



# Beyond Deflection: The Rise of Intelligent Self-Service in CX

## A Virtual Agent Transformation

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# Elevating CX with a Unified Approach Across the Enterprise

Customer experience (CX) is changing rapidly as customer expectations and technologies evolve. Today's customers want seamless, personalized interactions across every channel. They value speed, convenience, and results, and are less willing to tolerate friction. This makes loyalty hard to earn and easy to lose. CX has shifted from a support function to a strategic competitive advantage.

Organizations must rethink how they engage with customers, resolve issues, and deliver value. Customer problems are becoming more complex due to interconnected products, services, and ecosystems. Traditional measures, such as average handle time, are no longer enough—resolution speed and customer effort now serve as clearer indicators of experience quality. Low-effort interactions consistently lead to higher loyalty, making friction a significant business risk. Customers evaluate experiences not only based on courtesy, but also on outcomes, setting the stage for a broader, outcome-driven CX approach.

This shift toward outcome-driven CX requires agility, advanced analytics, and proactive service models that anticipate needs before they escalate. In this Vbook, we'll explore these trends, share strategies to manage complexity, and show how organizations can deliver faster, smarter resolutions that build trust and long-term loyalty.

## Top Five CX Priorities, Global, 2025 to 2026



Political and economic uncertainties drive business leaders' focus on CX improvement.

These are respondents' top business objectives through 2026:

69%

Improving CX

66%

Ensuring Business Continuity

61%

Optimizing Operational Efficiency and Productivity



# Key Contact Center Investment Strategies

## AI Paves the Way for Automation to Excel

Contact center leaders globally report that their top strategic imperatives are to:



Increase the use of AI for personalization and automation



Develop analytics and insights to drive business outcomes



Install robust security prevention, detection, and mitigation protocols



Focus on employee experience (EX) and knowledge base expansion



Manage government compliance and regulatory complexity



To fully realize the benefits of AI in the contact center, organizations must align their technology investments with strategic business goals. The heaviest investment in contact centers will be in AI voice and chat agents.

Improving CX is the **#1 business goal** across major verticals, driving accelerated investments in **AI-powered self-service**. For automation initiatives to succeed, virtual agents must perform as well as, or better than, live agents. Virtual agents can **often be more accurate and consistent** than human agents, and their role **should extend beyond merely deflecting or triaging inquiries**.



### Channels Supported Today and Investment Plans Through 2027, Global, 2025 to 2027

#### AI voice agent



#### Legacy interactive voice response (IVR)



#### AI chat agent



#### Video chat, video teller/kiosk



#### Voice with a live agent



#### SMS/MMS



#### Chat with a live agent



#### Email/web form



#### Social media

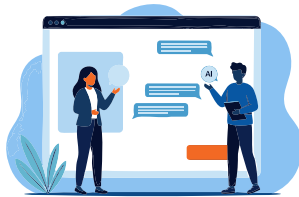


#### Messaging



Support today
  Plan to support over the next two year
  No plans to support over the next two years

### Other Key Data Points



**79%** of respondents who support these channels today plan to **upgrade or replace** their AI voice agents and AI chat agents



**56%** of respondents found that the number of interactions handled by **live agents increased**



**57%** of respondents found that the number of interactions handled by **virtual agents also increased**

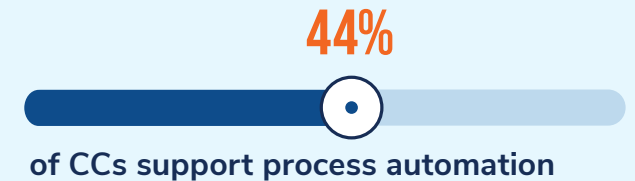
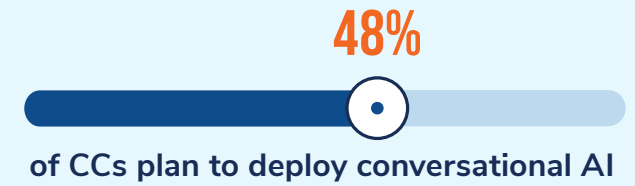
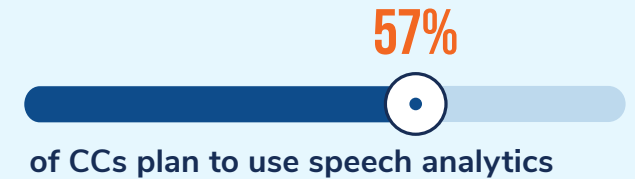


# Intelligent Self-Service and Virtual Agents

Intelligent self-service is rapidly becoming the cornerstone of modern CX strategies. While call deflection was once a cost-control tactic, today's AI-powered chatbots and intelligent virtual assistants (IVAs) **deliver real resolution** rather than redirection or containment. These advanced tools deliver a positive, streamlined experience that moves customers effortlessly through digital channels, making self-service the preferred choice for many. Intelligent self-service isn't just a cost-saving measure—it is a **strategic enabler of insights** that are analyzed to improve outcomes for customers and agents alike.

**Zoom Virtual Agent (ZVA)** is built on Zoom's AI-first platform and agentic AI framework, delivering advanced self-service across voice and chat. These virtual agents operate with autonomy, uncovering intent, retaining contextual memory, and dynamically adapting to customer needs. Using **Zoom AI Studio**, businesses can easily configure and deploy branded virtual agents with natural-language workflows. This can reduce IT dependency, shorten deployment timelines, and ensure a seamless customer experience. By combining intelligent task execution with issue resolution, Zoom Virtual Agent can **improve operational efficiency and elevate overall service quality**.

## Frost & Sullivan Data Insight: CX Investment Plans Through 2026



Source: Contact Center Objectives and Investment Plans, 2025 to 2027; Frost & Sullivan



Leveraging AI for analytics and **providing proactive customer care are the main focuses for CX leaders**. These key factors drive differentiation and brand loyalty.

—Alpa Shah, Global VP CX & Associate Partner, Frost & Sullivan



# Empowering Agents and Supervisors with AI and Expert Assistance

As AI expands self-service to handle repetitive and more complex tasks, live agent interactions are even more challenging and emotionally charged. The top frustrations, such as long wait times, poor personalization, and slow resolution, are the key initiatives guiding agent upskilling and retention.

- ▶ **Zoom AI Expert Assist** pulls data from third-party systems, knowledge bases, and CRMs to give agents real-time, personalized support for resolving complex issues. To save time and support consistency, it retrieves **responses, recommends next-best actions, and automates post-call wrap-up** with one-click summaries. This can also help improve compliance, first-contact resolution (FCR), and CSAT, while minimizing average hold times and agent onboarding duration.
- ▶ Together, Zoom Virtual Agent and AI Expert Assist create a connected resolution workflow that reduces customer effort through self-service. This empowers agents to resolve escalations faster and more accurately, strengthening loyalty across every interaction.

**51%** of respondents consider improving employee engagement a top business priority.

Between 2024 and 2025, more companies saw decreases in average call handling and wait times. Investments in AI solutions such as agent-assist and virtual agents are paying off.

## Top Five Agent Engagement Initiatives, Global, 2025 to 2026



Source: Contact Center Objectives and Investment Plans, 2025 to 2027; Frost & Sullivan



# Connected Customer Experience (CX)

## A Unified Platform Approach

Frost & Sullivan views AI as the backbone of **connected CX**, enabling seamless, **AI-driven personalization** and **empathetic customer interactions**. Tools like Zoom Virtual Agent and AI Expert Assist enable intelligent self-service and real-time agent support, reducing friction and improving resolution speed while maintaining consistency across every touchpoint. AI also powers analytics to detect sentiment shifts and personalize interactions, thus creating a more compassionate and efficient experience.

Zoom emphasizes **integration across its CX stack**. The goal is to avoid siloed systems by offering a single, AI-first platform that connects meetings, chat, phone, and contact center solutions. This unified approach helps to ensure customers and agents experience seamless transitions across channels, with shared context and no repetitive steps or breakdowns in the customer journey.

### CX leaders cite the top three benefits of a tightly integrated platform as:

Tailored off-the-shelf persona-based user experiences



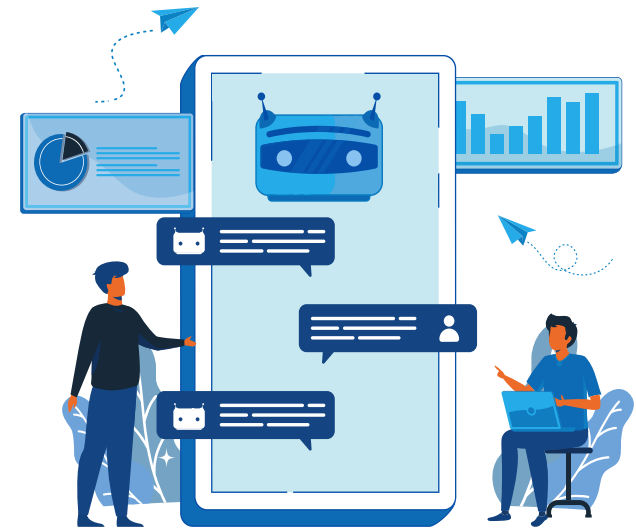
Call routing across enterprise users and agents



Integrated user interface



Because ZVA and Zoom Contact Center operate on a shared AI foundation, organizations gain a consistent brand voice, unified reasoning capabilities, and aligned data models across both virtual and live interactions.



Zoom aims for **Connected Experience**, where customer, employee, and operational experiences are aligned through integrated **workflows and shared data**. This can reduce wait times, improve CSAT, and drive ROI.

Source: Contact Center Objectives and Investment Plans, 2025 to 2027; Frost & Sullivan



# Solution in Action #1

## The Zoom CX Suite of Products Comes to the Rescue for Retailer Cricut

Cricut allows customers to bring creative ideas to life with personalized crafts, gifts, and home décor. As a global leader in design tools, it serves a passionate community of hobbyists, small businesses, and DIY enthusiasts in 30+ countries, with a mission to help customers “lead creative lives.”

### Business Challenges:

Cricut faced growing customer support demands across 30+ countries. Fragmented systems, long wait times (15 to 20 minutes), and high abandonment rates created a frustrating experience for customers and agents alike.

### Zoom Solutions:

Cricut adopted Zoom’s AI-first CX platform, unifying voice, chat, and video into one seamless solution. With **Zoom Virtual Agent**, customers can resolve issues quickly through self-service, while **AI Expert Assist** empowers agents with real-time insights and resources. Escalations transition smoothly to live agents with full context—no repetition required.

### Business Results and Outcomes:

**90%** reduction in call abandonment

**89%** shorter wait times (from 20 minutes to under 2)

**50%** self-service containment rate

Improved CSAT and agent efficiency

### Impact:

By combining intelligent self-service with AI-first agent support, Cricut delivers faster resolutions, happier customers, and a connected experience that scales globally.

View the video:  
[Customer Story: Cricut | Zoom](#)



By integrating AI functionalities across Zoom CX, **we’ve achieved a 50% self-service containment rate**, freeing agents to handle complex inquiries.”

—Kaushik Tilve, Manager of Systems and Technology, Cricut



# Solution in Action #2

## Zoom on Zoom: Setting a New Standard for AI Self-Service

As customer expectations rise and AI reshapes the CX landscape, Zoom needed a scalable, AI-first solution to deliver high-quality, personalized self-service at scale.

### Business Challenges:

- ▶ Zoom customers expect fast, accurate, 24/7 self-service.
- ▶ Legacy chatbots lack scalability, personalization, and integration.
- ▶ The system must be capable of handling millions of Zoom sessions.
- ▶ Deeper analytics, automated actions, and easy workflow are required to deliver excellent CX.

### Zoom Solutions

**Zoom Virtual Agent (ZVA) for Chat and Voice:** AI-driven virtual agent with NLP, ML, memory capabilities, and contextual understanding.

**Zoom AI Expert Assist:** Provides live agents with real-time access to the same knowledge library for faster resolutions.

**Enhanced Analytics:** Designed to identify intent gaps, reduce no-match rates, and provide insights into customer journeys.

### Business Results and Outcomes:


**98%** containment in ZVA Chat

**76%** containment in ZVA Voice within months

### Abandonment rate reduced from

 **23% to 1%**

### CSAT increased by

 **19%** (55% to 74%)

- ▶ Billing deflection increased from **0% to 30%** in 3 months
- ▶ **More than 1,000 agent hours saved monthly** on billing issues
- ▶ Significant reduction in total support tickets
- ▶ Near-zero no-match query rates
- ▶ Seamless handoffs to agents with full context
- ▶ Lower total cost of ownership vs. rule-based bots



# Differentiation and Competitive Positioning

## Why Zoom Virtual Agent Stands Out



### AI-First, Agentic Design

Autonomously resolves complex, multi-step tasks across voice and chat, beyond basic scripted bots



### Context-Aware Conversations

Understands intent, remembers history, and adapts tone for personalized, brand-aligned experiences



### Unified Platform Advantage

Seamlessly integrates with Zoom Contact Center, Zoom Phone, and collaboration tools, enabling fewer silos and less complexity

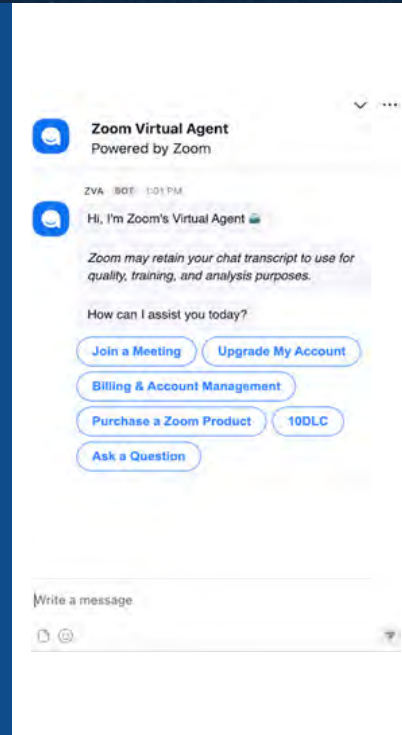


### Operational Efficiency

Zoom AI Studio enables fast deployment, reduces IT dependency, and scales globally with lower costs

### Ease-of-Use and Scalability

Zoom's design philosophy prioritizes **ease of use**, even for **complex** enterprise deployments. **The goal is to make CX technology intuitive** so businesses can adapt quickly without **heavy IT overhead**. This approach extends across all Zoom products, reinforcing an integrated experience with full resolution through self-service.



Zoom Virtual Agent integrates seamlessly with existing enterprise systems—including **CRMs, ticketing platforms, knowledge bases, and business applications**—allowing organizations to extend automation into the systems they already rely on.

Source: Zoom Communications, Inc.; Frost & Sullivan



# Key Considerations for Partner Alignment

## What to look for in an AI/CX partner

To establish a successful AI and CX partnership, Frost & Sullivan recommends evaluating prospective solution providers through the following strategic considerations:

▶ **Leadership Commitment, Reputation, and Technological Maturity**

Assess the extent to which the provider's leadership team demonstrates sustained commitment to digital transformation. Determine whether its organizational reputation, technical capabilities, and strategic roadmap position it to support current requirements while evolving effectively to meet future business needs.

▶ **Customer Insights and Analytics**

Prioritize solutions that offer advanced analytics to interpret multichannel customer behavior, identify pain points, and uncover actionable trends. Ensure the provider can translate these insights into smarter automation strategies and more personalized customer experiences.

▶ **Innovation Capability**

Evaluate the provider's history of driving innovation for its clients. Confirm whether they have a proven track record of implementing forward-thinking processes that deliver measurable cost reductions, operational efficiencies, and enhanced competitive advantage.

▶ **Security, Privacy, and Technology Governance**

Examine the provider's approach to data protection and risk mitigation. Determine if it employs robust, differentiated processes, tools, and platforms designed to secure AI and automation environments, safeguard sensitive customer information, and defend against emerging cyber threats.

▶ **Scalability and Operational Agility**

Consider the provider's ability to support rapid growth. Validate that it possesses the infrastructure, expertise, and operational discipline required to scale solutions swiftly and responsively as business needs evolve.

▶ **Partner Ecosystem Strength**

Assess whether the provider has cultivated a robust and strategically aligned ecosystem of partners. Confirm that this network enhances solution breadth, accelerates innovation, and enables comprehensive support for both enterprise objectives and customer expectations.

Find out more about [Zoom's CX suite of products](#) →

Find out more about [Zoom Virtual Agent](#) →

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