

Customer Contact Week 2018 Onsite Review



RapportBoost offers Maci (Machine Augmented Conversational Intelligence) to optimize the conversations live chat agents have with customers. They started out by addressing the premise that emotion had been the missing element in chat and worked to introduce emotional intelligence. Their products help chat agent supervisors and trainers manage their teams, allowing professionals to provide consistent, objective feedback and train their live chat agents without manual transcript review. One agent can handle up to 3-4 chats at a time while maintaining the same level of engagement. They also believe in human-assisted chatbots and can work with any chat platform to analyze the conversation.

The founders were Harvard-educated, one a professor who helped create a series of algorithms designed to produce successful outcomes, creating a funnel for chat and SMS communication. One of their highlight case studies is with weight loss specialist Jenny Craig, which wanted to revamp their chat strategy. They had 2 teams of 20 people, with a conversion rate running at about 30%. RapportBoost obtained their chat data and ran it through Maci which produced conversational insights that were used to determine which words helped to close sales. This knowledge enabled supervisors to give recommendations to the chat team. The agents choose the right path to close the sale. The supervisors could then give recommendations to coach agents on the chat team. Each agent has a colored dot on their screen to indicate if they are doing the right thing. Within two weeks of delivering the insight, Jenny Craig's conversion rate shot up to about 60%. Co-founder and CEO Tony Medrano delved deeper into the concept of developing chat intelligence.

What is "Maci" and how can it be used to improve the quality of live chat?

Maci is RapportBoost.AI's Conversational-Platform-as-a-Service that classifies, models and analyzes every word, message and conversation in a given data set across hundreds of dimensions. The cPaaS then performs hundreds of thousands of simulations to derive and test the actions taken in live chat conversations that matter most to the KPI's brands choose, such as conversion rate, order size, retention, renewal, cost per interaction, first contact resolution rate and customer satisfaction.

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It is mission-critical for retailers to engage potential visitors in channels they prefer and by building true rapport. Conversational Commerce is becoming more mainstream by the day and is the next generation of retail. Millennials preferred method of purchase is now short-form communication (i.e. chat, SMS), and brands that implement it will grow market share. Chat lacks the vocal cues of phone and the opportunity for lengthy exchanges of email. Live chat optimization recovers the emotion, nuances and context that get left out of digital, text-based communication.

Why is it important for a solution to have the capability to analyze an infinite number of variables as well as larger data sets than had previously been possible?

Maci augments the intelligence of human agents, which means making statistically viable recommendations requires evaluating as much relevant data in a myriad of ways as possible.

To give your readers an idea, we recently worked with a medium-sized customer doing e-commerce with about \$25 million in annual revenue in a highly competitive market. They gave us chat data consisting of about 200,000 visits. That equals a medium size data set – 3 million messages – enough to draw some insights. Anything less would mean some situations were not included in the analysis. That can affect the conversational insights that Maci recommends and impact the company's ability to provide top-tier service.

How can companies ensure that there is a "human-in-the-loop" to maintain brand equity and build enduring customer relationships in chat interactions?

Bots struggle to engage with consumers authentically. They're not good at selling; they often don't reflect the brand identity. For brands that want to convey a fun, fresh personality, bots feel robotic, and people pick up on that. Brands that care about having authentic conversations with high value clients do not use bots as brand ambassadors.

One reason bots fail so frequently is that many use simple decision trees. You can think of them as a programmed menu that includes possible questions and answers. The problem arises when a customer deviates from the script (as humans often do), at which point the bot reverts to the main menu or provides a canned answer. Potential customers feel devalued, not engaged.

What differentiates your solution from other similar offerings available on the market?

While Maci does fall under the umbrella of being classified as an Artificial Intelligence technology, we employ it to augment human intelligence. More specifically, we use AI to improve chat agent performance. We're confident in this approach for two reasons:

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It's the best application of the technology now. In its current implementation, AI is capable of two things: (1) automating repetitive tasks by predicting outcomes on data that has been labeled by human beings, and (2) enhancing human decision-making by feeding problems to algorithms developed by humans. Our Conversational-Platform-as-a-Service helps the humans behind successful sales and customer support interactions perform better at their jobs. We do this by employing predictive outcomes based on unique data and customers. Maci helps chat coaches develop unbiased, effective training strategies to empower live chat agent performance and achieve significant operational gains.

The emotional intelligence (EQ) of humans is what drives engagement and lifetime value. EQ is a human competence that's difficult to teach machines because it involves intuition, empathy and moral judgment. These traits make up the qualitative aspects of human interaction that are difficult to quantify and draw insights from using data. By testing variables in conversations across hundreds of dimensions, we're able to architect a conversation that will most often result in success for the brand. Better conversations are enjoyed more by both the agent and the potential customer and most often result in success.