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Ever experienced calling customer service for some problems you encountered with your purchases? Have you ever felt irritated when you are greeted by an automated voice telling you to press this or that button for some problem you may have encountered? Or have you encountered an agent who had no idea what you are talking about, often having to transfer you to another agent? Problematic ,right? Unfortunately, that is also the same issues that are also faced by appointment setting companies, even those based in a robust economy such as Singapore. It can get even more troublesome if telemarketing was used as a medium, since some business leads tend to call back, only to be answered by the metallic voice of an IVR.

This is an issue that the new concept of social customer service seeks to address. This method seeks to combine the best of both human operators and machines. One cannot deny that human agents tend to do well in probing, inquiry, and building rapport with callers, but it also cannot be denied that the results they produce may not be consistent, where quantifying them may be too much of an effort. On the other hand, machines, like the IVR, can be much more efficient, fast, and presents results that can be easily be quantified by the managers. The only problem is that these are very impersonal, cold, and may not be able to answer queries from callers that it had never encountered before.

Social customer service experts research ways in which a company can use the knowledge they gained from studying both sides of the coin to maximize results. This can have an impact on telemarketing, where generation of crucial sales leads is imperative for many businesses. It is either they trust the staggered or slow performance of humans, or using the much faster, and with a wider reach, option offered by the machines. But for the researchers, why not put them together. Yes, it can be possible. There are some things that machines can do better, like auto-dialing to save telemarketers time, but there are also other areas where humans perform better, like in talking to prospects and building a relationship.

With the development of Big Data technology, where more and more servers are used to support the compilation and analysis of millions worth of business data, it becomes even more important to incorporate these findings to help more businesses improve their chances of generating business leads. It may seem like a bit too difficult to make, but there is no doubt that improvements in knowledge delivery, as well as in the technology needed to support social customer service, can make it happen. Think of it as a necessary business investment. It may actually be able to provide you with the results that you need.

Basically speaking, why go against the machine when you can go with them? There are so many things that both sides can benefit from. Ultimately, the ones who will realize it are the firms that need it. It can be the best thing to happen for them.

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