

Exceptional experiences and valuable outcomes are now differentiators for many enterprises. To succeed in a competitive environment, organizations need actionable insights, orchestrated workflows, and a connected enterprise to deliver.

Agentic AI Excellence in Customer Experience Requires a Connected Enterprise and Workforce to Drive Resolution

May 2026

Written by: Aly Pinder Jr., Research Vice President, Worldwide Aftermarket Services Strategies

Orchestrated experiences deliver valuable outcomes

In an environment where value is determined by the gap between customer expectations and outcomes delivered, enterprises have to reconsider what a quality experience is. Historically, "good" was meeting a service-level agreement (SLA), answering a call in a timely manner, or ensuring a static FAQ page could be found by a customer. These interaction relationships are no longer meeting the expectations of a savvy, informed, and demanding customer who now has more options than ever for a variety of products and services. Organizations and customer experience (CX) teams have to move beyond the status quo, as increased customer expectations now demand a new level of urgency for value delivery, better outcomes, and issue resolution.

The need to meet a heightened level of service and customer outcomes has driven CX teams to have not only quality data but, more importantly, the right contextualized and actionable insights to improve decision velocity. As organizations navigate complexity in customer service and support, the ability to progress beyond data capture to insight-driven action has become the dividing line between success and stagnation. Just answering a customer complaint via a chat portal or phone call can now be just as frustrating as a customer receiving no answer at all if that agent asks for information that should already be known. Likewise, in field service, a technician is sent to a customer site to diagnose the issue to meet a contracted SLA while not actually having the right tools, skills, parts, or knowledge to result in a first-visit resolution. These are both instances where in the past just being available to interact with a customer was acceptable, but in our current information age, customers expect resolution, not just activity.

AT A GLANCE

KEY STAT

According to IDC's 2025 *Product and Service Innovation Survey*, the top 2 business initiatives for the next 12–24 months were adopting AI and generative AI tools (45.6%) and improving service (quality and speed) to customers (43.8%).

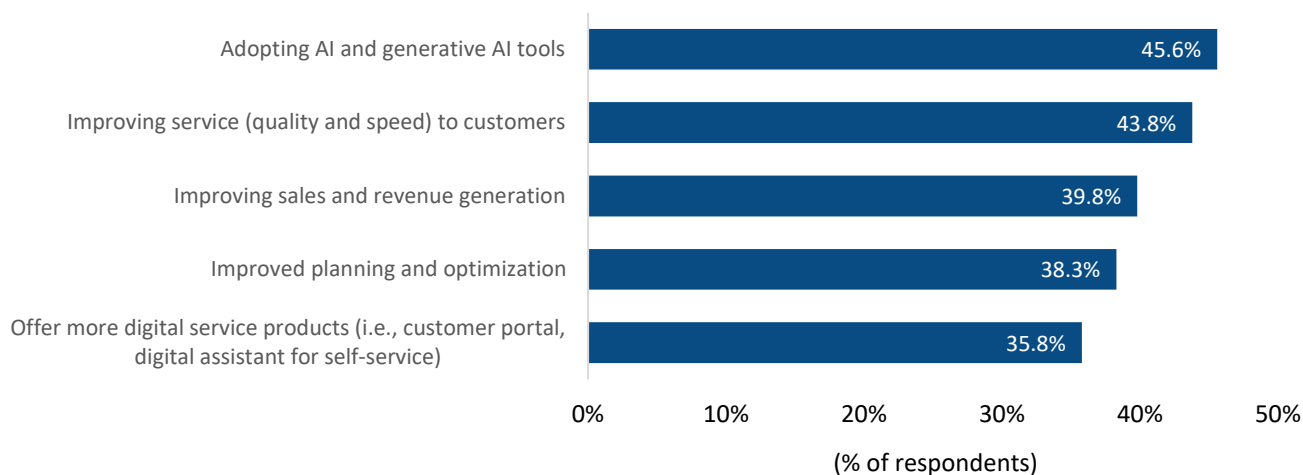
KEY TAKEAWAY

Excellence in CX is built upon partnerships where organizations can continuously innovate in a strategic and structure way around scalable value for customers and employees.

Digital tools that go beyond innovation to enable integrated dataflows across the enterprise, surface data in context with real-time insights, and ensure teams can take action on those insights are critical for enterprises to excel in this modern AI era. And these tools mustn't be siloed innovations that prioritize incremental advancements. Siloed applications or AI capabilities fall short of the mark as enterprise transformation depends on data-driven innovations that can span functions across the front, middle, and back offices in an organization. *Workforces are currently experiencing a cultural shift that encourages cross-functional department collaboration, coordination, and value-added engagements compared with transactional silos of manual, reactive actions.* In the near term, these CX organizations expect to have the insights to transform and not just interact (see Figure 1). This shift is achievable now with AI- and human-aligned workflows where data can autonomously trigger actions across the enterprise — whereas previously, the data would be captured but not acted upon. For organizations adopting these technology advancements whereby AI, agentic AI, and generative tools ensure action, orchestration, and autonomy across the enterprise, aspects of manual, disconnected, and reactive processes can be a thing of the past.

FIGURE 1: **Key CX business initiatives in an era of agentic AI**

Q (Overall rank) In the next 12–24 months, what key business initiatives will your organization pursue to achieve these strategic goals (i.e., AI-driven automation, increasing revenue, reducing costs, and increasing quality of service)?



n = 447 (all service and CX leaders; global)

Source: IDC's Product and Service Innovation Survey, June 2025

Get past pending disruption — success requires action now

As customer expectations elevate to value resolution and not just access, CX and technology leaders must begin to establish enterprisewide strategies that prioritize and enable actionable intelligence, contextual insights, and seamless orchestration. To overcome the pitfalls of complacency, stagnating customer value, and poor customer experiences, CX organizations need to avoid falling behind the competition. In an environment where data, insights, and action have never been more critical, CX teams need to prioritize the delivery of personalized, informed, and valuable customer experiences.

To excel in a time of disruption, leaders should prioritize the following:

- » Focus on the customer, not just on transactional KPIs
- » Establish a collaborative environment where service agents excel, aided by AI agents, ensuring higher-value tasks are human led and routine work is AI executed
- » Shift from single-purpose applications to platform technology powering rapid innovations (Enterprises are able to leverage platform innovations to have the data insights to move from cost-focused businesses to profit- and customer-centric models with speed and scale.)
- » Achieve the full potential of enterprise workflows and insights through agentic AI orchestration (Organizations need to assess which workflows should be autonomous, AI assisted, or human led, optimizing the impact of technology innovation for the benefit of the desired customer outcomes.)

Definitions

- » **Artificial intelligence (AI):** Techniques that help computers mimic human behavior
- » **Agentic workflow:** An iterative, interactive approach to AI development, where the AI agent is empowered to engage in a more dynamic and self-reflective process (This contrasts with the traditional "non-agentic" approach, where AI models are simply prompted to generate outputs in a single pass.)
- » **Social business/collaboration tools:** The use of social network communication approaches and community-based functionality in existing applications to support communication and collaboration
- » **Customer support:** A portal or channel to engage with client, customer, dealer, or partner
- » **Customer databases/CRM systems:** Essential yet conventional and are still the bedrock of any sales and service stack (Newer approaches to CRM design can result in much higher adoption and utilization rates among sales reps and service teams.)
- » **Configure price quote solutions:** Typically support the process of assembling complex product SKU lists, configuration specifications, and associated pricing (These solutions should be able to handle thousands of possible product and component combinations and integrate with proposal and contract management systems to streamline the deal-close process.)
- » **AI agents:** Represent one or more instances of agentic AI operating autonomously to make decisions, take actions, and adapt to achieve specific goals without the need for continual human prompting or intervention.

Agents exhibit three key characteristics:

- **Autonomy:** The ability to operate with minimal continuous human oversight, making decisions and taking actions independently to achieve specific objectives
- **Context awareness and tool use:** The ability to use external software tools and systems to act, including the ability to sense and adapt to the environment, processing contextual data to enhance agent efficacy

- **Memory and learning:** The ability to use past context and system feedback to refine how tasks are executed, delivering more consistent and relevant actions over time

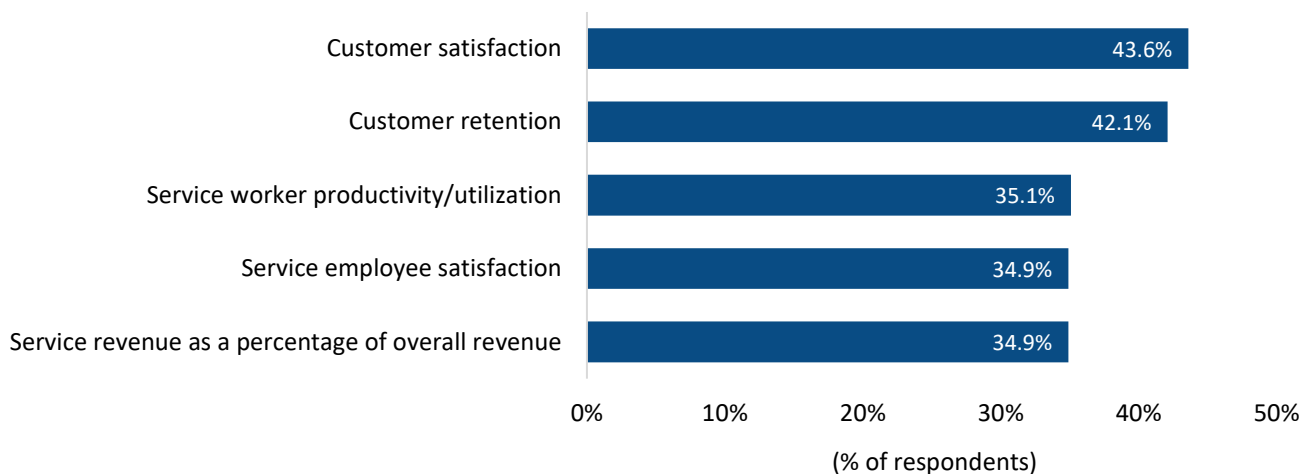
Benefits

CX organizations are at the precipice of a critical shift in their relationship with customers where transactional success is short lived but lifetime customer value establishes a true partnership that is long lasting. Competition, product commoditization, and overstretched customer service workers demand that organizations connect functions like sales, customer service, and field service to orchestrate experiences and avoid clunky handoffs. *The connected enterprise environment goes beyond CX to ensure customer-facing roles also have the insights and orchestrated enablers to engage with mid- and back-office functions.*

Figure 2 shows the metrics prioritized by organizations to determine success in service.

FIGURE 2: **Choose the metrics that matter for the experience and action**

Q (Overall rank) What KPI or metrics does your organization prioritize to determine success in service?



n = 447 (all service and CX leaders; global)

Source: IDC's Product and Service Innovation Survey, June 2025

An organization's ability to have modern technology tools and a platform infrastructure that ensures the entire enterprise has access to contextualized insights to act on demand is critical in this AI era. Some of the most impactful benefits of CX teams that can connect functions and deliver a seamless experience are:

- » Increased revenue opportunities as organizations establish new value-added offerings that expand the relationship with customers (This expanded value proposition also ensures competitive differentiation and stronger customer loyalty.)

- » Consistent, recurring revenue streams — autonomous systems that enable CX organizations to build relationships with customers, not disconnected transactions
- » Increased customer lifetime value buoyed by AI insights that establish personalization with context
- » Improved mean time to resolution as process orchestration integrates data across the front, middle, and back offices
- » Reduced cost per resolution as nonvalue, repetitive tasks are automated with AI agents
- » Increased employee satisfaction/reduction in worker attrition resulting from freed-up administrative time and a higher proportion of value-added engagements with customers
- » Cemented customer loyalty secured through consistent, repeatable quality outcomes delivered

The benefits to the CX team as noted previously are not trivial. The impact of data-driven insights that lead to precise action for the right moments is crucial in an ever-more competitive landscape where customers have options for the business. When evaluating partner fit in this rapidly changing AI era, IDC recommends looking for technology partners that can confidently prove support for the following capabilities:

- » Industry-specific AI agents, grounded in the business, that act and resolve cases across the full life cycle, from routine requests to complex tasks
- » Personalized self-service on any channel, informed by each customer's purchase history, entitlements, and prior interactions
- » Workflows that automate processes across departments and systems
- » A unified, AI-driven experience that surfaces relevant context and recommends action

Trends

Customer experience is an often-used term, but too many organizations still deliver just a series of disconnected transactions that underperform. Historically, organizations have focused on interactions with customers, not the insights needed to actually deliver a valuable customer outcome and experience. *Much of this failure to excel is due to CX teams' focus on transactional interactions, not value-added engagements.* This limitation makes transformation difficult and excellence in customer service ever tougher. Furthermore:

- » Autonomous orchestration capabilities within business functions accelerate business transformation.
- » Silos of data are no longer acceptable; to deliver an enhanced customer outcome, functions across the business need to go beyond data sharing to establish orchestrated and automated workflows that drive resolution.
- » Business KPIs are evolving to ensure metrics of success consider cross-organizational outcomes, not just siloed transactions.
- » It is important to establish an understanding of which customer engagements require a human interaction and which can be overseen by a human.

Considering ServiceNow

ServiceNow is an AI control tower for business reinvention. The ServiceNow AI Platform is cloud, model, and data source agnostic, with the ability to orchestrate how work flows across the enterprise. By unifying legacy systems, departmental tools, cloud applications, and AI agents, ServiceNow provides a single pane of glass that connects intelligence to execution across the enterprise.

In this agentic AI era, enterprises have been hampered by siloed use cases or pilots but haven't been able to realize the value from practical innovations. ServiceNow is focused on empowering its customers to shift business models, enhance customer and employee experiences, and rapidly innovate through its AI investments and platform. This advancement is enterprisewide as ServiceNow ensures that organizations achieve a workflow model whereby data and, more importantly, AI are an empowering force for action as opposed to a historical point-in-time record.

ServiceNow Autonomous CRM is an established offering that ensures CX teams can focus on the customer, empower customer service agents to focus on high-value work, and shift manual tasks to autonomous workflows. Historically, CRM tools have been databases of customer information often riddled with antiquated, poor-quality data that led to poor decision-making and manual workarounds by a variety of teams across sales, marketing, service, and support. ServiceNow embeds AI into its workflow automation platform that spans the front, middle, and back offices with a single data model to accelerate resolution, drive action, and bring AI-driven autonomy to customers as well as sales and service teams.

Challenges

The agentic AI era has rapidly changed expectations as to the role technology should play within enterprise business transformation. Executives, IT buyers, employees, and customers are being challenged with navigating the excitement of this technological innovation while grappling with turning pilots into scalable value. As ServiceNow continues to innovate at a rapid pace and further solidify its robust platform, the company will need to address a few challenges facing enterprises to help clients be successful:

- » **Legacy incumbents having a hold on risk-averse CX organizations:** ServiceNow enables a wide range of functionality across the enterprise in a variety of industries. As ServiceNow continues to bring together workflows across the front-, middle-, and back-office functions, the company will encounter incumbent vendors, as historically these functions have been siloed, with a hodgepodge of applications supporting processes. ServiceNow's ability to orchestrate work across these functions enables an enterprise approach to insights and action, but this approach will need IT buy-in in terms of an enterprise AI platform approach versus a fragmented technology infrastructure. ServiceNow's unified data model, cross-functional workflows, and AI agent fabric ensure organizations can bypass the cost and complexity of having to manage a glut of point applications or legacy systems.
- » **AI and agentic AI infancy in the market holding back rapid adoption:** AI and agentic AI advancements over the past few years have highlighted the promise of the technology; however, organizations have struggled at times to realize a transformative level of value in this near term. Too often, AI initiatives are siloed and not focused on the end-to-end workflow, which hinders enterprise value and momentum to scale to production. This slow value realization is also coupled with organizations finding deployment complexity with tools, technologies, and capabilities. ServiceNow is able to address these challenges as its offerings and platform help customers with a clear road map for both adoption and value realization with an enterprisewide approach to business

transformation. ServiceNow, through its AI control tower capabilities, enables companies to sense, decide, secure, and act based on data across the entire enterprise.

Conclusion

The time for complacency is over; organizations and business leaders can't afford to rest on laurels in this age of AI. The excitement surrounding AI and agentic AI is creating a tangible shift in the expectations of this set of technology capabilities, from incremental improvements to business transformation. IDC believes that organizations will either succeed or fail based on whether or not both leaders and the front line embrace technological advancements with purpose, ensuring benefits are shared across the enterprise and customer relationships.

About the analyst



Aly Pinder Jr., Research Vice President, Worldwide Aftermarket Services Strategies

Aly Pinder is research vice president, Aftermarket Services Strategies. Mr. Pinder leads IDC's research and analysis of service and customer support, which includes topics such as field service, warranty operations, and service parts management and how these service areas impact the overall customer experience. Mr. Pinder is also responsible for research that aids service organizations as they evaluate innovative technologies like 3D printing for service operations, augmented and virtual reality in field support, and the use of IoT and advanced analytics for remotely monitoring and managing assets.

MESSAGE FROM THE SPONSOR

ServiceNow Autonomous CRM is built on a single platform that connects front office teams across sales and service to the departments and systems where work gets done to resolve cases and close deals. The ServiceNow AI Platform unifies customer data, orchestrates workflows, and acts on insight with AI built in at every layer, not bolted on. Enterprises run sales and service on ServiceNow to resolve faster, deepen loyalty, and accelerate deal cycles.

Learn more at servicenow.com/CRM.



The content in this paper was adapted from existing IDC research published on www.idc.com.

IDC Custom Solutions produced this publication. The opinion, analysis, and research results presented herein are drawn from more detailed research and analysis that IDC independently conducted and published, unless specific vendor sponsorship is noted. IDC Custom Solutions makes IDC content available in a wide range of formats for distribution by various companies. This IDC material is licensed for external use, and in no way does the use or publication of IDC research indicate IDC's endorsement of the sponsor's or licensee's products or strategies.

International Data Corporation (IDC) is the premier global provider of market intelligence, advisory services, and events for the information technology, telecommunications, and consumer technology markets. With more than 1,300 analysts worldwide, IDC offers global, regional, and local expertise on technology and industry opportunities and trends in over 110 countries. IDC's analysis and insight help IT professionals, business executives, and the investment community make fact-based technology decisions and achieve their key business objectives.

©2026 IDC. Reproduction is forbidden unless authorized. All rights reserved. [CCPA](#)

IDC Research, Inc.
One Beacon Street
Suite 33100
Boston, MA 02108, USA
T 508.872.8200
F 508.935.4015
blogs.idc.com
www.idc.com