MAKING CONVERSATIONS FLOW

SMART KNOWLEDGE

– From knowledge silos to one collective intelligence

FROM KNOWLEDGE SILOS TO ONE COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE

Imagine you are in a supermarket and you approach an assistant to ask where the bread is. You'd expect a short answer and perhaps a gesture pointing you in the right direction. You don't expect to be told where to buy the best ham sandwich, or the fact that bread is available to buy at all grocery stores across the country, including a wide range of petrol stations. After all, you are in this particular shop for a reason, and it should be obvious to anyone that you are looking to find bread in the shop that you are in.

Regardless of what channel customers use to contact you, they want to deal with someone who will listen, understand and can put things in relevant context. A person who provides answers that are relevant rather than technically correct and, in best-case scenario, even predict what will be asked next. Naturally, customers expect the same answer regardless of how they interact with you. The key is to gather all the information into a smart database of facts; a smart knowledge base.

The factors that distinguish a smart knowledge base from a traditional FAQ is that it interprets the customer's questions based on their context, it is self-learning and keeps the conversation alive by providing the right answer and guiding the customer to the right channel. A smart knowledge base also simplifies everyday life for the customer service staff, especially for employees who are new to the job. It helps the staff to serve customers more efficiently, with greater precision and in a coherent manner. The information is entered into the system once and is then available to everyone who is granted access. Both internally and externally.

In this white paper we talk about the possibilities afforded by a smart knowledge base and how these possibilities can be used in the very best way. We also highlight some success stories.

STEER CLEAR OF KNOWLEDGE SILOS

All organisations hold a lot of information, but this information is often stored in systems that are separated from each other. The risk here is that customers may get different answers to the same question depending on channel and system. Even if both answers are formally correct, they may be perceived as unaligned, which can result in the customer experiencing contact with the organisation as being non-uniform and confusing. Consider each contact as a customer interaction, and that it is in every interaction with the customer that we build good, long-term relationships. It is this feeling of having your attention that creates loyalty.
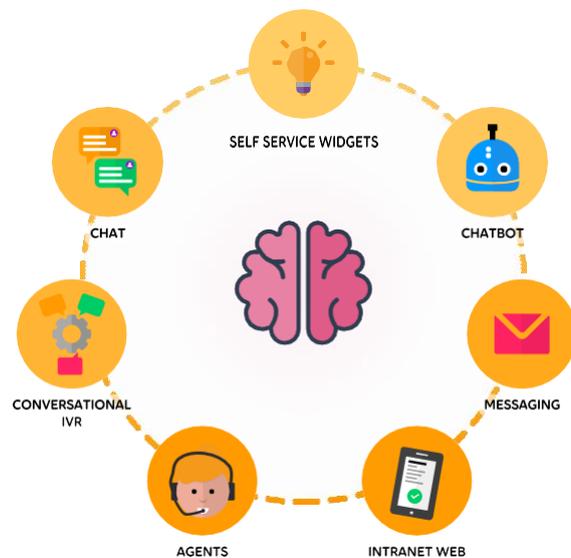

A smart knowledge base is the brain that provides the entire organisation with consistent information

LIKE A GUARDIAN ANGEL

A smart knowledge base can also be linked to different tools that facilitate self-service. For example, a chatbot can make itself known when and where the customer needs help, retrieve a precise and personal response from the collective intelligence and finally help complete the task. A self-service function that works well improves customer satisfaction and at the same time relieves pressure on customer service.

One organisation that has seen rewards from this solution is the Swedish telecom operator Halebop. They reduced incoming contacts to customer service staff by 20 per cent once they introduced a smart knowledge base. When the customer first inputs their question in the online form, they receive suggestions for answers based on that question. In many cases, this means the case is solved without the customer having to talk to a live agent or even sending off an email.
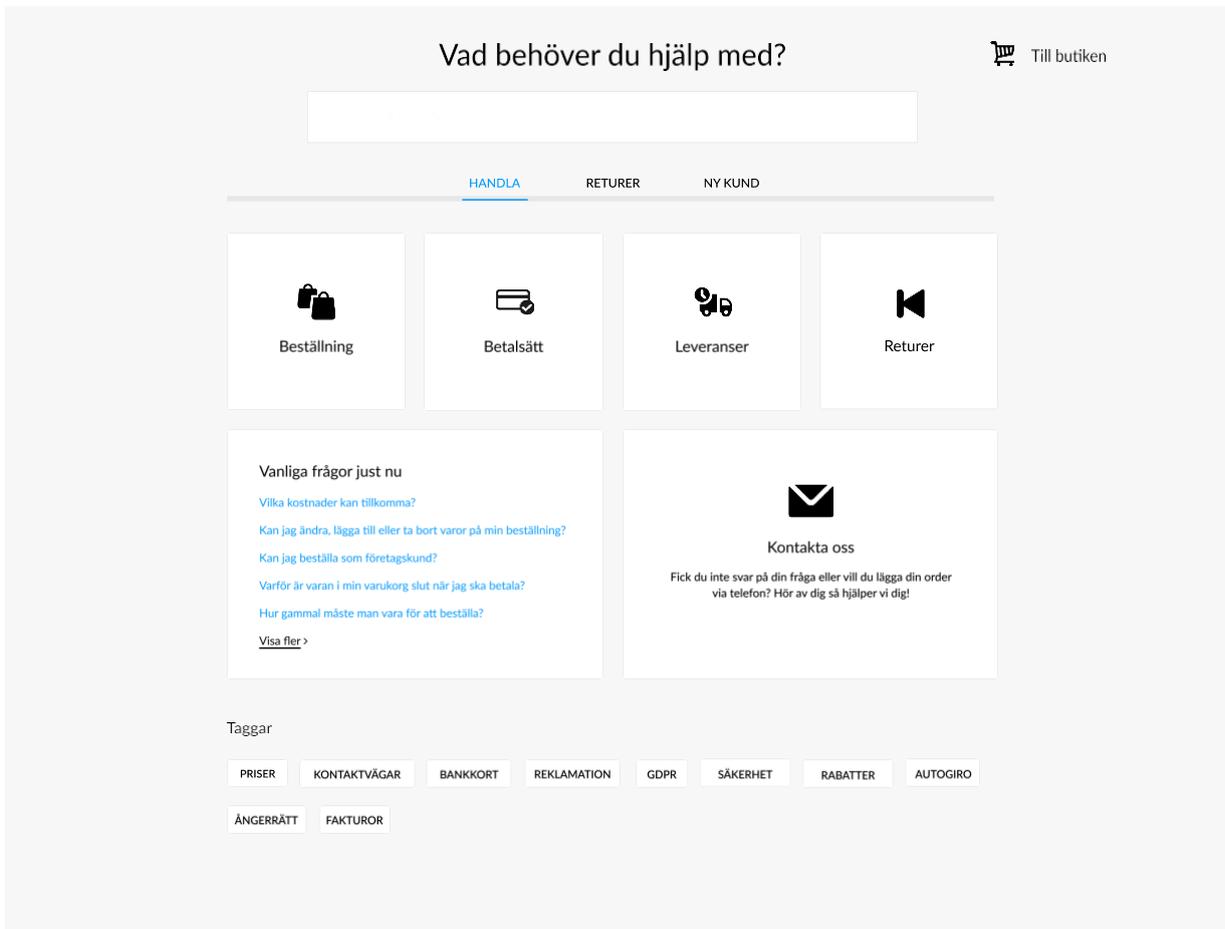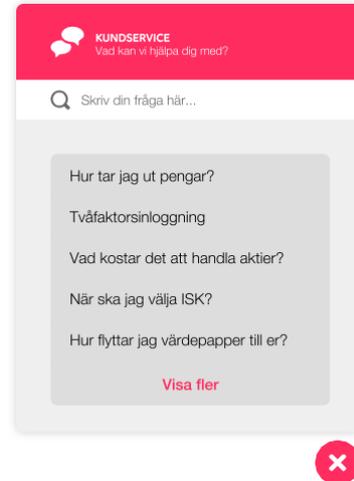
STRUCTURE AND MAINTENANCE

A smart knowledge base is a powerful tool, but to reach its full potential, the interaction needs to feel intuitive, and the database needs to be filled with content that deals with the issues raised by employees and customers in a precise and friendly manner. An introductory hackathon is a fun way to add content. But success also assumes that we understand that information needs to be kept fresh. Had it been food, it would have been stored in the refrigerator and been restocked now and then! Therefore, we need a plan to create, structure and maintain the information.

For the content of a smart knowledge base to be available and relevant for as many groups as possible, it is also important to structure it in a way that suits the various target groups. Invite people with the right skills to a workshop where you put yourselves in the shoes of both the customers and staff.

Together, you explore their needs and ways of thinking and, using this as your template, you can create purposeful content and arrange it in interfaces that serve both your staff and your different customer groups well.

EVERYONE CAN WRITE, CAN'T THEY?

Yes, it is true that most people who have attended school can write. But creating content that works requires much more than making sure letters and commas are in the right place. It calls for a person who enjoys writing and structuring information, and who is self-assured at the keyboard.

So, select your writers based on the right criteria; talent, interest and understanding of your customers and internal processes rather than one who is good in general and perceived as a good ambassador. We would also recommend that your assigned writers do the writing at a time that is specifically set aside for the purpose, rather than having to do it once a gap appears in their schedule.

WRITE FOR YOUR READERS!

All industries and workplaces use their own jargon and internal abbreviations. Regardless of whether the content is to be used by your customer service staff or consumed directly by your customers, it should only contain expressions that someone outside your business can understand. Also, keep in mind that the purpose of the content is to help the reader to quickly find answers, rather than making them experts in the field. Additionally, expect the reader to "browse" through the content, which means clarity always trumps the literary experience (not saying that you can't have both).

Avoid negatives, write clear headings and use bulleted lists when appropriate. Make sure that the right keywords lead to the right guide. Use headings that clearly explain what the article is about. An article with a surprise at the end won't fit the bill in this case.

Sometimes, it may also be wise to consider the recipient's state of mind. If there is any reason to believe that the person who is looking for answers is stressed or anxious. For example, in relation to an insurance claim or illness, it is particularly important that the article is formulated in a simple, clear and helpful manner.

LET THE PERSONALITY OF YOUR ORGANISATION SHINE THROUGH

The articles are part of the customer journey and brand experience, and although they are in their simplest form, it is good to develop guidelines for how to write and the feeling that you want to convey. It is usually a good idea to let an editor or copywriter review the linguistic style you have used.

OVERVIEW IN AN INSTANT

A good structure is a must for a smart knowledge base to offer an intuitive experience. Focus your attention on creating a good framework so that customers and internal staff understand where they are in the flow making it easy for them to filter out irrelevant information. Our philosophy is to provide relevant information as briefly and to the point as possible based on questions and context.

Also, keep in mind that different people search in different ways. For example, an employee in customer service often enters keywords in the search function, while a customer might benefit from having smart categories and interactive features. You could, for example, offer a clickable list covering different areas, or let a box pop up at the appropriate time. This allows the customer to feel that information is provided in an easy way that matches their needs. But having said that, we are all different. Offer different entry points that work for different styles of searching and finding information.

DRESSED FOR SUCCESS

The interface between the user and the information contained in a smart knowledge base should be just like a comfortable pair of shoes. You should be able to walk a long way in them and preferably not even notice that you have them on your feet. A benchmark is that a tool for internal use should be comfortable to look at and interact with throughout the entire work day. In short, it should be on the employee's terms.

It is also important to design a solution that makes the customer feel welcome and that conveys a sense of trust, within the same four digital walls, throughout the whole interaction. The interface that meets the customers should be embedded in a way that blends in well and that is in line with the current design language. Don't make the customer feel herded from one website to another. For the customer's peace of mind, it is also beneficial to adopt a personal approach and to present the relevant contact paths at the right time.

TRADERA IMPLEMENTS SMART KNOWLEDGE BASE

Tradera is one of Sweden's largest online marketplaces with over two million registered users, and just as many visitors to the site every week. In 2018, they built a new knowledge portal based on Telia ACE and gathered all of the company's knowledge, processes and routines into one place.

The new portal helps customer service staff. It is handy for them to always have easy access to relevant and correct information and the training period for new employees has been considerably reduced. For Tradera, it is also useful to be able to work with several different answers to the same question depending on the reader.

"Today, we can respond quickly with notices to both members and customer service employees if something out of the ordinary has occurred. This has proven to be extremely valuable. We have also implemented the Juno chatbot, which retrieves its information from the same source. It is available to our buyers and sellers around the clock and answers over 100,000 questions every month".

- Johanna Sahlberg, customer service manager at Tradera.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICE

The customer interaction of the future is a seamless journey between channels over time. For example, an initial chatbot conversation can easily switch to a video meeting with the staff at customer service and historical data follows along in every step. Technology makes it possible for us to create an ecosystem where everything is connected, and conversations are allowed to change and develop in line with customer expectations.
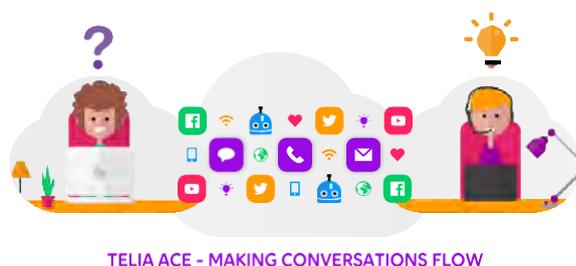
The technology choices we make now are about a lot more than selecting the right functions. It's about choosing solutions that can develop together with the business. Choices that allow all information to flow freely and be omnipresent at a time when Google is our reference point.

With the right platform it's only your creativity and innovation power that sets the limits for how you design the customer interaction of the future: one where information lays the foundation for a good relationship.

The customer service employee automatically receives a response

TELIA ACE – MAKING CONVERSATIONS FLOW

MORE INFO

Do you want to learn more about the customer interaction of the future?

Let us show how your customer conversations can flow seamlessly by booking a free demo at:

showcase.ace.teliacompany.com