



AI Training in BPO and Call Centers:

Faster Onboarding, Better Performance, More Scale

Introduction

The Business Process Outsourcers (BPO) and call center sector is extremely significant in the age of online shopping and remote interactions. More and more consumers and business customers are making vital purchases remotely, either online or after video conferencing conversations and phone calls.

Inevitably, people have questions, and sometimes complaints. They need a reliable address to raise these issues and achieve resolution, which is where BPOs and call centers shine. Call center and BPO customer support agents play a vital role in enabling businesses in every industry to drive customer satisfaction.

It's no surprise that the market is growing rapidly. According to a recent report, the global BPO market was valued at \$266.8 billion in 2023, and is predicted to reach \$544.8 billion by 2032, expanding at a CAGR of 8.5%. But as demand increases, so do the challenges.

The sector is struggling against a persistent shortage of skilled agents, together with high churn rates and long onboarding times. Employee morale can be low, and remote work undermines efforts to increase engagement. At the same time, customers have increasingly high expectations of fast, personalized, and efficient service, and become frustrated when they don't receive it. Agents also need to meet rigorous compliance and quality control requirements. It doesn't help that BPOs, like other industries, are still trying to adapt to the digital landscape.

The path to overcoming all these issues is better training. However, many call centers and BPOs aren't seeing the results they desire from their training programs. Enter AI training solutions, which offer improved call center training which drives enhanced performance, faster onboarding, and increased scalability

What's so hard about BPO and call center training programs

Today's training programs for BPO and call center agents have to reach a very high bar. They are expected to deliver on many KPIs in the shortest possible space of time. Here are the main concerns for those responsible for training programs.

01

Soft skills are difficult to impart

Customers are looking not just for fast resolution, but also for empathy and emotional support. Agents have to possess listening skills and the ability to express compassion, as well as a technical understanding of the product or service. However soft skills have always been difficult to convey through frontal learning. Without enough time or personnel to carry out sufficient practice conversations and a focus on training for company content rather than , agents are typically left to acquire them on their own. This is fine for "naturals," but the majority who need guidance could lose many customers before gaining the necessary skills, and resent the process.

Onboarding is under time pressure

Call centers and BPOs are constantly grappling with a labor shortage and high employee churn rates, so they need new hires to be able to successfully conduct customer conversations alone as quickly as possible. This puts training enablement teams under immense pressure to shorten onboarding and funnel agents to taking live calls.

However, they also can't compromise on the quality of training. It takes time for agents to master soft skills, fully grasp product information and company messaging, and gain the confidence to handle customer queries successfully. Training programs are stuck between a rock and a hard place trying to produce skilled agents in the shortest possible amount of time.

Agents need a lot of knowledge

On top of soft skills, call center and BPO agents also need to master all the details about the product, service, or solution that they are selling or for which they provide support. They need to be aware of common customer pain points, corporate messaging, and the company's overall value proposition.

What's more, many industries require agents to adhere to regulatory requirements and industry standards, especially finance, healthcare, and insurance. Agents also need to meet consistent service standards and deliver high call quality. Together with the need for effective soft skills, this only adds to the challenge of meeting onboarding time constraints.



Training programs are tough to scale

Call centers and BPOs frequently need to rapidly scale up their training programs. They may face an influx of new hires, be struggling to keep up with the expanded needs of current clients, or want to support an additional industry or add more types of services to their offering.

However, when your training program relies on frontal lectures and one-on-one role plays (either in-person or remote), it's extremely difficult to scale. High churn rates mean that few agents remain with the company long enough to be able to guide new hires, and a shortage of managers means that many training programs are barely meeting existing onboarding needs, let alone scaling.

What can AI bring to BPO and call center training programs?

Thankfully, artificial intelligence (AI) is here to help. Advanced training platforms use AI and machine learning (ML) to understand training needs and provide efficient and engaging training experiences.

With an AI training platform, agents practice authentic conversations with an AI-powered role play persona and receive instant feedback. The personas are always available for on-demand learning whenever agents have a few minutes free, allowing remote learning in every time zone at any time.

AI engines support realistic conversations that allow agents to rehearse soft skills and gain product knowledge through active learning, and provide timely feedback that increases memory retention. Thanks to AI, each agent can enjoy a personalized training program adapted to their strengths and weaknesses. Interactive AI training is far more enjoyable than traditional programs, which helps boost employee engagement and drive more practice time.

AI training programs also deliver detailed reports and evaluations that guide managers to those agents who need extra support. What's more, the AI platform serves as a safe space where agents aren't embarrassed to try different approaches, make mistakes, learn from their experiences, and try again, which also encourages more time spent on practice conversations.



Using AI to speed up onboarding

AI training offers a number of ways to speed up time to proficiency and shorten onboarding.

Personalized training

AI algorithms can analyze individual learner data, preferences, and proficiency levels to identify areas of strength and weakness in real-time. The platform then tailors the learning experience to offer targeted content in the style and pace that's most effective for each agent. In this way, customized training accelerates skill acquisition and enhances employee engagement.

Active learning

It's well known that active learning drives better memory retention than passive learning. AI algorithms underpin enjoyable and realistic interactive learning experiences, like authentic customer conversations with an AI persona. These active learning sessions speed up agents' mastery of product knowledge and company messaging.

Timely feedback

With traditional training programs, it can be days or even weeks until agents receive feedback and corrections about their customer conversations, which makes improvement very slow. AI trainers deliver immediate advice and guidance, and agents can redo the conversation straight away to reinforce the feedback they received and prevent them from forming bad habits.

A safe practice space

AI training platforms provide a private place where agents can try out their nascent skills without worrying about embarrassing themselves. Without the fear of judgment, they practice far more often than if they were facing their manager or colleague. Agents are also much more likely to ask questions of an AI program than a human, or request more clarification or a repeat explanation.

Increased practice time

Ultimately, the more that agents can practice realistic customer conversations, the faster they'll gain the necessary skills and knowledge. Human trainers and managers have hard limits to the amount of role plays they can undertake, but AI trainers are always available and never tired. Agents can rehearse more and advance their capabilities, to onboard at a much faster rate.

Key KPI for onboarding: Shorter time to proficiency

AI-powered role play conversations cuts the time it takes for agents to reach desired proficiency

Second Nature customers cut onboarding time by 60–80%



GoHealth uses AI training to speed up onboarding

GoHealth is a leading health insurance marketplace aiming to improve access to healthcare in America. It has thousands of benefits consultants who guide customers through complex healthcare provider options. GoHealth onboards as many as 6,000 new agents each year, with high call quality standards. The company added Second Nature's AI training solution to deliver better role play experiences, slashing time to proficiency and boosting agent productivity. The relationship between GoHealth and Second Nature emphasizes the value of innovative, AI-driven training experiences.



"We're not just saving time, we're also seeing faster productivity resulting in more profit, and I believe that we can push EBITDA up by 20% thanks to our ability to ramp up proficiency. We're getting agents out in the real world faster, we're seeing them selling more for a longer period of time, and selling at a higher level."

- Jay Fortuna, VP of Learning and Organizational Development, GoHealth -

05

Improving agent performance with AI training

AI-powered training programs and platforms offer a plethora of methods to help improve agent performance, enabling them to resolve issues faster and increase customer satisfaction.

Stronger soft skills

Because AI trainers are always available, never tired or distracted, and provide timely feedback, they enable agents to acquire soft skills far more effectively than traditional programs. Agents receive advice and suggestions about the best tone, pace, wording, and even body language to use to successfully convey the empathy that customers crave.

Ready for any situation

AI training programs allow agents to rehearse every possible scenario and learn how to handle them better in the future, ensuring that they are prepared for any conversation that might come their way. The active learning also helps them to master product knowledge more quickly, arming them with the information they need to provide a quick resolution.

Consistent service delivery

Unlike human trainers, AI trainers are objective and consistent, ensuring that every agent is trained to the same standards. The increased practice and active learning enabled by AI helps enforce compliance with regulatory and industrial requirements, and guarantees consistent messaging across the entire workforce, including agents working remotely.

Increased agent confidence

The more practice that agents receive, the more confident they'll be about their ability to successfully help your customers, which translates directly into better conversations and happier customers. AI training also allows agents to encounter every possible customer response in a safe setting and practice how to deal with it, which reduces the risk that they might get overwhelmed by an irritable customer and react with emotion or anger.

Enhanced morale

Interactive AI-powered training, with its dynamic leaderboards and gamified encounters, is far more enjoyable than traditional training programs. Employees actually appreciate the experience, which helps boost engagement, making them more motivated in their work and less likely to churn. Team-based training challenges also help connect remote agents and decrease their sense of isolation and unimportance, all of which translates into better performance.

Key KPI for performance: Customer satisfaction

AI training improves customer satisfaction (CSAT) rates significantly, along with associated metrics such as average handle time, average wait time, first call resolution, and abandonment rate.

Second Nature increases Customer Satisfaction ratings by 50%

AI training helps student sellers to excel

Xavier University of Louisiana is a historically black college with a popular course in selling skills. Students learn how to hold complex B2B sales conversations, culminating in a sales competition against students from other institutions. The course leaders adopted Second Nature's AI training solution to allow students to practice sales conversations more frequently and receive faster, more objective feedback. Performance improved significantly, with all the student teams reaching the semi finalist round in the sales competition for the first time ever. The introduction of Second Nature at XULA highlights the impact of AI-powered, realistic training conversations.



"Getting the feedback instantly from Jenny [Second Nature's AI Persona] was very beneficial. When I looked at what Jenny said, I saw there were things I didn't even realize I did, or selling points I didn't realize I missed."

- **Aryn Frazier, student at Xavier University** -

07

Scaling call center and BPO training with the help of AI

Successful BPOs and call centers face the challenge of scaling up their training programs. Not only do they need to onboard their many new hires, they also want to provide ongoing training for existing agents so they can support the evolving needs of their clients. BPOs may also want to add extra services or more industries. AI training can help with this challenge too.

AI trainers can carry more agents

Unlike human trainers and managers, AI-powered trainers can manage an almost infinite number of agents. The AI engine always delivers timely and objective feedback without losing focus, and can support an effective training conversation at any time of the day or night. Simply put, AI allows you to onboard and train far more agents without adding more resources.

AI is a turbo-pack for managers

Nobody intends to replace humans with AI, and you still want human managers to remain part of your training programs. An AI training platform provides essential reports and accurate evaluations that allow them to supervise more agents than they could alone. With AI insights, the same number of managers can maintain full visibility into the strengths and weaknesses of a far larger cohort.

AI supports remote training

Digital, AI-powered training doesn't require you to gather all your agents together in a single physical location. This enables you to run the same program in a shorter space of time, because agents don't need to travel or reschedule other commitments. Remote training also means that you can extend your workforce all around the globe, allowing you to scale without geographical limitations.

AI reduces churn

The increased engagement that results from more enjoyable AI training experiences helps reduce churn among your agents. This means that the new hires you onboard expand the size of your teams, instead of simply plugging the gaps left by departed agents. When agents remain with you for the long term, they also become proficient enough in your methods to serve as trainers and managers for your incoming new hires.

Faster onboarding improves scalability

As mentioned above, the increased practice time, active learning, and instant feedback provided by AI training speeds up onboarding. When you onboard new hires more quickly, you can also onboard more cohorts within the same space of time, even if you don't want to increase the size of each cohort.



Key KPI for scale: agent turnover

Agents who are engaged, motivated, and feel capable of meeting goals are less likely to churn and show higher retention rates (up to 70% more than agents who aren't)

Zoom case study

Zoom is a popular solution for video conferencing, phonecalls, and video chat. The pandemic brought a transformation, requiring Zoom not just to add hundreds of new agents, but also to recertify all its existing thousand-plus agents according to its new messaging, all at the same time. Zoom deployed Second Nature's AI-driven training solution to launch a team-based, gamified onboarding and certification experience. The reaction was overwhelmingly positive, driving unprecedented 100% participation rates and allowing Zoom to achieve its objectives and scale its workforce.

"Jenny (Second Nature's AI-powered trainer) helps us have conversations, certify competency on product, help exercise as our reps are pitching different methods of selling, and she's providing tailored feedback to the reps as they go through these exercises. You can use AI to test and almost ensure your sellers know exactly what you need them to know."

- **Michelle Dotson, Senior Manager of Sales Enablement, Zoom** -



09

Second Nature: Driving effective AI training conversations

At Second Nature, we work with leading enterprise call centers and BPOs around the world to enable them to transform their training programs. Second Nature's unparalleled AI-powered role play personas conduct authentic, realistic conversations that allow agents to strengthen their customer service skills anytime, anywhere.

Our immersive learning empowers call centers and BPOs to offer genuine practice conversations in the same contexts that agents will encounter “in the field.” Agents can rehearse every kind of interaction in a supportive environment. It’s like a batting cage for awesome customer conversations, where agents can build the muscle and confidence to knock customer support out of the park. The platform serves as a supportive space where agents can improve without judgment, while the AI engine provides timely and personalized feedback to help them immediately raise their performance. The dynamic leaderboards and gamified interactive sessions turn training into an immersive and enjoyable experience that increases engagement.

Our easy to use editor makes training infinitely scalable and individually customized. You can turn the content in any text document, audio file, or web link into an interactive and effective conversation in just 60 seconds. Use our extensive template library or apply your own parameters to adapt it to any scenario, client, or situation. Second Nature doesn’t just deliver better training; it drives exceptional customer experiences.

AI training helps call centers and BPOs to meet their goals

For call centers and BPOs, AI training is the tool they need to enable them to speed up onboarding, raise the bar for agent performance, and scale at will. Second Nature’s AI trainer personas bring the availability, effectiveness, and engagement that makes training programs more efficient, allowing you to develop your offering and expand your customer base at your own speed.



Try free simulations

B2B Discovery Call

Train to sell your solutions with this easily personalized simulation.

Interview Simulations

Practice a job interview tailored to your CV and job description