Panasonic

ABTasty

Panasonic reduces costly call volumes with AB Tasty's CXO Solutions

Customer journeys are more nuanced than ever before. As consumers switch between devices, channels and touchpoints, businesses on the digital frontier, like Panasonic, are focusing on the not-so-simple task of bringing continuity to each interaction and delivering an omnichannel experience.

We spoke with Michelle Esgar, who is spearheading the brand experience for Panasonic Consumer Electronics, about the challenges and strategy involved in delivering this integrated experience. We started by looking at an experiment we worked on together to reduce calls to customer support (and as a result, avoid lengthy wait times for users and bottlenecked workflows internally).

From there, we discussed how this experiment fits within Panasonic's overarching strategy—and how successful customer experiences are built with an integrated understanding of every consumer touchpoint.

Here's a snapshot of Panasonic's 360-degree approach.

Challenge

Panasonic has a recurring goal: reduce customer support costs year-over-year. Currently, every call to the support center costs up to 5 dollars, which quickly adds up to be: expensive. And along with optimizing the budget, Panasonic also needed to improve the entire experience.

Consumers reach out to customer support when their product isn't working as intended. So, from the gate, there's an element of frustration. More often than not, users will check the website first to help solve their problem. If they can't find the answer, frustration mounts. That's when they'll call a representative, and

Increase in Digital Customer Support

+11%

Yearly Cost Reduction

-$30k

have to go through a complicated IVR for an average of six minutes before getting someone on the line.

Consider how exit rates will exponentially increase on web pages after load time passes three seconds. Asking someone to wait six minutes in "the age of instant" isn't sustainable.

By conducting a call center analysis, it became clear that for the majority of incoming calls, Panasonic already had self-service information available that
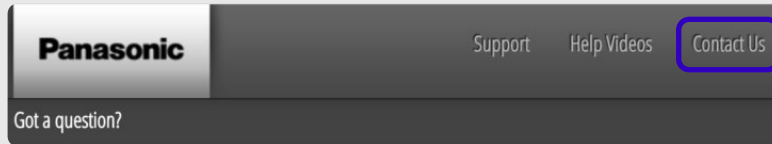
could answer the question. So, the underlying issue wasn't so much about bandwidth as it was about putting the right information in front of the right user at the right time. This meant tackling everything from the website's information architecture to physical product manuals; a concerted effort that would, of course, take time. So, while refining this ongoing strategy, Panasonic focused on a more immediate tactical next step: driving customers to their digital channels for faster support.

Test Hypothesis

Since representatives could handle multiple chat queries and emails at a time, it was important that these channels were properly promoted. Originally, these links were placed in the middle of Panasonic's customer support page—easy to miss if users were scrolling through quickly.

Michelle believed that if this contact information was more visible—in the header of the web page—consumers would be more likely to engage with these channels. Using AB Tasty's visual editor, Panasonic was able to quickly add this option in the navigation bar as an A/B Test (splitting traffic 50/50).

Results

Measuring the success of this test was based on the percent of digital customer support contacts vs. phone calls. In the few weeks this test ran, this ratio shifted 11.6% in favor of digital support. Based on average call volume, this equates to approximately $2,500 a month in costs saved, or roughly $30,000 a year. Based on these results, this new header was made visible to 100% of web traffic.

TAKEAWAY TIP

How do you make sure you're solving the root cause of a problem, and not just one of its symptoms? In this scenario, leveraging online support would create a faster experience for users and significantly reduce costs. But this experiment represents just one facet of Panasonic's multi-pronged strategy: to eliminate the pain points prompting these queries in the first place. Improving documentation and recognizing when issues are the result of user error, as a chance to improve product usability, are just two examples of this integrated approach. At AB Tasty, we're excited to keep working with Panasonic on this omnichannel strategy to further enhance the customer experience.