

# How brands are using artificial intelligence to enhance customer experience

*Robot hotel staff and virtual bank assistants have moved from science fiction to marketing fact, but systems that analyse customers' data to give personalised responses must be used carefully to avoid appearing intrusive.*



Artificial intelligence has been around since 1956 and has made some giant leaps in that time: beating the best human at chess, the best human at US gameshow Jeopardy and recently beating the best human at complex strategy game Go.

Brands have only recently started adopting artificial intelligence for core consumer services. [Google's](#) voice recognition technology now claims 98% accuracy and [Facebook's](#) DeepFace is said to recognise faces with a 97% success rate. IBM's Watson, which uses artificial intelligence to perform its question-answering function, is 2,400% "smarter" today than when it achieved the Jeopardy victory five years ago.

There is no doubt that the relationship between men and machines is changing, and brands are on the cusp of making artificial intelligence an everyday element of their customer offerings.

## ***Integrating AI and customer data***

In the future, Swedbank plans to personalise every interaction and make them, arguably, more rewarding for customers by integrating Nina into the customer database.

When a brand integrates AI into the fabric of its core data the information it is able to access will be much richer. But such a development then poses questions about what a brand does with that data, whether it is appropriate ethically and how marketers retain trust.

"While there is huge potential for brands to capitalise on AI to create more personalised experiences, they also need to be careful not to cross the 'creepy' line when it comes to customer privacy," says Rachel Barton, managing director of advanced customer strategy at Accenture Strategy. "If you integrate the technology into customer data for instance, it has the potential to run loose and make its own judgements, which could be to the detriment of customers who may feel a level of intrusion they didn't necessarily sign up to."

If businesses can strike the right balance between adhering to their brand values while allowing AI to access the right amount of [data](#), it can be highly beneficial – it is very cost effective and can deliver real-time personalisation that may not be possible via a human.

However, Accenture research finds that when customers want to complain or talk through a complex situation they want to talk to a human.

Hospitality is one of the sectors thinking more boldly about the opportunities of AI. Luxury hotel portfolio Dorchester Collection is using it to identify what guests want, not what marketers think they want. To [enhance its customer experience](#), it is using the AI Metis platform, which allows it to eschew the standardised hospitality industry measurement techniques such as mystery shoppers and customer satisfaction surveys and, instead, tap directly into digital customer feedback.



“Metis reads thousands of customer reviews and tells us what really matters to our customers,” says Ana Brant, The Dorchester Collection’s director for global guest experience and innovation. “Think of Metis as a giant focus group that not only facilitates the sessions in multiple languages but also summarises key findings, puts the findings in [context] with competitors and tells us stories worth listening to.”

The brand recently completed a comprehensive, brand-wide Metis study, which contained 7,454 guests reviews from 28 different hotels and 10 major hotel brands across 18 cities and regions. “New information is available to us every second – the biggest challenge is the

constant pursuit of meaningful analysis,” Brant says. “She [Metis] summarised all the findings in a 30 minute interactive video and provided us with invaluable insight, further redefining our competitive advantage.”