2016 Live Chat Benchmark Report

Contents

Introduction

We produced this benchmark report that focuses on five crucial customer service metrics

In the last five years, the number of U.S. online shoppers who use live chat has increased from 38% to 58% (Forrester). It's no surprise then that live chat is quickly becoming a must-have customer service channel for businesses in an array of different industries.

But after implementing live chat, how can you truly measure your team's performance? This is a question that concerns executives and management, and for good reason: Measuring the success of a channel is crucial when integrating it into your general customer service strategy.

To answer this question, we've collected the real-world live chat operation data from a large range of different international industries. With this information, we produced this benchmark report that focuses on five crucial customer service metrics. We hope this report brings the kind of insight that can help you achieve greater customer service success.

The Comm100 live chat benchmark report explores:

1. Customer service metrics in live chat
We focused on five main customer service metrics to help businesses measure their performance in live chat. The metrics are:

- Customer Satisfaction Rate

- Wait Time

- Chat Duration

- Chats per Month

- Chats per Operator per Month

2. What makes customers satisfied
Based on the real-world data we collected from our customers, we found that the number of chats operators handle can negatively affect customer satisfaction. The more chats handled, the lower customer satisfaction became.

3. Customer service metrics across industries
The **Government & Organization** industry has gained the highest customer satisfaction rate among the 12 industries in the report. And the **Finance** industry took the silver with 88.65% of customers leaving positive ratings on the service they received. Closely followed was the **Education** industry with a satisfaction rate of 88.34%.

4. Customer service metrics across countries
Among a large number of competing countries, **Mexico** received a remarkable customer satisfaction rate of 94.11%, and is accordingly the live chat leader in this report. Australia has took second place at 93.59%, which is much higher than the average customer satisfaction rate of 85.39%. **Canada** came in third at 88.36%.

Data and Methodology

The data discussed in this report has been gathered over the course of 2015, from the 1st of January, 2015 to the 31st of December, 2015.

We reached this segment after applying the following conditions:

- Only paying customers with established live chat implementations were taken under consideration

- To qualify for the report a company had to have at least 10 chats per month

- Similar businesses were grouped into broader industry categories

This allowed us to filter out trial accounts that are not representative of the actual customer service a company provides, as well as those that didn't reach a minimum level of web traffic. The purpose of these omissions is to obtain metrics that are both comprehensive and accurate; the more precise our metrics are, the more useful they can be to your organization's customer service team.

Customer Service Metrics

In this report, we adopted five main customer service metrics to help businesses measure their live chat performance. We came up with the benchmarks based on the real-world data from our customers, operating businesses in different industries across the globe.

What the Metrics Are

1. **Customer Satisfaction Rate:** The average percentage of customers who have left a positive rating for the service they received.

2. **Wait Time:** The average amount of time the visitor waits before his/her chat request is answered.

3. **Chat Duration:** The average amount of time it takes to finish a chat.

4. **Chats per Month:** The average number of chats handled per month by a company.

5. **Chats per Operator per Month:** The average number of chats handled per operator per month.

If you have already adopted live chat as a customer service channel, you can use these metrics as benchmarks for your organization.

But if you are just starting out and wondering what metrics to look into to gauge your

live chat performance, you can use the following benchmark metrics as a point of reference.

Customer Satisfaction Rate

85.39%

AVERAGE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION RATE

4.2/5

AVERAGE RATING SCORE

In this report, we define customer satisfaction by the rating score visitors give the chat service they have received. At the end of each live chat, visitors can be invited to leave a satisfaction score from 1 to 5 in a post-chat survey. If a visitor left a score of 3 or above, we counted it towards the customer satisfaction rate for the purposes of this benchmark report.

Then we calculated the percentage and rating score by deriving the average value from all of the relevant customer satisfaction data.

It takes less than a minute to answer a chat for the average company.

Wait Time

48s

IT TAKES LESS THAN A MINUTE TO ANSWER A CHAT FOR THE AVERAGE COMPANY.

The wait time refers to the average time a visitor waits before his/her chat request gets answered by an operator. This metric reveals how quick your customer service has the potential to be. It's also the most important time-based metric, proving that customers want answers from operators as quickly as possible.

Chat Duration

15min28s

This metric records the duration from the first message to the end of a chat. A chat may be ended manually by a visitor or an operator. Or a chat may end automatically when

no communication occurs after a pre-defined period of time.

While chat duration is a significant metric to consider when evaluating your live chat performance, it is important to note that this metric reflects only the speed of interaction and not the quality of interaction.

So the chat duration metric should be considered holistically, and as part of a plan that integrates quality with speed.

Chats per Month

1143

This metric records the average number of chats a company deals with in a month. Please note that only accepted chats are counted; the missed and rejected chats are excluded.

The number of chats per month can affect the recruiting and the staffing of your live chat team and as a result is a useful metric to track.

When calculating the average number of chats per month across companies, we found that there was a significant gap between the largest and the smallest chat volume. Possible factors that can affect chat volume include business hours, website traffic, and nature of business under operation, among other variables. For example, a company offering 24/7 live chat support is more likely to handle a higher chat volume than those organizations which offer chat support only during business hours of weekdays.

As a result, it's important to consider the importance of external factors when you compare your own chat volume with the benchmark value.

Chats per Operator per Month

274

This metric records the average number of chats an operator handles a month. Just like the chats per month metric, only accepted chats are counted.

When calculating the average number of chats a single operator deals with per month, only the operators who work for an entire month were taken in to consideration, as

fluctuations in turnover and onboarding could compromise the accuracy of the benchmark value.

What Satisfies Customers

Customer satisfaction is the ultimate goal of every customer service support team, regardless of the service channel.
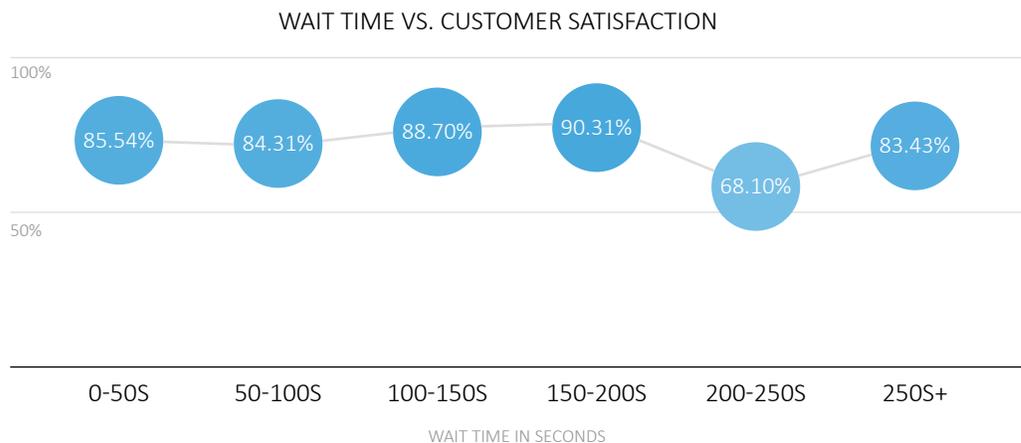
Customer satisfaction is the ultimate goal of every customer service support team, regardless of the service channel.

In this section, we'll explore metrics that can affect your satisfaction rate.

Wait Time VS. Customer Satisfaction: Customers Are Willing to Wait for Quality Service

Fast connection with live chat operators can make a good first impression, which is an important factor in customer service success. Yet we found that customers gave good ratings to the chat service they received even when they had to wait for a relatively long time.

The graphic below shows the correlation between wait time and customer satisfaction:

WAIT TIME VS. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

100%

85.54%   84.31%   88.70%   90.31%   83.43%

68.10%

50%

| 0-50S | 50-100S | 100-150S | 150-200S | 200-250S | 250S+ |

WAIT TIME IN SECONDS

Responding within the first 3 minutes of a chat request is crucial in keeping customer satisfaction rates high.

There isn't a significant variation in satisfaction when the wait time is under 3 minutes. It appears that as long as an operator solves the problem properly, customers don't mind the wait.

But notice that there is a sharp drop when the wait time surpasses the 3-minute mark. In interpreting this metric, it becomes apparent that responding within the first 3 minutes of a chat request is crucial in keeping customer satisfaction rates high.

Chat Duration VS. Customer Satisfaction: Take Your Time to Serve Customers

The graphic below depicts the correlation between chat duration and customer satisfaction.
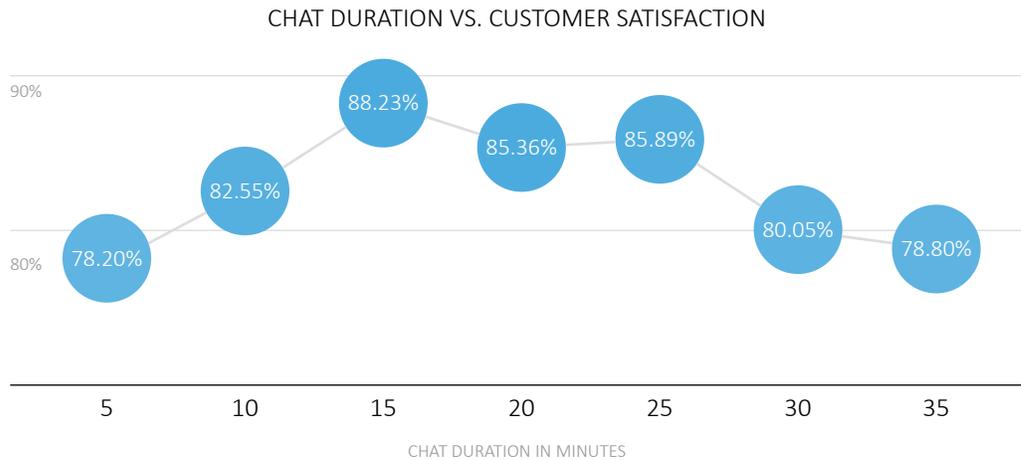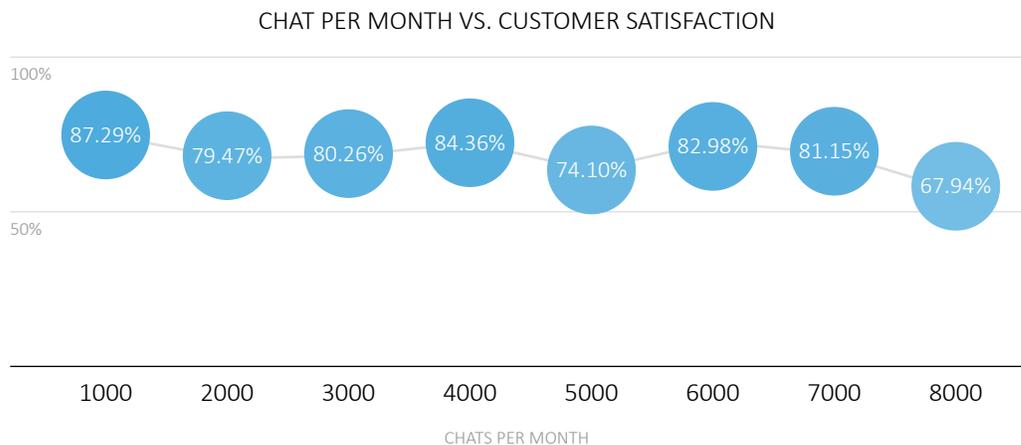
CHAT DURATION VS. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

We notice that if operators can handle a chat within 15 minutes, then chat duration affects customer satisfaction rate positively. That is to say that within this time frame, the longer operators spend in solving customers' problems, the more satisfied customers can be.

When a chat lasts longer than 15 minutes, customer satisfaction decreases as chat duration grows.

When a chat lasts longer than 15 minutes, customer satisfaction decreases as chat duration grows.

The metrics show that it's important to take your time in solving your customers' problems, but also that customers are only willing to wait so long for a solution.

Chats per Month VS. Customer Satisfaction: The More Chats, the Less Satisfied

The graphic below depicts the correlation between chats per month and customer satisfaction.

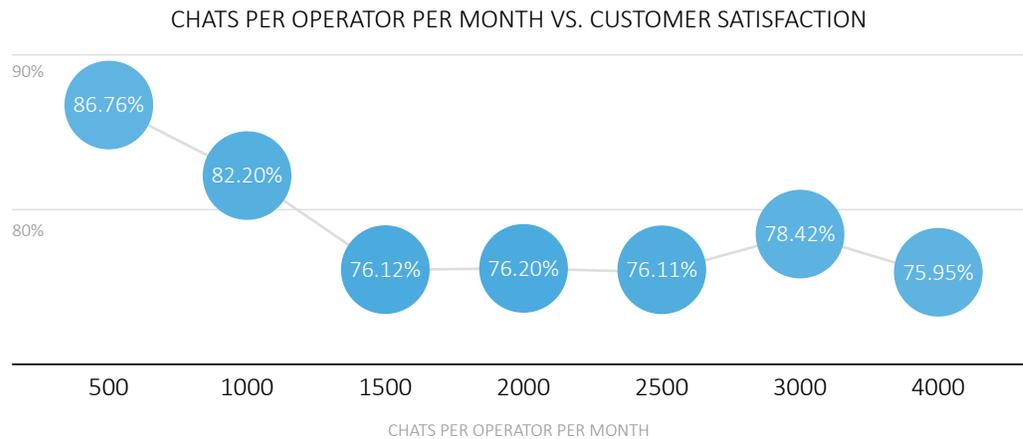CHAT PER MONTH VS. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Overall we can see that chat volume has a slightly negative correlation with customer satisfaction rate.

Large chat volume can result in long queues, thus long wait times. Although wait time is not a dominant factor in customer success, we know from our previous metric that customers become dissatisfied when you keep them waiting for more than 3 minutes.

But you don't have to sacrifice customer satisfaction if your website attracts a large chat volume; you can adjust your staffing to meet the challenge. As you will see in the following metric, the less chats an operator has to handle, the more satisfied customers can be.

Chats per Operator per Month VS. Customer Satisfaction

The graphic below depicts how the number of chats an operator handles per month can affect an organization's customer satisfaction rate.

CHATS PER OPERATOR PER MONTH VS. CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

The customer satisfaction rate is highest when an operator deals with about 500 chats per month, and it decreases sharply once operators must handle between 1000 and 1500 chats.

We can see a decreasing trend in the above figure. That is to say, the more chats an operator deals with, the lower the customer satisfaction will be on average.

The customer satisfaction rate is highest when an operator deals with about 500 chats per month, and it decreases sharply once operators must handle between 1000 and 1500 chats.

If an operator deals with more than 1500 chats per month, we found that the satisfaction rate plateaus at around 75%.

Customer Service Metrics across Industries

We have divided our customers into 12 industries according to the products and services they provide.

For example, the **Technology** category includes both software development and web hosting companies.

You can use the industry data to measure your own live chat success as compared to similar companies.

INDUSTRY	CUSTOMER SATISFACTION RATE	WAIT TIME	CHAT DURATION	CHATS PER MONTH	CHATS PER OPERATOR PER MONTH
Government & Organization	88.65%	24s	17min 20s	252	136
Finance	88.46%	27s	15min 14s	2883	838
Education	88.34%	33s	15min 07s	349	166
Ecommerce	87.50%	73s	16min 40s	519	195
Technology	87.27%	59s	20min 56s	340	99
Manufacturing	86.06%	51s	17min 52s	289	119
Telecom	85.60%	45s	15min 46s	416	300
Healthcare	85.30%	28s	13min 09s	143	46
Business Service	84.57%	70s	18min 46s	477	170
Recreation	80.55%	31s	09min 56s	4964	517
Consumer Service	80.25%	30s	14min 29s	317	175
Travel	79.14%	53s	17min 56s	259	109

Government & Organization Led the League

The **Government & Organization** industry took first place with 88.65% of their customers leaving positive ratings on their support.

We can see that the wait time of The **Government & Organization** industry is the shortest, meaning customers can be connected to operators in the fastest possible manner. This has laid the foundation for a high customer satisfaction rate.

Then we noticed that The **Government & Organization** industry received the lowest chat volume and a fairly long chat handle time. This allowed for every customer's concern to be handled with more attention, which was likely the reason for their high satisfaction rate.

Finance Took the Silver Medal

The **Finance** industry has gained a customer satisfaction rate of 88.46%, taking the silver medal.

At 838 chats per operator per month, the **Finance** industry received 1.6 times the amount of chat volume as the runner up, which was recreation at 517. You can imagine how busy the operators were handling chat requests, and yet the industry managed to receive a relatively high satisfaction rate.

Ecommerce Was the Largest Participant

For every three companies in our sample, one was an ecommerce company.

Although the industry had the longest wait time at 1 min 13s, the customer satisfaction rate of the **Ecommerce** industry reached 87.50%, 2 points higher than the average customer satisfaction rate.

Travel Had the Most Room for Improvement

The **Travel** industry received the lowest customer satisfaction rate in 2015. Only 79.14% of their customers felt the live chat support they received was satisfying.

Yet it was quite interesting to notice that the other metrics were not as discouraging: The wait time was less than a minute; chats were handled in around 18 minutes; and the industry didn't face an overwhelming chat volume.

It is possible that the nature of the **Travel** industry affects the possibility for dissatisfaction more than these metrics can account for. Whatever the reasons, this industry has the largest potential to improve their live chat customer experience.

Customer Service Metrics across Countries

Our customers are located all over the globe and we have chosen the top 10 countries for presentation here.

Below is an overview of the 5 customer service metrics in different countries.

COUNTRY	CUSTOMER SATISFACTION RATE	WAIT TIME	CHAT DURATION	CHATS PER MONTH	CHATS PER OPERATOR PER MONTH
Mexico	94.11%	28s	18min 35s	757	402
Australia	93.59%	39s	14min 43s	578	114
Canada	88.36%	27s	13min 52s	1144	134
UK	87.15%	46s	16min 52s	468	91
US	86.75%	60s	14min 59s	327	115
Malaysia	84.40%	44s	11min 30s	246	141
China	82.49%	105s	25min 31s	1163	437
Turkey	80.25%	22s	10min 40s	5752	677
India	78.77%	26s	15min 34s	530	246
Colombia	68.87%	30s	8min 53s	302	280

Top Three Countries in Customer Satisfaction Rate

Mexico, among other countries, has gained the highest customer satisfaction rate in the past year—94.11% of customers left positive ratings for the chat service they received. This is likely due to the short wait time and relatively low chat volume.

Australia also had low chat volume and took second place in the customer satisfaction race.

Canada came in third with the third shortest wait time, despite a relatively high chat volume.

US Was the Largest Participant

One company handles 14973 chats per month while the average is 327.

The **US** was the largest participant in this report. Nearly one third of the companies are located in the United States.

We found an outstanding gap among US companies regarding the number of chats per month. One company handles 14973 chats per month while the average is 327. The factors that might affect chat volume include company size, website traffic, and nature of business under operation.

Colombia Had the Largest Potential to Improve

Colombian companies received the lowest customer satisfaction rate in 2015. Only 68.87% of their customers felt the support they received was satisfying.

At the same time, Colombian companies spent only around 9 minutes handling each chat on average, the quickest among all the countries listed. They also received the second smallest chat volume.

Ultimately, there seems to be much room for improvement regarding customer satisfaction for Colombian companies.

Report Summary

Live chat customer satisfaction comes from quality, not speed.

When looking at the metrics in this benchmark report, we saw one clear theme: live chat customer satisfaction comes from quality, not speed.

When operators and organizations had fewer chats to handle overall, they had significantly higher rates of customer satisfaction than their busier counterparts. It's likely that this is a result of being able to resolve problems more thoroughly and with undivided attention. It also explains why chat durations at 15 minutes led to a higher satisfaction rate than chats with a duration of 10 or 5 minutes. Customers want to feel heard; they don't want to feel like just another number in your queue.

Overall, it's important to realize that in an industry where there is so much emphasis on quick response time and on speedy resolution, customers are looking for a deeper commitment from the companies and institutions they engage with. Use these metrics to help establish a live chat strategy that truly speaks to your customers and their needs, and you'll find your customer satisfaction rates will soar to new heights.

About Comm100

Comm100 Network Corporation is an award-winning global provider of live chat, email marketing, and help desk software. Comm100 Live Chat is an enterprise-grade live support solution that enables brands to engage website visitors in real time interactions. The prominent benefits of utilizing our live chat software include higher website conversion rates, increased customer satisfaction, improved service efficiency, and lower operating costs.

Trusted by thousands of global brands worldwide, some of Comm100's top clients include **G2A**, **Sears**, **Stanford University**, and **Whirlpool**. With "100% communication, 100% success" as our company motto, Comm100 is committed to ensuring that transitioning human-to-human interactions to real-life success stories is always possible in a digital world.

Contact Us

TEL | 1-778-785-0464
FAX | 1-888-837-2011
E-Mail | support@comm100.com
Web | www.comm100.com

Suite 238 – 1027 Davie Street Vancouver, British Columbia V6E 4L2 Canada

To find more resources about the live chat industry and more tips on improving customer service, you can:

• Visit Comm100 official blog

• Follow us on