

Personalizing CX with Digital Video Assistants

By: Al Balasco

Today, technology has changed the way we shop, learn, and connect. Yet, it can be argued that technology has sanitized many of our interactions of the human touch. To win and retain customers in today's hyper-competitive market, customer experience needs to take back some personalization. Digital video assistants offer new tools to do just this.



According to a recent [Facebook survey](#) of users in 13 global regions, more than 70 percent of consumers today across all generations favor instant messaging apps as their primary communication method. And, more than half of these consumers prefer businesses that they can communicate with via chat. Businesses can use messaging-based communications to answer customer service questions and to build brand loyalty by informing customers about new products or sales promotions.

Businesses have moved to automate these chat-based interactions as a cost-effective alternative to more expensive live chat engagements. In addition, customers are increasingly comfortable using chatbots for customer service interactions. However, dramatic improvements in technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), computer vision, natural language processing (NLP) and advanced speech recognition (ASR) capabilities are taking digital communications with customers to the next level with video bots. These video bots can deliver virtual customer assistance services for customer service, digital marketing, brand loyalty, and sales enablement—and can bring the “human touch” back to the customer experience.

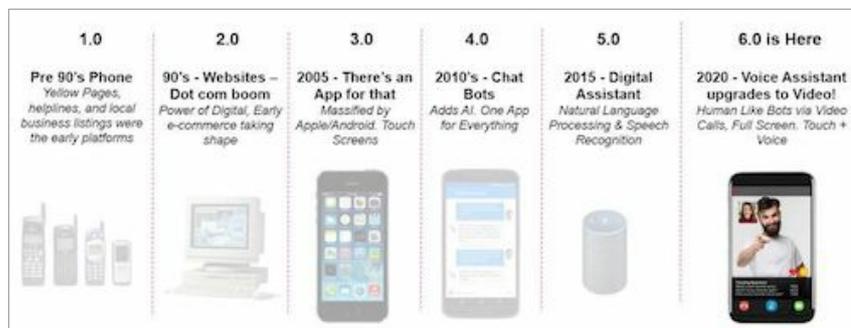


Figure 1: The Evolution of Customer Engagement from the Yellow Pages to Video Digital Assistants

New Technologies are Changing CX

When linked together, these new technologies can dramatically improve the digital customer experience and reinforce customer loyalty:

- **Artificial Intelligence:** Enables computers to interpret and to leverage data to make decisions based on their findings.
- **Natural Language Processing:** Computer processing of large datasets of human speech so that the compute can understand what is being said.
- **Advanced Speech Recognition:** Allows computers to convert speech to text.
- **Computer Vision:** Uses software processing of video streams to “see” in real-time.

While voice-enabled services and chatbots have played a critical role in the evolution of customer service, interactive and realistic video bot services are even more attractive

to the customer. Video call bots that leverage all of these technologies—and that can be accessed by dialing a regular phone number (no app download required) via a 4G/LTE phone—allow businesses to automate customer support while still creating a personalized experience for customer service, sales and brand engagement.

Delivering Personalized Touch with Automated Human Interaction

Chatbots, natural language processing, and other automation technologies are enabling businesses to achieve cost-effective scalability and agility in order to respond in real time. The problem is that they lack the human touch in providing a personalized customer experience. Video-based digital engagements can create a more intimate experience for customer service, sales, and engagement, but they need to be able to be deployed with the same cost effectiveness, scalability, and real-time agility as automated chatbots.

Video Digital Assistant bots can enhance and build customer engagement programs with interactive and short video messages. They can take on many roles for the customer such as brand ambassadors, subject matter experts, sales professionals, and of course, customer service agents. The video bots can provide five key capabilities that can grow a brand and improve customer engagement, including:

1. Personalized Engagement

Video with a human response provides a richer, deeper and more personalized interaction that can help create excitement and trust to attract and retain customers.

2. Perfect Message Control

Businesses want to have control over their messages. Video Digital Assistants can cost-effectively deliver a consistent and company-approved message, eliminating the possibility that a customer service representative goes off-script during a call or makes statements that are no longer valid.

3. Always Available

Personalized video messages can be delivered anytime, anyplace 24/7, building trust with customers that they will always have access to customer support.

4. Unlimited Call Support

Chatbots have already proven their ability to scale and support simultaneous sessions with multiple customers. By adding video, the interaction can become more engaging for the customer.

5. Intelligent Learning

AI-based video bots can expand their understanding of questions and interactions to continuously improve and ensure better future engagements with customers.

Businesses that deploy Digital Video Assistant bots enable their customers to interact with dynamic and engaging personalities as they deliver targeted messages with the right intent. They can support a broad range of interactive services such as coupon boosts, quiz capabilities, and campaign boosts for brand engagement and loyalty.

Overcoming the Challenges

There are multiple challenges associated with delivering automated interactions, whether voice, chat, or video. These include time to market, cost of development, and

the ability to add intelligence to the interaction to deliver the correct response every time.

One of the first challenges to create and deploy a video chatbot is the need for the business to anticipate every customer question or engagement, develop all of the responses, and then record all of the videos appropriate to each response. If a business is using chat, voice and video bots on three different platforms, it may need to replicate these efforts three times over. Leveraging an application that converges all three bot options into a single solution will shorten time to market and costs.

Digital Video Assistants are a completely new way for business and service providers to interact with their customers. As such, another challenge is that the chatbot interfaces are not part of their normal customer engagement channels. Businesses will need to create new channels to interact with a potentially broad customer base, which adds complexity: their customers could be comprised of multiple generations that use different devices and applications. For cost effectiveness, businesses will need to deploy one solution that is accessible by every customer.

Communications service providers can deploy these technologies for their business customers and upsell these capabilities. They can integrate the video chatbot application with their existing telephony infrastructure to process these voice and video media streams cost effectively and at scale. Service providers can generate new revenues by offering 1-800 numbers that can support Digital Video Assistants to call centers and businesses, adding more value to these numbers. Customers seeking support automatically are routed to the video chatbots when they dial a supported number from a 4G/LTE or 5G smartphone.

Win and keep customers

Consumers today have global access to any business and to any brand. They regularly use digital channels to stay informed and make decisions. To win and keep customers, competitive businesses must find new and creative ways to engage buyers with a positive experience that:

- Boosts brand value with enhanced video-based customer experience
- Lowers support costs and improves agent productivity
- Increases customer stickiness and customer loyalty
- Expands global reach without heavy investments

While most companies already deploy voice-enabled or text-based chatbots, these solutions have quickly become commoditized and lack the human element. They are not able to provide a rich brand experience that engages a customer and builds loyalty. By using Digital Video Assistants, companies are adding the personal touch back into the customer experience and can ensure that their brand's tonality is maintained throughout the engagement. In addition, they have tools that ensure better customer service and support overall.

One of Asia's largest Tier-1 service providers has already launched a digital video assistant service to empower its business customers of all sizes to conduct their business more efficiently.

Today's technologies provide the tools that can control and improve the digital customer experience without sacrificing the personal touch or breaking the bank. Video Digital Assistants bots can bring personal service back to customer service.