



Customer Service Quality Benchmark Report 2022



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Invest in your customer-facing team: the dividends will pay off

When we published the first-ever support quality benchmark report last year, our goal was to uncover what a good result in customer service actually looks like. But what is more interesting than individual metrics? Trends. This year's report allows us to tell an even bigger story through the direction where the benchmark metrics are heading.

I was thrilled to learn that not only are the metrics associated with service quality increasing, but more and more teams have started to track these metrics. 10% more teams now track Customer Satisfaction Score (CSAT) and 18% more teams track Internal Quality Score (IQS).

However, it's important to keep in mind that collecting this data is only the first step in the quality improvement process. It's what you do with the data that matters. How do you put the learnings into practice? And how do you get the rest of the team to understand the impact your work is having on the business?

It is becoming painfully evident that customer support is not just customer support but also sales, marketing, branding, customer success. And support quality is directly impacting business results as these disciplines blur.

I hope this report inspires you to notice the business opportunity in customer support and motivates you to set even higher goals.



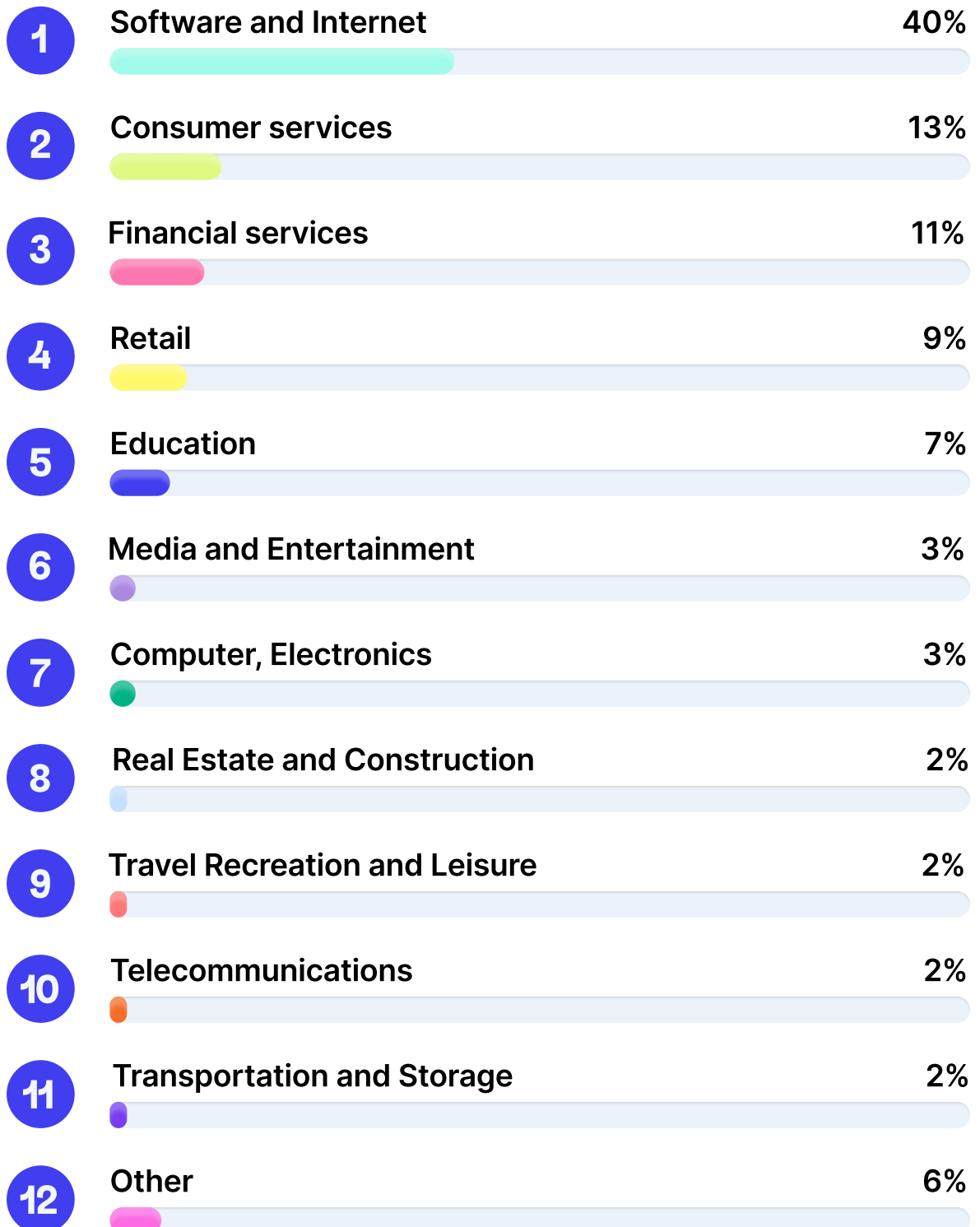
Martin Kõiva

Co-Founder and CEO of Klaus

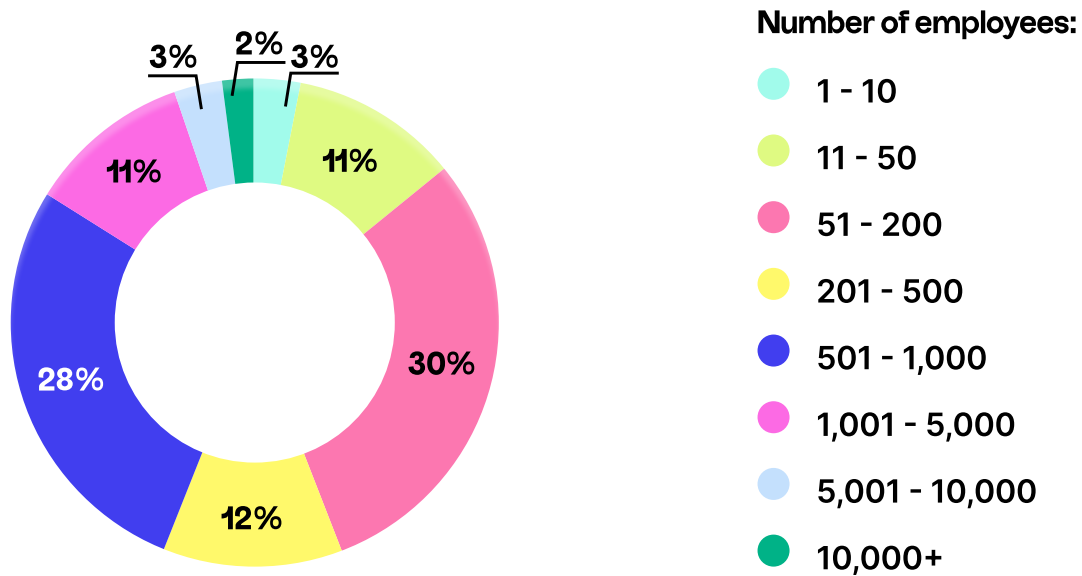


Who took the survey?

Software and Internet made up the bulk of responses, but we also heard from professionals in Consumer & Financial services, Retail, Education, and more:



Respondents work in a variety of environments, from small startups to enterprises of 10,000+ employees:





Customer Service Challenges

“A lot of the rules for quality support are the same no matter where your business is at, but a couple of key things can help when you’re rapidly scaling a company. Forecasting is probably your biggest asset, as maintaining your ability to help customers is directly tied to how big your support team relative to your inbound conversations and how efficient your tools are. Focus on a plan to increase your team size in line with your product’s user growth and you won’t fall into the trap of trying to offer great service with a team who is forced to move too fast to truly be focused and attentive to each customer.

The second thing is also related to tool efficiency, and that’s centralizing your customer support data so that every interaction a user has with your team is easily referenced by your agents as they are assisting that user, making their context on the customer and the relationship your team has with them immediately available. This helps the user to feel like they’re talking to a team that knows them rather than an individual who knows them only in the context of their current problem.”



Shawn Carter

Team lead, Frontline Support at Aircall

When asked about current biggest pain points, we saw responses fall into two major categories:

Maintaining quality through growth

Challenges:

48%

maintaining quality support when scaling

48%

measuring and getting an overview
of support quality

28%

onboarding new reps

26%

coaching existing agents

While steep growth trajectories are to be celebrated, growth can compromise quality. Nearly half of customer service teams struggle to maintain quality support when scaling, an issue that plagues many - regardless of company size.

An airtight **onboarding process** is your first priority. This pain point is less of a factor for companies of less than 50 employees, with only 13% of them citing it as a challenge. Conversely, this percentage jumps to 43% for companies of 500 - 5,000.

89% agree that quality assurance reviews help customer service teams onboard new agents.

If companies undergo hypergrowth without due diligence, growing pains reverberate for agents, managers, and support quality. A structured onboarding process overcomes this hurdle: a buddy system, detailed product & communication guidelines, structured training, etc.

An effective onboarding process without an ongoing **QA program**, though, is like taking one step forward to take two steps back. Regular

internal reviews provide an overview of performance and the feedback via which to improve.

Proactive support

Challenges:

40%

reducing repetitive requests

30%

creating and providing help documentation

Proactive support frees up time for your agents to handle more complex inquiries and prioritized customers. Being proactive with customer service includes maintaining a thorough help center and scheduling automatic messages for known problems or automatic responses for common issues.

[Last year's report](#) showed that **85% of teams offer proactive help.**

However, many still find that repetitive requests take up their day, and generating adequate help documentation is a challenge.

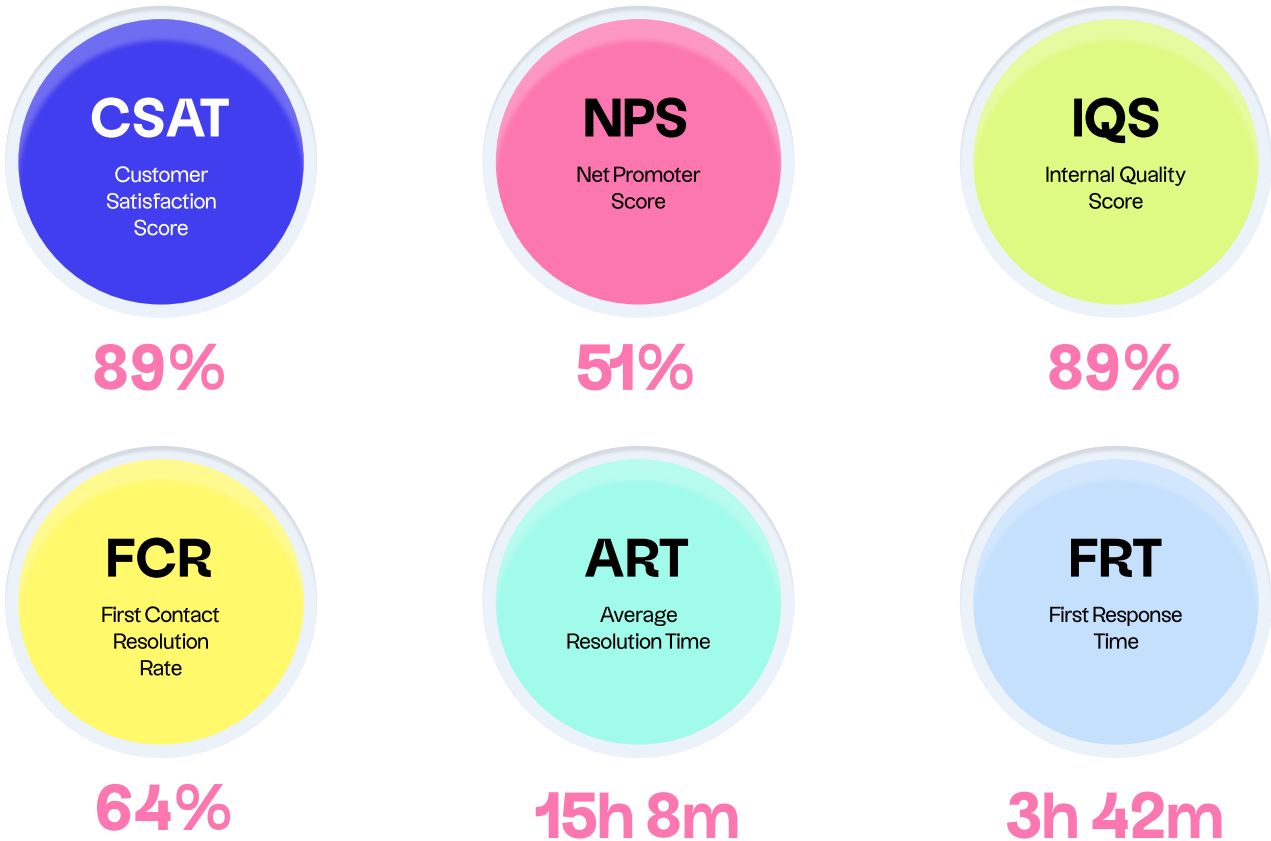
Investing in the resources to create a detailed onboarding process and accessible knowledge base for customers will pay off in the long run.

70% of companies plan to invest more in proactive customer support in 2022.

Self-service

73% of customer service professionals agree that investing in self-service options for customers has reduced the workload for support.

2022 Support Quality Benchmarks



Customer Satisfaction Score (CSAT)

Customer Satisfaction Score (CSAT) is a customer service, marketing, and business metric that measures how well a company meets their users' expectations. It is calculated by survey, with a question to the effect of 'How satisfied are you with the company's services?'

How to calculate Customer Satisfaction Score

$$\frac{\text{Number of positive responses}}{\text{Number total responses}} \times 100 = \text{CSAT (\%)}$$

Customer Satisfaction Score Benchmark 2022

77% of the support teams track Customer Satisfaction Score.

The average CSAT has increased 14% this year to 89%.

4% of the respondents reported their CSAT to be a perfect 100%.

“The biggest lesson I’ve learned along the way (and the factor that ties into CSAT most) is providing each customer with empathy and understanding. Even if I cannot solve their problem or make their situation better—which is most of the time!—I can still be human and share in their emotions.”



Jessica Ross

Customer Success Agent – Ramsey Solutions

Net Promoter Score (NPS)

The Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a holistic metric used to measure customer loyalty to a product or service. It is calculated by survey, with a question to the effect of ‘How likely are you to recommend [company] to a friend or colleague?’.

How to calculate Net Promoter Score?

$$\frac{[\text{Number of promoters} - \text{Number of detractors}]}{\text{Number of total respondents}} \times 100 = \text{NPS}$$

Net Promoter Score Benchmark 2022

48% of the support teams report tracking Net Promoter Score - an increase from last year's 28%.

The average NPS across industries increased this year from 45 to 51.

Internal Quality Score (IQS)

Internal Quality Score (IQS) is a metric which represents how well your support team perform against defined internal standards. IQS calculations are based on each support team's individual scorecards.

How to calculate Internal Quality Score

[Sum of ratings / Number of categories / Maximum available score]
X 100 = IQS (%)

Internal Quality Score Benchmark 2022

39% of the support teams report tracking IQS.

The average IQS across industries increased this year from 81% to 89%.

According to [Chatermill's 2022 report](#), 98% leaders think feedback surveys and online reviews need to be complemented with more data sources.

First Contact Resolution Rate (FCR)

First Contact Resolution (FCR) rate is a metric that measures the proportion of customer issues solved at first contact. Customers prefer

efficiency, and resolving an issue on first contact is proof of dedication.

In an [Aircall survey](#) of nearly 6,000 eCommerce shoppers, they determined that 33% of respondents consider resolution in the first interaction to define good customer service. Respondents from all surveyed industries agree with this top ranking. It's especially highlighted in the Physical Goods/Energy sector, where 38% of industry respondents ranked this factor as the most important.

How to calculate First Contact Resolution rate

$$\frac{\text{Number of issues resolved on first contact}}{\text{Total number of issues}} \times 100 = \text{FCR (\%)}$$

First Contact Resolution Rate Benchmark 2022

48% of the support teams surveyed report tracking FCR.

The average FCR across industries increased this year from 54% to 64%

Average Resolution Time

Average Resolution Time (ART) is often also known as Mean Time To Resolution (MTTR) or Average Ticket Resolution Time. ART is a metric calculated per agent, displaying the average time taken by them to solve all opened tickets in a given time frame.

Like FRT, average resolution time varies wildly depending on industry, support channel, product/service, etc.

How to calculate Average Resolution Time

$$\frac{\text{Total resolution time for all tickets solved}}{\text{Number of tickets solved}} = \text{ART}$$

ART Benchmark 2022

66% of customer service teams track their ART, down from 84% last year.

Average resolution time ranged from 1 min 30 seconds (Software and Internet) to 70 hours (Software and Internet).

First Response Time (FRT)

First Response Time (FRT) is the time between a customer initiating a ticket and the support rep's first response.

A benchmark FRT is difficult to qualify - some companies offer 24/7 support, industry standards can vary wildly, and it also depends largely on the communication channel.

In general, we found B2C industries to be more unified:

- Consumer Services averaged **6 hours 11 mins**
- Education averaged **3 hours 21 mins**
- Retail averaged **5 hours 24 mins**
- Among B2B industries, responses were more diverse - FRTs ranged the gamut from **30 seconds to 26 hours**.

How to calculate First Response Time

$$\frac{\text{Sum of first response times}}{\text{Number of tickets}} = \text{FRT}$$

FRT Benchmark 2022

74% of customer service teams track their FRT.

Average FRT ranged from 3 seconds (Media and Entertainment, Consumer Services) to 26 hours (Software and Internet).



Customer Service Quality Reviews

80% of teams confirmed that they conduct regular internal reviews.

The math adds up. In our 2021 report, 69% of customer service teams conducted regular conversation reviews and 11% announced plans to roll out a support QA program within the year.

Who conducts reviews?

There are four possible formats for customer service QA reviews - manager reviews, peer reviews, self-reviews, and specialist reviews.



Our survey found that **59% of teams with review programs use a combination of review formats.** Each format has its advantages and disadvantages, and combining reviewers is a growing trend - last year, only 39% of support teams combined review formats.

The most popular combinations are:

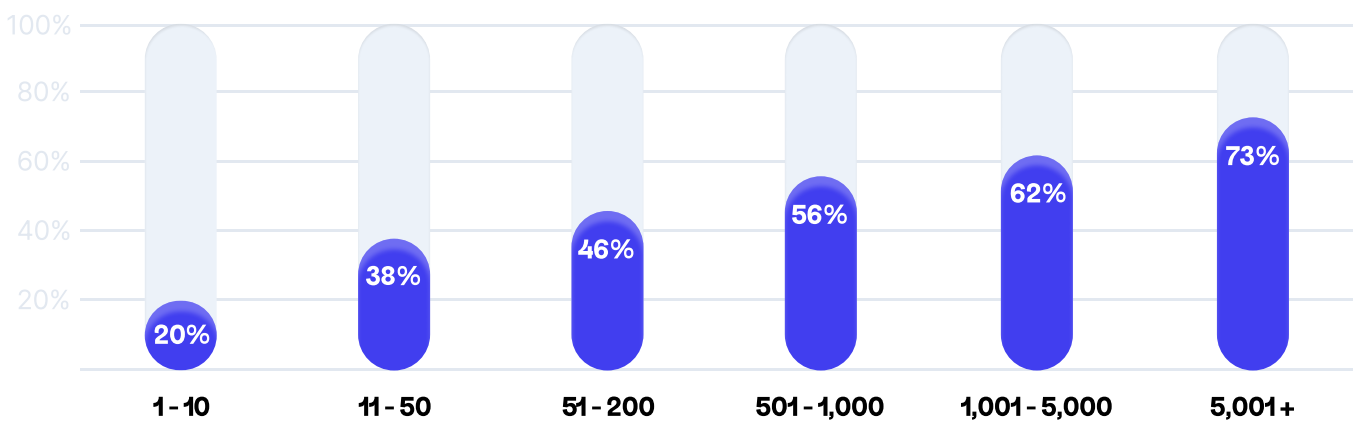
- Manager & QA specialist
- Manager & peer-to-peer
- QA specialist & peer-to-peer
- Manager & self reviews

Manager reviews remain the most popular form: in 2021, **62% of support teams that have a QA program do manager reviews**. This is, however, on a downward trend - last year 68% of teams employed manager reviews.

Where manager involvement is downtrending, QA specialists are uptrending. **52% of support teams who conduct reviews use QA specialists**, compared to 36% last year.

Growing teams need QA Specialists

As teams scale, they are increasingly likely to hire a QA specialist/ specialists to help uphold quality standards:



“We started our dedicated QA team in August 2021, and after building a stable program we’ve now reached the time to go deeper on the things we should improve on.

One of our focuses for this year is to create an improvement plan matrix to quickly act on the agent’s performance when needed and help them improve faster. We’re working on doing live QA with our new joiners so their learning curve decreases as well.”

Carolina Lage

Quality Assurance Manager for Customer Support at Pipedrive

For what purposes do they review?

General overview of conversations

60% of customer service teams who review choose a random sampling of conversations.

However, a random sample does not always provide the best sampling for QA purposes. Far more teams used the randomized method last year (82%). Quality assurance tools are getting smarter at conversation discovery - and 34% of teams who review now seek a more representative sample of their support interactions.

Understanding agent performance

96% agree that conversation reviews are useful for team member’s professional growth.

QA reviews are an invaluable tool for coaching purposes and to

understand team performance:

- 48% of customer service teams who review are interested in conversations involving agents with poor performance.
- 38% for customer service teams who review select conversations involving new agents.

The majority of teams who review use the results to provide actionable feedback to their customer service agents. 77% use the results as input in 1:1 meetings between managers and agents, 43% use the results as input for team meetings.

To drill down on data

- 49% of customer service teams who review focus conversations with negative CSAT.
- 26% for customer service teams who review choose conversations on certain topics & keywords.

Reviews are not just important for customer support teams; listening to and understanding customer feedback is beneficial on a wider company level. 49% of the customer service teams with a QA process use it to report back to managers and executives.

Although customer support teams usually track many metrics through surveys, IQS (Internal Quality Score) is the only metric which is only calculated through conversation reviews. **Over half (53%) of customer service teams who have a QA program use reviews to track their IQS** - a 6% increase from last year.

Quality Criteria

Scorecard rating categories represent support goals and demonstrate customer service priorities. The following show what those surveyed evaluate their agents on:



Other categories for evaluation:

Completeness of answer

Formatting

Thoroughness of response

Extra mile

Expectation management

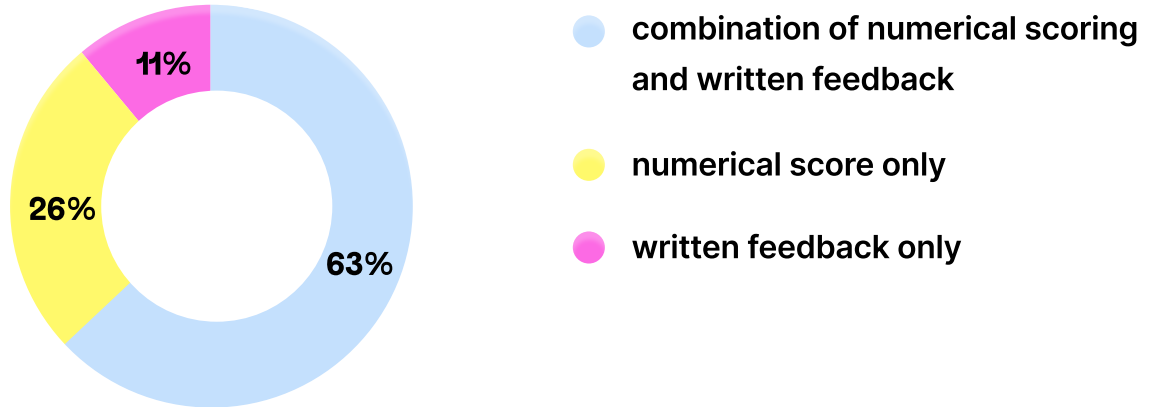
GDPR compliance

Readability

Validation

Review feedback

How review feedback is provided:



91% agree that conversation reviews improve their customer service quality.

Gain a customer support edge in 2022

When we released last year's report, we focused on how the support landscape was rapidly changing in an increasingly unpredictable world. Since then, maintaining support quality has become even more of a challenge for many support teams – especially as teams try to grow, grapple with the ongoing challenges of the pandemic, and keep up with accelerating customer expectations.

We're now at a critical tipping point where businesses need to embrace change or risk losing valued customers to competitors who are moving with changing tides.

Tellingly, this year's report found that measuring the impact of customer support is a top priority for many forward-thinking businesses – a clear indication that businesses are starting to view customer support as the value driver it really is. But even with the right data, providing quality support at internet scale is easier said than done.

No one can predict the future, but through surveys and analyses like this report, we were able to identify three clear trends emerging in the market in 2022.

Support teams need support to thrive

More businesses are seeing great customer support as critical to improving a business's bottom line. That means investing in support agent onboarding and coaching is no longer optional. Plus, with support teams facing increased pressures from the pandemic and the dawn of

the great resignation, it's more important than ever to support your support team – so they can better support your customers.

Savvysupport teams are investing in setting up the right support systems and coaching. This year 80% of customer service teams report conducting regular internal reviews – up from 69% of teams last year.

Proactive and self-serve support are more important than ever

Scaling fast, empathetic support requires the right technology. The good news? More support teams are tooling up – a significant 85% of support teams already invest in proactive support, such as in-product messaging and contextual help content. What's more, leveraging modern tools is paying off: 73% of customer service professionals agree that investing in self-serve support, like bot technology and automation, makes their teams more efficient by reducing their workload.

On top of that, 70% plan to invest more in proactive and self-serve support technology for the year ahead Why? Because they see that investments in those areas yield clear efficiency gains, while still empowering them to keep their customer service personal and helpful. Keen to gain a competitive edge this year? Don't go it alone – get a helping hand from personalized automation in the form of targeted chatbots, contextual help content, personalized product tours, and more.

An integrated tech stack is no longer optional

The lines between customer support, engagement, and success are becoming increasingly blurred. Support is now a key component in a

business's growth strategy, or as we like to say “customer retention is the new conversion.” Arming customer-facing teams with integrated tools that enable them to provide consistent, human-centric support across the customer journey, through multiple channels is essential. Adopting a unified communications platform, one with a central customer record that helps you unify every team and function, is crucial to success.

Cheers,



Bobby Stapleton

Director Customer Support at Intercom

Want to access more resources on Customer Support trends, best-practices, and more?

Check out the [Klaus](#), [Intercom](#), and [Aircall](#) blogs.