

How You Can Turn Customer Service into a Profit Center

Minimize Your Cost-to-Serve While
Maximizing Customer Satisfaction



Cost to Run Your Customer Support Center

QTY	DESC	AMT
1	Repetitive Customer Questions	Wasted Time
1	Customer Reps Unable to Keep Up	Frustrated Employees
1	Insufficient Legacy Tools	Lost Efficiency

TOTAL Profit-Draining Operations



The situation is all too familiar: you oversee the customer support or customer service departments and when it comes to getting a seat at the table, the balance sheet is not your friend. Sure, your department adds a lot of value to the business—most everyone can agree, but you often get written off as an expense and only that.

You know that your team can offer far more than simply damage control. But how can you actually reflect this on your department's receipt when it's time to crunch the numbers?

Your Customer Support Team's Receipt

When totaling your numbers, you know that salaries and technologies will be your largest expenses; however, it's not these line items that are really hurting you. It's the costs incurred by **wasted time**, **frustrated employees**, and **lost efficiency** that can make your department a profit-draining operation.

According to Hubspot, 31% of customer service professionals say that their department is viewed as a cost center, and this figure has been increasing over the past few years.¹

But, what if you could prove the value of the customer support team beyond responding to customer requests and complaints?

Let's explore how you can make that possible by **reducing the costs of customer service and generating new revenue streams to support profitability**.

¹ The State of Customer Service in 2020

From Incurring Costs to Enabling Profits

Innovative leaders have been able to take their customer support team, what is typically seen as a debit only, and transform it into a profit center.

By leveraging digital self-service, these leaders have been able to reduce costs and generate new revenue streams.

WHAT IS SELF-SERVICE?

Let's start with the basics.

When customers are able to help themselves through a digital channel, without engaging a live representative, this is digital [self-service](#).

Self-service can be delivered through many different channels such as chatbots, FAQs, or video tutorials; however, these tactics are often implemented separately and can quickly become disjointed. So to unite all these capabilities in a single touchpoint, leaders have leveraged self-service customer portals.

Let's see how a self-service portal can help your customer support team move from just being a necessary cost to becoming a revenue-supporting department.





5 Ways Self-Service Customer Portals Contribute to Profitability

- 1 Reduce Cost of Support
- 2 Increase Volume and Speed of Support
- 3 Generate More Sales
- 4 Boost Customer Rep Satisfaction
- 5 Raise Customer Retention Rate

1 Self-Service Customer Portals Reduce Cost of Support

As you know, the most costly form of service is one-to-one live support. These time-consuming live interactions can cost 80-100x more than a fully self-service resolution.²

According to Harvard Business Review, the average cost of a customer service interaction can be more than \$7 for a B2C company and more than \$13 for a B2B company.³

These numbers may seem small, but if we were to consider a call center that gets 1,000 calls each day, those costs add up:

	Cost for B2C	Cost for B2B
Month	\$210,000	\$390,000
6 Months	\$1,260,000	\$2,340,000
1 Year	\$2,520,000	\$4,680,000

Self-service can reduce the cost-to-serve to just pennies, helping your organization save thousands in support costs.

² Rethink Your Customer Service Strategy to Drive Self-Service

³ Kick-Ass Customer Service





2 Self-Service Customer Portals Increase Speed of Customer Support

According to a survey performed by CMO Council, a global network of senior marketing decision makers, **the most important attribute of a good customer experience is fast response time.**⁴

Businesses can use self-service to deliver real-time responses utilizing a fraction of the resources required for one-to-one live interactions.

With self-service, customer support teams are able to increase the speed and volume of service scalably.

Service leaders surveyed by Gartner report that as much as 40% of today's live volume could be resolved in self-service channels.⁵

⁴ The Customer in Context

⁵ Rethink Your Customer Service Strategy to Drive Self-Service

3 Self-Service Customer Portals Generate More Sales

Many customers will abandon a transaction rather than trying to deal with the hassle of live support. In fact,

53% of U.S. online adults are likely to abandon their online purchase if they can't find a quick answer to their question.⁶

But, instead of losing these customers, businesses can leverage self-service to easily remove roadblocks to purchasing by....

- Including an FAQ page that makes it easy for customers search for answers
- Providing real-time support through a chatbot
- Tailoring the purchase experience with account-based pricing, product information, and inventory

Additionally, businesses can use self-service as a method to increase order size through upselling and cross-selling with AI-powered recommendations.

⁶ Your Customers Don't Want to Call You For Support





4 Self-Service Customer Portals Boost Employee Satisfaction

When customers are able to find answers on their own, your team members no longer have to spend the majority of their time answering common questions. Instead, they are now free to handle more urgent issues and make more strategic decisions.

Studies have found that support agents find 40% of the tickets they work on to be “mind-numbing and repetitive.”⁷

In a recent poll of service leaders, Gartner found that businesses that make investments to streamline the customer support representative experience have seen:⁸

- 19% increase in productivity
- 25% decrease in rep intent to leave
- 11% increase in customer satisfaction

⁷ Exasperated Customer Service Leaders Report that 40% of All Customer Tickets are Mind Numbing and Repetitive

⁸ The Secret to Boosting Rep Productivity

5 Self-Service Customer Portals Raise Customer Retention Rate

Customer retention rate is, at its simplest, how much you need to spend to keep your customers happy so that they continue doing business with you.

Loyal customers buy more often and make larger purchases than newer customers. They can be your business's most fervent advocates and greatest resource.⁹

By investing in self-service, sellers can directly impact a customer's willingness to continue doing business with them.

According to a study performed by global research firm Aberdeen, **companies who offered self-service support experienced an 85% year-over-year increase in customer retention rates, compared to those without self-service.**¹⁰

⁹ Here's Why Customer Retention is So Important for ROI, Customer Loyalty and Growth

¹⁰ 10 Leading Customer Experience Trends





Totaling the Benefits of Self-Service

- Reduce cost-to-serve
- + Increase volume of support
- + Encourage more sales
- + Raise support team productivity
- + Boost customer retention

= **Increased Profit**

The Start of a Profit-Generating Center

So, how do you make the case for your department as a prime contributor to overall profitability instead of just being viewed as a cost-center?

Let's go back to take a look at that receipt. With self-service, your customer support center can reduce cost-to-serve, increase the volume of support, encourage more sales, raise support team productivity, and boost customer retention.

Transform how your department is viewed to be seen as is far more than just problem-fixers and complaint-handlers. With the right tools, prove that customer experience can be both a cost-efficient and profit-supporting department.

Learn How to Build an Effective Customer Self-Service Portal

Ready to start supporting more profitable operations? [Follow these best practices here >](#)



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