Survey Shows: Majority of Consumers Frustrated with Web Self-Service, Want a "Human" Touch

New Research Shows 71% of Consumers Would Prefer Virtual Assistant Interaction on the Web to Make it Easier to Resolve Questions, Find Information

BURLINGTON, MA – December 16, 2013 – When it comes to customer service, it's an always-on, always-connected world, and consumers expect to be able to seek help from companies whenever and wherever they need it. Many consumers have become accustomed to self-service – across channels and devices – but what should be quick and easy often turns laborious and painful for consumers who are simply looking to help themselves, particularly on the Web, where more than 58 percent of people are currently unable to get the answers or information that they need.

Nuance Communications today unveiled results from both a recent survey and associated customer experience study that explored consumer attitudes and preferences for accessing service and support via the Web. The results point to clear frustration among consumers when it comes to seeking, and finding, help online. While many Web sites offer static self-help tools such as FAQs to enable consumers to resolve their questions or issues online, today's findings from Nuance revealed that those tools simply aren't guiding consumers to the resolutions that they expect. Despite wanting to answer their own questions online, nearly 50% of consumers ultimately give up and contact a live agent for assistance when they find that their questions require a deeper level of engagement to resolve. Consequently, the vast majority of consumers (71%) note that they would prefer to use a virtual assistant on a Web site to help guide them to the answers that they need in a conversational human-like way, without requiring a call to a live agent.

Key findings from the survey include the following:

- More than 58% of consumers are unable to resolve their issues on the web, despite their best efforts.
- Of consumers who do manage to self-serve on the web, 63% of them spend over 10 minutes trying to find a solution to their issue.
- 71% of those that try to self-serve on the Web but eventually give up do so after spending over 30 minutes attempting to find a resolution.
- 49.5% of consumers reach out to a live agent in customer service when they can't self-serve on a company's Web site.
- 59% of consumers are frustrated that they have to reach out to a live agent in customer service to resolve their issue (as opposed to serving themselves online).
- 71% of consumers would prefer a virtual assistant over static Web pages when it comes to self-service.

More information regarding this recent survey as well as a related infographic can be found on Nuance's Customer Experts blog [here](#).

"While consumers are willing to resolve issues and find answers to questions from their service providers online, the options available today just aren't meeting expectations," said Robert Weideman, executive vice president and general manager, Enterprise Division, Nuance. "Enterprises are losing money as consumers abandon their Web sites out of frustration and turn to live agents for service and support. In fact, recent data from Forrester tells us that unnecessary service costs to online retailers due to channel escalation are $22 MILLION, on average each year for an enterprise. () This is a real problem, but the good news is that it presents a big opportunity for Enterprises to differentiate by innovating their customer experience on the Web with virtual assistant solutions like Nina, which can deliver a more compelling, human-like experience and drive down costs at the same time."

Nuance delivers key innovations in the area of online customer engagement, leveraging Nuance's natural language understanding (NLU) to provide human-like virtual assistant interactions through its Nina platform. Nuance's Nina Web is an Intelligent Virtual Assistant that delivers personalized, effortless online customer service, ensuring a compelling customer experience while reducing a company's agent-led interactions by more than 40%. Using a human-like text-based conversational interface, Nina Web responds quickly, consistently, and accurately to customer requests – 24/7 – interactively guiding them to a successful resolution, at a fraction of the cost of traditional channels.

To see how Nina Web was recently deployed by leading airline Jetstar to give customers a better Web experience, see today's press release, ["Jetstar Selects Nuance's Nina Web for 'Ask Jess' Virtual Assistant."](#)

In recent consumer research, when people were presented with Nina Web as an alternative route for resolving a problem versus the standard tools provided on a traditional Web page (e.g. FAQ section, search fields, etc.), they overwhelmingly pointed to Nina Web as delivering a superior experience (SUS score of 90.8 versus standard Web tools at 67) when it came to getting to their intended results.

Methodology

Sources: The Nuance Web Self-Service survey findings included in this press release were fielded by independent panel research firm Research Now and responses were generated from a survey among 1000 Web users from their online opinion panel. All respondents are between the ages of 18 to 45 and living in the continental United States. The margin of error for the survey is +/-3.1%. Interaction Experience conducted a consumer research study of 11 individuals in November of 2013. The 90.8 SUS score refers to Windstream virtual assistant, and the total number of respondents is three. SUS score of 67 refers to an aggregate score of consumer research conducted on website where the total number of respondents is 174.

About Nuance Communications, Inc

Nuance Communications, Inc. (NASDAQ: NUAN) is a leading provider of voice and language solutions for businesses and consumers around the world. Its technologies, applications and services make the user experience more compelling by transforming the way people interact with devices and systems. Every day, millions of users and thousands of businesses experience Nuance's proven applications. For more information, please visit www.nuance.com.

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Source: Forrester Research, Inc., "Embrace Continuous Improvement To Power Customer Service Operations," by Kate Leggett, November 6, 2013

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https://news.nuance.com/2013-12-16-Survey-Shows-Majority-of-Consumers-Frustrated-with-Web-Self-Service-Want-a-Human-Touch?_ga=1.168394017.1837486986.1484114689