



Call Chaos

How to Relieve your
Phone Queues with Live Chat

Introduction

If you're reading this eBook, your customer service team is likely experiencing a huge spike in call volume. Don't worry – you are not alone.

Almost every industry has been affected by COVID-19 and is most likely receiving an unprecedented level of customer queries. It's not just the high volume that's causing huge issues for customer service agents. The complexity of questions has also significantly changed. According to Tethr, in the two weeks between March 11th to 26th, the average company saw the percentage of 'difficult' questions increase from 10% to over 20%.

This perhaps comes as little surprise. With a situation as unparalleled as we find ourselves in now, there will be many questions that your agents have never had to field and may not even have the answers to. Equally challenging is the nature of the queries. It's likely that the severity of the issue and emotion of the customer are elevated.

Putting aside your agents' increased workload and stress, they are also now finding themselves working from home, likely without the same level of support and infrastructure that they had at the office. All of this makes it more difficult for your agents to resolve questions quickly, and ultimately results in increased queue times and unhappy customers.

So how can you help relieve these phone queues and keep providing your customers with the level of support that they expect? The answer – with live chat.

Live chat is the communication channel of choice for today's consumer. In fact, 9 in 10 Comm100 Live Chat users say they prefer chat over any other channel. It's accessible from your website and mobile app, facilitates instant responses, and enables highly personalized service. And while your agents can only handle one phone call at a time, they can easily handle several chats simultaneously.

Whether you are offering live chat already, or you are thinking of doing so, this guide will show you how to use live chat to take the pressure off your phone lines - and help your support team resolve more queries with less time and less effort.

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Show me the chats

Your customers like talking on live chat. So why aren't they all using it? If you're offering live chat for the first time, it could be that your customers are just accustomed to using phone or email as their primary touchpoint with your business. The key to increasing chat volume is establishing a chat-based relationship with your visitors. In our experience, once users try live chat, they stick with it.

Here are some ideas to get your customers as excited about live chat as you are:

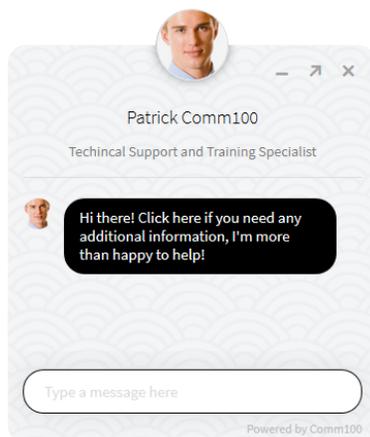
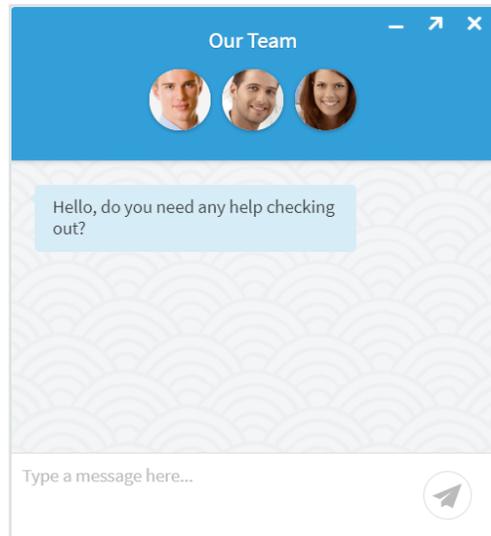


Proactivity

If your visitors aren't starting chats with you, then why not have your agents start chats with them? A visitor may not consider chatting unless they are invited to. Use Comm100's proactive chat tools to break the digital ice.

Manual Invitations

Invite users to chat with you from inside the agent console. Before requesting to chat with a visitor, you can refer to their identity information and browsing history to create a personalized invitation message. For example, if you notice that a visitor is stuck on your checkout page, you can send them a message asking if they need help with the checkout.



Auto Invitations

You can also automatically invite visitors to chat with you based on pre-defined rules. Use criteria like 'time spent on a specific page' or 'number of visits to your site' to trigger your chat window to appear with a custom invitation message. Experiment with different parameters to find when your visitors are most receptive to chatting.

Experiment

Many support teams use pre-chat surveys to gather data about the visitor and route them to the most suitable agent. You can try removing this survey to see if it will help encourage more visitors to start a chat with you.

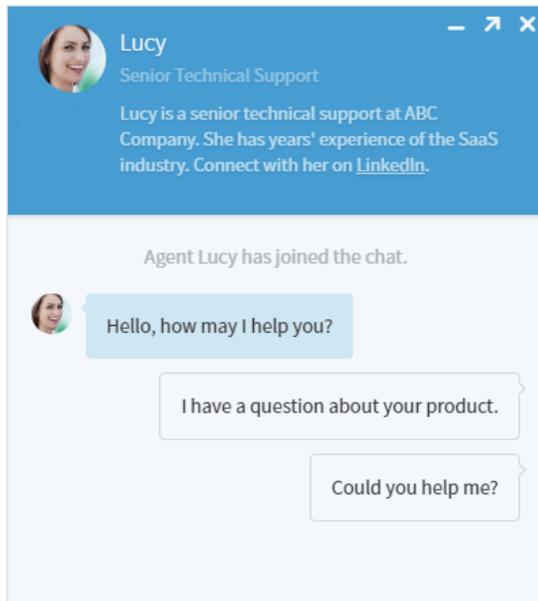
Design

Whether we like it or not, looks matter. A bland or poorly designed live chat experience could discourage visitors from chatting, or they may miss it entirely if it doesn't stand out. Fortunately, with Comm100 you can fully customize your chat button and interface to attract and encourage your visitors to start chatting with you.

Chat Button Design

Your chat button needs to stand out if it's going to be an effective conversation starter. Create a button that is both attractive and on-brand by customizing its color, size and placement on your webpage. Consider using an adaptive button which uses interactive animations to draw the visitor's eye. For a deep-dive on chat button design, check out [this blog post](#).

The screenshot shows the 'Chat Button' configuration interface. On the left, there are settings for 'Type' (Adaptive or Image), 'Desktop View' (Image source and Position), 'Mobile View' (Customize), and 'Advanced' options. On the right, there is a 'Preview' section showing two chat buttons: one for 'When Agent Is Online' (blue) and one for 'When Agent Is Offline' (grey). Red arrows with numbers 1 and 2 point to the 'Image' radio button and the 'Customize' link, respectively. At the bottom, there are 'Save Changes' and 'Discard' buttons.

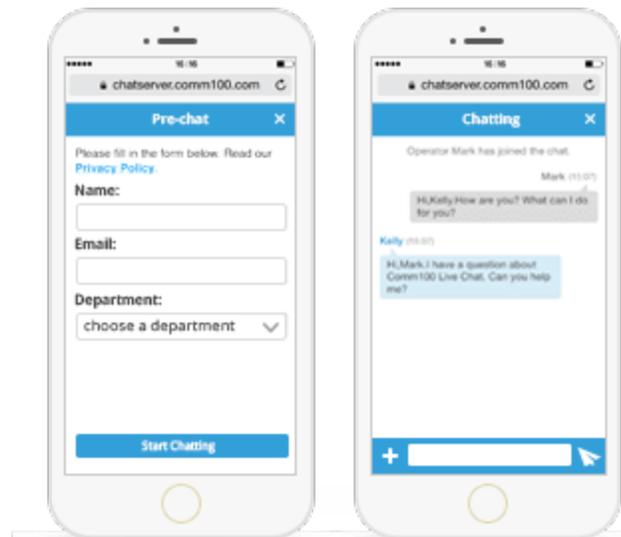


Agent Information and Avatars

Having your agents' names, titles, and avatars displayed at the top of the chat window adds an extra layer of intimacy to the live chat experience. The most effective live chat is personal and emphasizes that there is a real person on the other end of the conversation. This increases the likelihood of engagement, and typically improves the overall customer experience. For returning visitors, seeing a familiar face in the chat window creates even more comfort and loyalty.

Mobile Optimization

On average, 74.5% of live chats are sent from a mobile browser or app, according to our [2020 Live Chat Benchmark Report](#). Comm100 Live Chat windows adjust automatically in size and layout to fit mobile screens, ensuring your visitors can easily chat with you on whatever device they are using. The text button and image can also be customized for mobile.

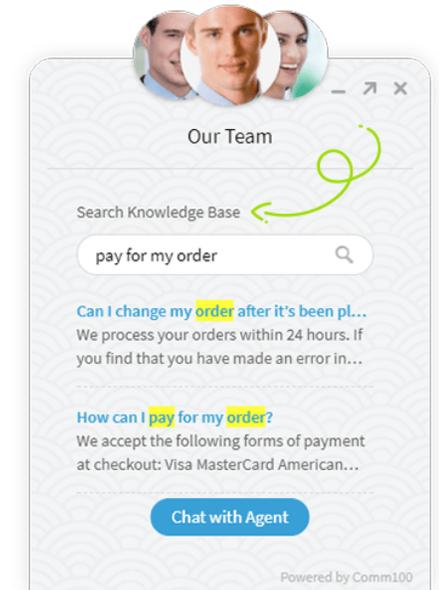


Value

People don't start chats just for the sake of chatting (well, maybe some do these days). They reach out because they want to solve a problem. To increase chat volume, you've got to make chatting worth your customers' while. Establish your chat window as the go-to place for answers using Comm100's diverse capability set.

Knowledge base integration

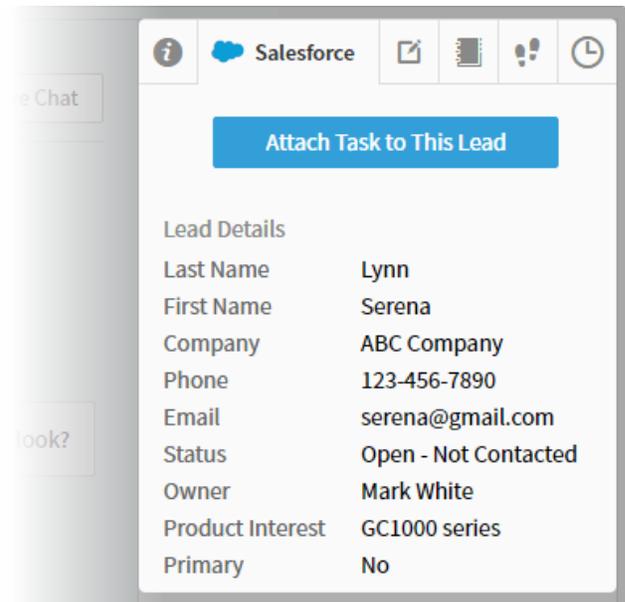
Increase the usefulness of live chat by allowing your visitors to access your knowledge base from inside the chat window. This gives your customers a quick and easy way to find answers to their questions on their own and bolsters your chat window's problem-solving credibility. It also helps reduce queue length and wait time if people can find what they're looking for and close their chat request.



System integrations

With Comm100's diverse integrations you can use live chat to do even more for your customers. Comm100 Live Chat offers a wide range of off-the-shelf integrations with key systems including CRM and shopping cart platforms. Comm100's Zapier integration also lets you connect with hundreds of business apps, from Microsoft Dynamics to Marketo to Trello, allowing you to make better use of your customer data. And with a highly flexible API, you can easily transfer data to and from the other relevant platforms in your ecosystem.

For example, Comm100 can use visitor data collected from various channels (pre-chat survey, website, log in systems etc.) to identify existing contacts or leads within Salesforce. If a visitor is found, a Salesforce icon will show by the visitor's name and by clicking the icon, your agent is directly taken to the details page of that individual in Salesforce. You can also choose what contact information from Salesforce to display within the live chat console, and even update this information from here. Find out more about [Comm100 Salesforce integration here](#).



Another useful integration is to link your shopping cart and credit card processing solutions with your chat window to allow for quick checkout.

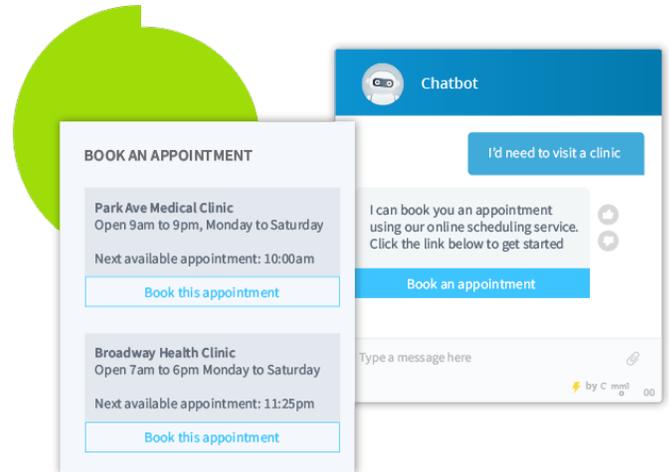
Chatbot

With a chatbot, you will never miss a chat. They are always ready to talk, 24/7, 7 days a week. And unlike a human, they can handle an infinite number of chats simultaneously, helping to automate a substantial portion of your front-line customer care and leave your agents to handle more complicated cases.

But a chatbot needs to do more than just 'be available'. It needs to solve your visitors' issues. Comm100's AI Chatbot uses advanced Natural Language Processing (NLP) to understand conversational dialogue (even spelling or grammar mistakes) and quickly identify intent. This allows it to provide comprehensive answers to the most complex visitor inquiries.

Tangerine, an Australian telecommunications company, set up Comm100's chatbot to manage a surge in customer communications, without having to hire more agents. Their chatbot now [resolves 91% of assigned live chats](#). Find out more below.

If a chatbot is to go beyond merely serving as an interactive FAQ, it must also be able to do more than deliver answers - it must act. Comm100's chatbot allows users to perform actions like resetting their password, booking tickets, paying invoices - all from inside the chat window. You can also set it up to let your visitors book appointments by integrating your meeting solution software within the chat window.



Everyone knows that not all conversations are meant for bots. When your visitors have especially complex needs, or a VIP logs on, you want to be able to take the reins of a chat or at least monitor the conversation. Comm100's AI chatbot offers complete control over which conversations it handles, and when it hands a conversation over to its human counterpart.



The increase in our customer base was causing such a huge uplift in chat volume, we knew that we had to install a chatbot. The number of chat requests was simply too high for the number of agents we had, and expanding the team was too costly an option. If it had been left as it was, acceptance rates and wait times would have been seriously damaged, and complaints rife. And ultimately, we would have risked losing customers to competitors.

- Richard Branson, COO of Tangerine

Recommended reading
How Comm100 AI Chatbot Resolves 91% of Assigned Live Chats for Tangerine



Promoting Adoption

Like any new service offering, getting the word out about it can be as important to success as the offering itself. If the key to increasing chat volume is getting visitors to have that first chat, then make sure you are letting them know it's on offer. Here are a couple ideas that will help drive your customers to use live chat:

Talk about live chat in other support channels

Users of other channels are already reaching out for help and may prefer the expediency and ease of use of live chat instead, so make sure you offer this option to them. For example, you could inform customers waiting on hold or navigating your IVR that they can avoid the wait by using live chat instead. You also could have your support agents include a link in their email signature that directs recipients to chat – and to even chat with that specific agent. More simply, you could send out an email announcement to inform your customers.

Run an awareness campaign

Deliver the compelling message that live chat is faster than phone, more efficient than email, and easier than both. You could mention live chat on your invoices, packaging, marketing collateral, promote it on social media campaign, or write a blog post that highlights the capabilities of your live chat system. On your 'Contact Us' page, make sure it's listed as the first option for customer contact. And see above for how to use proactive chat invitations!



The Wrap Up

No matter the size of the business, call center agents around the world are struggling to keep their heads above water as they continue to be bombarded with enquiries. Take WestJet, a Canadian airline, for example – on March 12th 2020, their website was showing phone wait times of [over 540 minutes!](#)

Not to mention that many of these call center agents must now work remotely and may lack the equipment or technical set up to do so. For these companies, live chat isn't just a 'nice to have' - it's essential for their agents to continue working and providing the level of support that their customers expect.

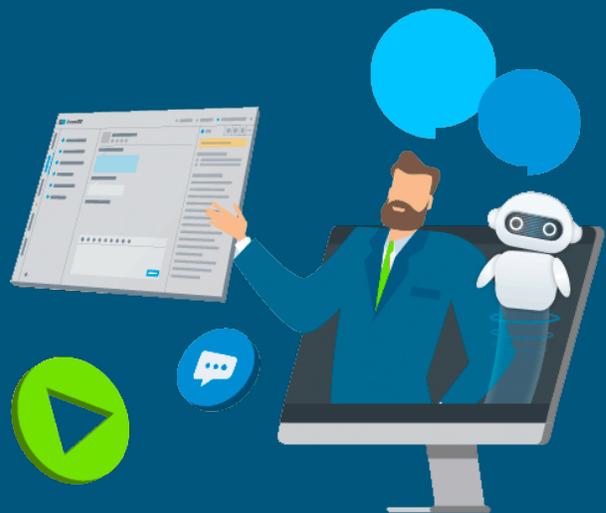
The State of Texas Office of the Attorney General found themselves in this situation and realized they had to come up with a solution, and fast. They contacted Comm100 and within 24 hours, more than 150 of their agents were set up at home with secure and compliant [Comm100 Live Chat](#) via the cloud on their desktops, browsers or mobile apps.

If you want to set up live chat to help relieve your phone queues and ensure every customer query is responded to quickly and accurately, then get in touch with Comm100 today.

Want to find out more?

Comm100 has a lot to offer, but sometimes you have to see it to believe it. That's why we've put together a series of 5- to 20-minute videos that provide a summary of some of our most popular products.

[Take the tour](#)





Let's chat

Comm100 is a leading global provider of omnichannel customer experience solutions with a mission to make online service and support delivery more genuine, more personalized, and more productive through meaningful conversations. Let us show you how.

[Learn more](#)