

zendesk

Dollar Shave Club shaves down service costs with Answer Bot



Dollar Shave Club resolves 12% of its tickets with Zendesk's Answer Bot

100

Agents

96%

CSAT

2011

Customer since

12%

Self-service resolution with Answer Bot

When your business model is as simple and brilliant as Dollar Shave Club's, your customer service better be, too.

Back in 2011, Dollar Shave Club became one of the first direct-to-consumer subscription services, delivering affordable razors straight to Members' doorsteps every month. A cheeky commercial starring CEO Mike Dubin set the tone for the high-value, no-frills brand—and went viral in the process—earning worldwide attention and a huge cohort of subscribers.

Since then, Dollar Shave Club has scaled up—way up. In 2016, the company was acquired by Unilever to the tune of \$1B. They now offer grooming products that complement the original razors, including oral, hair, and skincare lines.

An ingenious concept and cool products aren't enough to fuel the kind of success that Dollar Shave Club enjoys, though. The company knew from day one that the only way to nurture legions of loyal subscribers was to provide a world-class support experience—and this they deliver.



Dollar Shave Club began with Zendesk Support and Guide back in 2011 and, as the business grew, so did the channels through which subscribers wanted to interact with the brand. Over the years, Dollar Shave Club expanded its Zendesk solution to include Zendesk Chat and Message, and connected its Genesys phone system via Zendesk Talk Partner Edition software.

Building out an omnichannel solution with Zendesk was a natural choice once the team decided to offer live chat and other channels, given their success with email and self-service, explained Trent Hoerman, Dollar Shave Club's senior program manager.

"The nice part for agents is that they don't need 40 tabs open at one time and they don't need to continually click back and forth. All the information's there," Hoerman said. "You might see this Member has written into us before about the same issue, so let's not give him the exact same answer. Let's personalize it and say, 'Oh, I see this



has happened to you before. This isn't the norm. We're sorry about that. Let me try this today, instead of what happened last time.”

Now all contacts—email, live chat, phone calls, and messages from Facebook Messenger—feed into Zendesk Support. “We're looking very closely at customer effort—how much effort did this Member need to find their answer or contact us. The experience is always changing and the experience is everything,” Hoerman said.

Email claims 45 percent of all support volume, but live chat is rapidly gaining traction, accounting for as much as 25-30 percent, followed by 10-15 percent of contacts through social media. The team has its eye on SMS next, and is slowly building out a platform for official launch in 2019. Phone support is reserved for tickets in progress that would benefit from a quick conversation.

“A big goal is to drive more people to our live channels, especially chat, Facebook Messenger and, eventually, SMS,” Hoerman said. “Those channels allow agents to take on more conversations and result in quicker resolutions. The response has been great so far.” So great, in fact, that the team consistently achieves a CSAT score between 94 and 96 percent.



Dollar Shave Club's support organization is comprised of three teams spread across three locations, totaling around 100 agents. While one team specializes in billing and handling live chats or Facebook Messenger inquiries via Zendesk Message, most agents are trained to manage the majority of Member queries. This allows for a consistent overall experience and empowers the team to focus on creating an exceptional support experience rather than through an arbitrary daily quota.

When it comes to exceptional self-service, Zendesk Guide plays a huge part in helping the company surface and anticipate the kinds of information Members are looking for when they access the website. “Now that we sell so many products, we realized that it didn't make sense to just continue to add FAQs for every single one. With Guide, we created one knowledge base where Members can search for a

product instead of having to scroll. They can just type in ‘shave butter’ if they want to find every article on shave butter,” explained Hoerman.

Self-service content is also surfaced on the help center through the [Zendesk Web Widget](#), before a member initiates a live chat. The team regularly takes deep dives into their help center search results, looking for words and phrases used by Members that lead to a dead end.



Dollar Shave Club takes advantage of another feature of Zendesk Guide: Answer Bot. Before turning it on, repeat conversations and tickets streamed in for issues that Members should have easily been able to search for on their own, Hoerman explained. These included things like: “How do I cancel my account?” or “How do I pause my account?”

“We wanted to deflect these kind of tickets and have more meaningful, consultative conversations with our members and Answer Bot has been the answer. So far, every month it resolves anywhere from 12-16 percent of all tickets that come in. When you get over a million total contacts in a year, that’s a very large number and really helps us,” Hoerman said.

Dollar Shave Club gradually trained Answer Bot by whitelisting certain help center articles to surface when a specific question was asked. “We ran that for two months to train Answer Bot to know what we want to see on these types of tickets. Now, we don’t white-label anything. We trust the system and we’re rolling it out to the entire ticket base,” explained Hoerman.

Answer Bot has given agents more time to focus on the work they’re interested in. “We allow agents at HQ to come up with their own ideas on how we can improve the member experience, whether that’s sending an email every six months for a new handle. Answer Bot has given agents more time to be creative because there are fewer tickets,” he said. Another bonus? Dollar Shave Club hasn’t had to increase staff at any location since they began using Answer Bot.



Further efficiencies are achieved through the [Zendesk API](#). The team embeds satisfaction surveys into tickets using a third party integration with Customer Thermometer. In conjunction with the Zendesk Optimization Services team, Dollar Shave Club also created a custom “Telepath” app that integrates with Zendesk, allowing agents to see member information that includes past orders and tracking information.

“It’s important to us that every third party app we use integrates with Zendesk,” said Hoerman, “and we try to get Telepath into everything that we do now, including Chat and our upcoming SMS system, called One Reach.”

At the end of the day, Dollar Shave Club’s service goal is to make it as easy to deal with their Member service team as it is to receive their razor blades at their doorstep.

“Zendesk is an amazing tool for us thus far and we don’t see that changing. It allows us to continually improve our Members’ experience.”

– Trent Hoerman
Senior Program Manager