You need an answer fast. You searched online and almost got the answer, but require a little more information without having to call someone. What do you do? Fortunately, in today’s customer service world, there are options.

That’s because companies have responded to the digital generation’s preference for online support with new channels like Live Chat and Email Management. These mobile-friendly touchpoints give customers the right answers at the right time when self-service just isn’t enough.

Here we outline best practices for providing ‘a little extra service’ that saves your company money and drives high customer satisfaction at the same time. First, we discuss the web self-service foundation needed to funnel the right questions into chat and email support. Second, we detail live chat and email management support strategies. Finally, we share practical next steps for getting started.

1. Great Service Starts with Personalized Web Self-Service

If you don’t have processes and tools for delivering a personalized web experience, then your chat and email support will quickly escalate into expensive phone service. Why? Because your agents won’t have the information trail they need to provide fast, relevant service.

Your service journey begins with building a Web self-service foundation that includes:

- **Knowledgebase**—a searchable online knowledge base with answers and FAQs
- **SmartAssistant**—the ability to scan keywords searched and automatically suggest answers based on the customer’s context
- **Guided Assistance**—tools to guide customers to relevant content and walk them through their own troubleshooting

By guiding customers to relevant content and empowering them to answer their own questions, you deliver a differentiated customer service experience that builds loyalty and saves money by deflecting calls.

2. Live Chat and Email Management Give Customers the Right Answer at the Right Time

When customers need agent assistance, you can provide it through Live Chat or Email Management.

**Live Chat** enables personalized agent assistance right at the customer’s point of need. You can proactively offer chat based on rules like how long customers have spent on your site or how many items they have in their shopping carts. Or, you can enable customers to contact you by providing company-branded chat links on your Web pages.

“Chatting has become a wonderful way for us to present products, advertise promotions, and resolve customer issues when they arise.”

Lisa Larson, Drugstore.com, A Walgreens Company

“The returns from implementing SmartAssistant have been astonishing; we expected between 12% and 15%, so we were staggered by the 60% reduction in email.”

Chris Carmichael, British Airways
Chat is so popular that its use has doubled in the past few years, with many companies saying it’s now their most trafficked channel. That’s good news because chat delivers key business benefits:

- Increased online sales conversions—prevent customers from abandoning their shopping carts
- Faster agent response time and issue resolution—resolve support issues in less time
- Improved agent productivity—enable agents to handle multiple support requests at once

**Email Management** is another tool enabling you to personalize support at the point of need. You can use SmartAssistant to scan customer emails and present an auto-reply with relevant answers, including links to the knowledgebase and social support communities.

If the customer requires further assistance, you can route the email to an agent based on the 1) content of the support request, 2) value of the customer, and 3) sentiment of the message.

For example, you can route support requests with a certain subject matter to agents who specialize in that area. You can also prioritize emails with a negative sentiment, or those from high-value customers, so you can address their concerns right away and prevent escalation.

### 3. Practical Next Steps for Driving Higher Customer Satisfaction with ‘A Little Extra Service’

1. Invest in your customer’s Web experience—offer guided assistance, searchable knowledgebase answers, and chat and email support
2. Make your support pages mobile-friendly—enable mobile-friendly navigation of your online support and allow customers to engage via chat and email
3. Right channel support requests with intelligent routing—route based on the type of support request, value of the customer, and availability of agents in each channel

Taking these three easy steps will provide a differentiated service experience to attract and keep more customers and save money at the same time.

**Learn more about Oracle RightNow Cloud Customer Service Solutions at** [www.oracle.com/rightnow](http://www.oracle.com/rightnow)

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“**What’s impressive is that the escalation rules are rarely activated because we are resolving [email] issues quickly and effectively.”**

Tom LeClerc, Evolution1

“**Using RightNow, agents have the right information at the right time to give members positive interactions, whether solving an order issue or making a big purchase online.”**

Chris Purpura, HauteLook, A Nordstrom Company