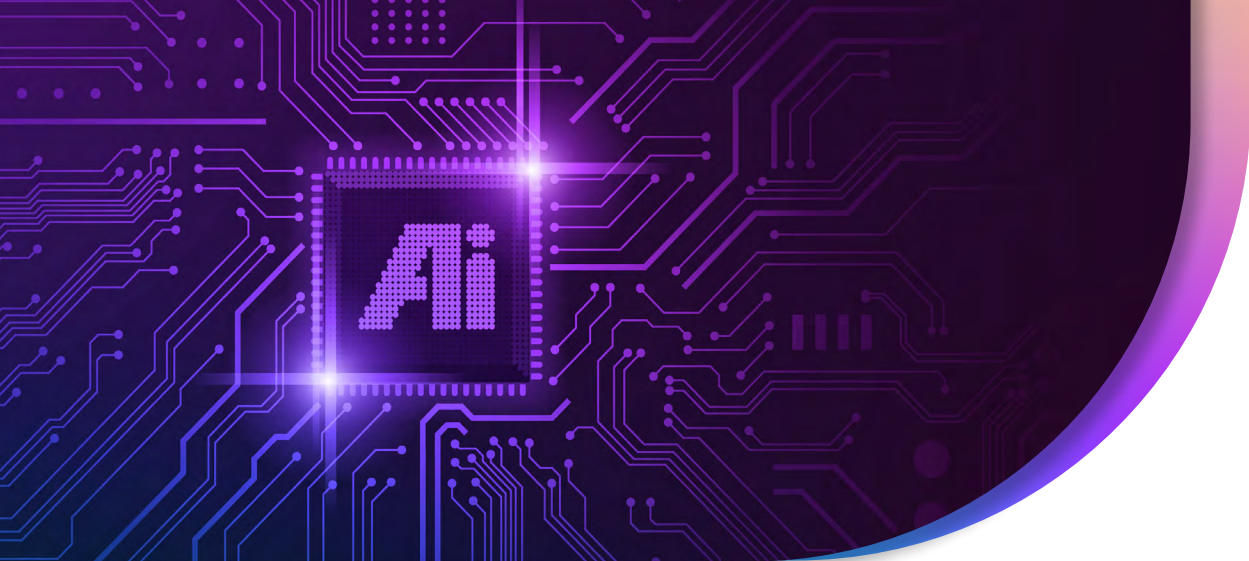
Customer experience leaders are consumers, too. And when they place themselves in the customer's shoes, they realize that being treated as an individual with specific needs is vital to achieving loyalty and an ongoing relationship with their business.

But developing and maintaining customer loyalty requires more than an empathetic sales or support agent (although that is always essential to a great experience). It also requires data.

When your customers' multiple interactions with your business — across multiple channels — can be easily indexed, you gain a more complete understanding of their history, intents, sentiments, and preferences. You also achieve context.

Pro Tip: How Vonage AI Studio Can Help

A complete conversational AI platform like Vonage AI Studio can both build omnichannel conversation flows and extract data from a company's customer relationship management platform (including native Salesforce integration).



CHAPTER 4:

Conversational and Generative AI Effectively Address Key Use Cases

Marketing

AI enables you to efficiently reach more prospects on more channels. Use AI-powered virtual agents for prospecting and escalating hot leads to your sales team. Generative AI omnichannel campaigns can reach prospects more readily and deliver a larger volume of quality leads. Examples include:



Outbound campaigns
(broadcast)



Surveys



Lead generation



Reminders

Customer support

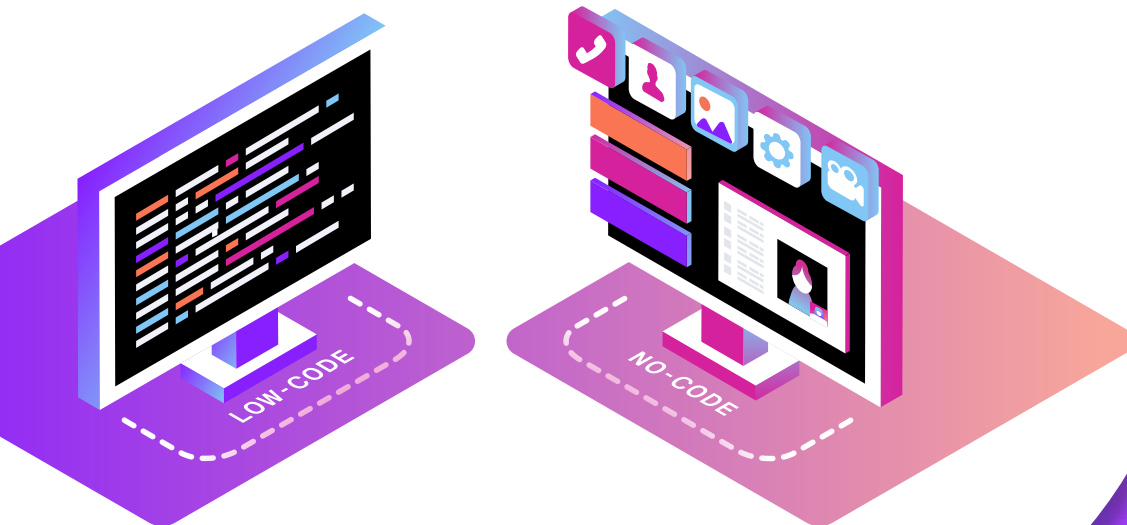
It's easier and faster to help more customers with AI. That's because AI-powered virtual agents handle self-service and FAQs, which frees your team to focus on more challenging cases. So let AI manage:

- Orders
- FAQs
- Product availability
- Tracking packages
- Returns and replacement
- Self-serve issue resolution
- Account management
- Appointment scheduling

Employee services

You can create a digital workforce that augments your human team with self-service for employees across channels. This smarter digital engagement can help with:

- Recruitment and onboarding
- Training and development
- Help desk
- Concierge and reception
- Business continuity



CHAPTER 5:

AI-Powered Customer Engagement Beyond the Bot

Perhaps you've already invested in AI. You've deployed a virtual agent to support your business's unique industry use cases and want to reach as many customers as possible. With AI connectors, powered by digital media streams, you can extend the reach of your platform across the channels your customers use to engage with you.

Additional personalization comes when your contact center seamlessly extends to a multitude of agent assisting AI tools such as sentiment analysis, transcription services, and next-best actions. Vonage AI, and its low-code/no-code tools, can easily make these integrations possible.

You can also augment video meetings with AI and personalize video collaboration by:

- Leveraging natural language processing to enable content moderation, live captions, transcription, and more.
- Applying video and audio effects for event customization.

And it's never been easier to use the power of AI, driven by Vonage machine learning algorithms, to proactively detect and resolve anomalies associated with your voice, messaging, or video connectivity.



CHAPTER 6:

Meet ROI, Budget, and Resource Objectives With AI

According to **Zendesk's CX Trends 2023 report**, nearly two-thirds of business leaders say their investments in customer service AI have generated significant performance improvements. This sounds great ... but many businesses using AI to improve their KPIs don't know where to start.

Luckily, companies don't need prior experience with AI or advanced coding skills to ensure a successful AI implementation. In fact, this step can be accomplished in a variety of ways, depending on skill set, organizational capacity, budget, and specific needs.

An advanced conversational AI platform with low-code or no-code capabilities can empower non-technical employees to create their own conversation flows using easy drag-and-drop features. You can start small and build gradually to both add channels and integrate with your contact center, CRM, and analytics tools.



Pro Tip: How Vonage AI Studio Can Help

It's easy to begin your journey to elevated customer engagement. Vonage AI Studio brings a no-code workflow and is available at no additional cost. Now you can start building voice and messaging conversations.*

Implementing self-service at this greater scale enables human agents to operate more efficiently. This can be especially valuable for small businesses and startups with limited resources.

AI virtual voice and text agents reduce the average handle time and costs for customer interactions. On average, the cost of a voice virtual agent is 10% of a human, and a text virtual agent is just 4%. The 24/7 available virtual agent is able to handle significantly more conversations, which improves efficiency and reduces customer wait times.

Remember: AI virtual agents free up human agents to perform more important and productive tasks. AI supports human agents so they can deliver a higher standard of care to the customers they do speak with.

Virtual agents can also become a key element in your business growth plan. By auto-resolving at a greater scale, you promote more positive customer outcomes that can translate to customer loyalty.

AI-powered virtual agents can help your business automate sales and marketing outreach to potential customers. Being able to interact through natural language processing and sentiment analysis can become a valuable tool in lead conversion efforts. Conversational AI can now replace the rote work that sales and marketers previously undertook to generate leads.

***Note: (1) Only applies to incurring voice and messaging channel usage and if adding generative AI. (2) Usage of the Vonage natural language understanding engine involves a separate charge.**

Vonage AI Use Case Examples



Industry	Health & Fitness	Marketing	Hospitality
Use Case	24/7 member support	WhatsApp groups for large clients	Automated food ordering
Category	Marketing and support self-serve	AI-powered digital marketing	AI voice
Business Challenge	Ability to answer all inquiries during busy times and after hours	Faster bot deployment with no-code tools and easy third-party app integration	Automated food ordering, with support for speech
Vonage Solution	Vonage AI Studio voice agent for inquiries, with option to connect through WhatsApp bot	Vonage AI Studio WhatsApp agents with integration through webhooks	Vonage Voice API with AI Connector to integrate with specialty bot
Outcomes	Secured 700+ monthly inquiries that otherwise would have been lost Resolved customer inquiries through 24/7 automation Closed 500+ fully self-serve conversations in one month	Provided faster deployment, along with the flexibility and ease to integrate third-party applications and small pieces of code	Grew business 200% from pre-pandemic to peak-pandemic and beyond

CHAPTER 8:

How Vonage Can Help

The potential contribution that AI will have by 2030 to the global economy, according to a PWC report, will be to the tune of \$15.7 trillion. Undoubtedly, AI will radically shape the dynamics of many industries. And that's why many digital leaders are overcoming the perceived barriers to entry and embracing AI to successfully reap the benefits.

By taking advantage of low-code/no-code interfaces — not to mention safe and guided use of generative AI — you streamline your AI deployment and onboarding. This helps you start building more expansive conversation flows based on your unique use cases, along with the ability to secure the expert support of conversation designers.

As consumer demands continue to grow, so will the need for 24/7 service and the customer demand for personalized engagement that drives not just satisfaction, but ongoing loyalty to your business.

Personalized customer experience

According to the Vonage Global Customer Engagement Report, 63% of customers express frustration with long wait times to speak to an agent. The same percentage was disappointed when they must contact customer service multiple times to resolve an issue.

What does this suggest? First, channel options are great. But more importantly, these omnichannel conversations must be frictionlessly connected to your customer data — think CRM, contact center, and other analytics engines — so that you create a more complete view of customer needs, intents, and sentiments.

Now you can enable a full 360-degree customer engagement that promotes more positive outcomes faster and long-term loyalty to your brand.



Smarter than the

average IVR Natural language understanding (NLU) powers virtual agents that are easily aggregated to create omnichannel conversations for user insights.



Low-code, no-code simplicity

You can easily start building self-service experiences across channels, AI NLU capabilities, and third-party integrations. Or tap into Vonage professional services to guide you, or to build and manage for you, if preferred.



A better ROI and more AI can help you close and retain more business with less overhead. For example, auto-resolving more complex tasks at greater volume allows human agents to operate more efficiently. This is especially valuable for small businesses, startups, and businesses with limited resources.

Vonage is your partner to deliver elevated customer engagement for the long term through Vonage AI Studio, Vonage Contact Center Virtual Assistants, and AI Connectors.

Vonage brings you an intuitive flow builder and templates, AI-expert services, and more. The tools and expertise can help you overcome potential business barriers and create winning experiences faster — and all to promote a beneficial ROI.

Getting Started

Enhancing customer engagement and employee collaboration has never been easier. Visit us online to learn more about **AI Studio** today.