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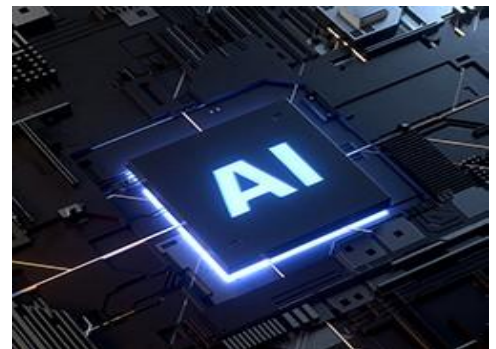
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# AI-Powered Experiences: The Key to Future Growth and Relevance for Telcos

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CEOs across industries are embracing AI and automation to gain a competitive edge. Following this year's Mobile World Congress, this shift has never been more apparent in the telecommunications industry.

In today's fast-evolving landscape, the race to AI is no longer optional – it is the baseline requirement for telcos looking to stay relevant. AI and automation are not just tools for survival; they are the key to delivering exceptional customer service and driving long-term success.



However, adopting AI and automation to drive a successful impact to the bottom line requires a strategic, platform-based approach. Telcos must focus on connecting disparate technology systems, improving operational efficiency, gaining a 360-degree customer view, delivering personalization at scale, and ultimately creating seamless, effortless experiences across digital and voice interactions.

Yet, as AI adoption accelerates, telcos face growing regulatory scrutiny and ethical concerns around data privacy and AI governance. Ensuring AI is implemented responsibly is paramount to maintaining trust while maximizing its transformative potential.

## Pitfalls of Generic AI for Telcos

Many organizations turn to generic AI solutions to tackle complex business challenges. For example, some law firms are testing chatbots trained on publicly available internet data for legal research. However, these solutions are falling short. In a recent case, one UK law firm experienced issues including AI hallucinations – where the model fabricates citations – as well as inaccurate and missing information following the use of generic AI

Telcos face similar risks. Deploying generic AI can degrade customer service, driving down Net Promoter Scores (NPS) instead of improving them. Customers may receive incorrect or irrelevant responses from AI and human agents, forcing them to repeat themselves across multiple interactions, and multiple channels. Worse, rising bills and things like bill shock could leave vulnerable customers without the urgent support they need at critical moments.

In contrast, purpose-built AI is designed with governance frameworks tailored to specific industries, regions, regulations, and domains – ensuring compliance, reliability, and effectiveness. Trained on customer service-specific data, and telecom-specific local regulations, purpose-built AI can enhance customer interactions with tailored responses and predictive issue resolution. This translates into real-world benefits such as improved support for vulnerable customers, faster resolution of customer issues, often without live agent escalation, and improvements to NPS.

## Supporting Vulnerable Customers with AI

One of AI's most impactful AI and automation applications in telco customer service is its ability to support vulnerable customers. A newly released 2025 Consumer Vulnerability Report reveals that up to 35 million adults in the UK alone could be at risk – many without even realizing it. This challenge extends across the global telecom industry.

Even when customers self-identify as vulnerable, they often hesitate due to fear, embarrassment, or stigma. At the same time, frontline agents frequently lack the tools, confidence, and life experience to respond effectively, leading to missed warning signs.

Purpose-built AI can change this by analyzing 100 percent of customer interactions in real-time, across both voice and digital channels. These AI-driven systems detect subtle signals of vulnerability, such as financial distress, low financial confidence, or emotional strain, and provide agents with real-time guidance to deliver proactive and empathetic support. Automation can then ensure compliance, by connecting events that include vulnerability to the right resources, teams, and processes, ensuring no customer or their need is overlooked. By shifting from reactive to proactive customer support, telcos can do more than meet regulatory requirements – they can foster a more equitable and empathetic customer experience. Recognizing that vulnerability is a shared human experience, AI-driven support systems enhance customer loyalty, drive positive sentiment, and contribute to a more compassionate community.

## The Case for a Unified AI Platform

Many telcos struggle with a fragmented ecosystem of point solutions, leading to a "Frankenstack" – a disconnected technology stack across the organization.

While powerful individually, these disparate systems often create operational inefficiencies, data silos, and disjointed customer experiences. When AI and automation are layered onto this, the challenges get worse. For example, chatbots may deliver inaccurate or generic responses, which only frustrates customers instead of improving service. These virtual agents will also struggle to hand off to other AI or human agents, creating more friction rather than less.

A unified AI platform is essential for eliminating these silos and overcoming these challenges. By taking a platform approach, telcos can optimize, connect, and automate workflows, agents and knowledge, balancing AI-driven transformation with a human-led service to create effortless experiences.

With a single AI platform, telcos gain a 360-degree view of each customer, enabling personalized digital experiences at scale. This approach drives faster, more accurate service while improving operational efficiency. Moreover, it facilitates automation across customer service workflows, bridging the gap between front line agents and back-office teams, ultimately delivering faster response times and higher customer satisfaction.

## **The Evolving Role of Customer Service Professionals**

As AI and automation take over routine customer service tasks, we cannot ignore that the role of CX professionals is and will evolve. The traditional contact center model is giving way to a new paradigm—one where human expertise is more strategic, focused on AI oversight, seamless AI-human collaboration, and deepening customer relationships.

Rather than replacing human agents, AI enhances their impact. CX professionals will take on greater responsibilities in managing AI performance, ensuring service quality, and supporting vulnerable customers. This includes monitoring AI interactions for fairness and bias, ensuring ethical compliance, and stepping in when human intervention is required.

With AI handling routine inquiries and providing real-time insights, CX professionals can focus on high-value interactions – building rapport, providing emotional support, and resolving complex issues requiring human empathy. This transformation not only enhances job satisfaction but also strengthens brand loyalty and business growth.

## **The Future of AI in Telecom Customer Service**

AI and automation are reshaping the telecom industry, offering a competitive advantage to businesses that embrace innovation. However, successful AI adoption requires a strategic approach, one that prioritizes operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, and ethical AI governance.

For telcos, purpose-built AI presents a powerful opportunity to enhance customer service, improve NPS, and deliver proactive, compassionate support for vulnerable customers. The industry must move beyond one-size-fits-all AI solutions and invest in technologies specifically designed for their unique challenges and regulatory landscapes.

The future of telecom customer service isn't just about AI and automation – it's about creating a seamless synergy between AI and human expertise. By leveraging AI responsibly, telcos can drive customer loyalty, enhance efficiency, and contribute to more inclusive, empathetic experiences for both customers and agents.

The next decade belongs to those who recognize that AI and automation are not just tools to deploy but a transformative force in the telecom industry.