

Customer Service Seekers Prefer Bypassing Humans

But many would take a person over a chatbot

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The role of chatbots in ecommerce has evolved from a sales tool to a customer service assistant. These AI-powered helpers can answer questions 24/7 and don't make users wait on hold, but not everyone sees the benefits of interacting with chatbots in lieu of other channels.

When US internet users want to resolve a customer service issue quickly, more than half turn to chat, according to a July 2018 survey by [CGS](#), a business process outsourcing firm. Phone (24%), email (13%) and social media (11%) are less frequently used channels. Most prefer to bypass speaking to a human because they take longer to respond (32%) and are less available (32%).

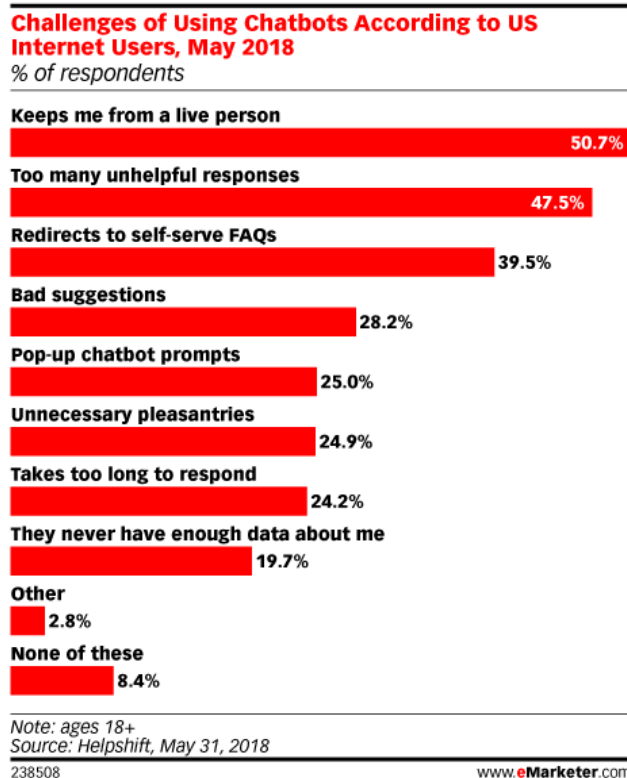
Yet 40% of these customers would prefer a human over a chatbot. Why?

Fully 41% of respondents said chatbots don't provide enough detailed answers, while 37% said chatbots aren't helpful generally. Six in 10 said they would give up on a chatbot if the issue is too complex, and 41% would do the same if the chatbot directs them to FAQs.

This isn't the time for deep personalization — most don't care that a chatbot conversation feels impersonal (13%). They just want to get a problem resolved quickly. More than one-third do expect a customer

service rep to be familiar with and have access to all of their prior interactions, though.

Roughly half of the US internet users seeking customer service help in a recent study by [Helpshift](#) said dealing with **chatbots was keeping them from connecting to a live person**. Additional beefs with chatbots echoed those in the CGS survey: too many unhelpful responses and the tendency to redirect to self-serve FAQs.



According to [RichRelevance](#), more US internet users thought chatbots using AI to answer customer service questions instead of humans was **"creepy" than "cool"** (40.7% vs. 27.0%).

The sometimes unhelpful nature of chatbots aside, it's possible that it could take more time for consumers to get accustomed to this type of customer service. According to CGS, 60% of US internet users ages 35 to 44 think companies are moving too quickly to replace humans with chatbots. This sentiment was shared by fewer younger and older consumers, but still one-third of those 18 to 24 and 42% of those 55 to

64 had concerns about companies making it harder to connect with live customer service agents.