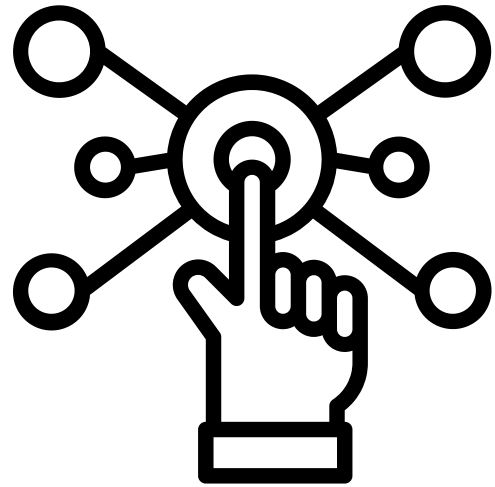


Introduction

Providing customers and agents with robust, fully integrated self-service tools can lower an insurer's costs and improve customer satisfaction. Whether a policyholder needs help at 2 a.m. with a policy change or claim, or an agent on the road seeks coverage details, many companies aspire to full self-service capabilities. But few are delivering.

While chatbots, advanced customer portals and some other tools have begun to address the demand for self-service, self-service automation represents the next step. It can automate routine questions and transactions, acting as a digital agent with a human touch while offering the ability to escalate to a live agent as needed. The right solution can be a win-win for insurers and customers, while the wrong solution can irritate customers and ruin a carrier's reputation.

As Accenture wrote recently, digital self-service "remains a largely untapped opportunity for the insurance industry as a whole. Those that are creating self-contained conversational experiences that satisfy customers' needs--rather than simply answering FAQs or pointing customers to where they can get help--are generating higher levels of satisfaction with significant customer service cost savings and reduced reliance on a challenging labor market."



Moving beyond chatbots

Chatbots were the first widely deployed customer care automation technology, but the bloom is off the rose. Once seen as nice-to-have, chatbots are now ubiquitous. However, consumers dislike them, and customer care executives have found their benefits underwhelming, to say the least. This is because chatbots can do little more than provide answers to FAQs, handle simple lead qualification or gather user information before escalation to a live agent. Plus, their textual user interface is laborious. As a result, they rarely alleviate pressure on call centers, and sometimes can even cause damage to the brand.

Operating higher up the technology curve, digital self-service solutions offer far more robust capabilities than chatbots. Like chatbots, they transact with customers via messaging, yet they more closely mimic the behavior of human reps and leverage artificial intelligence to deliver better customer support.

Meeting Insurance Needs

What does self-service automation offer insurers and their customers?

There are multiple use cases where the technology can empower customers to exchange information on their terms and timetable, boosting convenience and satisfaction while delivering the information that insurers need. Self-service automation that draws on highly sophisticated AI can be an extension of a brand, meeting customers where they are, without the need for downloading an app. That can happen on a mobile phone, on WhatsApp or on other social media, where solutions can personalize the user's experience and help them navigate to the next step for onboarding, filing a claim, etc.

Importantly, digital self-service also can draw instantly on machine learning, including what's known as natural language understanding (NLUs) and large language model (LLMs), to not only assess the information that a customer has provided or that an insurer has in its systems but to draw on more abstract sources of information, such as social media posts or SEC filings. That additional information allows for more accurate pricing, if a quote is being requested, and helps spot any attempts at fraud. However, these NLUs and LLMs do pose a security risk as they could be vulnerable to cyber attacks and they run the risk of delivering inaccurate or misleading information. When combined with a self-service platform that works to control security and access, these tools can become immeasurably useful to customers.

The pandemic has created an environment in which call centers struggle to retain and attract talent. Customers, who suddenly expect rapid, 24/7 customer service, are not only calling contact centers more frequently but have greater frustrations that they take out on call center staff. The results are high stress levels and burnout among employees, low morale, and higher-than-usual employee turnover. Customers are left to suffer. The impact of these challenges is increasing costs and decreasing customer satisfaction –the exact opposite of what every business wants to achieve when it comes to customer care.

Self-service tools can tackle those problems and enhance insurance activities by:

- Gathering policyholder information and loss details to submit a claim.
- Updating coverage information to adjust policy limits or endorsements after, for example, a client purchases a car or builds an addition on a home.
- Confirming information about an existing insurance policy when someone is securing a loan.
- Getting a quote from an insurer after sharing key details about coverage needs.
- Renewing an insurance policy and updating any details about insured properties and assets.
- Providing information about policy enhancements or restrictions, or ensuring customers and agents are kept current on policy terms.
- Directing policyholders to approved service providers, such as auto body shops, after an accident.
- Taking and processing payments.

Meeting Customer Demands

Changing demographics coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic have accelerated customer interest in self-service and digital experiences.

When the pandemic first hit, millions of people who normally spent their earnings on dining, entertainment and travel suddenly found themselves stuck at home. With no commutes and the barriers between work and home obliterated, many consumers turned to digital devices and digital services to decompress from the many pressures brought on by the pandemic.

This change appears to be permanent. Consumers are increasingly shifting to digital platforms to address their day-to-day needs, and this shift has changed customer care. For insurance, this means that customers are eager to research available cars, buy a new car and purchase insurance for the new car all in one sitting without speaking to a live person. To meet this new customer demand, insurers need to leverage advanced self-service tools.



In another important trend, consumers have become more fickle. This trend began to appear before the pandemic, but COVID has served as a catalyst. Long gone are the days when people stayed loyal to brands for decades. Instead, consumers are shopping around for great service and lower costs. One bad customer care experience could cause you to lose that customer for life. And to take that further, that customer will share their negative experience with friends, family and their social media networks. The impact of one can grow to thousands.

Launching successful automation

Successful automation begins with a review of your existing customer contact channels and what types of customer inquiries come up most frequently. Building customer service use cases, defining key performance indicators (KPIs) and designing your ideal customer experience are essential steps.

Start by identifying the most frequent customer interactions by type, as well as an estimate of the cost, to get an understanding of where automation can have the most impact. Survey your contact center staff, through interviews or polling, to better understand the nature of these customer interactions.

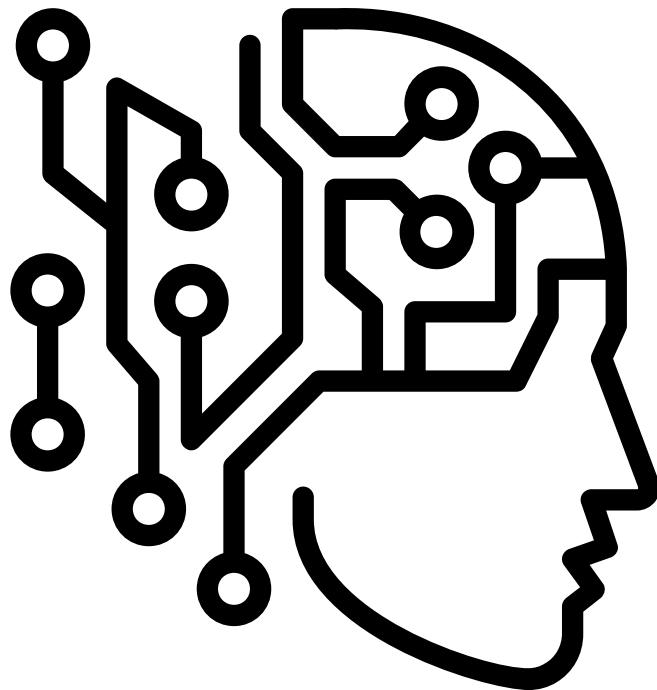
This process of prioritization will help to identify inquiries that can be automated relatively quickly for delivering quick wins, as well as other inquiries that require more effort for subsequent automation efforts.

In addition to identifying high-priority customer interactions to automate, another important step is reviewing the technical environment to see how the business back end can be plugged into a messaging interface to achieve your goals. Some use cases, such as FAQs or simple troubleshooting, can be stood up without any back-end integrations. But the most value in automation will lie in use cases that leverage one or many back-end systems. You'll need to determine what information or transactional capability is needed to fully automate each use case, where that information can be found and how it can be accessed and used.

If APIs are already built out and exposed, you'll be good to go. But you may find that an API needed to successfully automate a use case isn't exposed or isn't built. When you come across this scenario, you'll either need to prioritize API development with IT or find a suitable workaround.

CX Success

Digital self-service offers many benefits to organizations, large and small. But to get the most out of your solution, you need to make sure it's well-designed, well-built and well-maintained. With the right team and the right approach, even those organizations that still rely on decades-old systems can transform how they handle customer engagement and build brand loyalty.



Frequent Uses for Digital Self-Service

Quote to Bind

- Browse policy plans
- Get policy recommendations
- Generate a custom quote
- Manage forms
- Purchase policy
- Make a payment

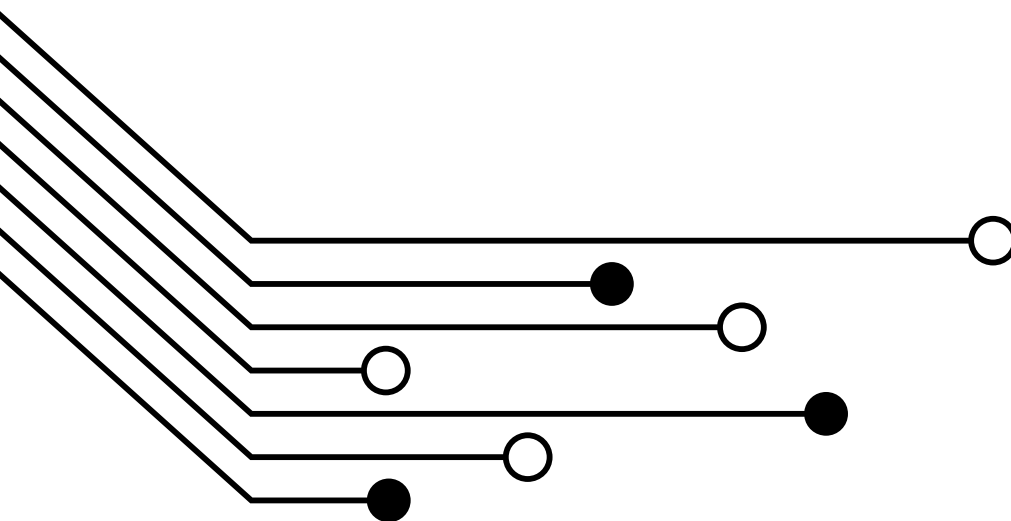
Claims Management

- Report an incident
- Find a provider
- Manage appointments
- Manage documents
- Check claim status
- Look up claim history

Policy and Billing Admin

- Update payment information
- Check payment history
- View billing
- Look up policy
- Request a card
- Set payment notifications
- Renew or upgrade policy

Among the roughly 600,000 insurance customer contacts that Pypestream's technology handles annually, there are 87,000 checks on claim status and 67,000 on payment status. Roughly 44,000 custom quotes are generated. On average, 76% of the contact with customers is automated, and they report a 75% positive customer satisfaction rating.



Case Studies

Company Nurse

Challenge

Company Nurse is the premier nurse triage service for workplace injuries. Over 25 years ago, it had the revolutionary idea of placing a medical professional at the beginning of the workplace injury process, before a claim is even filed. In 2021, the organization collaborated with Pypestream to enable employees to digitally report injuries and support its contact center operations. Reporting a workplace incident over the phone, including the collection of details and nurse consultation, previously took an average of 15-20 minutes. Nurses collected and validated information, in addition to triaging the injury and providing self-care instructions. Many of Company Nurse's clients are in the education industry, meaning contact center volumes fluctuate seasonally, which presents operational challenges.

Solution

To improve both the injured worker experience and operations, Company Nurse introduced Lin, the digital assistant, to allow employees to continue to report incidents immediately after they occurred, but this time using the method they were most comfortable with – be it by phone, Lin or scheduling a call back. The digital assistant is available in English and Spanish and is easily accessible via IVR, website, QR code scan or Lintelio, the mobile workplace health and safety tool (developed by Company Nurse).

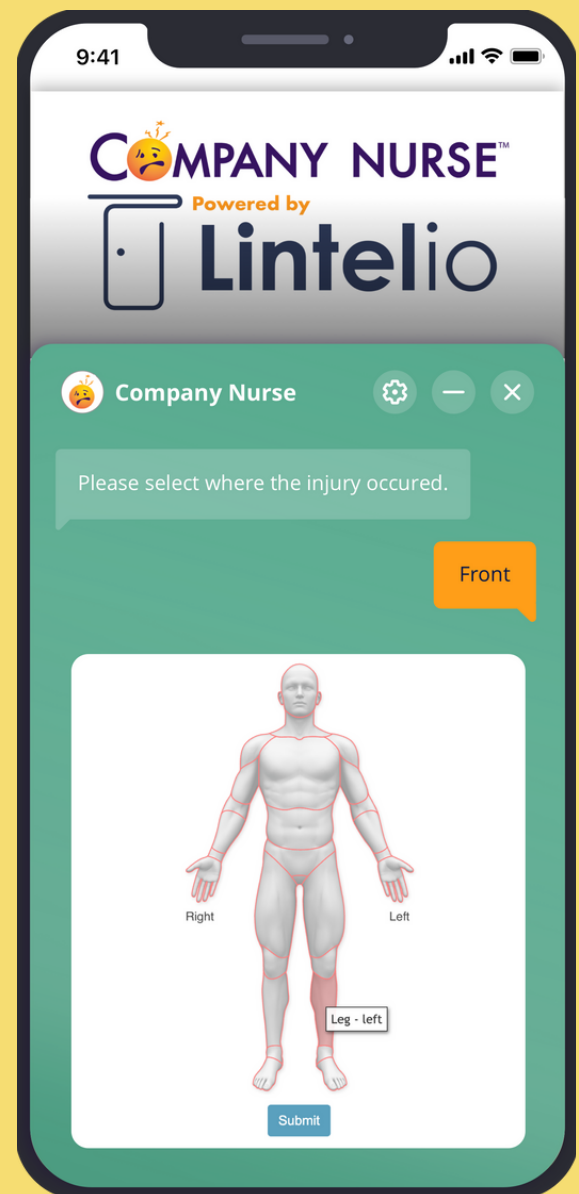
After Lin was launched:

Average handling time of incident reporting calls was reduced by five minutes
Reporting accuracy for time-sensitive data increased
Streamlined onboarding process allowed an increase in overall volume

Results at a glance

Since launch (One year in production):

- ~20k total sessions
- >7k incidents submitted
- 93% CSAT rating



Case Studies

TriWest

Challenge

Community Care Network (CCN) is being deployed by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to medical facilities across the country. As the preferred national network that the VA uses to purchase care for veterans in their community, CCN consists of five regions managed by two trusted partners. One of the partners is TriWest, which currently serves 17 states in the network and serves as a critical bridge until CCN is fully deployed, to ensure veterans continue to receive the care they need.

When its service expanded to another region, TriWest partnered with Pypestream to develop a new digital engagement tool to reduce help desk inquiries by phone. TriWest was also required by the VA to develop an electronic messaging channel as part of the new contract. The new tool replaced the existing appointment scheduling tool for providers and was available in different languages and had accessibility features that met the needs of the veterans community.

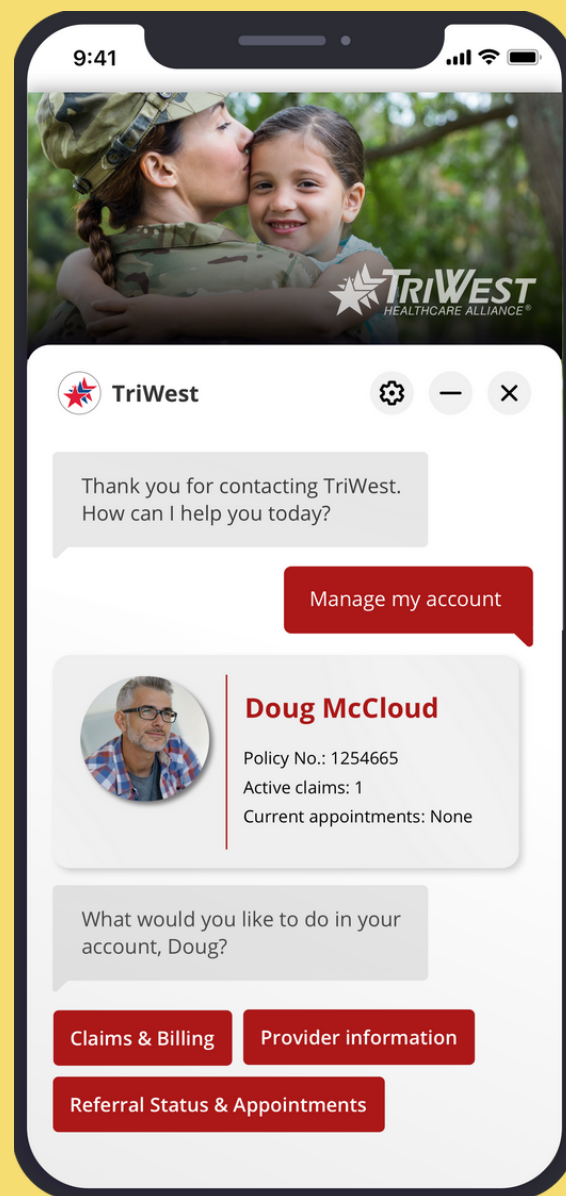
Solution

The Digital Assistant supports VA staff, the veterans themselves and care providers in various ways, including claims, billing and appointment management. Over 90% of the users are the providers, and the Digital Assistant is a critical part of the VA transformation. It enables the ongoing critical healthcare services to veteran patients by providing rapid information to providers during the transition.

Results at a glance

Since launch:

- 302,583 engaged sessions; 90% engagement rate
- 60% automation rate
- 73% success rate for claim status lookup
- Over 105,000 claim statuses retrieved



Case Studies

Berkley One

Challenge

Berkley One is a recently formed personal insurance provider focused on the evolving needs of people with full, busy and adventurous lives. They aim to make insurance more innovative, more customizable and more personal. Berkley One is a part of Berkley, one of America's largest property and casualty insurance providers.

They engaged with Pypestream in 2021 to improve the payments experience and to help customers resolve or avoid late payments. Customers were having difficulty navigating the website to view their bill and to make payments, as well as getting frustrated with wait times over the phone.

Solution

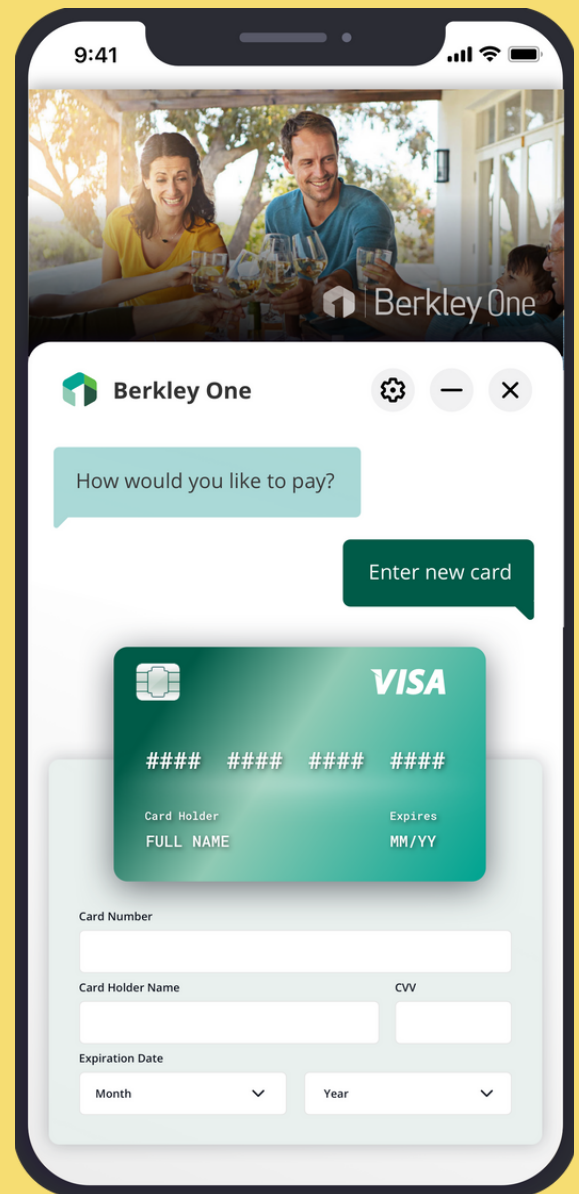
The Berkley One virtual assistant was designed to make it easier for customers to pay their bills on time. Pypestream integrated with their back-end system and Twilio to enable SMS outreach to customers who have bills that are overdue or almost due. Once customers receive the personalized notifications, they can access the virtual assistant via a unique URL. After validating the user, the digital assistant allows the customer to view their billing summary and make a payment with an existing card on file or add a new payment method.

Using a customized payment process that mimics a conversation with agents on the phone, customers easily pay their bills on time with their mobile device without interacting or signing into a portal.

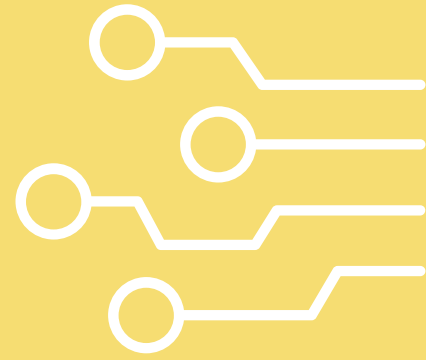
Results at a glance

Since launch in 2019:

- 16,523 successfully delivered SMS notifications, with an open rate of 34%
- 67% payment success rate
- 94% CSAT rating



About Pypestream



Pypestream is transforming the way brands do business. And customers? They love it.

That's because Pypestream is setting a new standard for conversational AI. One that enables customers to engage with your business in a way that is hyper-personalized and actually enjoyable. The result: less wonky robotic talk and more love for your brand.

Pypestream was born from the desire to improve the way companies interact with their customers. Today, customer experience is everything. Deliver a poor CX, and you might as well kiss your customer goodbye. With chatbots becoming the norm, the goal was to bring real humanity back into the mix, putting it at the helm of a brand's digital interface. Enter: the Pype, a Conversational GUI that is the first human-like AI-powered technology of its kind. In fact, it's so good, it's patented. The Pypestream Platform is a complete end-to-end solution that enables brands to engage with customers instantly, on any channel, at any time. It's attracted the likes of ADT, HBO Max, and Proctor & Gamble to Pypestream's growing customer base.

People are at the heart of all Pypestream does, from the customers engaging with their favorite brands, to the people behind the brands themselves. The platform puts end users' needs first while giving your employees the opportunity to do what they do best—real human tasks—and leveraging AI to handle the rest. A one-of-a-kind solution, Pypestream clears the way for more humanity, more love, more care—throughout the customer experience.

*Because customers deserve better.
And great brands do, too.*