## What's Buzzing in CX World This Month?

### Is everything in the AI CX World a Winner?

While it may be exciting that AI will bring new insights to viewer customers into the skills and insights of the upcoming Winter Olympics

How the Winter Olympics is Bringing AI-Powered Customer Experiences to A New Audience  - Customer Experience Magazine

it appear there are still some slippery issues in CX AI .

The seeming tsunami of enthusiasm for AI in CX may need careful coaching if the costs of operation do not match the benefits. Geoff Spick from a Gartner report

*The rising cost of AI was a thorny issue across 2025, and one that will likely get worse for the rest of the decade. The cost of back-end AI hardware (silicon, RAM, data centres and energy) is rocketing. So, even a midsize business with modest AI and cloud use for customer or employee experience could see support service costs rise as vendors change their cost models or keep ticking up prices at renewal.*

*Which has led to business analyst firm Gartner suggesting that by 2030:*

*Cost Per Resolution for GenAI will Exceed $3, higher than many B2C offshore human agents And that regulatory changes related to AI will increase assisted service volume by 30%. While none of this addresses customer preference for human or AI help, it could throw another curveball into the executive decision-making process.*

*"Customer service leaders are determined to use AI to reduce costs, but return on those investments is far from guaranteed," said Patrick Quinlan, Senior Director Analyst in the Gartner Customer Service and Support practice.*

*"Full automation will be prohibitively expensive for most organizations; instead, leading organizations will use AI to drive customer engagement rather than to cut costs."*

*With often hidden costs such as licensing fees, integration work, compliance reviews, and constant monitoring to prevent AI drift. Then there's the well-known and dependable use of outsourcing (ignoring the yo-yo debate around reshoring and juggling between AI and human agents).*

### Some Hope?

*However, the AI creator giants of this world are starting to focus on lower-cost AI. Reducing the need for expensive hardware and the use of smaller datasets for limited functions, like customer service. That could see AI prices fall pretty sharply*

Gartner Predicts AI Customer Service Costs Will Exceed Those of Offshore Human Agents Soon - Customer Experience Magazine

Another insight into the potential dangers of the AI CX minefield and whether AI is hitting the mark are explored by Sandra Radlovacki in the article
 ***The AI Satisfaction Illusion: Leadership vs Reality***

*Most companies deploying conversational AI seem convinced they've cracked the customer experience puzzle. Internally, the story looks reassuring. Containment rates are up, response times are down, and automation volumes keep rising. Twilio's latest global research shows 90% of business leaders believe their customers are satisfied with their AI-powered service experiences. In reality, only 59% say they're actually satisfied.That 31-point gap exposes a fundamental misalignment. At scale, businesses are mistaking operational efficiency for customer satisfaction, confusing automation performance with real experience quality.*

*Counting Success Where Customers Feel Friction*

*The rapid rollout of conversational AI has created a convenient measurement trap. Programmes are evaluated using internal metrics like deflection rates, reduced agent load, and lower handling times, which demonstrate that automated systems are working as designed. What they don't reveal is whether customers feel helped or understood at the end of the journey.*

*Customers Aren't Anti-AI*

*Sixty-nine percent of consumers say they prefer human agents, yet 72% would choose an AI agent over a person if their issue were guaranteed to be resolved faster.* ***Outcome matters more than empathy, until the system fails.***

*The orchestration collapses most commonly at the point of escalation. Only 15% of customers report a seamless transition from AI to a human agent. Customers routinely re-explain issues, repeat identity checks, and reset conversations. any CX teams are building experiences on unstable foundations. Fifty-nine percent of organisations expect to replace their conversational AI platforms within a year, and 80% say tracking new models is increasingly costly, creating constant changes for agents and customers alike.*

*As a result, the perception gap widens even more. Leaders judge success through efficiency metrics like containment and response speed, while customers measure effort, clarity, continuity, and emotional ease.*

The AI Satisfaction Illusion: Leadership vs Reality

**So What things could leaders be looking at to avoid some of the issues identified?**

**One is Predictiive AI**

In a very comprehensive article in Customer Experience Magazine David Dungay explores ***Predictive CX: How the Smartest Brands Solve Problems Before Customers Notice***

*Customers today don't want faster replies. They want fewer reasons to reach out in the first place. For years, customer experience teams optimised around speed: shorter wait times, faster tickets, quicker resolution. But shaving minutes off a support interaction doesn't matter much if the customer keeps having to start another one.*

*This is why Predictive CX is becoming the real frontier. Not responding better, but knowing sooner. Not reacting faster, but preventing altogether. It's the difference between ambulance-chasing and public health. One treats symptoms. The other stops them from spreading.*

*Predictive CX isn't really complicated. It's all about using data, signals, and AI to figure out what a customer will need next, and then doing something about it before they ever ask.*

*Most companies today still operate in response mode. A customer complains. A ticket gets logged. Someone jumps in and puts the fire out. The better ones do it quickly and politely. But it's still firefighting.*

*Predictive CX changes the order of operations:*

>*__Reactive CX__ = the customer raises a hand, and a company reacts.*
>*__Proactive CX__ = a company spots an issue forming and reaches out.*
>*__Predictive CX__ = the system knows the issue is likely, calculates the best intervention,*

*and acts before the customer has a reason to care.*

*The engine of this is predictive customer analytics: models that spot patterns in behaviour, product usage, sentiment, past support history, intent signals, or digital body language. Add decision intelligence (what should happen next), plug it into orchestration (where and how it happens), and you get a system that prevents problems instead of processing them.*

*The Unfair Advantage In CX Noticing First*

*When customers get frustrated, churn, stall, ghost, or escalate, what they're really saying is: you should've seen this coming. Predictive CX is how you turn hindsight into infrastructure. It makes the invisible visible early enough to do something about it. Not to message more, interfere more, or prove you know more, but to intervene better.*

*The teams doing predictive customer support well are already changing what good looks like. They're lowering inbound volume without ignoring customers. They're making support better by making some support unnecessary. They're making outreach fewer but smarter. That balance is the whole game.*

*If you're waiting for predictive systems to feel perfect before deploying them, you'll be experimenting forever while braver competitors start getting unfairly good at being early. __Start with one signal. One intervention. One outcome you can prove changed because you saw it coming.__*

Predictive CX: How the Smartest Brands Solve Problems Before Customers Notice - Customer Experience Magazine

See https://icxi.com/for all details of the institute's newest products including the new Standard for the Health Care sector

The International Patient Experience Standard IPEXS 2026