



# Gyst Blog Post

## The future of voice self-service in the contact center



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**Daniel O'Sullivan**  
Innovation Oriented | Executive Focused | Results Driven

May 25, 2023

In an earlier, pre-pandemic post, I talked about how contact centers have been slowly restructuring aging and outdated voice channels to adjust for the mobile device/smartphone era and advances in AI, ML, NLU, and other enabling technologies. While many enterprise IT departments already had plans in place to do this, only a few were actually executing on it as a priority prior to the pandemic.

This has all changed now and with the investments heavyweights like Amazon, Google, and Apple have made in AI, ML, and speech technologies, along with much improved acceptance and adoption rates for speech among the general public, it may soon be time for the self-service voice channel to finally fulfill its long-awaited promise.

Many organizations, including those supporting the financial and government sectors, retail shopping, utilities, and healthcare, to name just a few, are now dealing with massive increases in call volumes, web site visitors, and mobile app and chat sessions.



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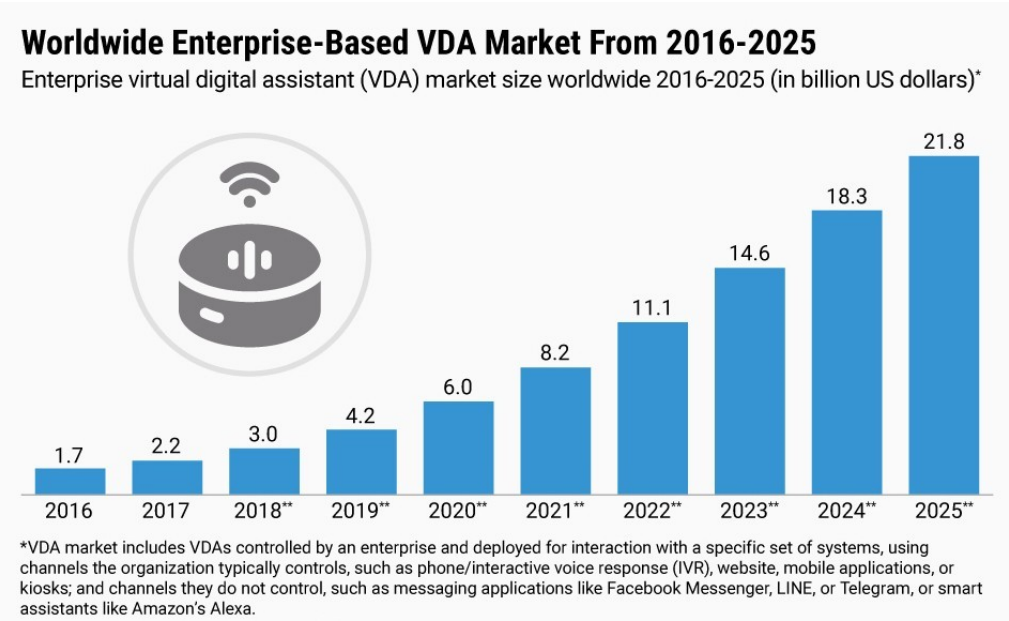
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And as digital transformation accelerates and moving to cloud, or at least hybrid computing environments, becomes less of a future plan and more of a matter of necessity for many contact centers, the future of the voice channel as a means of efficient, cost-effective self-service looks brighter.

Some of the vendors supplying the contact center market and infrastructure needed to support these increases have already seen record increases in technology sales and the simultaneous need to innovate even faster than in the pre-pandemic era. Common innovation themes and strategies include:

- AI powered conversational interfaces
- AI/ML informed workforce and advanced RPA
- Replacing/supplementing traditional IVR with IVAs and Chatbots
- Rapid deployment of cloud-based contact centers

And the pandemic has accelerated the need to adapt and adopt much faster - from 5 - 7 years down to months and even days in many cases. According to Statista, the Intelligent Voice Assistant and VDA markets were already projected to grow substantially prior to the Covid crisis:

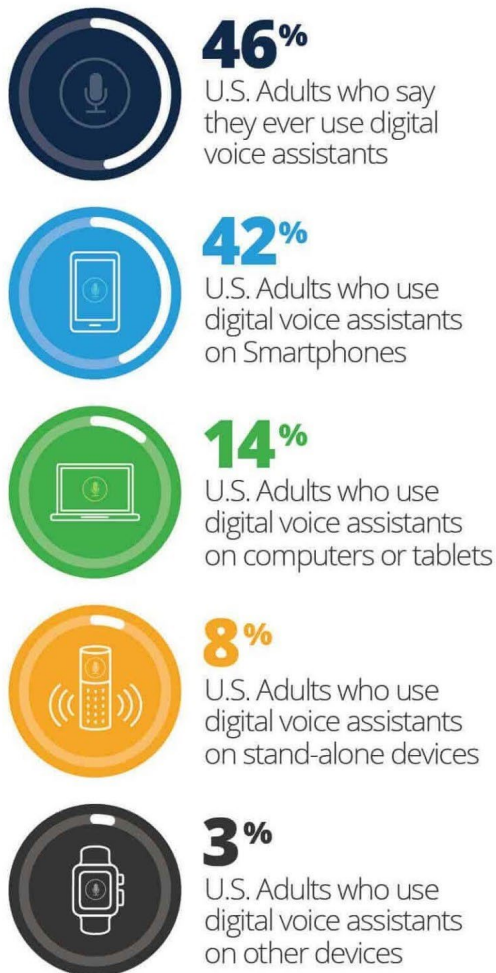


This rate of growth will undoubtedly accelerate in the wake of the crisis and changing consumer habits. A look at the pre-covid projections for application growth in this area shows a similar trend:



(Source: Tractica)

And consumer and user habits are already very well positioned to take off from the levels seen before the pandemic. We are way past the early adopter phases here and the technology is now well situated to become the norm, as opposed to the next new thing...



Pew Research Center

While the debate over the responsible use of AI and services like ChatGPT will, and should continue with urgency, there is little doubt that niches like customer service and contact center inquiries with their well-defined rules and data domains will benefit from these advances.

That, coupled with significantly increased user acceptance for speech and the much-improved performance the technology providers promise, is likely to result in voice self-service finally becoming at least something akin to that which was supposed to have arrived already, all the way back in the 90s 😊.



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