Virtual Assistant Reduces Live Chat Requests by 43%

Messaging Based Virtual Assistant

Customer
ForHousing

Sector
Social Housing

Size
24,000 homes

Website
www.forhousing.co.uk

Employees
350 – 400 employees

About
ForHousing is a progressive landlord in North West England which owns and manages more than 24,000 homes and delivers housing management services for other landlords.

ForHousing is part of ForViva Group and is focused on improving lives for communities, customers, and staff; delivering excellent quality, affordable accommodation, and housing services across the region.

The Challenge

ForHousing were looking to extend their service hours and accurately answer customer enquiries 24/7 whilst still providing an excellent customer experience. They needed to provide a flexible service at the time that suited the customer, through their channel of choice.

Handover between self-service and live agents would need to be seamless and give context and history to eliminate repeated conversations and to ensure a consistent high level of customer satisfaction regardless of channel.

ForHousing also wanted to automate repetitive and monotonous tasks so the team could focus on complex enquiries or where care and compassion was needed, whilst at the same time make the agent roles more fulfilling for staff members.

The solution would need to integrate with existing business applications, remove silos and offer more streamlined procedures.

The Project Aims

ForHousing receives thousands of incoming voice calls, webchats and email enquiries every month, and the number of interactions is continually increasing. ForHousing is striving to:

- Reduce costs
- Increase web interactions
- Increase customer satisfaction
- Remove mundane questions
- Focus on more challenging issues
- Streamline processes and increase efficiency

> "Tenants can contact us 24/7 and get instant answers to enquiries, rather than waiting for opening times; if further work is needed when the office is closed, all data is collected and sent to the service centre for the next working day.
>
> **Group Assistant Director of Customer Services - ForHousing**

The Approach

ForHousing engaged Amillan as their contact centre partner of choice, to assist with the project. Amillan provided converse360's Assist-Me Service Automation Platform which delivers Virtual Assistant (often known as a chatbot), Speech Assistants, Digital Humans and Contact Centre integration through a powerful No-code / Low-code orchastration portal .

A private zone was set up for ForHousing within the SaaS Cloud platform and FAQ's and workflows were designed to address all the frequent requests. The Enghouse contact centre connector was used for seamless hand-off to live advisors.

> Although customer contact has increased, we have reduced the staffing requirement for live chat and are utilising them elsewhere in the organisations.
>
> Following user training the Customer Service team had the knowledge and tools to build and edit new workflows, add FAQ's and amend processes dynamically.
>
> **Group Assistant Director of Customer Services**
> **- ForHousing**

The Solution

converse360's Assist-Me Service Automation Platform was deployed in 8 weeks. It was developed with ForHousing branding and a unique avatar was created to interact with residents.

The platform provides a Web-based Virtual Assistant and a back-end orchestration platform. The Virtual Assistant instantly responds through automation and intelligent blending of complex workflows to ForHousing's live customer service applications.
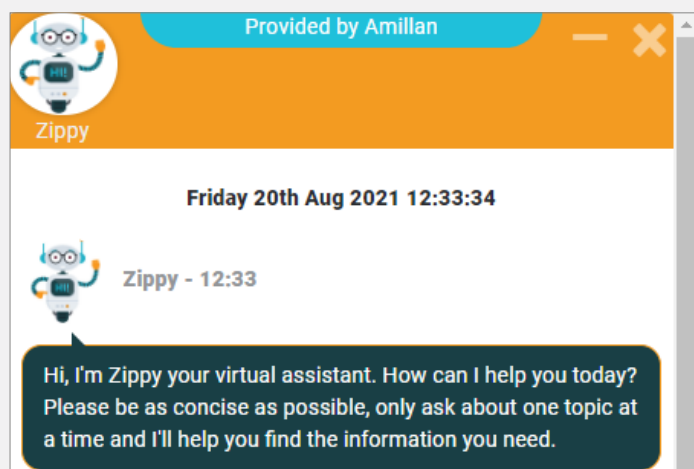

Zippy - ForHousing's Unique Avatar

Automated Workflow Using Existing Data

The platform automates workflows and FAQ that already exist, allowing the Virtual Assistant to answer questions, guide users through workflows and capture data.

The Virtual Assistant utilises AI technology and Machine Learning to understand conversations in whichever way a customer may phrase their enquiry and makes data capture and information supply dynamic, interactive and conversational.
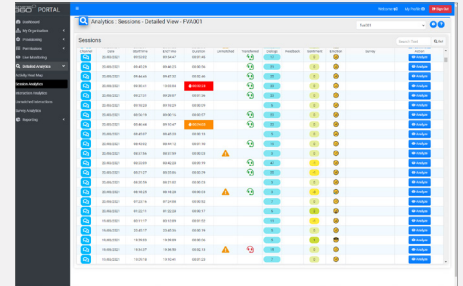
The Solution cont.

The portal for the platform gives access to company users to be able to create and edit everything from FAQ's through to complex workflows. The portal provides management with real-time monitoring, dashboards, journey maps and escalation control.
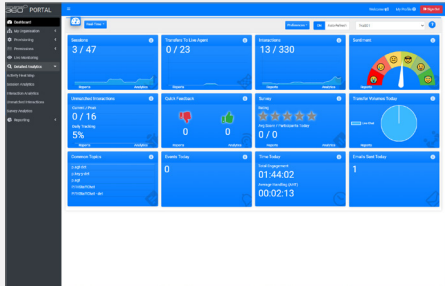
Portal Dashboard giving overview of current status.
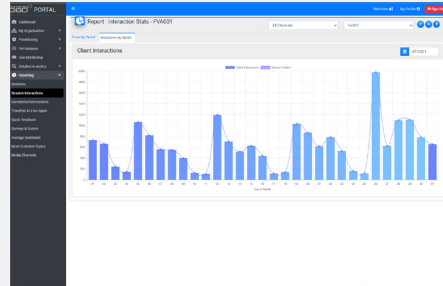
Real-time Analysis of Session Interactions

Detailed Real-time conversation session reporting

Project Results

26%
increase in user engagement

43%
reduction in live chat requests

390
hours saved through automation (2.6 advisors)

6
months to achieve Return on Investment (ROI)

90
second reduction in average live chat time

1518
monthly web chat sessions answered by Virtual Assistant

- **341 hours saved from decrease in live chat requests**

- **50 hours saved through reducing agent live chat (90 secs saved per chat)**

- **391 hours total time saved per month (equivalent to 52 days or 2.6 Customer Service Advisors)**

- **Reduction in staffing requirements for live chat**

- **ROI within 6 months**

Areas of Support

- **Repairs and Maintenance**
  - **- Fault diagnosis**
  - **- Suggested resolutions**
  - **- Repair processing**
  - **- Repair updates**
- **Property locator**
  - **- Property type workflows**

- **Anti-social behaviour (ASB)**
- **Tenancy**
- **Rent**
- **Gas enquiries**
- **Complaints**
- **Fly tipping**

- **Allocations**
- **Right to buy**
- **Opening times**
- **Telephone numbers**
- **Office address**
- **Building Insurance**

Next Steps

Having seen significant benefits from phase one, ForHousing is integrating their Housing Management system with the Service Automation Platform to provide customers with personalised access to repairs, rent, ASB and other key topics.

For phase two, ForHousing is looking to introduce a speech-based Virtual Assistant allowing customers to interact verbally. ForHousing are also looking to enable the customer survey module enabling improvement and learning based on customer feedback.

About converse360

converse360 helps organizations deliver effortless customer service on any channel, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Intelligently delivers Virtual Assistants, Chatbots, Speech Assistants, Digital Humans and Contact Centre integration through a powerful orchestration portal. Blending automated and live services. update after messaging meeting.