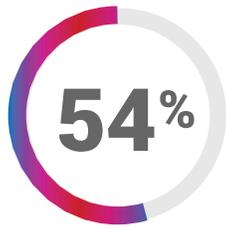




Royal Caribbean Cruises Maximizes Contact Center Efficiency with Conversational Virtual Agent

TRAVEL & HOSPITALITY

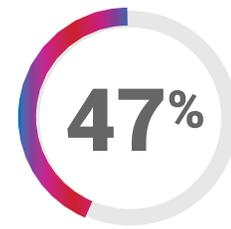
Success by the Numbers



Survey Completion
Up from Single Digits



Agent Minutes
Freed Up/Month



Decrease in
AHT

Challenges	Solutions	Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Overwhelming call volumes, leading to long hold timesInefficient customer service processes increased customer frustrationNeeded a differentiated customer experience that also maximized contact center efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Successfully automated a repetitive process that was bogging down agents, followed by three additional solutionsUsed Conversational Artificial Intelligence (AI) to engage callers and offer better containmentStreamlined the handoff between self-service and customer service reps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Significantly improved IVR containmentFreed up more than 100,000 agent minutes per monthBoosted survey finish rates from single digits to 54%

Royal Caribbean Cruises is an award-winning global cruise brand that delivers innovative and exceptional vacations to customers around the world.

Royal Caribbean began its partnership with SmartAction to integrate operational efficiency with seamless customer service. As a cruise line, the brand is in the business of providing exceptional experiences, including in the contact center. With customer self-service automation, Royal Caribbean could better focus its live representatives on high-value, human-only customer engagements.

Introduction

Boasting over 35 ships visiting 250+ global destinations, Royal Caribbean stands as the second largest cruise line in the world. The popular travel service serves five million customers annually, who engage with the company from initial pre-booking inquiries to post-vacation feedback.

Booking a cruise can require considerable effort: customers must juggle their decision between reviews, budgets, destinations, weather conditions, and amenities. Making this process as easy as possible is

vital in creating an overall experience that ensures customer loyalty. Royal Caribbean used its contact center as the one-stop solution for guests, whether it be for bookings, payment processes, checking remaining rewards balances, sending invoices and order confirmations, and more. Yet these many inquiry types were creating high volumes of inbound calls that drove up average handle times, and with it, customer frustration. In addition, Royal Caribbean was struggling to collect Customer Satisfaction surveys via email, and needed a way to improve survey completion rates.

Solution

SmartAction has helped Royal Caribbean re-define their self-service strategy delivering forward thinking solutions that have prepared the company for growth, innovation, and expansion. With efficiency and an enhanced customer experience in mind, SmartAction worked with Royal Caribbean to ensure customers had effective conversations, not just robotic exchanges, when they dialed in for customer service.

Contrary to the high cost and ongoing expense of the traditional professional services model, SmartAction's cloud-based "AI-brain" was purpose-built for the contact center, with templates that support every industry and pre-built components that service hundreds of call types and chats from order management to roadside assistance. This made it quick and easy for Royal Caribbean to implement natural language understanding with zero professional services within an affordable, predictable usage pricing model. After customizing SmartAction's proprietary "AI-brain" to support Royal Caribbean's specific needs, Royal Caribbean was able to introduce AI automation sooner than expected. Since every SmartAction solution includes a suite of services and benefits as part of the per-minute-usage, Royal Caribbean now had a dedicated team of CX experts that provided ongoing customization, tuning, and enhancements to the application for improved process and containment over time.

It began with a Payments solution, a natural language application capable of securely processing payments, checking balances, and sending booking invoices using reservation ID number as the unique identifier. While some Payment solutions can be simple, this dynamic application opened the door for additional solutions.

Transformation Journey



Soon after Payments, Royal Caribbean launched an Invoice Request application to allow both guests and travel agents to quickly and easily request a copy of a recent travel invoice. This helps customers to keep their trips in order, as cruise guests sometimes have balances due for multiple trips and need to separate the charges out. Other times, their invoice was simply lost or sent to spam. Next came the Loyalty Program solution, which informs Loyalty Program Members of their status, point balance, benefits, and any other details on the account. This helps Royal Caribbean's most loyal members remain up-to-date with their account – most importantly their Loyalty number, which is needed when creating new bookings. Lastly, Royal Caribbean introduced an automated Survey campaign to couple with outbound emails asking about customer satisfaction.

For all solutions that SmartAction implemented, there is integration with the agent desktops so that Royal Caribbean live agents are available for additional questions and support. If guests need or request to be transferred, all of the data from the call is passed to the agent, reducing repetition for guests and equipping agents to provide better service.

Results

Combined, these solutions have cut customer effort in half and streamlined the handoff between automation and agents. With SmartAction's conversational AI platform handling up to 100,000 minutes per month, Royal Caribbean's agents have been able to focus on providing excellent care for the other steps in the customer journey. Additionally, they were able to boost their survey response rate to 54% - up from single digits - by adding an intelligent IVR component to their offering.

“SmartAction has helped us solve the problems we were tasked with: improve efficiency and enhance the customer experience.”
- Cristy Mestre Quintero, Director of Operations, Trade Support & Service, Royal Caribbean