Knowledge, Knowledge Everywhere: 10 Places to Be Sure to Use Knowledge Management

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Knowledge management (KM) offers a wealth of reliable information on a variety of topics. But if the knowledge you need isn't right at your fingertips, right in the moment, then KM can become yet another application to toggle to in the midst of your other activities. To maximize the value of KM, whether using it on-premises or in the cloud, be sure you've set it up to work alongside these other critical customer service applications, so that you can reap the greatest benefit:

1. CRM—Many organizations have already realized the value of adding KM to their CRM systems. Contact center employees spend most of their day within CRM systems, so they need knowledge to be easily accessible. Further, by leveraging the customer data within CRM, your KM system can personalize the results.

2. Channels—Today, most contact center inquiries don't come in through the phone. If a customer emails, chats, or sends a tweet or a Facebook message, your agents need a quick and reliable source of answers. Each channel shouldn't have its own knowledge base. Rather, a central knowledge base should be linked to all channels, so answers remain consistent.

3. Virtual Assistants—Intelligent virtual assistants (IVAs) are one of the hottest new solutions in the customer service industry. Just ask the assistant a question, and it'll give an answer. But where does your IVA get its information from? To maintain consistency across all communication channels, it should be interconnected with your central knowledge base.

4. Communities—Online communities are another popular self-service channel. Communities enable customers to ask questions and share information with one another. But, if a customer has a question that is already answered in the knowledge base, you should be able to present that information to him/her immediately. Likewise, if a customer solves a new issue that isn't in the knowledge base, you should easily be able to add the community thread there for others to see.

5. IVR—You can even leverage KM as part of your IVR. With speech-to-text capabilities, customers can ask simple questions and receive answers straight from the knowledge base, without having to be transferred to an agent at all.

6. Quality Management—As your quality team reviews calls, they may find calls where the agent had trouble finding information or didn't follow a process accurately. By linking your QM system with KM, you can easily point agents to knowledge articles to improve the overall quality of your calls.

7. Performance Management—Odds are, your performance management system is already tracking your agents' call times, process accuracy, and more, so why not also add KM metrics? The performance management system can track KM usage, feedback provided, and more.

8. eLearning—Customer service inquiries have grown so complex that it's increasingly difficult to train new employees on all the information they need to know. That's why training should focus on teaching employees how to find what they need in the moment. By incorporating KM into your learning program, employees can get up to speed faster.

9. Desktop and Process Analytics—It's difficult to ensure that employees remember every action they need to take a call. By incorporating KM into your desktop and process analytics systems, you can pop up knowledge articles as reminders to employees when certain desktop applications are used.

10. Speech Analytics—The best way to give employees the information they need at their fingertips is to actually listen to what the customer is saying. By combining KM and speech analytics, you can automatically present knowledge articles to the agent based on what the customer says.

In short, don't keep your knowledge base in a box! Use it as a part of your critical customer service applications to get the most out of your investment. ▪