Top 5 trends that are transforming customer service.

These days, customer service is far more than a simple phone call. Today's customers want to be taken care of at any time, in any location, on any device. Yesterday's solutions aren't enough. Here are five important trends to keep up with in customer service.

In 2013, 66% of global consumers switched brands or businesses due to poor customer service. Some 82% of those who switched said the brand could have done something to stop them.

– Accenture Global Consumer
Pulse Survey, Accenture, Nov. 2013.

1. Mobility.

Mobile devices allow consumers the freedom to make phone calls while waiting in traffic or chat with online agents in their few free minutes before a meeting. As a result, companies need to adopt mobile strategies that allow for interaction with consumers anywhere, anytime, on any device.
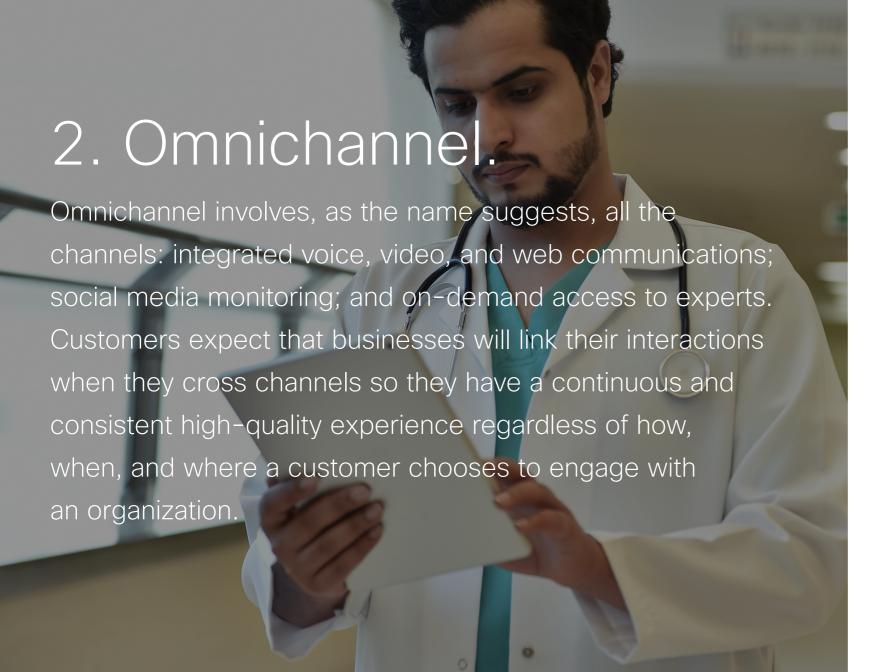
Customers want fast response times when contacting companies through social media.

42%

expect a response within 60 minutes.

– "Are Consumer Expectations for Social Customer Service Realistic?" Jay Baer, The Social Habit, Oct. 4, 2012.

2. Omnichannel.

Omnichannel involves, as the name suggests, all the channels: integrated voice, video, and web communications; social media monitoring; and on-demand access to experts. Customers expect that businesses will link their interactions when they cross channels so they have a continuous and consistent high-quality experience regardless of how, when, and where a customer chooses to engage with an organization.

Key characteristics of omnichannel:

• Reduced customer effort as they interact with businesses and organizations
• Persistent context and data as the customer traverses care channels
• Personalized customer journeys

90% of consumers who started purchasing a product on a mobile phone switched to a laptop.

– "Mobile-First Is Dead, Says Google Display Ad Chief Neal Mohan," Forbes, Feb. 27, 2014.

3. Cloud.

Cisco continues to invest heavily in cloud. With a cloud contact center, businesses can provision rapidly, scale easily, maximize resources, and access latest upgrades and solution capabilities. Contact centers of all sizes, with as few as 10 agents or thousands, can benefit from the cloud.

"Cloud computing ... takes evolutionary steps in hosting that change both the deployment model and the business value of IT in profound ways. Those that acknowledge this and accept what truly is different about it stand to gain the most from it."

– James Staten, principal analyst, Forrester Research

4. Video.

Video and content collaboration are gaining momentum as a mobile customer experience channel. Customers can virtually interact and collaborate with agents from your website or apps on their phones at the touch of a button. This can greatly improve your customer's experience and more easily address complex transactions.

Three ways to use video:
mobile, website, and branch.

5. Total customer experience.

When you focus on the total customer experience, you will know your consumer, be proactive, and deliver exceptional customer service at every touch point throughout the entire journey.

Connect
• Cross-channel client interaction
• Personalized and effective assistance
• Greater loyalty, value, and repeat spending

Engage
• Effortless experience
• Increased productivity
• Consistent outcomes

Optimize
• Reduction in complexity due to single platform
• Simpler integration and lower TCO
• Simpler admin configuration