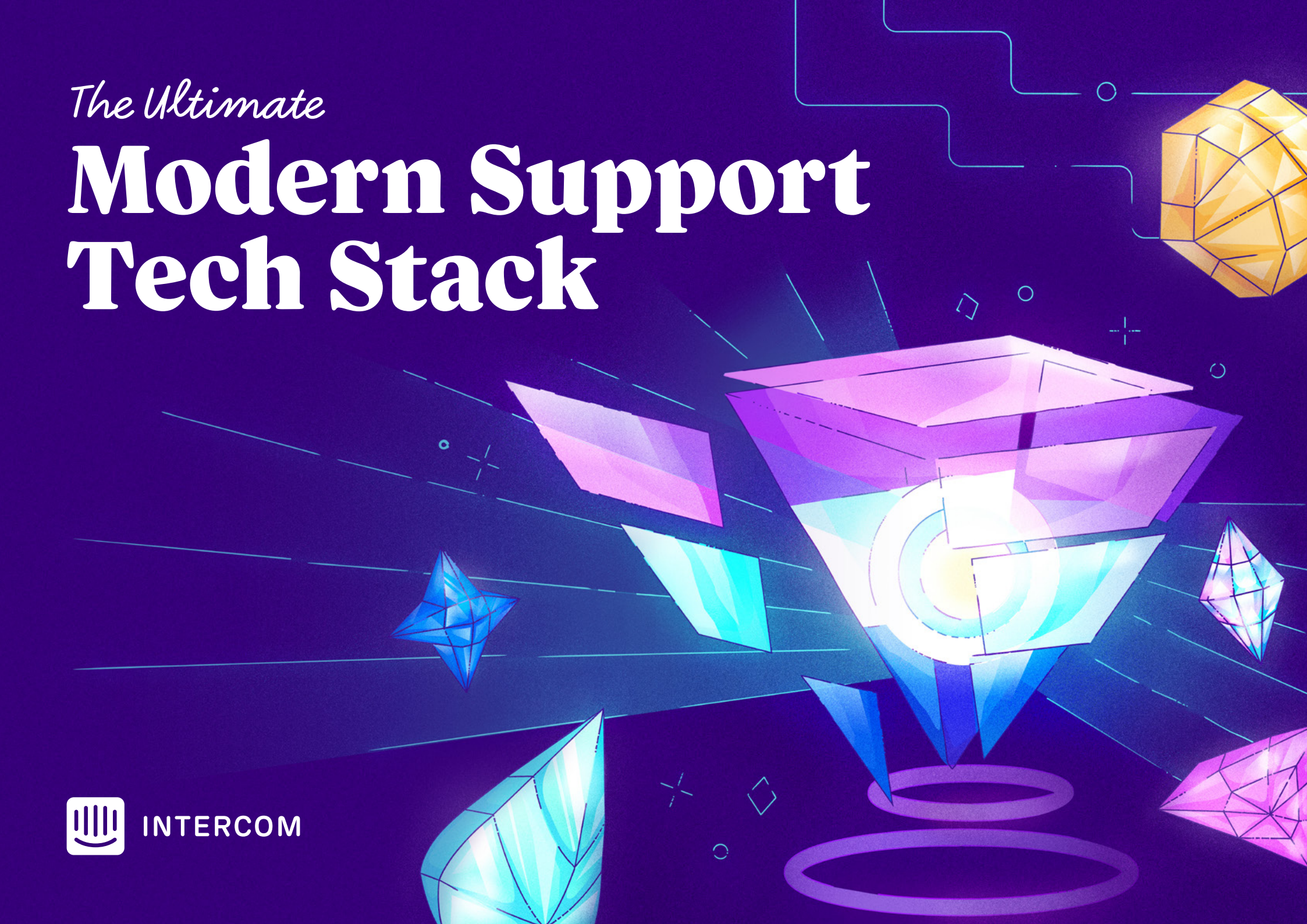
The Ultimate

Modern Support Tech Stack



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Chapter 1

The support landscape has changed. Is your tech stack ready?

Introduction from

Bobby Stapleton
Director of Customer Support at Intercom

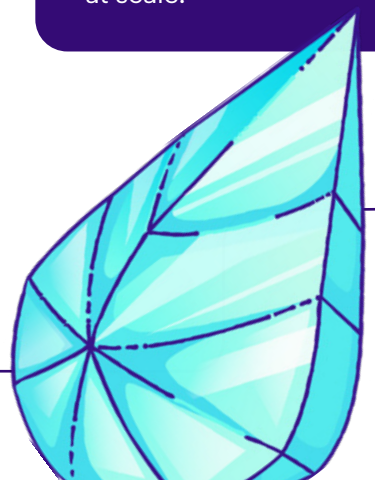
The future of support is conversational and connected

It's official: C-level execs have finally caught up with what savvy support leaders have long known – customer support is business critical. With the acceleration of businesses moving online coupled with increasing customer expectations, there's no denying that customer support is a key customer retention lever.

But under the weight of outdated tools of the past, support teams have struggled to get off the repetitive query treadmill to provide the kind of personal, efficient support that modern customers crave. Juggling outdated, disconnected tools is a recipe for team burnout, customer dissatisfaction, and ultimately, churn. No wonder a recent Forrester Consulting study commissioned by Intercom, *Drive Conversational Experiences For A Future-Ready Customer Support Strategy*, found that only 37% of support leaders are happy with their current tools.

Luckily, with increasing market pressures comes new opportunities to reinvent. Just like help desks dominated the 2000s and social media took over the 2010s, the next decade-defining category is here – it's conversational support. Modern support teams are ditching outdated, disconnected tools and adopting all-in-one, conversational, messenger-based solutions to achieve that once-elusive balance between being efficient and providing personal support at scale. And it's working – 71% of support decision makers agree that scaling conversational support will allow their organization to stay competitive or make them an industry leader.[1]

> "Modern support teams are ditching outdated, disconnected tools and adopting all-in-one, conversational, messenger-based solutions to provide efficient, personal support at scale."



With a modern conversational support solution, you can combine proactive, self-serve, and human support capabilities, so your team can get ahead of known problems with targeted messages, automatically answer repetitive queries with bots, and quickly resolve complex issues with automation and a human touch.

Powered by a modern business messenger, it scales your ability to answer more questions from more customers without increasing headcount, budget, or hours logged. It also integrates with other tools in your business tech stack so you can work seamlessly with other customer-facing teams – like marketing, sales, and product – to help, delight, and retain customers all from one inbox.

In this guide, we'll share everything you need to future-proof your tech stack for the new conversational support era. You'll learn the ingredients of a winning modern support tech stack, the key ways to optimize your stack through a proven framework, and the top strategies fueling customer-centric teams, including HubSpot, Zapier, and Stripe. Happier, more loyal customers and a more productive team await.

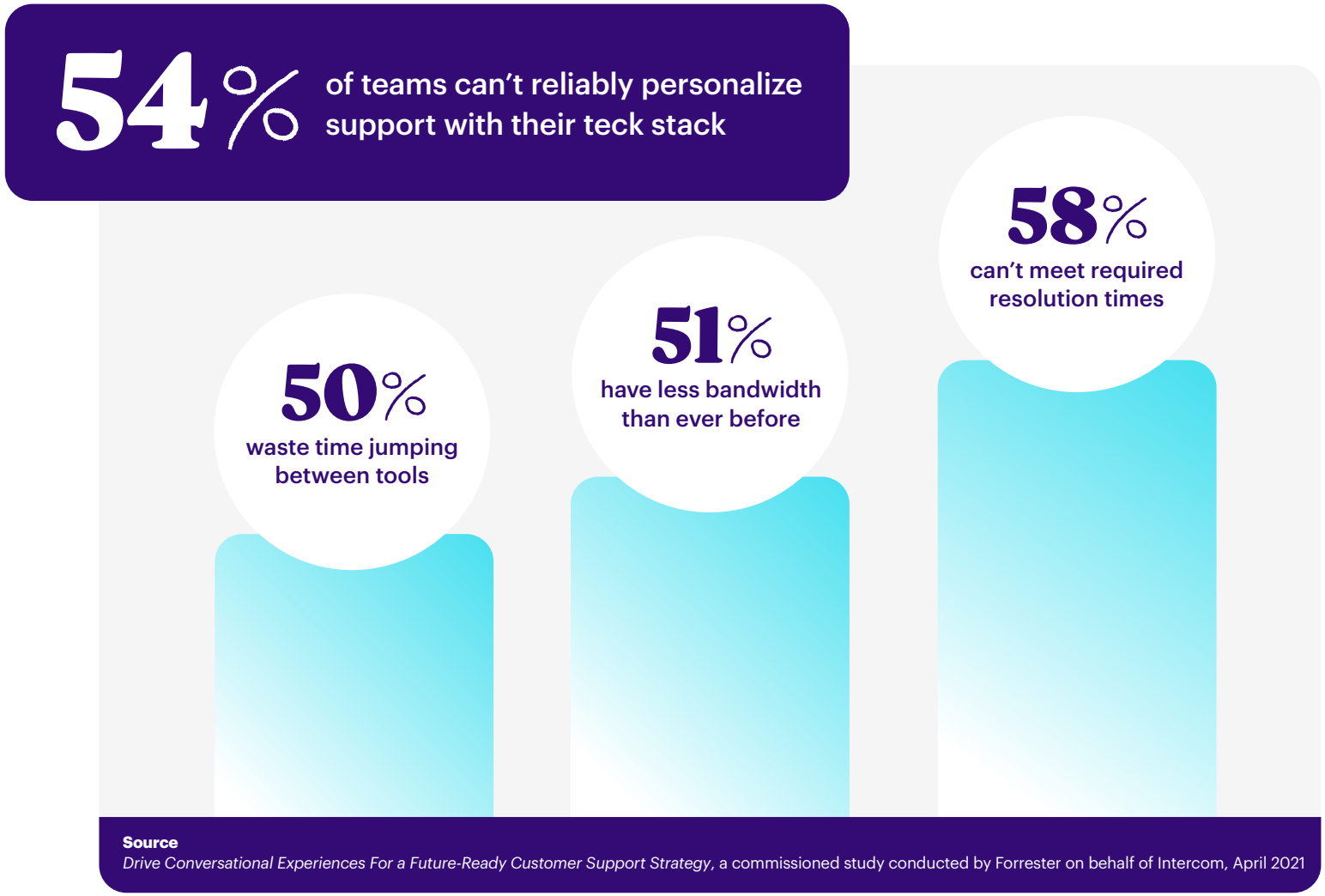
Enjoy!

Bobby Stapleton

Outdated tools are no longer good enough

Study after study shows that traditional support tech stacks are falling short of meeting modern customer and business needs. A commissioned study* conducted by Forrester Consulting, *Drive Conversational Experiences For A Future-Ready Customer Support Strategy*, revealed:

- 54% of teams can't reliably personalize support with their tech stack
- 50% waste time jumping between tools
- 51% have less bandwidth than ever before
- 58% can't meet required resolution times



*Forrester conducted an online survey of 523 global customer support decision makers with responsibility for strategy and technology purchasing decisions in EMEA and the United States. Survey respondents were managers or above and worked at organizations with 100 or more employees.

Conversational support solutions are bridging the tech stack gap

Today, conversational support tools are bridging the gap between what modern customers want and what time-strapped support teams can deliver. There are three trends leading the charge.

1. From disconnected tools to all-in-one solutions

The cost of multitasking is real: 68% of support leaders say their team hit roadblocks at least once a month because their support tech stack isn't integrated with technology used by other teams.[2] Plus, regularly switching between tabs, logging into disparate tools, and transferring data between platforms zaps your team's morale and your customers' trust.

These stats come as no surprise when you consider the sprawling number of tools in the customer support landscape. According to Intercom's BizOps

The customer support landscape

Help desk	Phone support	Chat support	Analytics and insights	Self-serve and automated support
Ticketing system	Contact center operations	Live chat	Team performance	Communities
Shared inbox	Contact center workforce	Messaging and social apps	Surveys and feedback	Knowledge base
CRM	Contact center quality assurance	SMS/Mobile	Conversation AI insights	AI bot platforms
Visual engagement tools	Speech analytics			Chatbots
Agent assist tools				

Proactive support	Internal collab and productivity	Customer success	Field service and mobile work	Social media tools
Proactive notifications	Project and issue management			
Digital adoption platform	Internal communications			
	Workforce management			

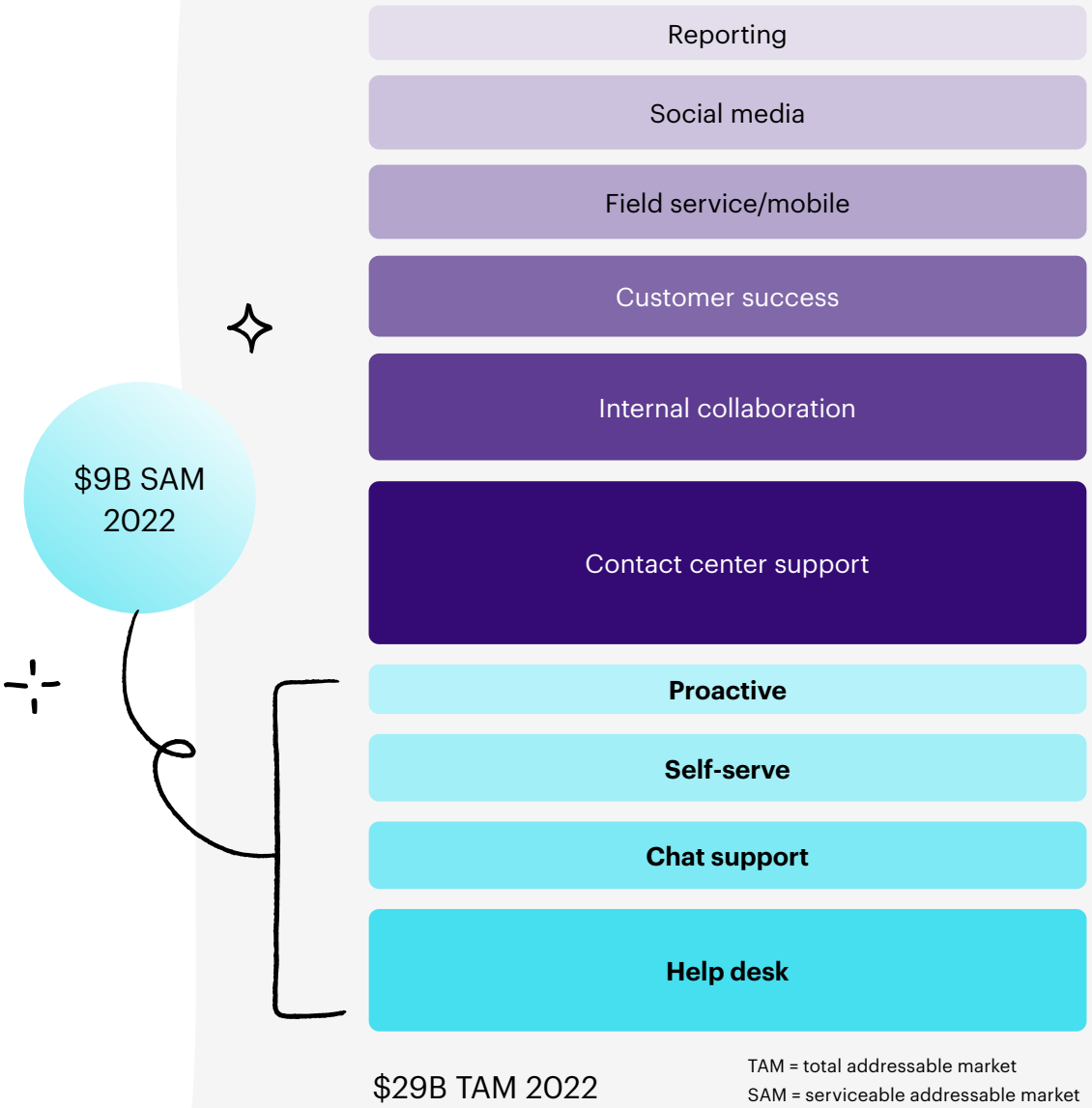
research, there are thousands of tools – and growing – across 10+ categories and 24+ subcategories.[3]

Forward-thinking support teams are regaining control with all-in-one conversational support solutions that help them achieve more with fewer tools. Conversational support tools combine proactive, self-serve, and human support capabilities to empower your team to provide faster answers to more customers – without losing that personal touch that makes your support so memorable.

These tools also connect with other tools in your tech stack, like your sales CRM, issue management tools, and social media channels, so your team has all of the data and context they need at their fingertips to efficiently support your customers.

According to Intercom's BizOps research, conversational support solutions are set to take over a third of the total addressable market share by 2022.[3] Want to future-proof your tech stack? Now's the time to switch to a flexible, all-in-one conversational support solution.

Predicted customer support total addressable market for 2022



2. From choosing between being personal or efficient – to the best of both

Nearly seven in 10 support leaders believe that the strongest customer relationships are built through personalized support experiences. And yet, 54% of support teams can't reliably personalize support with their current technology stack.[1] Improving customer satisfaction (and subsequently loyalty) hinges on a company being able to close the gap between what customers expect – fast and personal support – and what a company can actually deliver with their tools.

Until recently, due to technological limitations, most support teams faced an impossible choice – stay personal with customers or get efficient. Staying personal meant offering expensive, unscalable services like one-to-one phone calls or 24/7 real-time chat. Efficiency meant deflecting customer issues through impersonal forms and do-not-reply emails.

Today, customers have shifted their personal communication with family and friends to messengers like WhatsApp and Facebook. They expect the same personal touch and rapid responses from the businesses they use. Modern conversational support tools are empowering customer-centric teams to provide efficient, personal support at scale via messaging-based, context-rich interactions – leading to longer-lasting and more satisfying relationships with customers. It's a welcome shift for both time-strapped customers and support teams alike!

SURVICATE

"Using conversational support techniques helps us maintain a high CSAT score of 96% – or even higher – and collect positive reviews from our customers."

Vlada Masevich
Head of Customer Support at Survicate

3. From stretched bandwidth to supercharged productivity

As conversation volumes increase and customer expectations continually escalate, time has become an increasingly precious commodity for support teams. But most support teams are running on fumes and borrowed time – 51% have less bandwidth than before, and 58% feel ill-equipped to deliver quick, efficient resolutions with their current tools.[1]

Today, modern conversational support tools are shifting the power back into support teams' hands by eliminating a lot of the manual, time-consuming labor traditional support tools require. Forward-thinking support teams are now using proactive messaging to automatically resolve known customer issues ahead of time, bots and contextual knowledge bases to instantly resolve simple queries in real time, and automation to collect personalized data and route relevant messages to the right teams. This frees teams up to focus on the most important conversations that require a human touch, like emotionally charged complaints, VIP queries, and tricky troubleshooting issues.

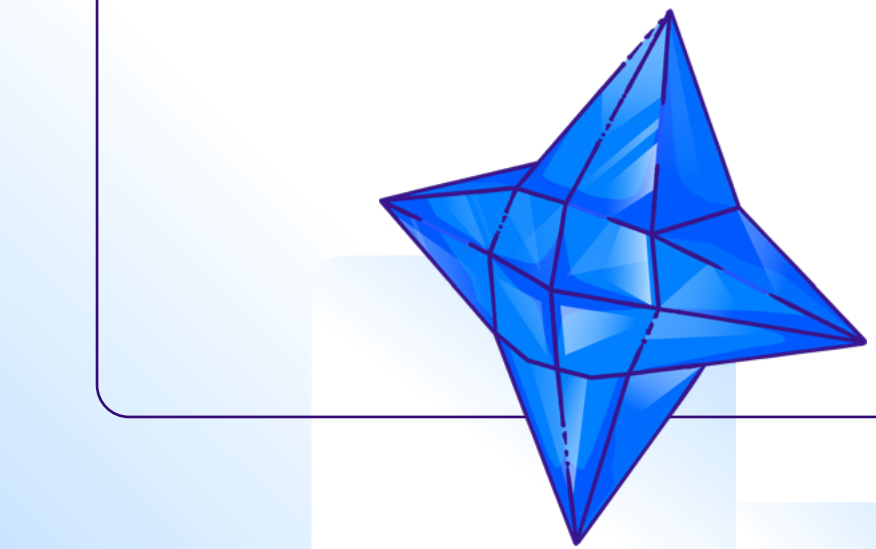
HubSpot

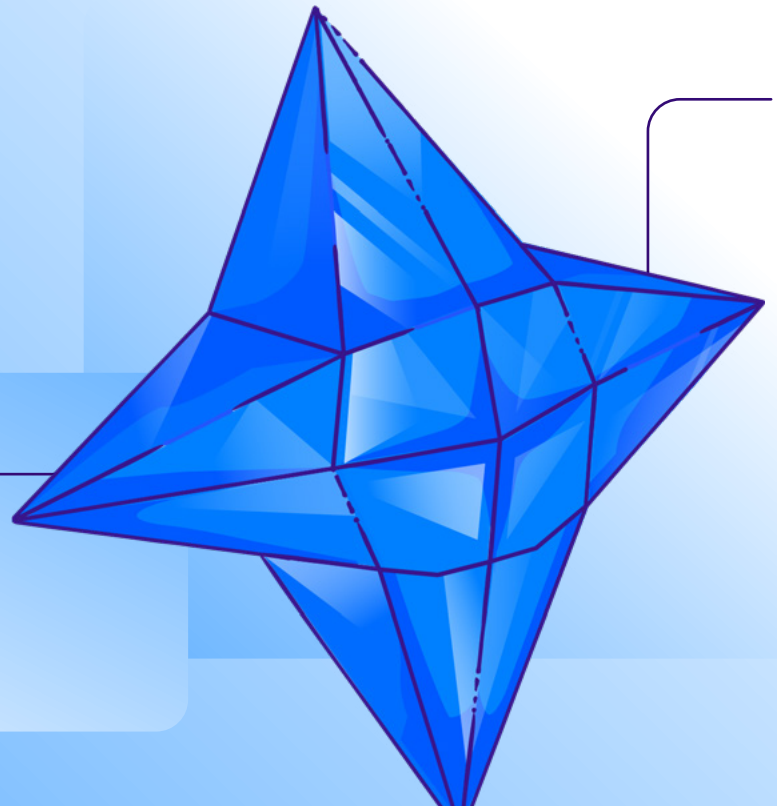
"If you're a customer support team and you're not using technology for efficiency, there will be roadblocks ahead. Our customers are evolving more and more, and so are the ways they want to get help."

Jean-Bernard Baptiste
Senior Manager of Customer Support at HubSpot

Chapter 2

The anatomy of a modern support tech stack





Strategy first, technology second

The benefits for future-proofing your support tech stack for the new conversational support era are clear. But many support teams – especially those in the enterprise space – worry that "ripping and replacing" their tech stack will be costly: timewise, cognitively, and financially.

A carefully-considered strategy can help you simplify the process and zero in on the conversational support essentials that will move the needle on your business's bottom line. Adopting the right strategy will help you scale your personalized support without scaling your costs, which will have the knock-on effect of increasing your customer satisfaction (CSAT) and customer retention. It can also shift the outdated business perception of your support team from a "cost center" to a core value driver.

But here's the thing: a toolset is not a strategy. Sure, you can compare different software packages by their features, but that's like marrying someone based on their dating profile. The real value support software offers is in the approach it enables and how it impacts the customer and team experience. So before you begin searching for specific tools, define your goals up front. Here's an example of key goals and metrics to consider:

Outcome type	Goal	Success metrics
Customer	More personal, efficient support	Customer satisfaction (CSAT), resolution rate, customer retention
Team	Better team efficiency without increasing headcount or hours logged	First-response time (FRT), resolution rate, reduced employee turnover
Business	Position support as a value driver	Customer retention, customer loyalty, net promoter score (NPS)

Future-proof your tech stack with the Conversational Support Funnel

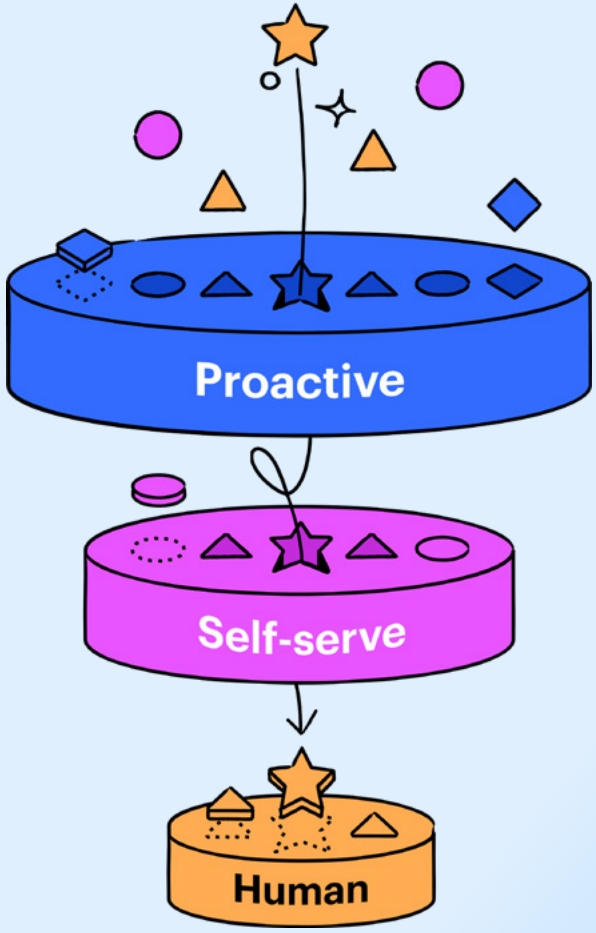
Once you're clear on your goals, a solid framework can help you pinpoint the exact tools and capabilities your team needs to succeed. With Intercom's Conversational Support Funnel framework, meeting and exceeding modern customers' expectations, increasing your team's efficiency, and moving the needle on your business's bottom line all go hand in hand. To achieve this seemingly elusive balance, it connects these three support layers and core capabilities:

- **Proactive support** helps you get ahead of known problems before they reach your team using outbound messages, product tours, and mobile carousels.
- **Self-serve support** resolves simple, repetitive queries through automated bots and contextual help content.
- **Human support** empowers your team to resolve complex and VIP issues seamlessly with apps and automation.

With the funnel, no matter how much your conversation volume grows or which resources you have on hand, you can still excel and provide customers with the fast, personal support they deserve – all without burning out your team or budget.

Alone, each layer of the funnel is powerful, but creating a connected support strategy with a flexible, all-in-one conversational support solution will help your team future-proof your tech stack and gain a true competitive edge. In the following sections, we'll show you how to optimize and modernize your support tech stack through the lens of the Conversational Support Funnel framework.

The Conversational Support Funnel



- **Preemptively answer known questions with targeted messages**

  "Our website will be down for planned maintenance this weekend."

- **Automatically answer repetitive queries with chatbots and contextual help content**

  "Here's how to reset the password on your account."

- **Enhance your team's capabilities to resolve complex and VIP queries with automated workflows**

  "Sorry to hear you're not happy with your plan. How can I help?"

Lay the right foundations with a powerful all-in-one conversational support tool

Future-proofing your support tech stack to meet both business objectives and the needs of modern customers starts with laying the right foundations. You need an all-in-one conversational support tool at the base of your tech stack that powers each layer of the funnel and integrates with your favorite tools to enhance your team's capabilities as your business grows. Once your team is free from the shackles of constant tab and context switching, they'll have more time to better support and satisfy your customers. And they'll have all of the personalized customer data they need across a range of tools – all in one inbox.

Medallia

"Intercom has unleashed the power of conversational support across Medallia's growing suite of products. What used to be a disjointed customer experience is now unified, consistent, and personalized."

Kennen Warmack
VP of Global Customer Support and Education at Medallia

Ingredients of a great conversational support tool

At a minimum, here's what your conversational support tool should include:

- The ability to send targeted proactive messages so your team can preemptively resolve issues ahead of time
- An integrated knowledge base and chatbots so you can empower your customers to self-serve and get instant answers
- A team inbox to help you set up the right efficient workflows and work seamlessly with other teams
- The ability to integrate with other tools in your tech stack
- A solid API you can build on top of as your team grows and their needs evolve
- The ability to report on your team's success and gather meaningful insights that improve your support

Top conversational support tools

The first step is to lay the right foundation with an all-in-one conversational support tool that powers each layer of the funnel. Obviously we're a little biased so here are five top conversational support tools as reported by the world's largest and most trusted marketplace, G2:

Intercom

Intercom is an all-in-one Conversational Relationship Platform that empowers you to build better customer relationships through personalized, messenger-based experiences across the entire customer journey.

- ☑ Live chat
- ☑ Proactive messaging
- ☑ Integrated knowledge base
- ☑ Chatbots
- ☑ Team Inbox
- ☑ Integrations and Messenger apps
- ☑ API
- ☑ Reporting and AI-powered conversational insights

HubSpot

HubSpot's Service Hub brings all your customer service data and channels together in one place, and helps scale your support through automation and self-service.

Podium

Podium's Interaction Management platform uses messaging to make it convenient to interact with your leads, customers, and team at every customer touchpoint.

Front

Front brings email and apps together in a collaborative customer communication platform and drives business impact by scaling the natural conversations that create customers for life.

Zendesk

Zendesk's Support Suite lets you have conversations with customers on any channel, while keeping all interactions and relevant context in one place for your agents.

Enhance your team's capabilities with connected integrations

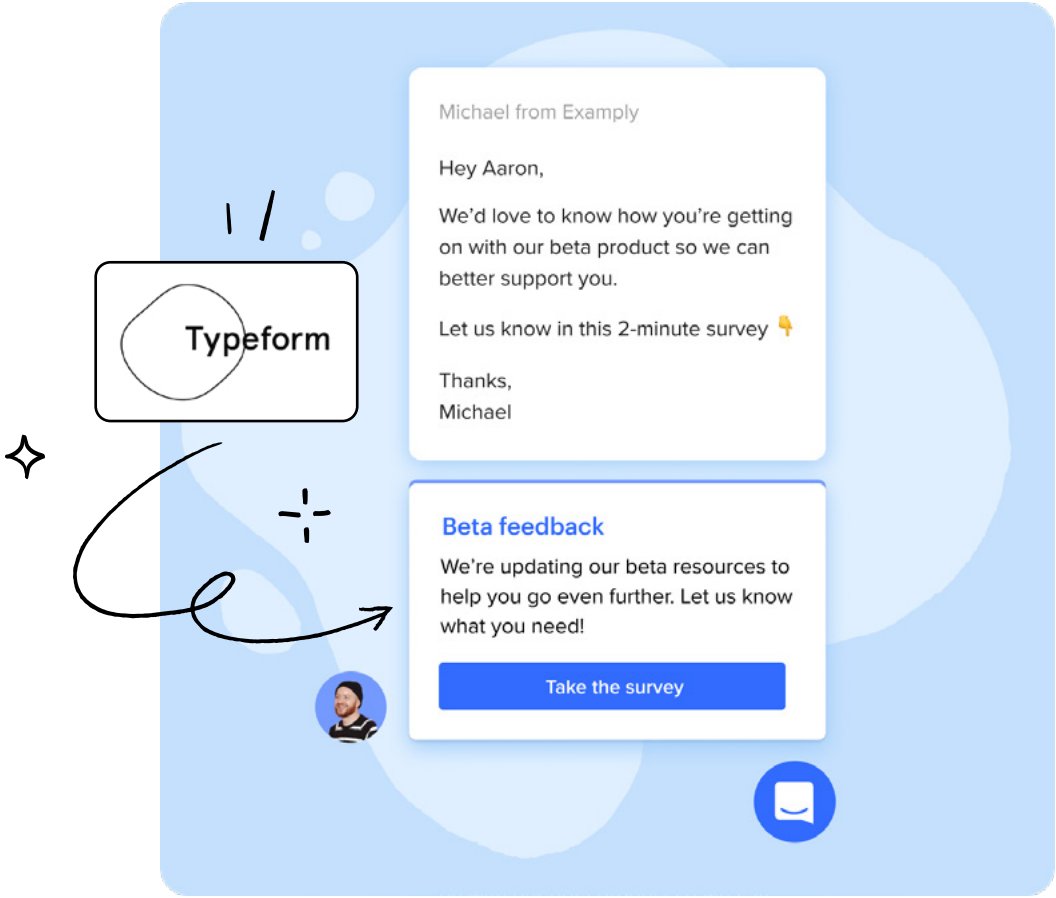
As cutting-edge as most conversational support software is, it's unlikely that your tool will do everything your business needs. This is especially true as your customer base grows and your team's needs evolve accordingly. So it's important to choose a solution that's flexible and that will integrate seamlessly with other tools in your tech stack. If you're looking for inspiration, here are some of our favorite apps that will supercharge and enhance each layer of the funnel.

Top proactive support tools to integrate with

Integrating your conversational support solution with the right proactive support apps can help you better understand your customers' needs and empower your team to preemptively resolve more known issues ahead of time.

Surveys and qualitative feedback: Typeform

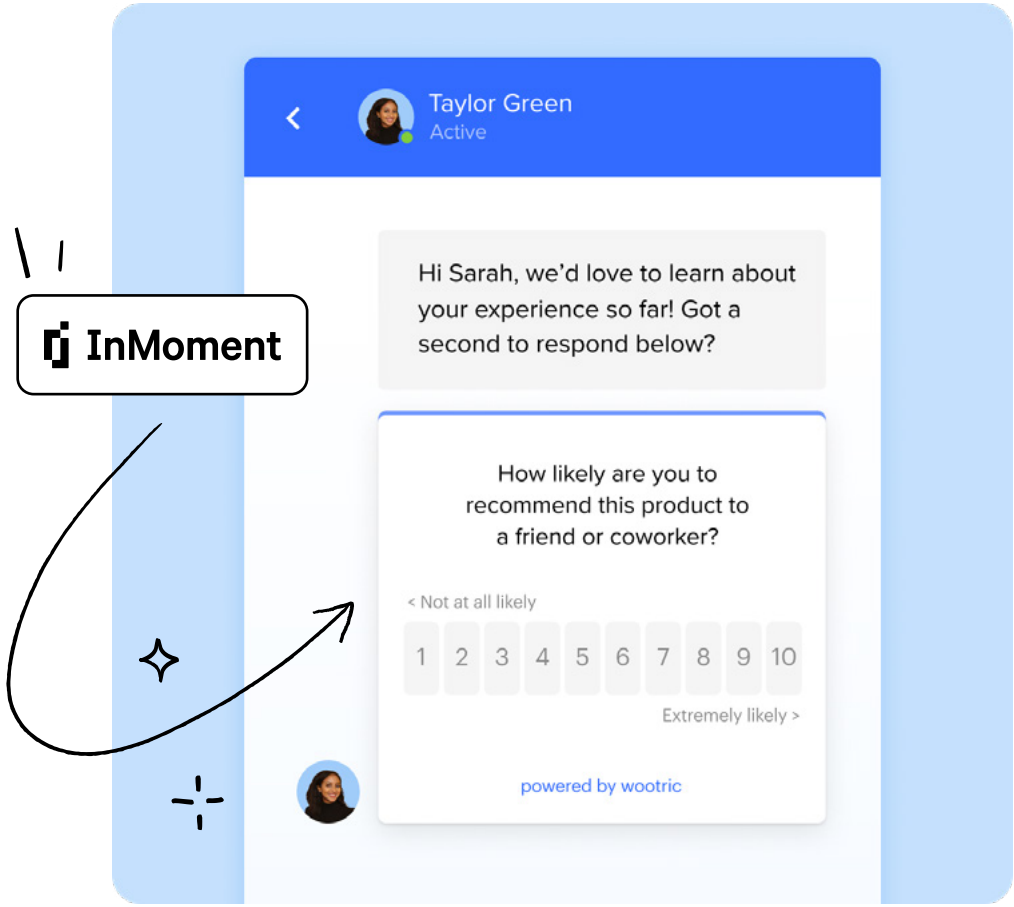
Quantitative data is meaningful. But it won't help you fully understand all of the context behind your customers' pain points. Often, you'll be left with questions like: "Why do they have these issues?", "How do they feel?", and "Where are the stumbling blocks?" Typeform connects with Intercom to empower

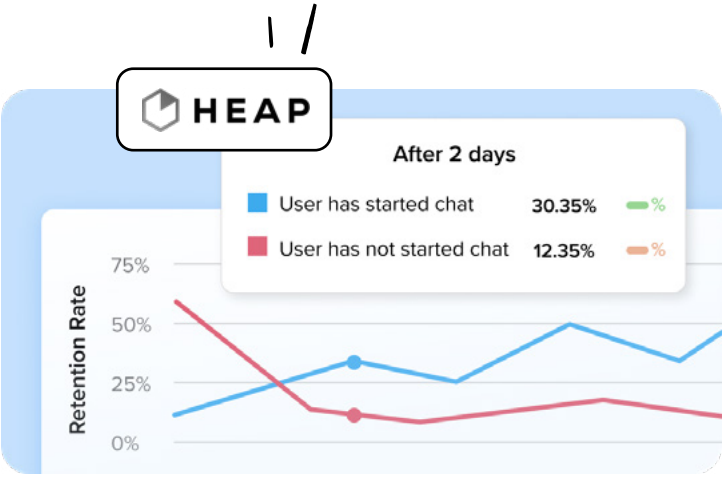


your team to quickly gather key qualitative data from customers in the Intercom Messenger. For an even more personal touch, you can even send customers video surveys with VideoAsk. Then, armed with eye-opening customer insights, you'll know the exact questions to address in your proactive messages and the precise words to use (yes – your customers' words).

NPS, CSAT, and CES surveys: InMoment

In today's customer-centric world, listening to and responding to voice-of-the-customer feedback will give your proactive support a competitive edge. InMoment helps your team keep an ongoing pulse on how your customers feel about your product or service so you can proactively drive retention, engagement, and advocacy. You can connect InMoment with Intercom to empower your team to send NPS, CSAT, and Customer Effort Score (CES) surveys directly in the Intercom Messenger at relevant moments in your customers' journey. For example, when customers close a conversation or use a specific feature, you can check in to see how they feel. You can also proactively follow up with detractors to resolve their issues or reach out to happy customers to turn them into brand advocates and retain them for life.



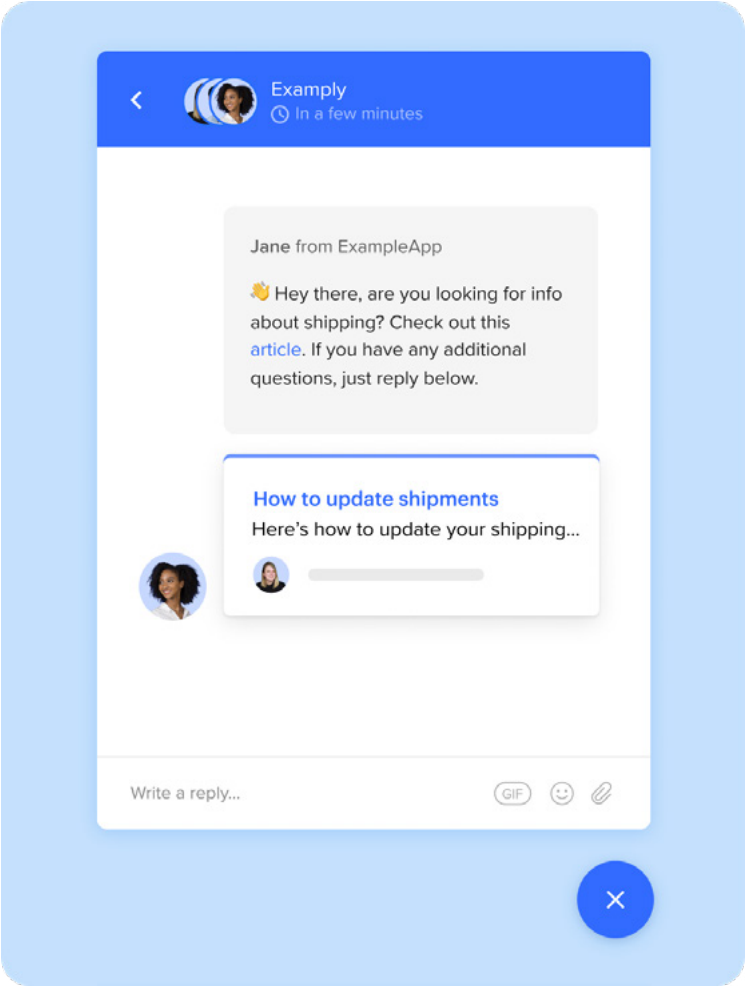


Analytics: Heap

Improving the quality of your proactive support hinges on gathering meaningful insights. Analytics tool Heap connects with Intercom to analyze how effective your messages are at driving key actions in your product and improving long-term customer retention. Your team can view graphs, funnels, retention curves, and other visualizations to answer meaningful questions like: "Do customers start conversations more often on certain pages than others?" and "Which messages are most effective?" Then, brimming with these insights, you can improve your proactive messages, inform your product roadmap, and more.

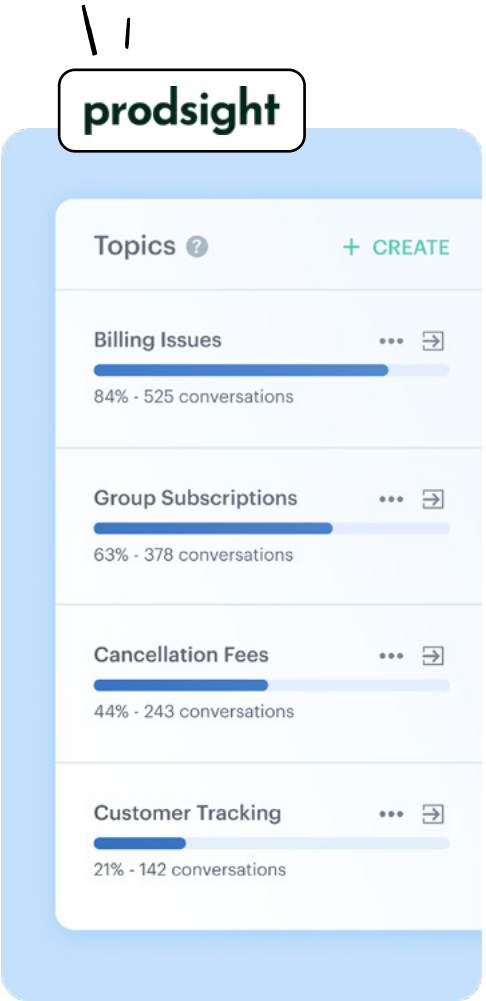
Proactive notifications: Article Inserter (built by Intercom)

Answering the same repetitive queries over and over again can be draining for your support team and a misuse of their time and expertise. Even when these questions are covered in your knowledge base, not all of your customers will want to abandon the page they're on to find an answer to their query. To protect your support team's inbox and help your customers get faster resolutions, you can integrate the Article Inserter app with the Intercom Messenger. Then, your team can proactively deliver relevant help articles via an outbound message at key moments when customers appear to be struggling, like when they're stuck on your shipping page.



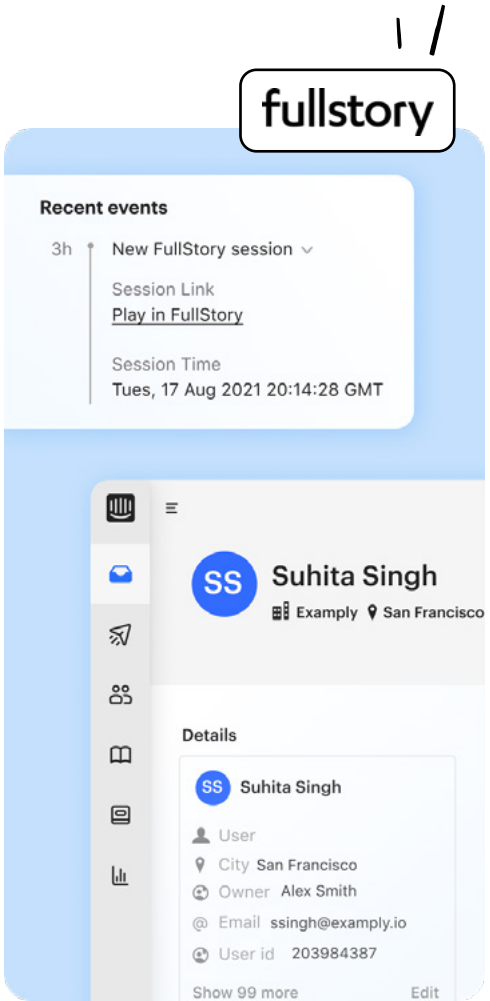
Business intelligence: Prodsight

As your conversation volume grows, it can be harder to see which issues your customers are struggling with most and what feature requests are most important to them. Business intelligence tool Prodsight connects with Intercom to surface the most critical topics you should be tracking, help you identify underlying issues, and provide an automated sentiment analysis for every message so you can understand how customers feel about certain topics or features. These insights empower your team to create more valuable proactive support messages and proactively inform your product roadmap.



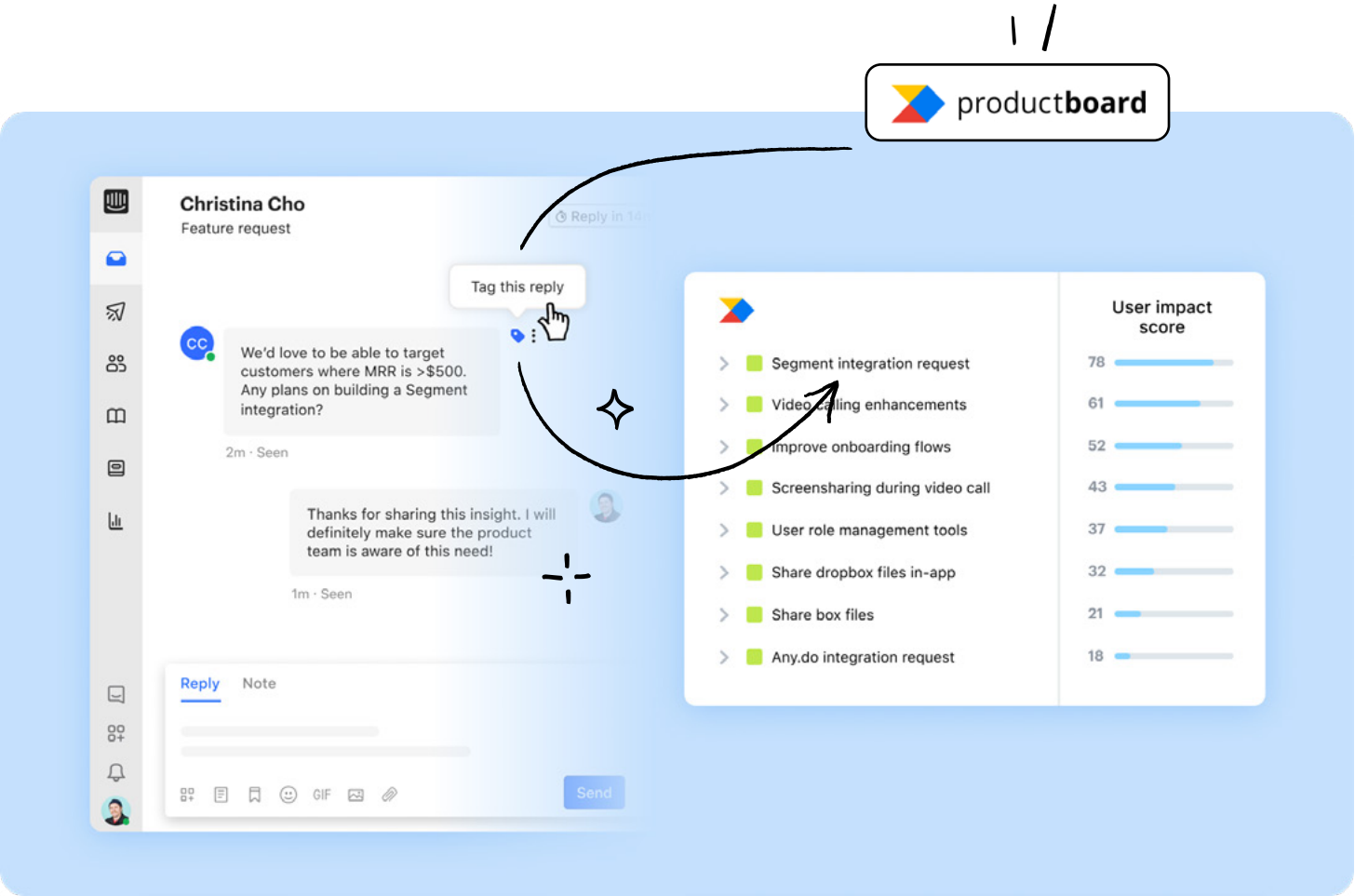
Screen capture and digital experience intelligence: FullStory

Ever felt the frustration of a cryptic support ticket or a poor feedback rating submitted without comment? Digital experience intelligence platform FullStory integrates with Intercom to show you exactly what happens when a customer visits your site or app, and how to proactively improve their experience. You can also send proactive outbound messages to your customers in real time to help them preemptively resolve issues when they're experiencing friction on your site or in your app.



Product feedback: Productboard

Your support team knows your customers' pain points, questions, and desires better than anyone else in your company. They're in a unique position to partner with your product team to help proactively improve your product roadmap. You can connect the Productboard app with Intercom to capture valuable product feedback during customer conversations and send it to a centralized repository. From there, your product team can categorize interesting insights to understand what customers really need, prioritize what to build next, and ensure it gets built in the right way.

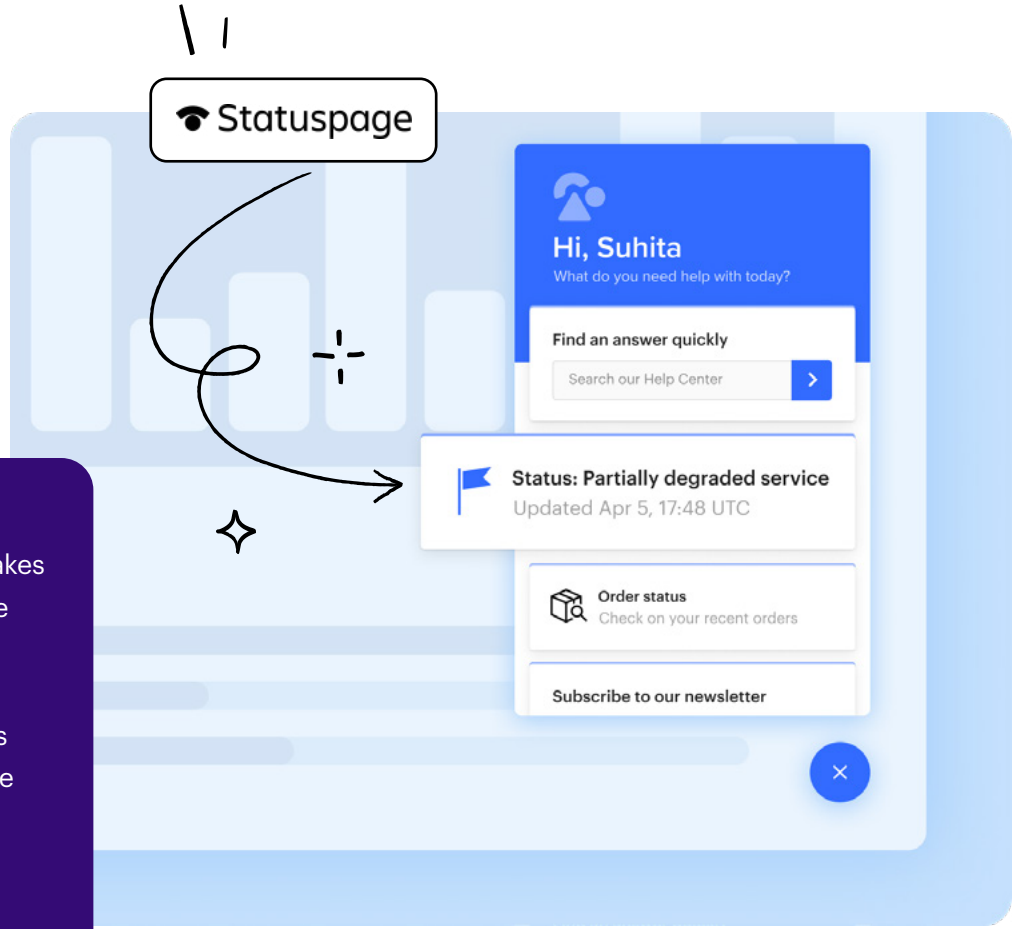


Top self-serve support tools to integrate with

The right self-serve support apps can empower your customers to help themselves and resolve their own queries right inside your business messenger, without ever leaving your website or product.

Issue tracking: Statuspage

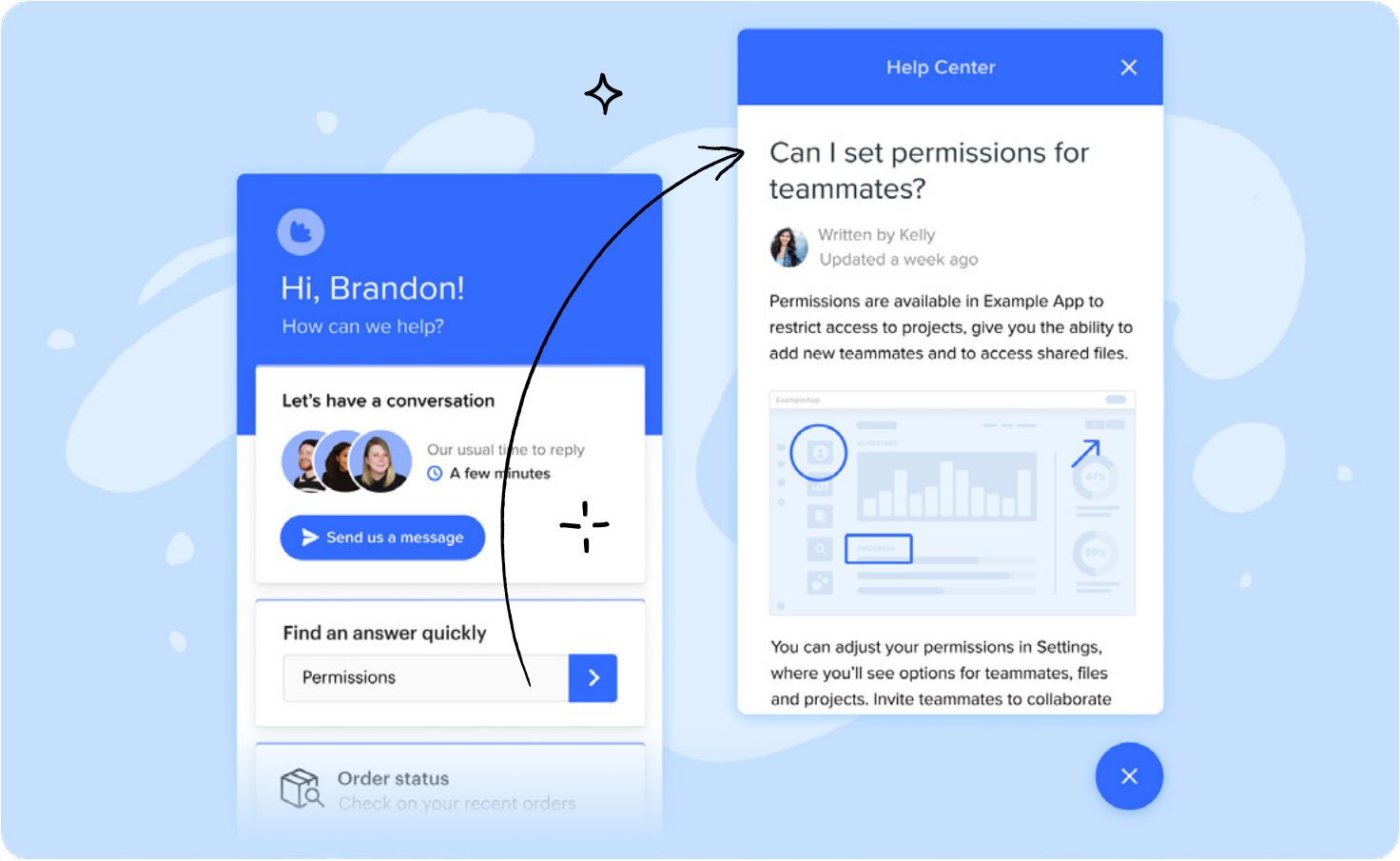
No matter how diligent your business is, day-to-day issues can occur with your product or service that can affect your customers, like product outages and website downtime. But these mission-critical issues don't have to frustrate your customers and wipe out your team's entire day. Instead, you can connect the Statuspage app with Intercom to proactively surface critical outage information in the Intercom Messenger. Customers can also subscribe to automatically receive proactive status updates via email or text so they don't need to constantly check in with your team – significantly reducing your inbound conversation volume.



> "The Statuspage app helps us increase visibility around Guru's uptime and makes it easy to post scheduled maintenance or potential performance-related insights for our customers. Providing this transparency significantly reduces inbound conversation volume, all while creating more trust in our brand."
>
> **Hillary Curran**
> *Director of Customer Experience at Guru*

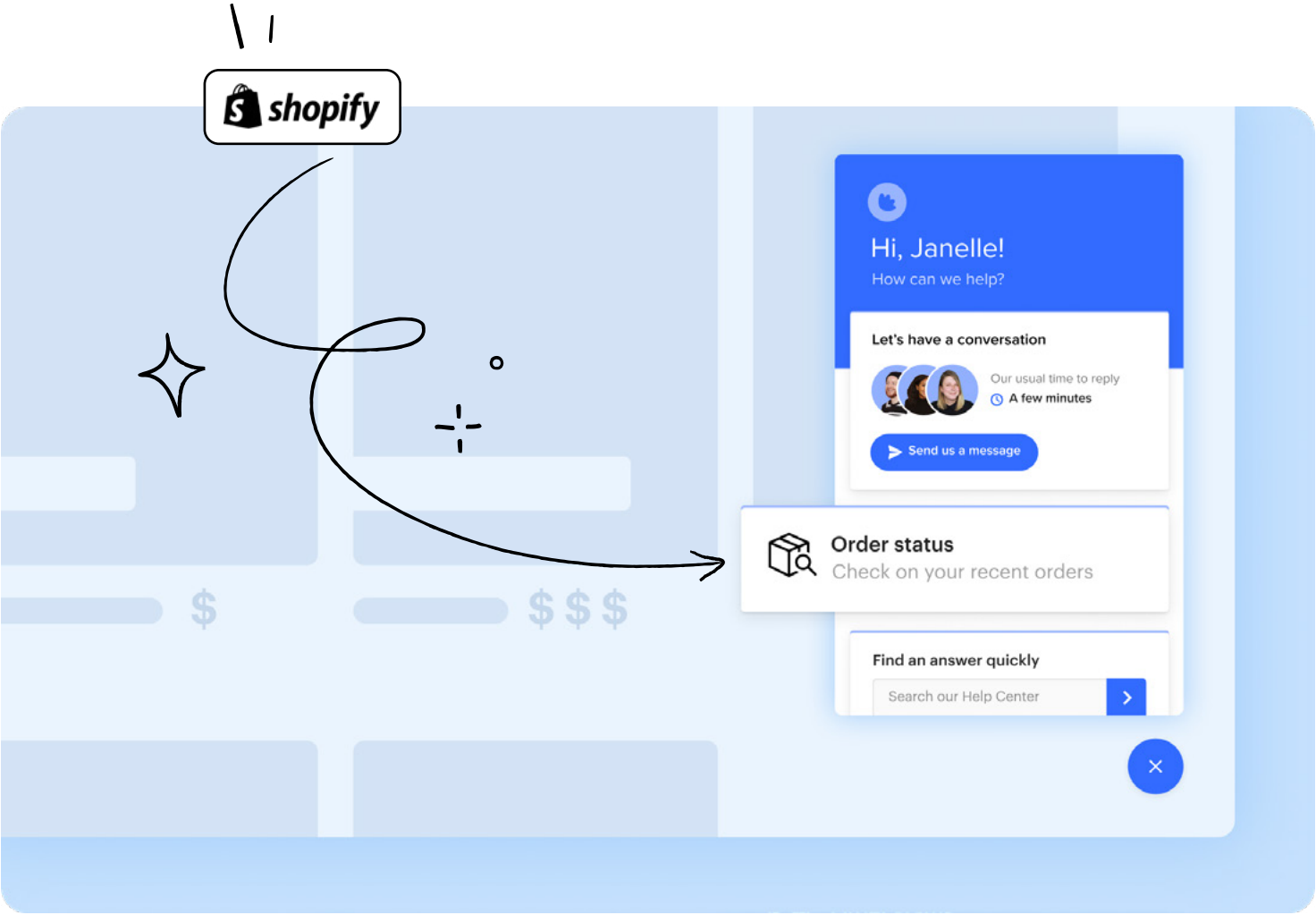
Knowledge base: Article Search (built by Intercom)

Modern customers are busy with a capital B. They won't always have time to search and sift through a knowledge base to find the answers they need. Connecting the Article Search app with Intercom gives a new home to your help center right inside the Intercom Messenger. This empowers your customers to search and view articles anywhere on your site or in your app so they can help themselves without having to start a conversation with your support team. As a result, your support team is then freed up to tackle the more complex support queries that truly impact your business.



E-commerce order tracking: Shopify

"When is my order going to arrive?" "Why is my delivery late?" Answering simple, repetitive queries like these can feel like Groundhog Day for your support team. Asking these questions is no fun for your customers either – study after study reveals that many customers would rather self-serve than talk to a support rep at all. If you work for an e-commerce store, you can connect the Shopify app with Intercom to empower your customers to self-serve and check their order status right inside the Intercom Messenger, without ever having to reach out to your team. It's a win-win!

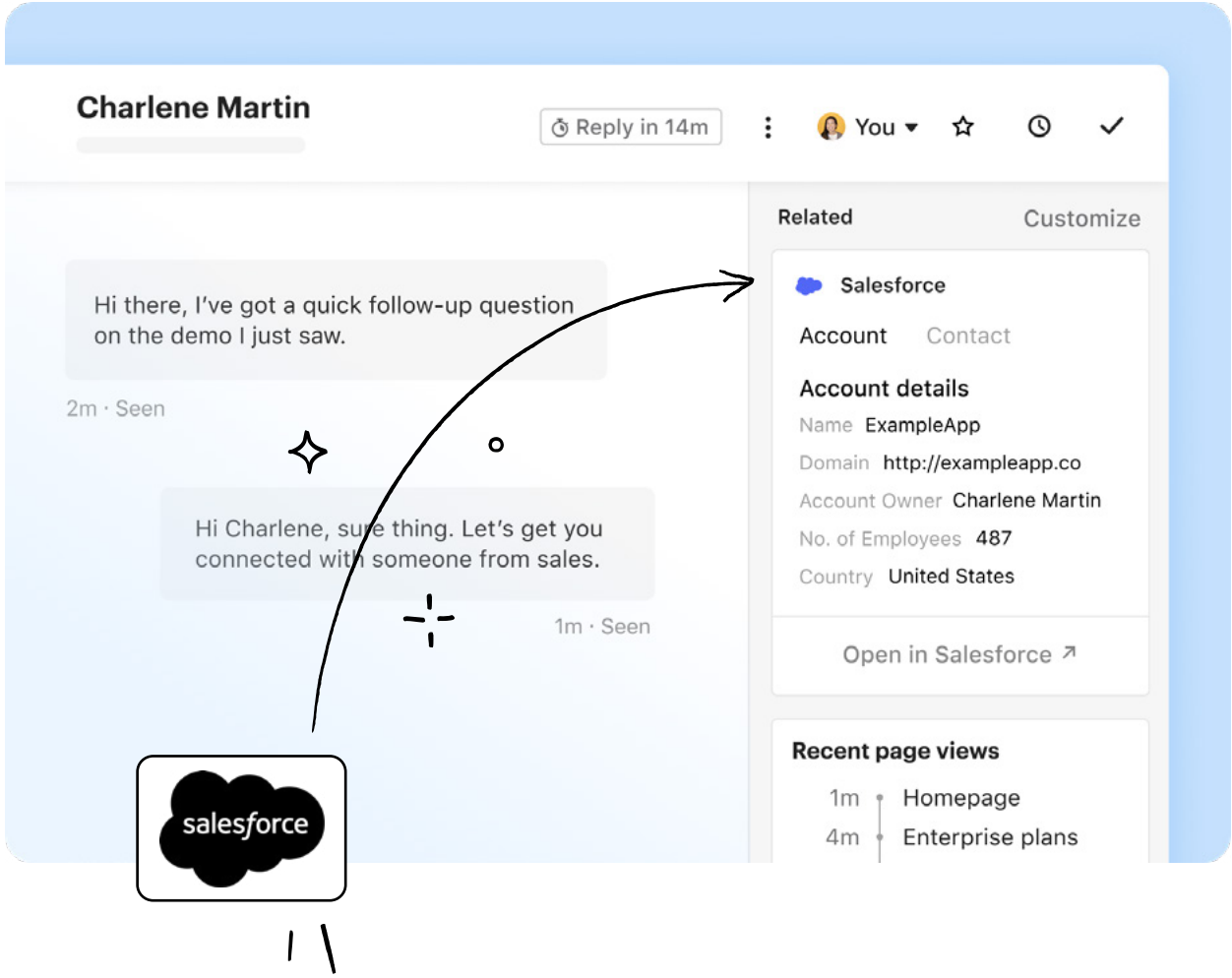


Top human support tools to integrate with

The right human support apps supercharge your team's efficiency and make it seamless to work with key teams in your organization, like sales, marketing, and engineering, so you can deliver an even more personal, efficient conversational experience for your customers.

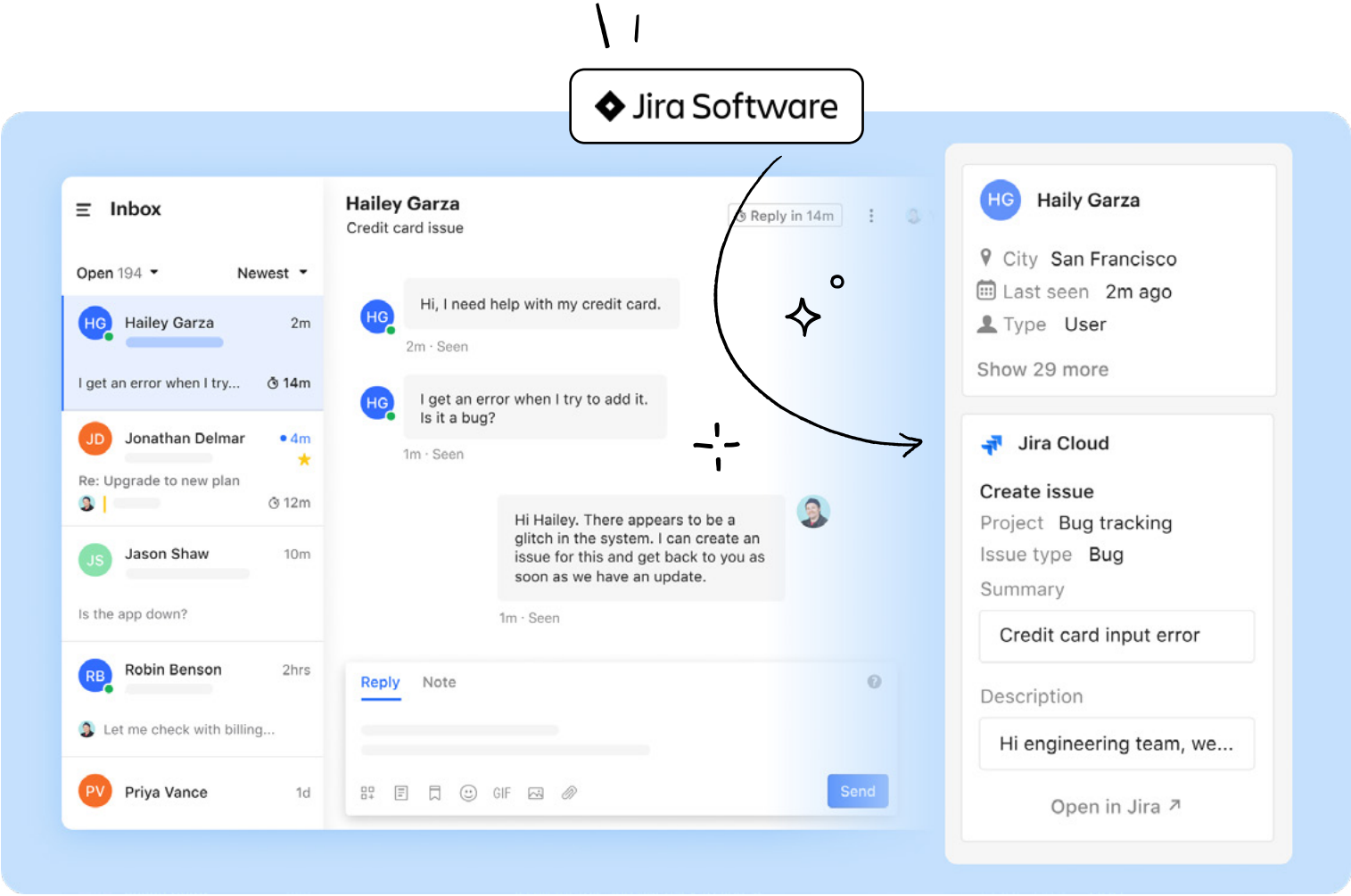
CRM: Salesforce

When a sales-ready conversation – like a billing query from a high-value prospect – pops into the Intercom Inbox, you'll want to ensure a seamless transition from your support to your sales team. Instead of copying and pasting details into your sales CRM, you can connect Salesforce with Intercom to empower your team to easily create leads and route them to your sales team or individual reps. Once a lead or customer is logged in Salesforce, both your support and sales teams will have all of the data they need – like the status, opportunity stage, and account owner – to better support, nurture, and upsell prospects.



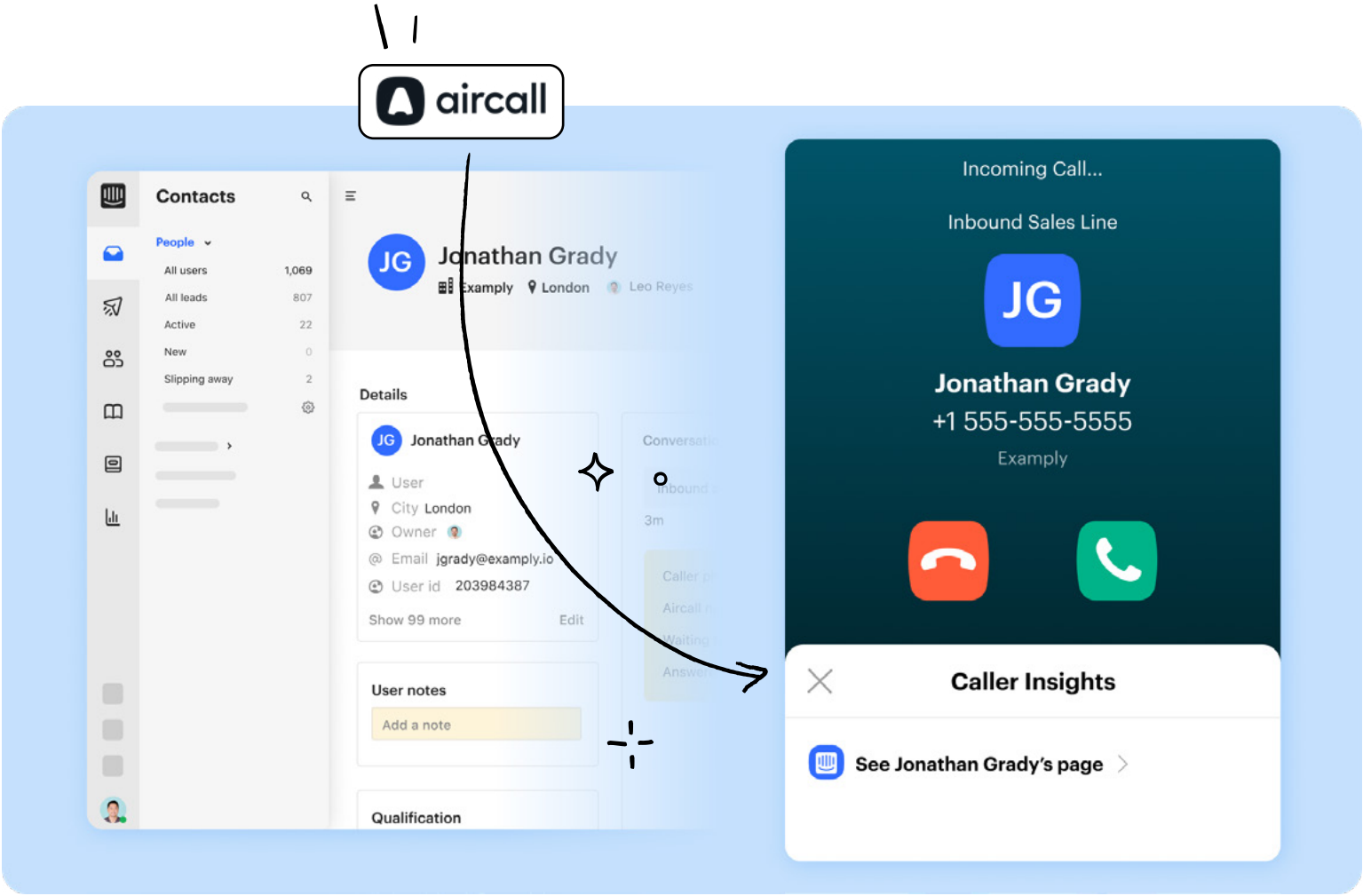
Issue tracking and management: Jira

When a customer spots a bug or website error, their first port of call will often be your support team. That used to mean copying and pasting between tools and pinging your engineering team to help out. But now, you can connect issue tracking software Jira with Intercom to empower your team to create Jira feature requests and bug reports in the Intercom Inbox. When a Jira issue is created, it will automatically be linked to the relevant conversation, so your engineering team gets the full context they need to resolve the issue. Your support team will also get live status updates, so you can let your customers know as soon as the bug is resolved.



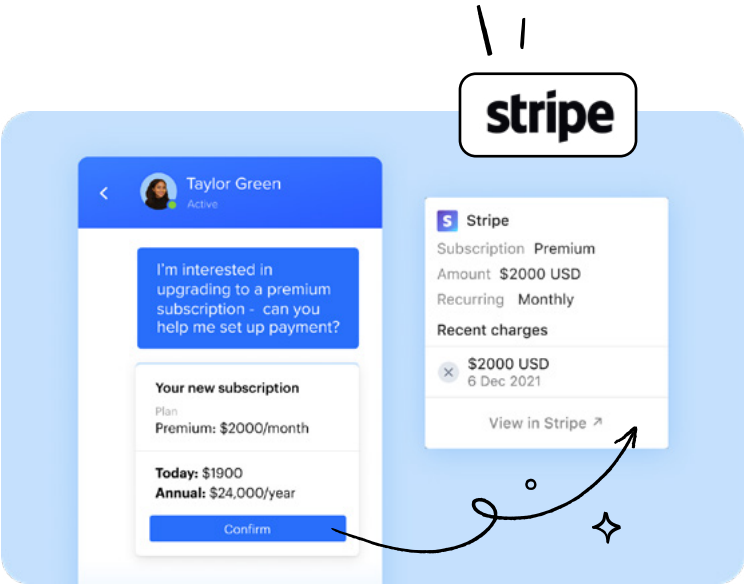
Cloud-based phone support: Aircall

No chatbot can help calm an angry customer quite like your support team can. Some complex conversations, like tricky troubleshooting issues, emotionally-charged complaints, and VIP issues, may require a quick call with a customer to smooth out the details. In cases like these, you want to ensure a seamless transition from chat to call. Cloud-based phone support tool Aircall connects with Intercom to empower your agents to make a call right from the Intercom Messenger. Call activity also gets logged directly in the Intercom Inbox so you can keep track of every interaction with ease, like when a customer leaves a voicemail or when they last answered a call from your team.



Subscription payment and management: Stripe

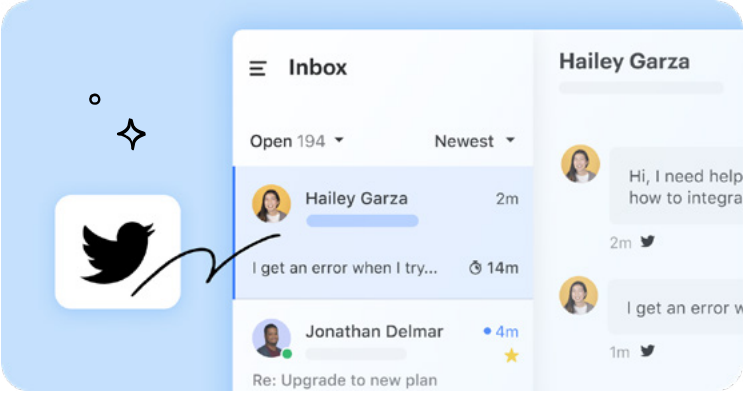
When a customer wants to change or upgrade their subscription plan, they'll often reach out to your trusted support team. Forget logging into multiple platforms to find payment details or to adjust a customer's plan. Instead, you can connect Stripe with Intercom to ensure a seamless end-to-end payment process. Your team can initiate subscription upgrades and accept secure payments via the Messenger, which empowers them to boost trial and upgrade conversions with ease. They can also view Stripe data – like what subscription a customer is on, the date they signed up, and the last time they reached out to your team – all in the Inbox.



> "Rather than having to look up their account in Stripe and going through a separate platform, we can see everything within Intercom. It saves significant time, and helps scale our customer support efficiently."
>
> **Blake Bolona**
> *Head of Customer Experience at Threadbeast*

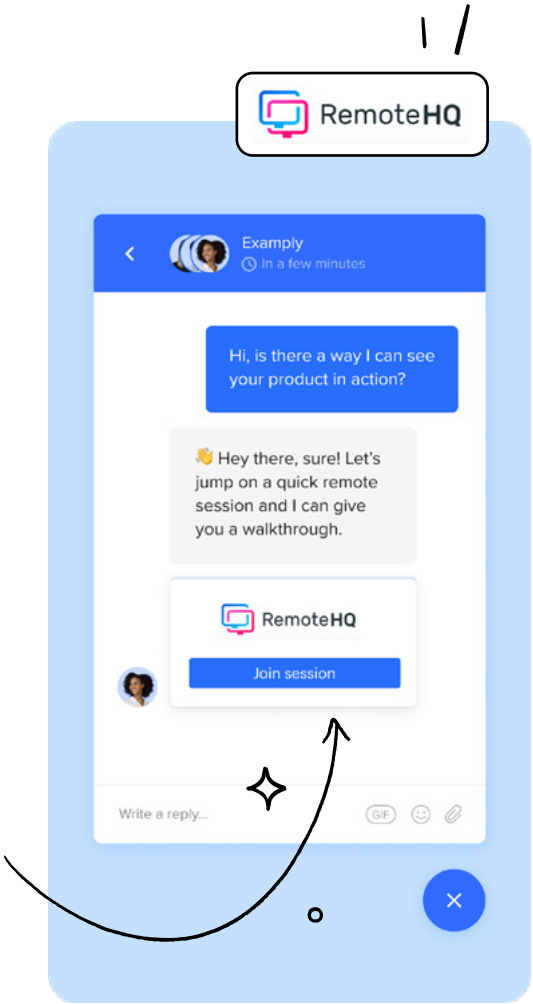
Social media: Twitter

Switching tabs and checking for messages across multiple tools is a huge time sink for your support team. Social media platform Twitter connects with Intercom to automatically route your Twitter messages right into the Inbox. Instead of your team spending large chunks of their day frequently checking social media channels, they can read, manage, and respond to Twitter messages all from one Inbox. They can also track all of your customer data in one place, giving you a clear picture of your customer base.



Cobrowsing: RemoteHQ

"Are you sure you're on the right page?" "What can you see?" "Can you share a screenshot?" When high-priority customers report critical issues or have pressing queries, getting on the same page shouldn't require a time-consuming, back-and-forth question marathon. Make the troubleshooting process more streamlined and personal by connecting RemoteHQ with Intercom. Your team will be able to escalate an Intercom chat into a live cobrowsing session where they can control your product and web pages hand in hand with that customer to resolve their issue interactively.



Bonus: Top automation tools to integrate with

Need to set up a very custom or complex workflow? Integrating your conversational support solution with the right automation tools helps streamline and supercharge your support operations behind the scenes to ramp up your team's efficiency and eliminate time-consuming, manual tasks.

Zapier

Zapier lets you connect Intercom to the apps you use every day to automate manual actions and save time. You can connect any of the 1,000+ integrated apps on Zapier together to make your own custom automations.

Automate.io

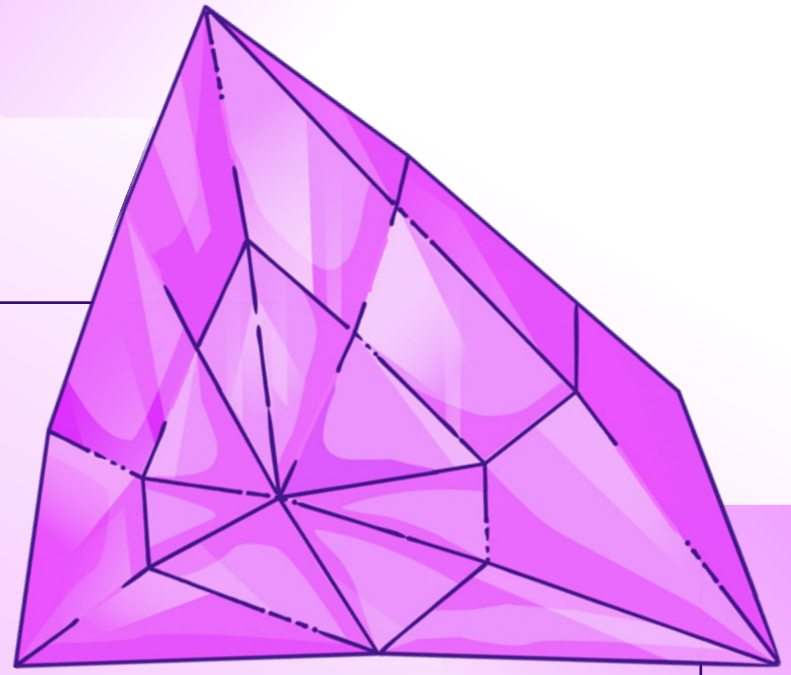
With Automate.io, you can connect Intercom to your marketing and sales platforms, project management and collaboration apps, and more. It's easy to set up a simple one-to-one integration, or a workflow spanning across multiple apps in minutes – without any technical help.

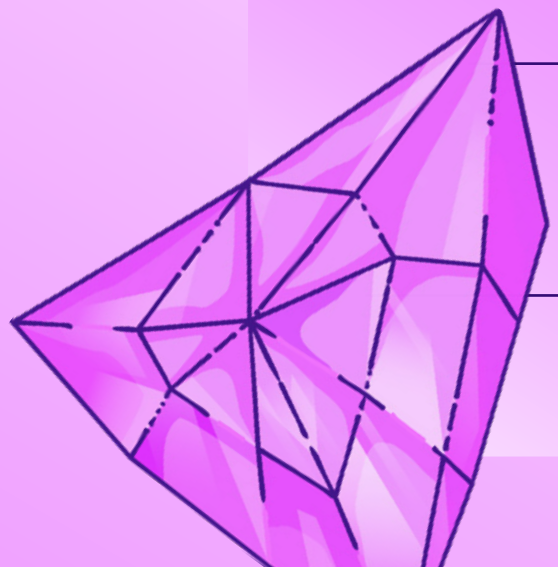
Tray.io

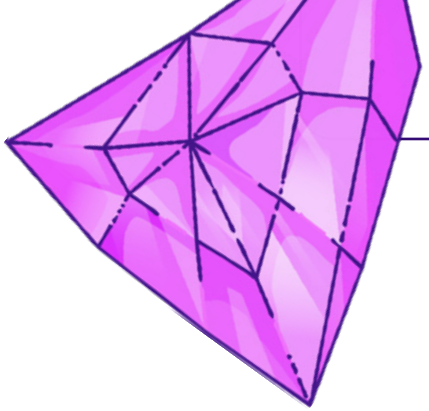
Work for an enterprise or fast-growing company? The Tray Platform empowers you to easily integrate your entire cloud stack with Intercom and build powerful, flexible automated workflows with no engineering resources.

Chapter 3

Top tech stack strategies fueling customer-centric companies







1. Choose flexible tools that grow with your team

No one tool can do everything. That's why you need an all-in-one platform that will plug in and play nicely with the other tools in your business's tech stack. According to the support leaders we spoke with at key customer-centric companies, flexibility – like the ability to integrate with new essential tools and build on top of a solid API – is key.

HubSpot is an all-in-one platform built to enable business growth across marketing, sales, and customer service. Its customer support team is focused on creating great customer experiences for the 100 thousand businesses using the platform. How do they achieve that kind of scale? HubSpot Senior Manager of Customer Support Jean-Bernard Baptiste says that when choosing a tool, having the flexibility to build on top of that tool is essential.

> "I don't think there's one tool that will solve for everything, so having the flexibility to be able to build on top of it is a big factor."
>
>
>
> **Jean-Bernard Baptiste**
> *Senior Manager of Customer Support at HubSpot*

As your business grows, your customers' and team's needs will inevitably evolve too. So, in order to stay competitive, it's critical to choose flexible, modern tools that can grow with your team and business.

When adding a new feature or capability to their tech stacks, many of the support leaders we spoke with also explore the "build or buy" question. More often than not, rather than defaulting to adding a new tool, they investigate new ways to capitalize and build on top of their current technology to achieve their goals.

Stripe is a technology company that builds economic infrastructure for the internet. Its customer support team uses technology as a strategic lever to provide world-class support across their customer base. Theresa Hagel, Head of Priority of Operations at Stripe, says the team often builds capabilities in-house that help them deliver great support, so any new tools they add need to plug into and play nicely with their current system.

stripe

"We see technology as a strategic lever to help us provide great customer support across our customer base. This means we take advantage of opportunities to build capabilities in-house that we believe will increase our ability to make our support great; and therefore any tool we choose has to be interoperable with our systems."

Theresa Hagel
Head of Priority Operations at Stripe

2. Solve for the customer outcome, not the feature

Don't get too bogged down in exploring fancy features. Instead of the "shiny penny" approach where you try out every new tool that emerges on the market, the support leaders we spoke with recommend getting hyperfocused on solving for customer outcomes first. When considering whether to add a new tool or functionality, they ask customer-centric questions like: "What are the outcomes for the customer if this all works?" and "Will the tool get us closer to the outcomes our customers want?"

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, almost every support team experienced their customers struggling more than ever before – emotionally and financially. During this challenging time, it has become even more important for support teams to deepen their empathy muscles and put their customer needs and desired outcomes first with their tech stack requirements.

Zapier is a platform built to democratize automation and eliminate manual busy work by enabling teams to integrate web applications and build smoother workflows. Richard Hall, Director of Support Operations at Zapier, explains how the pandemic accelerated the need to zero in on customer outcomes.

zapier

"It's really about the customer experience – especially having come through this year where many of our customers were struggling. We listened to them and tried to understand what they needed to succeed, whether that was a break in their payments, or to automate further because they were now working from home. All of these components had us zero in and focus on customer outcomes."

Richard Hall
Director of Support Operations at Zapier

3. Less is more when it comes to enhancing team efficiency

More features and functionality does not equal more power. In fact, the support leaders we spoke with said that fewer tools and fewer clicks often equal more productivity, efficiency, and headspace. Choose consolidated, interconnectable tools that will help your support team streamline simple tasks – whether that's through automation, a more streamlined workflow, or fewer tabs.

Aircall is a cloud-based phone system for modern businesses. With a clear mission to bring value to voice, its customer support team focuses on building strong, lasting relationships with their customers. Aircall's Global Head of Customer Care Ian MacLean explains that most support teams struggle with the "swivel chair effect" – the process of having to switch between multiple tools to gather necessary information or context to solve a problem. Aircall's support team strives to ensure they can marry the systems they use on a daily basis to eliminate manual data exchange and unnecessary clicks.

Adopting a bias towards keeping your tech stack simple is another key way to avoid the "swivel chair effect." Klaus is a conversational support tool designed to help modern support teams measure and maintain the quality and consistency of their customer conversations. Chris Jewitt, a customer success manager at Klaus, recommends keeping your tech stack as simple as possible and only adding tools your team truly needs.

"If somebody on my team can make a process happen with one click – or no clicks – all the better, because it means they can spend that time building a relationship with the customer."

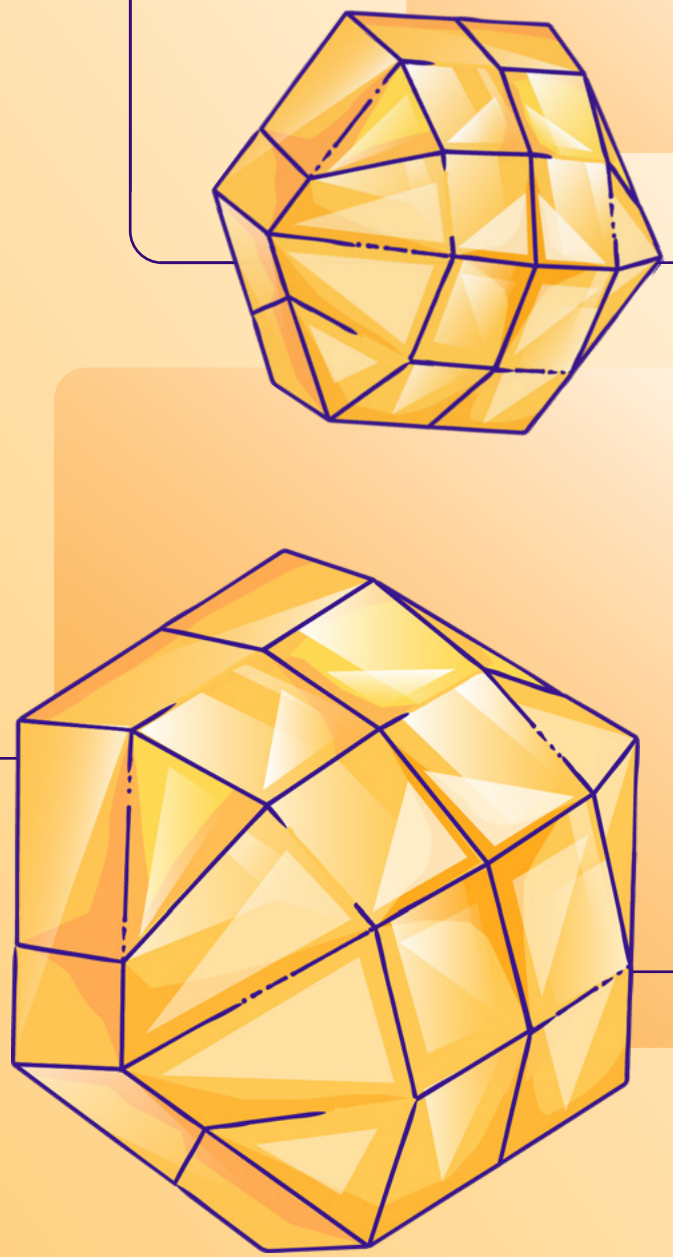
Ian MacLean
Global Head of Customer Care at Aircall

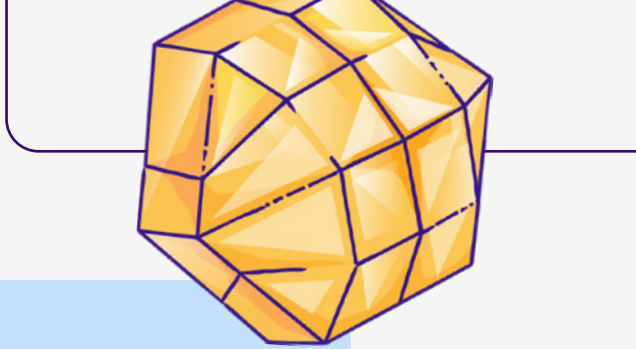
"You should try to keep things as simple as possible and not have your support team logging into 15 different platforms every day and feeling overwhelmed."

Chris Jewitt
Customer Success Manager at Klaus

Chapter 4

Future-proof your support tech stack: The checklist





Checklist for optimizing and future-proofing your support tech stack

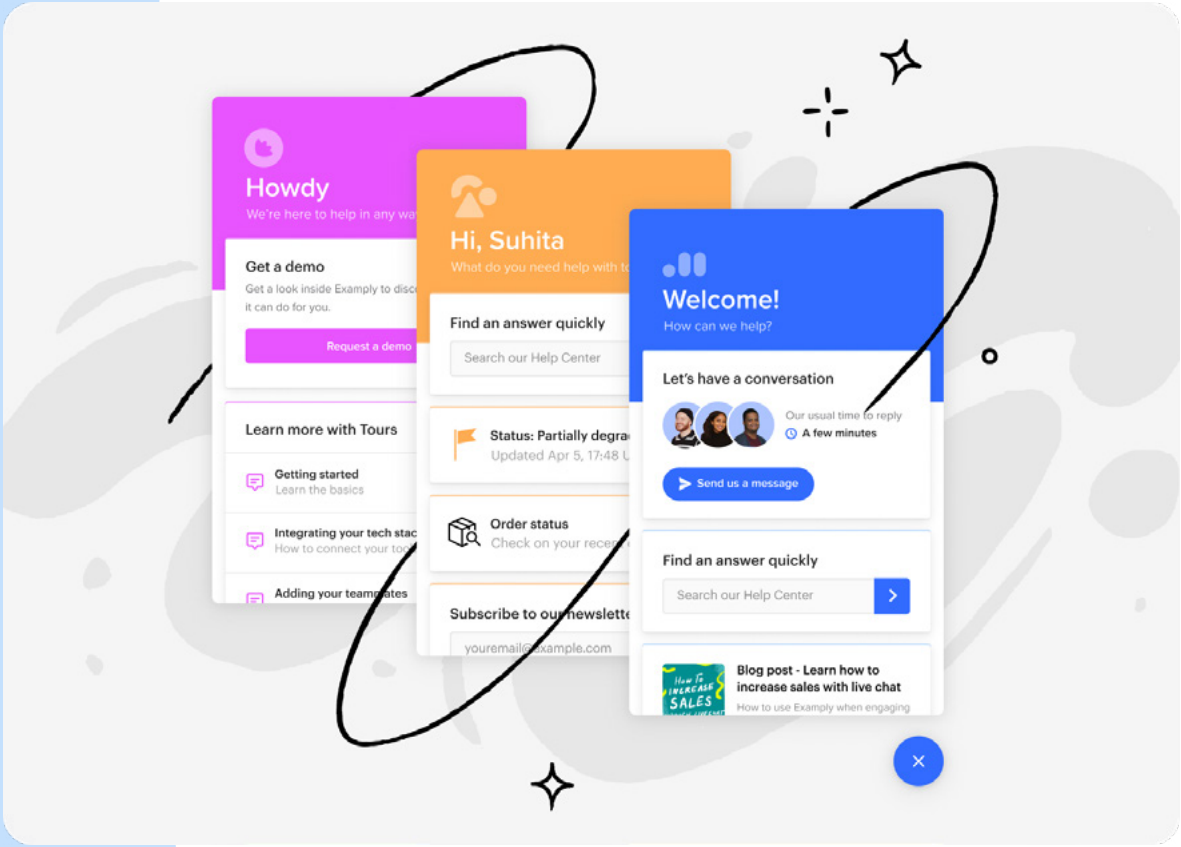
By now, you're probably excited to optimize and future-proof your tech stack in order to stay ahead of the conversational curve. But where do you start? With this seven-question checklist.

Does your support tech stack:

- [ ] Have a foundational all-in-one conversational support solution that powers each layer of the Conversational Support Funnel?
- [ ] Plug into and play nicely with key apps in your business's tech stack to extend your team's capabilities?
- [ ] Meet the expectations of modern customers for fast, personal, messenger-based support?
- [ ] Solve for your customers' desired outcomes now and in the future?
- [ ] Supercharge your team's efficiency, autonomy, and subsequently, satisfaction?
- [ ] Empower your team to build and nurture relationships across the entire customer journey and successfully collaborate with other teams like marketing, sales, and product?
- [ ] Have a solid API you can build upon as your customers' and team's needs evolve?

Get ahead of the curve with Intercom's Conversational Support solution

The message is clear: now's the time to future-proof your tech stack and stay ahead of the conversational curve. The great news is you can achieve everything in this guide with Intercom's all-in-one Conversational Support solution.



Interested in trying Intercom to deliver the best support in the business?

Go ahead and chat with us through the Intercom Messenger here, and we'll provide you with tailored help ASAP – conversational style.

[1] *Drive Conversational Experiences For a Future-Ready Customer Support Strategy*, a commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Intercom, April 2021

[2] *The Future of Support Has Arrived: It's Conversational*, a commissioned study conducted by TrendCandy on behalf of Intercom, May 2020

[3] Intercom Support Business Case research, December 2019