

Scaling Success

10 of Europe's fastest growing startups on how to scale your customer support





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About Kaizo & Zendesk



Kaizo is first and foremost a company by customer supportians for customer supportians (yes, it's a word). Our Zendesk® app, and this e-book for that matter, have been shaped by the experiences and contributions shared with us by fellow support managers, team leads, agents and enthusiasts.

This is where our passion lies. In actively steering employees towards achieving their goals and making an impact in their companies. In reviving agent motivation, productivity, and retention with gamification. And in helping teams scale, whilst providing the best service possible.

The Kaizo platform transforms your team's performance metrics into powerful insights. It enables you to effectively guide your agents towards improving their skills, self-managing their goals and delivering better service. The platform provides the tools to upgrade operational workflow and efficiently scale your team. Kaizo empowers teams to use their time and resources more efficiently, providing a more productive and engaging digital work environment for everyone

We are also proud to be part of the Zendesk's program for Startups at Station F in Paris. With a shared passion for customer support and helping startups scale, Zendesk for Startups program helps companies improve their customer experience and develop long-lasting relationships with their customer.

Check out **Zendesk's discounts for startups** to get six months of credit for free.

Visit our website to find out how you can effortlessly scale your team whilst boosting your service quality with Kaizo.

Foreword

In a world evolving towards data-driven decisions, automation and AI, empowering humans should stay the company's focus. Whether they are serving your prospects or clients, your teams are the showcase of your company. When scaling or transforming your Customer Experience, it's mandatory to capitalize on your team's knowledge to succeed in this important shift.

In our annual research report, The Zendesk Customer Experience Trends Report 2020, which incorporates data from more than 45,000 customers across the globe, confirmed the impact that a company's culture, work environment, and overall experience have on keeping employees motivated to build greater customer experiences. More companies are clearly realizing the value of prioritizing customer experience and therefore the need to hire leaders who can understand and champion the customer. Seventy percent of Fortune 500 companies now have a Chief Customer Officer. The CCO role focuses mainly on three strategic themes: strategy, culture and processes/tools.

More than a quarter (28%) of companies still don't define what success looks like. It's really alarming if you don't know how to measure your (or your team's) success. Setting clear objectives for your teams will help them benchmark with their colleagues, co-create content to support automated channels and concentrate on better serving your clients and prospects. Happy agents will have a longer tenure. In fact, agents spending three years in an organization have 94% personal CSAT vs 90% for those who only spent one year.

Kaizo's innovative solution, integrated with the Zendesk platform, helps realize this shift to offer the best customer and employee experiences. In addition to their successful app in Zendesk Marketplace, we are proud to welcome Kaizo as part of the Zendesk Incubation Program at Station F, in Paris. Kaizo is a great fit for Zendesk as the solution offers an added value to our clients and aligns with our new service-first CRM approach.

Chams Ejjaouani - *Zendesk Marketing Director (South)*

Introduction

Scaling isn't black and white. It's objective. Experiential. Much like customer support. Whether it be from your personal encounters, those of a colleague or of those who have succeeded before you, experiences, both positive and negative, shape our successes.

That is the purpose of this book. To share these experiences, from successful start and scale-up customer support teams. To create an actionable knowledge base from which support professionals (such as yourself) can take from, and apply to their own teams.

Scaling Success shares what we've learned sitting down with the leaders of 10 of Europe's fastest scaling customer support teams. These support experts share the challenges they have faced with expanding a team and how they turned them into opportunities. Covering topics such as:

- Company culture
- AI & Automation
- Recruitment/Onboarding
- Employee retention
- Motivation/Incentivization
- Budgeting
- Best practices
- Specific scaling tools
- Important metrics

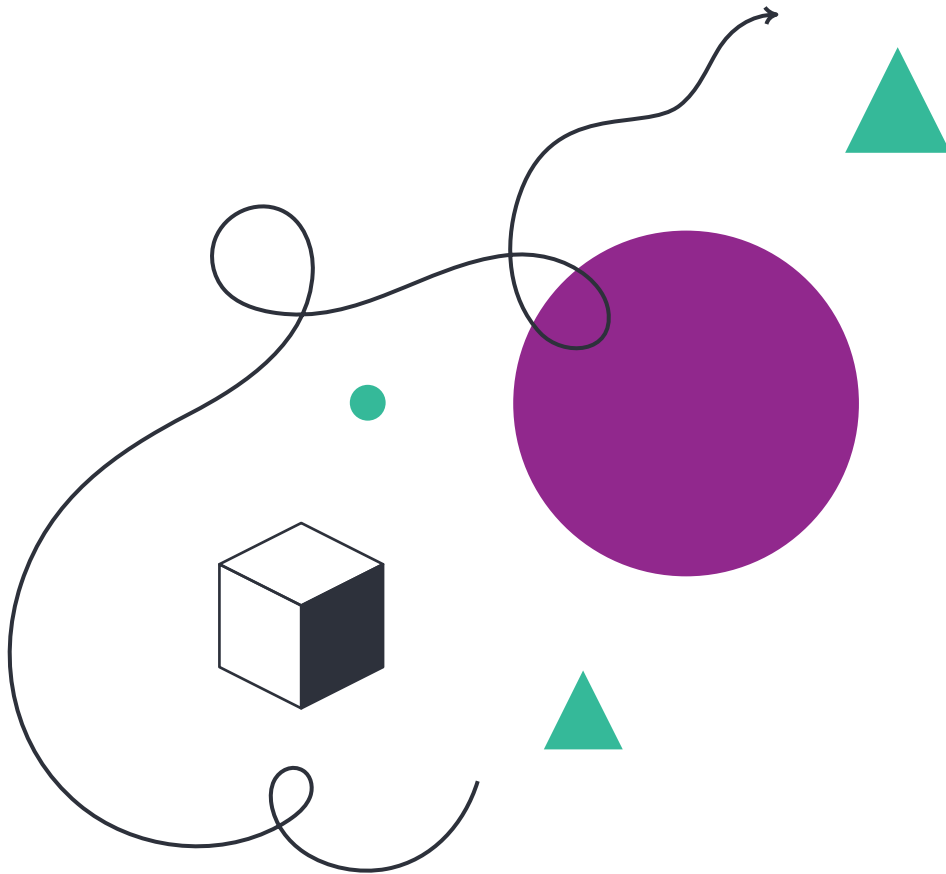
We understand that not every company operates in the same way. That's why each chapter of the book delves into the specifics of the unique experiences, practices, and #fails of teams in different parts of their scaling journeys.

Our hope is that you find the practices in this book helpful as you embark on or fine-tune the scaling of your customer support.

This project is all about creating a community within the industry where we can share our thoughts and ideas. With this in mind, we'd love to hear your feedback. Feel free to shoot us an email at hello@kaizo.com or contact us on our socials.

[LinkedIn](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Blog](#)

Happy reading!





**If someone
already
needs to
contact us,
that is a
degree of
failure**

Chapter 1

It's not about cost, it's about culture

I sat down with Elina to chat about scaling without hiring, the simple beauty of self-service and how BlaBlaCar is so beloved that they have customers working for them.

So Elina, you've been at BlaBlaCar for 3 years and you haven't hired, yet you've scaled your operations drastically. What's your secret?

We do hire and expand our team but not at the same pace as our business is growing. Our team has varied from 100 to 110 people over the last three years whereas our activity more than tripled.

Before I joined the company, we were mostly growing the team locally in Paris. I joined the team during a high international expansion and very quickly we realized that in order to cover 22 countries and languages we should rethink our model. Since then we have expanded to 4 sites globally.

What was the reason for expanding?

First of all, it was the proximity to the local teams and most importantly to the local culture. We are mindful of costs, however in this case we focused primarily on the quality and proximity of the team.

Elina Roetynck

Head of Community Relations at BlaBlaCar



Since joining the community relations team at BlaBlaCar in 2016, Elina has successfully scaled her team across the globe. With a strong focus on organizational restructure, data-drivenness and a very unique FAQ system.

If you've ever traveled around Europe or South America, you've heard of BlaBlaCar. With over 65 million members in their community, it's the biggest ride-sharing platform in the world. Speaking with Elina, it's obvious why. This is what they're all about. Community.



Ok, so you didn't so much scale the size of your team, but obviously, the size of your operations grew a lot. What are your processes to be more efficient?

The first thing we put in place 4 years ago was data-driven support. What do I mean by that? First of all, defining the 3 KPI's that are important to us.

We track CSAT and Response Time. But perhaps most important is our Contact Rate (this means the number of contacts received vs your number of bookings).

Interesting, why is CR so important?

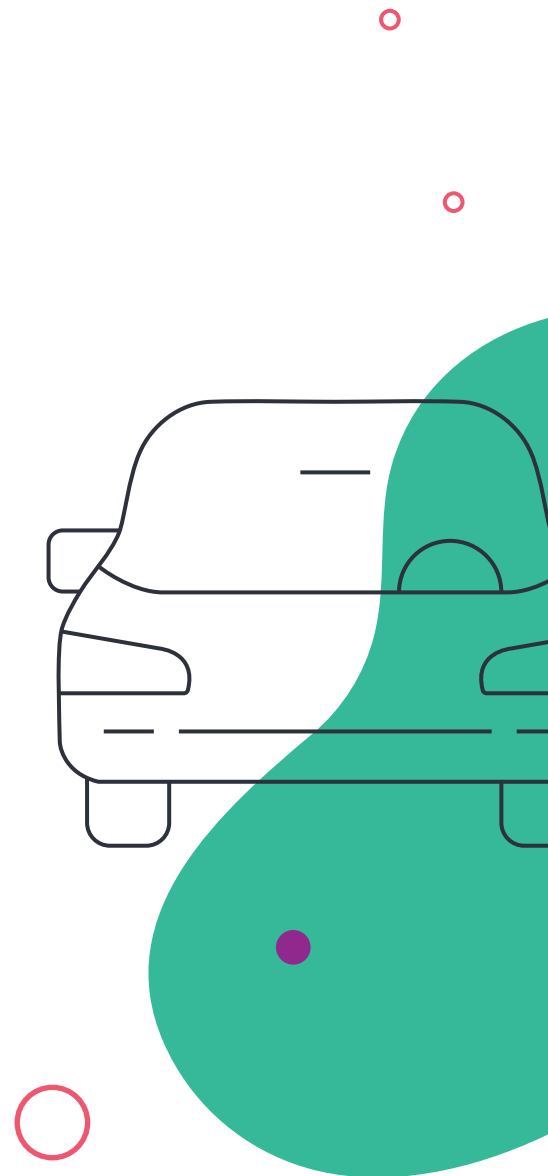
It's not just a support KPI, it's a company KPI. It's like saying how efficient is our product/service? Think about it, if someone already needs to contact us, that is a degree of failure, you know? Or there's some misunderstanding, or something isn't clear.

So how can we, as a company make sure that our tickets always stay low? We show this to the product team, tech team, data science team and work on this together.

Another way to keep the CR low is to privilege the Self Help when possible. We do it via our Help Center (FAQ).

Your FAQ ?

On our website, we made it so that you cannot contact us until you have checked an article on



your specific issue in the FAQ center. This encouraged self-help and discouraged unnecessary contact.

Wow ok, I've never experienced that before. Was it hard to set up?

Not really. Zendesk provides a good base for your FAQ. We just took out a sample of contacts for a given month, categorized their tickets and then based on the categorization of tickets we created our FAQ topics.

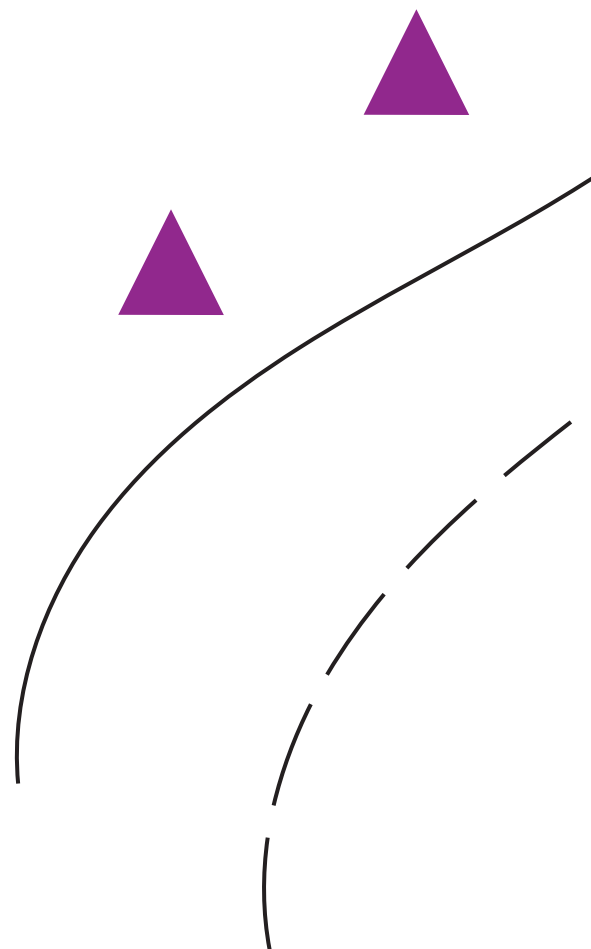
Zendesk allows you to tag each section with trigger keywords. When these are searched, our contact info is released to the customer. Trust me, it's easier than it sounds.

So, did it lower your contact rate?

Yes, definitely. Interestingly, it also didn't lower our scores on customer feedback for a level of support. We thought some people may say, "Oh you're too hard to get a hold of". But it didn't happen.

It's a risk, but at least if they still need to get in contact, they are at least more educated on the issue so that the conversation goes a lot more smoothly. We also work closely with the content team to make sure that our FAQ is optimal and as informative as possible across cultures.

Wow, that's one of the most unique approaches I've heard. Speaking of, please



tell me about your project 'BlaBlaHelp' I've heard so much about.

Yes, so we have a project called 'BlaBlaHelp'. If you go on our website, you'll see a chat widget for support. This isn't answered by our team, it's answered by our most engaged community members (customers). They are ambassadors who volunteer to help.

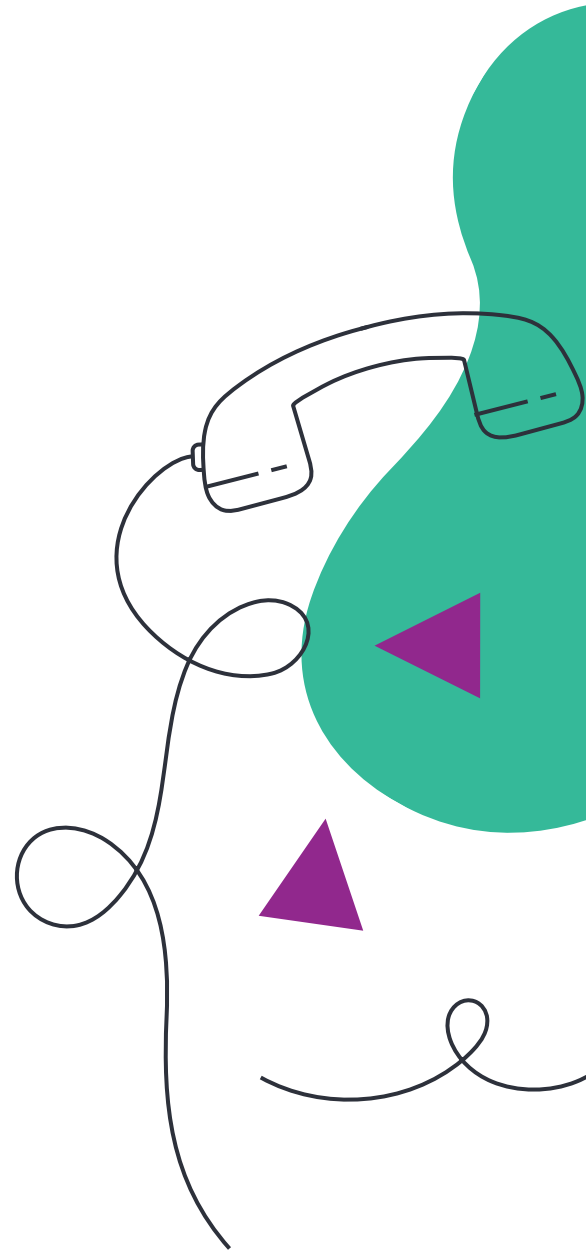
Wait, so your customers are working for you?

Well, yeah. It's quintessentially *BlaBlaCar*. That's what we're about. The sharing economy. People sharing expertise and helping each other.

We have 1,000 registered, but a strong core of 50-100 people. We meet them regularly too, they are an extension of our team. We even celebrate with them every year and have awards ceremonies. It's a lot of fun. Not to mention great for customer feedback.

Ok Elina, I'm officially impressed. Before you go, do you have any last words of wisdom for teams looking to scale?

Don't be afraid to be creative, and to test and try and learn. Learn from experiences, read books, go to conferences and get involved with others in your industry.





**As your
company
grows, your
culture
morphs and
changes and
that becomes
the new
culture**

Chapter 2

Scaling is chaos... in the best way

After exchanging the typically awkward “Nice to e-meet you” introduction, Mike and I got down to business. Discussing JustPark’s ever-changing company culture, maintaining service quality whilst scaling and why he offers new agents to ride around in London traffic before talking to a customer.

Hi Mike! So let's talk about company culture. I know you're passionate about the culture at JustPark. But how do you maintain that and your quality of service whilst scaling 30% year after year?

That's something we are passionate about at JustPark. Getting people involved in the culture from day one.

On day one, you go around, meet everyone in the business and learn about what other parts of the business do. We also have lunch together every day and every Friday we have social events. Tomorrow we are even flying the whole company out to Mallorca.

When scaling, the challenge is, it can be quite easy

Mike Miner

Head of Customer Support
at JustPark



Mike made his way from Associate to Head of Support at JustPark in just over 18 months. With a clear passion for people, efficiency and a dynamic company culture, Mike has set the bar high for start up support.

With 30% of city traffic being attributed to finding parking, it's obvious why 3 million British drivers are using JustPark. Mike and his team of 20 take a very hands-on approach at fulfilling their mission of 'making parking easier and more efficient for everyone'.

JustPark

to let that slip, and I think, don't try and tackle that mountain by yourself. When you have over 20 people you can't go around and introduce them to absolutely everyone in the business on a personal level.

You really need to delegate that introduction, to someone who you believe is really showing your culture. It really comes across when you serve your customers when you have this foundation of great company culture.

Who is the lucky delegate in your office?

We have a guy called 'the friendliest Kiwi', and he is such a warm soul so we were like, "Oh, you're perfect". So every time we have a new starter in the team, his exclusive job is to get them on board.

So we find someone that really merits and shows our culture. When they come in he'll sit with them, he'll teach them all the aspects of the job, walk them through our onboarding process, review their chats and calls and just make sure that they're trying to show their personality through their work. So things like emojis, gifs and whatever else.

By no means are we perfect on this yet, but we are trying to allow people to bring 'themselves' to their work.

It's interesting you mention emojis. Amidst growing automation, a big goal for many support teams is to be more 'human'. Is that something you guys strive for?



JustPark

Yeah, I agree. A lot of companies are trying to push towards this personalization topic and trying to make things feel a bit warmer and friendlier. We've started there with gifs and emojis and trying to be a bit more relatable.

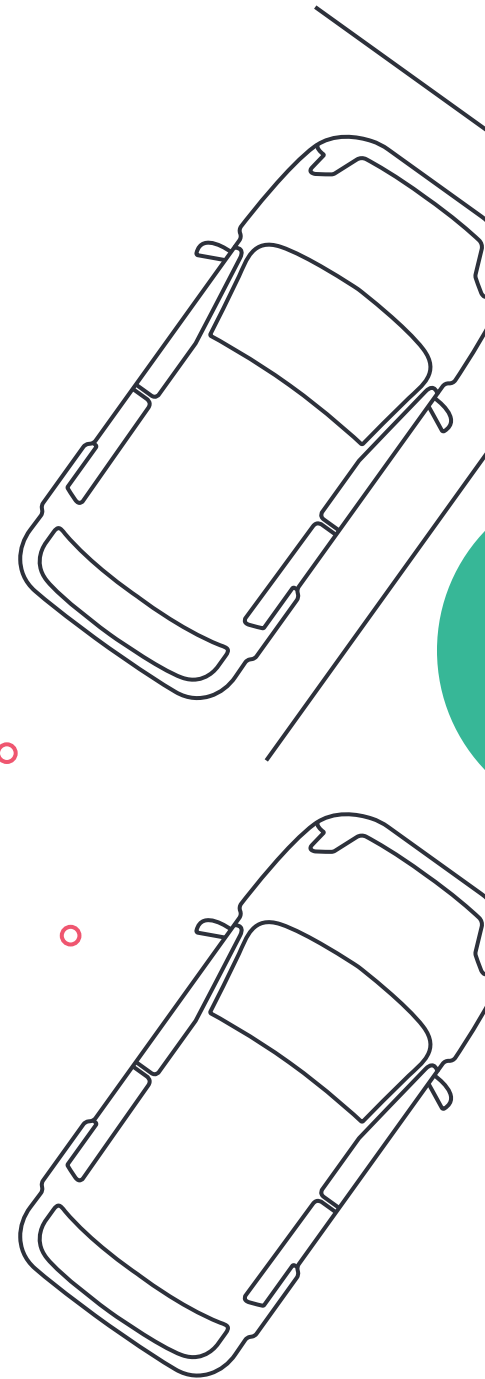
In order to really learn about the human side of each other, rather than just business, we have 'away-days', full of team bonding, learning about each other and what the future looks like. We discuss with the team the importance of personal development and working as one unified team. We even had a guest speaker from Kaizo - they really loved it!

**What about on the other side of the fence?
I'm sure you've implemented some
automation as well?**

We've done a bunch of that. If you want to scale your team, you *have* to have some type of AI and self-service solution. Both are really important in your teams now. Just by chucking more people at a problem, doesn't actually reduce costs or increase service. You're just making agents do rubbish work they don't want to do. They'll do the easy tickets, instead of actually getting their teeth deep into something.

We use Zendesk's own trigger function to pick up keywords and then from that, we can email out an automated response from our friendly chatbot which we've named "Parky". This gives customers a really nice, customized response from us.

And how effective is Parky?



JustPark

Very. It answers anywhere between 200-500 queries a week. It only took 8 hours to set up on a hack day, and it's still sitting around 65%-70% accurate. So whilst there is a margin of error there, we're seeing a lot more delighted customers and a lot fewer tickets coming through.

Wow, go Parky! Obviously, it's very cost-effective too. How do you measure that?

We've built a Zendesk explore dashboard to review how many of those tickets have come in, how many get solved by a bot and how many get reopened. Then we know roughly our cost per ticket, based on our headcount, so we can work out the cost-saving from that, along with efficiency rates.

Speaking of efficiency, how do you know when your team is at maximum efficiency and it's time to hire?

That's forecasting. We do our forecasting dynamically. If you give me a week next year I can tell you exactly how many ticket numbers we're gonna have in to around 90% accuracy. This is based on current figures and we update that every 6 weeks. We actually do ours through ticket volume. If we see significant growth based on the inbound side over 6 weeks, we will start looking at whether or not we need to hire new people.

However, you need to factor in things like a tough week or AI implementation. You don't want to create jobs that aren't going to be able to be

fulfilled in 3 to 4 weeks.

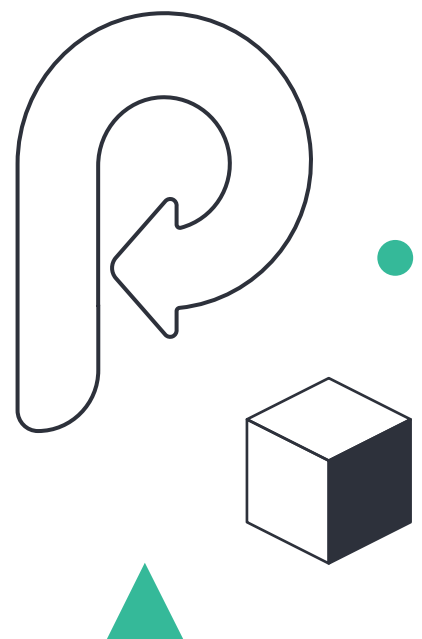
Would you mind sharing your secret of how you forecast?

No, not at all. This process was taught to me by a HR manager in my ASDA days for sales growth and I managed to translate it to the same type of thing, but for ticket numbers.

So at the moment, it's a trusty Google sheet, where we take in the last 6 weeks ticket numbers, review them against last year's, see the percentage change and add that on top. Which we tend to find works well. Week on week, we seem to get 85-90% accuracy.

That's amazing. I think everyone reading this has learned a lot. I know I did. Is there any last survival tips you have for support teams scaling?

It's chaos in the best way. Nothing goes the way you plan it and there is a lot of learning on the job. Don't be scared to take risks and for things not to go right. As your company grows, your culture morphs and changes and that becomes the new culture. I don't think culture should be a 'this is what we do' situation, but a dynamic and beautiful thing for other people to come in and mold.





**It's all
about
effortlessness**

Chapter 3

It's about being proactive, not reactive

I'm lucky enough that Petra works in the same co-working space as myself. So we grabbed a coffee and did the interview the old fashion way. Face-to-face. We made sure to touch on scaling a remote team, re-sparking agents' passion for support and her custom Zendesk task system.

So Petra, please tell me. I walk past your office every day and I know you definitely could not fit all of your agents in there. Are most working remotely?

Yes, we have a follow-the-sun principle. Since we are a marketplace, our customers are trip organizers and travelers from all around the world. That's also why we operate 24/7.

Wow. So what is the main reason for having your team so spread out?

We did initially have people also working night shifts to provide 24/7 support. I think it's healthier and more productive to have agents working during both day and evening, so we spread our support around the world. We are now

Petra Hageman

Head of Customer Service
at *Tripaneer*



Petra has had extensive experience in the tech and travel industries in her role as a customer service manager. Her passion for team development, data-drivenness, and innovation have led her to lead teams of both early-stage startups and giants like Booking.com

Tripaneer is the European force leading the charge to bring the global travel experience industry online. In its 6 years of operation, they have amassed +1 million monthly customers from all corners of the globe. Similarly cosmopolitan are Petra's team of 42 remote support agents, who ensure each customer experiences their dream holiday.

tripaneer

in Europe, Latin America and APEC. So no more night shifts!

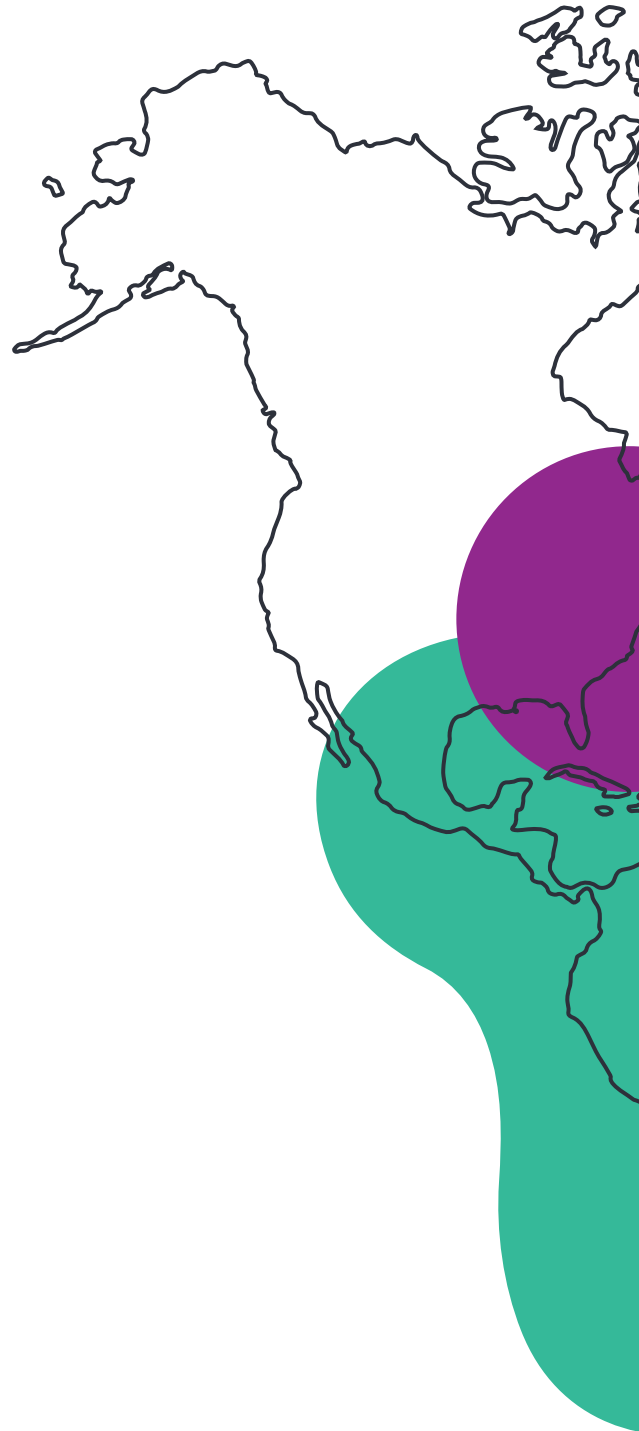
When a team is scaling, keeping your employees satisfied is difficult. But for a remote team, even harder. How do you manage to keep everyone engaged and satisfied?

Working with remote team members is indeed a little bit more of a challenge than having the entire team in the office. We now have an initiative for team members to meet their international colleagues. We encourage them to have an e-coffee together via video chat because you miss out on those coffee machine moments and that is a lot of fun actually!

We also have our Slack channel, our team meetings, our daily standup and our newsletter to make sure everyone feels part of the Tripaneer family.

Well, it must be working. Your employee turnover rate is extremely low. Do you think there's any other reason agents are staying with Tripaneer?

Apart from the flexibility of working at home and our passion for making everyone feel part of the family, our agents are truly passionate about our product.



For example, we have employees who are really into martial arts or yoga. It's nice to be able to work in a company where you support people to get experience in working with their passions.

How important is having a passion for the product to you when you're scaling and decide to hire new agents?

Very. You don't need to spend time training people to be passionate about your company. Finding people who are already passionate is much easier.

Also hiring colleagues that are naturally customer-driven, want to provide service and can show empathy is very important when scaling. 60% of CSAT is driven by the customer's perception of an agent's willingness to help. It's about being authentic, empathetic and showing you are really willing to help.

Ok, so it sounds like you have the human side down pat. I hear you've also engineered a customer task system to help on the automation side. Care to elaborate?

What we did is we created a CS task system to automatically trigger actions for the CS team when we need to take action. Our developer coded this system. So for example, when we see in the messaging between traveler and organizer that something may not be right, then the TS creates a task. The task then gets automatically sent through our Zendesk API. That ticket is then assigned to



tripaneer

our agents.

So if you get that ticket, you go into our backend system and check the ticket and see, "Hey what's going on here? Do we need to take action? Or is this a false alarm?"

And has this saved you time or given you any insights?

Well yes, both. In principle, we want the communication to be seamless between the traveler and the organizer, but sometimes we are necessary in the process.

By having a system that triggers these tasks, we are also able to report on it. For example, we had tasks in 97% of the cases where we didn't have to take any action. So, basically it allowed us to see where we can take action that will create value or action that isn't necessary, and better allocate our resources.

We improved our operational efficiency, whereby now we are actually handling more bookings and handling that volume with 20% fewer people compared to a year earlier.

Wow, so that is a 20% increase in productivity. Is that solely due to your task system?

Well, there's a lot of things, but we've focused on being more proactive towards customer issues. So for example, when you make a payment with your credit card and your payment doesn't go through.



When I started here, we waited until the customer contacted us about their issue. But that is not very customer-focused. So now we've created a task that flags this so that we can initiate the contact with the customer. This way we often can support quicker whilst finding a solution together.

Do you think your customers appreciate this?

Yes, definitely. We went from last year around 86% CSAT to 88% this year because we are responding faster. We trained the team to show more empathy, make it more personal and to be proactive.

So obviously customers are most satisfied when they have to use minimal effort then, right?

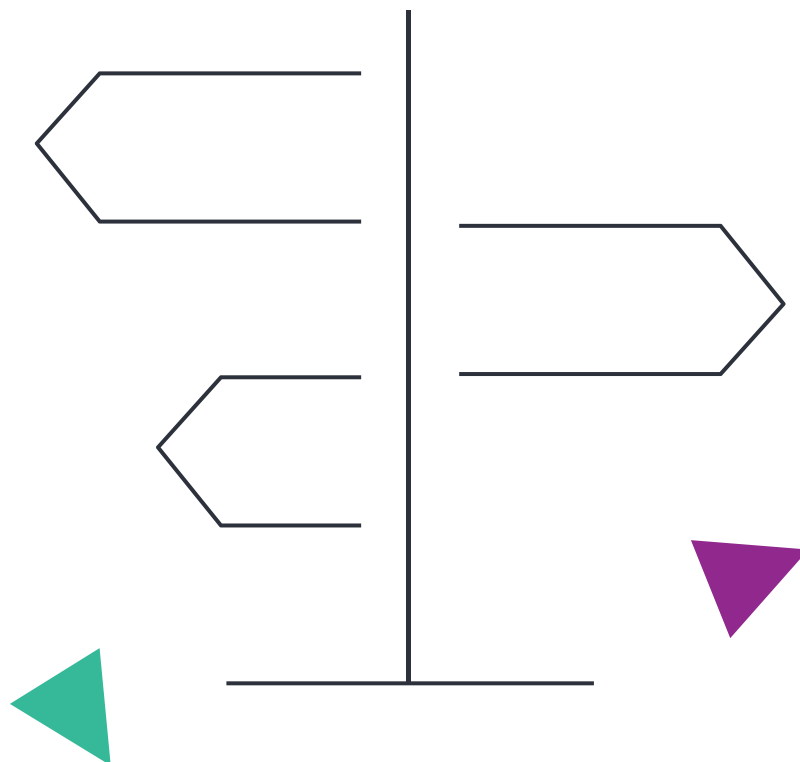
Yes, that is very true indeed. It seems customer loyalty overall is decreasing globally. The younger the generation, the less loyal the customers are. It's all about effortlessness. If you don't have to spend any effort then it's just easier to stay.

No arguments here. Ok Petra, any last words of advice when scaling from someone who has experienced a significant amount of highs and lows?



My biggest learning at Booking.com to start thinking scalable was the 80/20 rule, also called the Pareto principle. How I implemented it is to solve a problem 80% and leave the other 20% to go to the next big problem and do the same. If you try to resolve the whole problem you won't be able to keep up when you need to scale fast.

The other learning from the experience of scaling fast, is to always make recruitment the top priority. Don't wait to hire until the last moment, but be ahead of the recruitment game.



tripaneer



**Don't
throw
money at
a problem.
Work
smarter,
not harder**

Chapter 4

Hiring for excellence

I met with Jeff at the tech-chic WeTransfer HQ to discuss why he would never outsource, how he made customer support the beating heart of WT and how hiring right is the key to scaling right.

Ok, Jeff. I have to ask. For a team that's scaled so quickly, I was a little surprised that you're entire team, is here in this office. You've never been tempted to outsource?

Never. I think the moment you start outsourcing there's this disconnect. More often than not, when you look at contact centers, agents are often working on different projects at the same time. I think it's hard to get a feel of the beating heart of the company you're working for if you're not located there. I will *knock on wood* never outsource.

You mentioned that you feel your support team is at the heart of WeTransfer. That's no easy feat for any support team. How did you manage that?

Well, our founder always had such high regard

Jeff Sen

Vice President of Support
at WeTransfer



As one of the first customer support agents and only the 30th overall employee of WeTransfer, it's safe to say Jeff has had experience with scaling. In 4 years, he has assembled a support dream team with his passion for recruitment and strategic operations.

WeTransfer is at the center of cloud-based file sharing. The company transfers over 1 billion files per month, serving 50 million monthly users. Doing all this with only 13 support agents, it's easy to see why Jeff's team is so integral to the company.

WeTransfer

for us. But, we still needed to push with numbers. Addressing issues isn't enough, you need to back it up with numbers, especially when talking to managers. Otherwise, you're just screaming into an empty hallway.

What numbers do you use to get your message across?

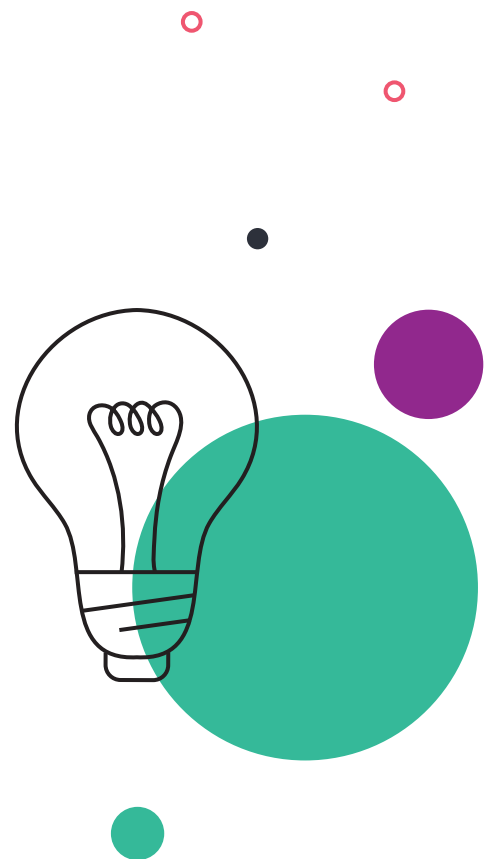
It's not so much which, but more about making the numbers relatable. Let's say we have a contact rate of 50 customers per 10,000 tickets. To a product owner that doesn't seem like much. But 50 tickets about one certain thing in a day is a lot. So it's about making sure they understand the weight of a ticket and being ready to act upon this.

I guess it doesn't hurt as well that you have such a strong team. How have they played a role in the scaling process?

I'm passionate about hiring for excellence and I've had the luxury so far to never have to settle. When I started there were 4 of us. Now there are 13. That's the thing I'm most proud of. Even though we are financially healthy, we don't throw money at a problem. We want to work smarter, not harder.

I like that, 'work smarter, not harder'. Could you give me an example?

Well, everything is AI nowadays, to automate stuff and make things easy. We don't use any



WeTransfer

automation chatbots. We've tried it, but quickly realized that every query that we received still required our interaction. Our tool is so easy to use when people reach out it's something complicated. So rather than follow the trend, we got rid of it and went our own way, focussing on our FAQ.

It seems like this approach is working for your agents too. How have you maintained such a high employee retention rate (apart from offering this amazing office)?

It's agency. Our agents have control over what they do on a day-to-day basis. The fact that I don't care if they walk through the door at 9, 9.15 or 9.30, as long as they get the work done. Treat your agents as adults, give them the respect and trust they deserve and if you hire well they will reciprocate.

Makes sense. Any last words of wisdom to impart upon scaling startups reading this?

Ah, yeah. Hire on time. Never settle. It sounds like a deadbeat answer, but it's so true. It makes no one happy and it's a short term solution. Even if you're desperate, I would advise you to wait it out for even 2 or 3 months and wait for that right person. That's my biggest mantra.





**In this
industry
it's about
people
that care
about
people**

Chapter 5

The messy magic of scaling a startup

I caught up with Sivan to chat about the messy magic of working in a startup, starting a team from scratch and why the Jellyfish is the spirit animal of customer support.

Hi Sivan, so first up. I've got to ask. Airbnb, that's pretty cool. How was it working there?

Yeah, it was awesome. I was in a support role for 3 years in Dublin. I honestly think their true intention and the way they see the customer journey are so deep.

I remember vividly from one of the first days of training, a member of my team said, “We always give the customer the benefit of the doubt. Let’s assume that when the customer is calling you they are always telling you the truth and putting forward their best intentions. People lie, but we want to presume their core is good”. I think that's awesome.

I notice that you have gradually transitioned to smaller, newer companies. First to 3D Hubs and now Fairphone. Is there a reason for that?

Sivan Kaniel

Customer Support Manager
at Fairphone



With a resume including companies such as Airbnb, 3D Hubs and Xura, Sivan has had her fair share of experience scaling support teams. Combining her strong passion for workplace happiness with a keen eye for efficiency, she has built a team that embodies all things Fairphone.

Founded in 2013 in Amsterdam, Fairphone is a social enterprise that is building a movement for fairer electronics. The company has created a smartphone that improves the conditions of the people who make it and uses materials that are better for the planet. Since winning the TNW award for the fastest-growing European tech startup in 2015, the company has scaled immensely throughout the world.

FAIRPHONE

There's always a difference working for a large company and a small company. With a large company, everything comes really structured. You know what your place is what your role is what you're doing. But with startup, things can get messy, but it has a lot of magic to it. You have a lot of room to wiggle and create effect. I joined *Fairphone* for two reasons. Mainly the mission, I wanted to be part of the greater good. The second thing was the people.

It seems like you have a great team. You mentioned you started it from scratch. Can you run me through how that worked?

So currently, we have 6 people in the first-line team, 10 in the second line. So including me, 17 people. The first-line team that looks after initial support, phone and emails. We have a second-line team that looks after more in-depth issues. Things like escalations on technical aspects or troubleshooting because usually those issues take more time and more investigation.

But it wasn't like that when you started?

So when I started we only had the 2nd line team here and our first line issues were bounced to a call center. We used to have teams allocated to different parts of the Netherlands as part of a huge call center and I was managing both of those teams. So I was traveling back and forth checking on them. But I have to say, managing teams in different locations can be challenging. We decided



FAIRPHONE

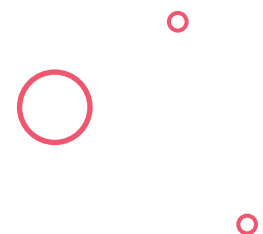
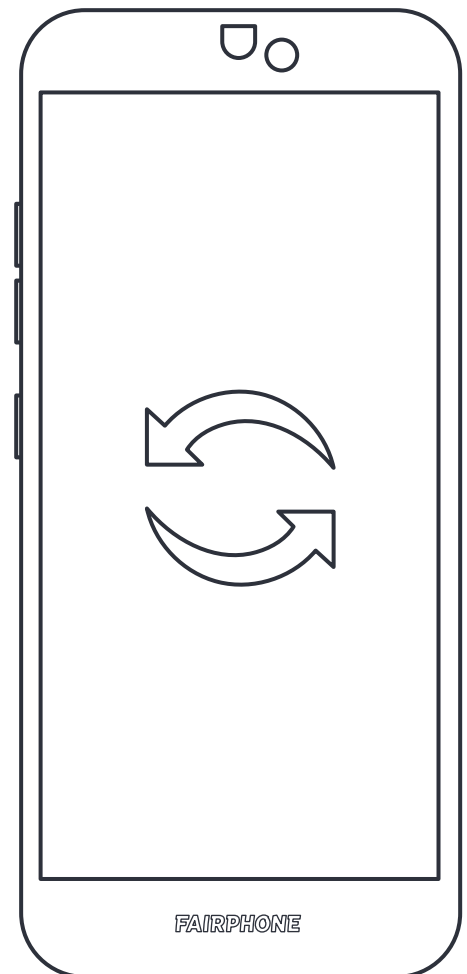
that apart from an operational push, we wanted to lift our customer support quality and make it more personalized, which is something we couldn't do using an external call center.

**Would you ever utilize a call center again?
Say if you scale your team to 50+ agents?**

I mean, never say never. It happened 3 years ago when we had a crazy backlog. I mean, no way we could have handled that all in-house. So that decision that was made which I think was right at the time. However what we realized was, the way they interacted with customers, whilst it was efficient, it wasn't personalized, at all. I think when people are part of a call center, they come to work. They do tickets. They look at numbers, they have very specific targets. It's constantly around targets. And whilst they were very important for us, the whole conversation was constantly around numbers, not people.

I mean, that makes sense. So has it made your life a lot easier scaling a team completely in-house?

It works better not only on a personal level, but an efficiency level too. I love to get to know my team, I love to pay them better, I love to have lunch with them if it's possible. This morning, a classic example. One of my teammates from the first-line, she raised the fact that some customers got the wrong communication over email. She literally walked over and told me that.



FAIRPHONE

It took 2 seconds. If this was in the call center, that person would never talk to me directly. They would tell their manager who would bring it up with me in their next weekly meeting. It's lost in that chain. Whereas I just tell the content team, they change it and it's done right away.

It sounds like your team works like cogs on a watch. Was that your focus when recruiting? Efficiency and experience? Or were you looking for more human traits as well?

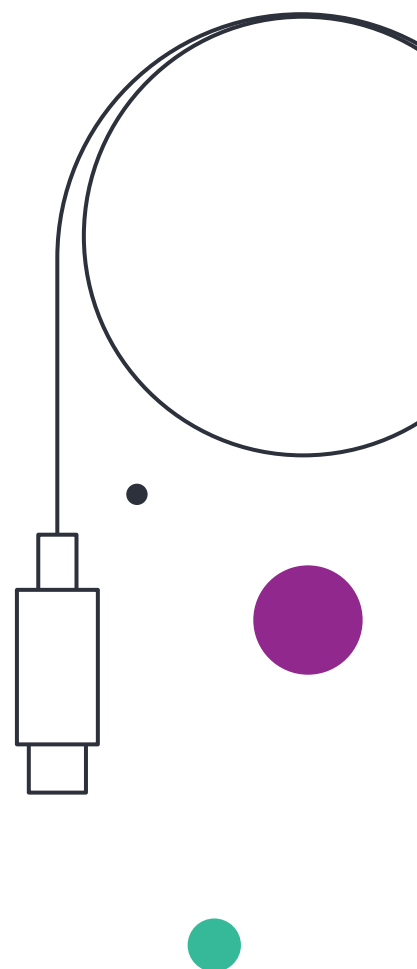
When we were starting the new team, one of the things we pushed a lot was around the culture. We were working a lot around recruiting. We asked ourselves, "Do we want people who have worked in tech CS before and have a lot of experience? Or do we want people who have not necessarily worked in CS before but are empathetic?"

What did you decide?

The approach we decided to take is that we would look for a people person. People that really care about people. Somebody who is able to express empathy, connect with people, is able to go that extra mile. These qualities are rarer than you'd think.

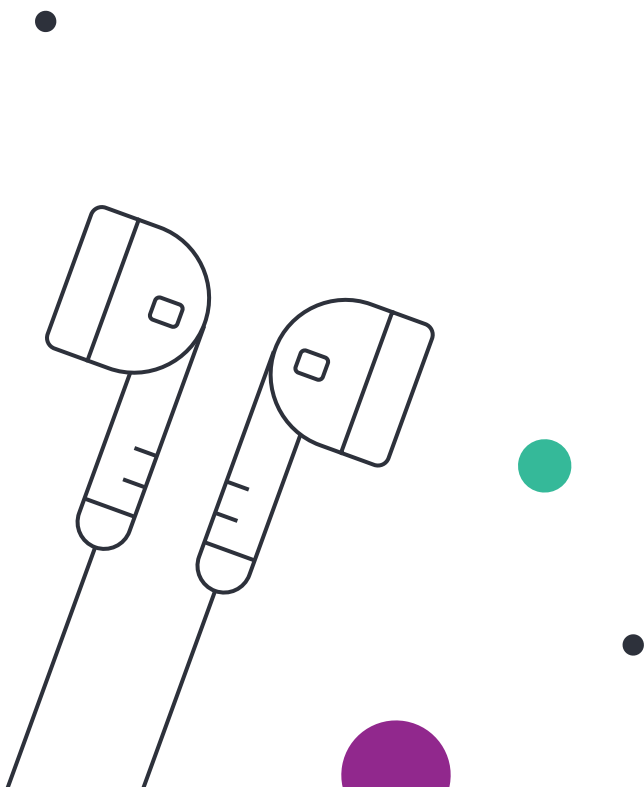
Do you think this has transferred into your team's culture and work ethic?

Definitely. That's why our mascot in CS is a jellyfish. The main reason why is because one day



we were all outside talking about our values etc. One of the biggest values we have is transparency and this is definitely something we try to do with our customers every day. And you know, jellyfish are transparent. So you'll see a lot of jellyfish around the office. It really helps to build the team culture and remind us what is important in our work.

Viva la jellyfish!



FAIRPHONE



**Everyone
deals with
change
differently.
So be
creative**

Chapter 6

Making agents key in your creative process

I buzzed into Sendcloud's head office in Eindhoven to chat with Jeff about the perils of multilingual scaling, avoiding robotic processes and how to motivate a team of any size.

So Jeff, you've worked for a diverse range of companies to say the least. What interests you about *Sendcloud*?

So I've always worked for startup companies. However, the company I worked for before *Sendcloud* was a traditional, non-startup. I wanted to take on the challenge of taking an established team, grow it and to kind of keep that same feeling of being a startup but with a team of 20+ people.

Maintaining the startup vibe in a growing team can be tricky. What are some of the challenges you've faced?

The main issue that you will always run into while scaling is that the culture will change. You know? People oftentimes think, "Oh, will the new people fit in?" But in the end, I think the people that you

Jeff Perales

Head of Customer Support
at *Sendcloud*



When it comes to scaling, Jeff has seen it all. Throughout his career, he's been an integral part of growth for support teams, both in the U.S and Europe in the areas of medicine, finance and tech. With a strong passion for cross-cultural communication and internal knowledge sharing, Jeff has found his own pragmatic solution to scaling.

The best ideas are always simple. That's definitely the case for Sendcloud. Their mission: to make shipping as easy as possible. With 15,000+ satisfied customers, they've achieved this goal and earned themselves the title of Europe's number 1 e-commerce shipping software.

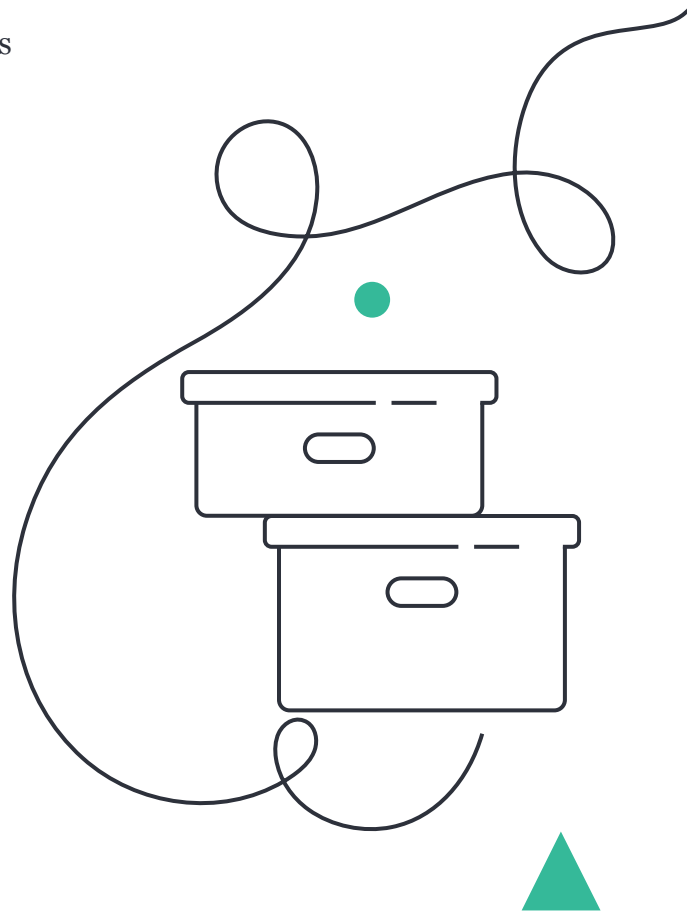
really have to think about are the people that are already there.

So you're saying we need to be careful to not focus too much on accommodating only new employees?

The bigger concern, I think, is will the people who have been here the longest who have all the tribal knowledge, will they stick around and will they be happy? They've been there for 1,2,3 years, maybe even since the beginning. These people remember sitting in a closet with 4 other people working 24/7 to make sure everything was successful. As you grow, of course your success magnifies, but you need different skill sets, different people. All of this changes the culture.

I agree, startup cultures are definitely dynamic. Especially when you're scaling multiple teams internationally. How have you managed this challenge?

What we're really looking to do now is looking at, "How do we, as we add more teams and people to these teams, maintain that team feeling across boundaries. But also, how can we help each other out?" One of the typical problems that companies have when scaling in Europe is that you need to have the local language arranged in each country. In the US, it's easier to scale your team, because everyone's speaking English. And what we have here (Europe) of course, is that everyone can operate in English, but the customers are expecting that they still get served in their local language.



So how do you manage that?

So what we do now is see where we can leverage each other's experience to help each other with the increasing workload. But whilst making sure the customers have the same CX. For example, if there is spare capacity in the French team, and chat is overflowing in the Dutch team, maybe we have a macro that says, "Hey all of my Dutch colleagues are busy, can we continue in English?" You share the workload, using English as a backup constant between teams.

Do you have specific teams for these backup situations or is it evenly distributed amongst all agents?

We layer our teams as well. So the front-line people that are answering the phone calls, emails, chats, etc, they're all local language speakers. But then we've created a second layer of support that you can escalate to.

So this obviously requires a lot of internal communication. What tools do you use for this?

We use a lot of Slack amongst team members. All in English. Myself and the team leads speak on a weekly basis with Zoom. We also do a once a month meet-up with the team leads for one week in a different office every time.



How do you make sure that you're providing consistent service across the board with multiple different countries?

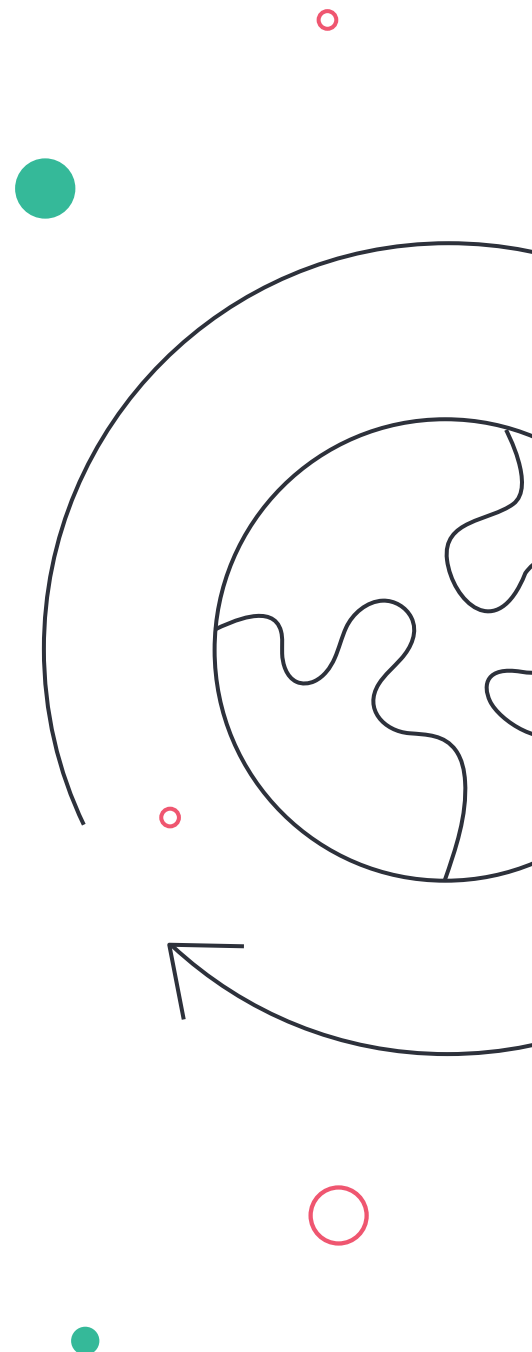
In the end, it's the dreaded P word and that's process. You have to recognize that the local market is a bit different, but we all have the same goal. To make sure the customer can do whatever they need to. However, you also need to measure your processes and that's another 3 letter word, you need to have KPI's.

Which KPI's do you think are crucial to measure?

Well for us right now, we measure NPS to gauge how our customers feel about us. We also use the Zendesk CSAT functionality, just to give us a pulse on how we are progressing.

The idea of structured processes in the workplace are often associated with an impersonal level of service. How do you ensure as your team scales, your service avoids become robotic?

It's coaching. Focus on each agent's personal growth. We want you to get better at your job and deliver the level of service that you want. As you grow bigger, ensure routine communication with the team, getting their buy-in on KPI's, tracking the right things and supporting the customers in the right way. It gives people a sense of ownership. And when people feel that, then they tend to give



better and more authentic service.

So it's all about giving agents responsibility?

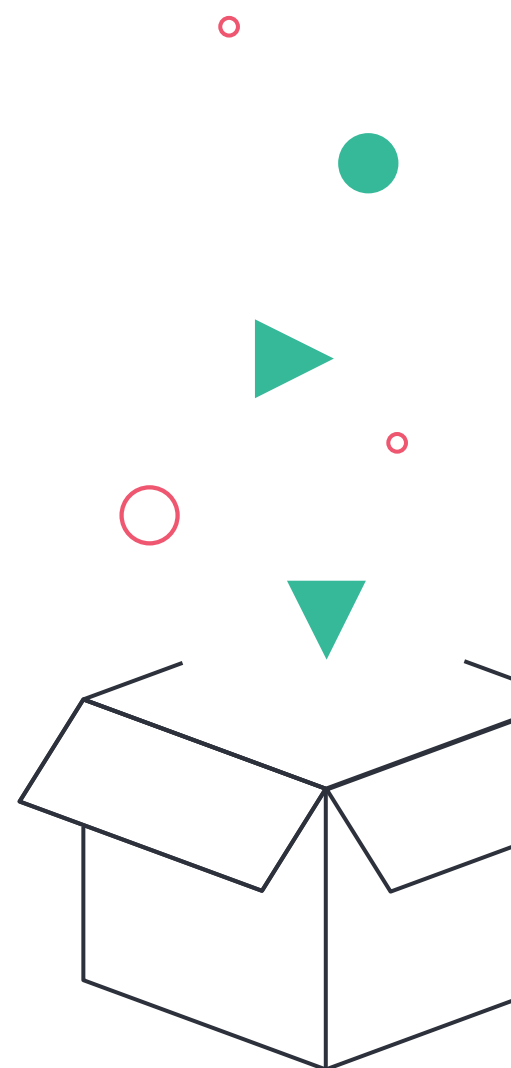
In a word, yes. What a lot of managers forget is that the people who do the job on a daily basis are great sources of ideas of how we should make it better. A constant feedback loop between managers and agents is essential. Also making sure agents are involved with the creation of processes is key.

Responsibility often drives a higher level of motivation. Are there any other practices you utilize to motivate your team?

They need to be incentivized. There's a lot of people that say, "Hey, you get a good salary and maybe you get a bonus at the end of the year if you do well. So that should be enough". People like to receive incentives outside their pay, and not because it's money. People like the recognition that they've done something good.

Do you have an example of a non-monetized incentive?

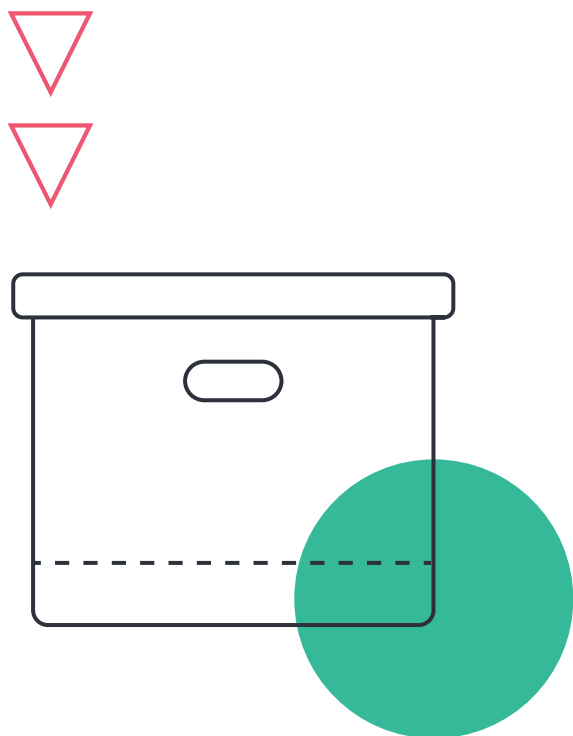
On one of the first weeks I was here there was a guy who handled 127 tickets of backlogged chat in one day. It was an outrageous number. He's a big Magic player (a card game), so I went out to the shop and got a \$20 box of cards. It's important to



have some thought behind your incentives. Never lose track of the fact that these are their own people with their own interests and hobbies.

Agreed. Any final tips for those scaling their support teams?

It is stressful every time. Take time out to make sure it's still fun. Change is inevitable and everybody hates change. Make sure the team understand WHY you are changing things. Scaling is change. Right? But everyone deals with change differently. So be creative.





**I want it to
feel like we
are a family,
not just
colleagues
working
next to each
other**

Chapter 7

Thinking like a customer

I dialed in with Ximena to get her side on employee morale in times of crisis, thinking like a customer and the myth of the customer support Bible.

Ok, Ximena, so over the last two years, your support team has grown over 400%. That's insane. I have to ask, how did you know when to hire? Was it forecasted or more touch & go?

Well, in my first experience it was when it was too late *laughs*. My team wasn't capable of handling any more work and there was a big backlog. It was especially bad when we had some outages in the beginning because our app wasn't perfect. That's when we realized, "Ok we can't handle this. We need to hire".

That must have taken quite a toll on the agents' engagement with their work.

Yes, it was challenging to keep the morale of the team high in times of crisis. However, what's awesome is that when you're in situations like this, members of other teams within the company

Ximena Cahsay

Team Lead at *OneFit*



Combining an academic background in Psychology with a diverse history in the customer support industry, Ximena has forged her own unique style of operating a team. With a refreshingly humanistic approach to her leadership, it's no wonder Ximena has such a happy, high-performing team of agents.

OneFit is disrupting the health industry as one of Europe's leading fitness aggregator apps. With a simple mission: to create one fit planet. Founded in 2013, in Amsterdam, the startup has grown rapidly, offering a connection with over 1000 gyms and studios and scaling to Germany and Spain.

Onefit

are willing to help out. We have a really great team attitude here.

Throughout these crazy periods of growth, how did you measure your successes and failures? Was this touch & go also? Or more metrics-based?

The funny thing is. At first, we didn't really look at metrics, because our team was so small and we could actually see if something was working or not without them. For me, I'm more of a humanistic leader, so I didn't like focusing too much on metrics because I felt it shifted the focus to quantity over quality. As our team grew, we worked on feel. We asked ourselves, "Is this working out? Are agents answering enough tickets and doing it to a high enough standard?".

So, no metrics at all?

No, no, as growth fastened, we decided we need to look into metrics more closely. That's actually how we came across you guys. For my team we look at Tickets Handled per hour and CSAT. CSAT is actually more important to us than any other target and as a result, our CSAT score never goes below 94%. We try for no backlog longer than a day, 12 tickets an hour, and WhatsApp responses within 1-2 hours.

Speaking of WhatsApp, I noticed you decided to opt for them over having a chatbot on your site. Why is that?



Onefit

The difference is, with WhatsApp you have a 2-hour window to respond. Whereas, with chat, it's more like a 30-second window. This actually means that you have to hire someone to constantly be on the chat ready to answer questions. So it's the same with the phone, it's really demanding.

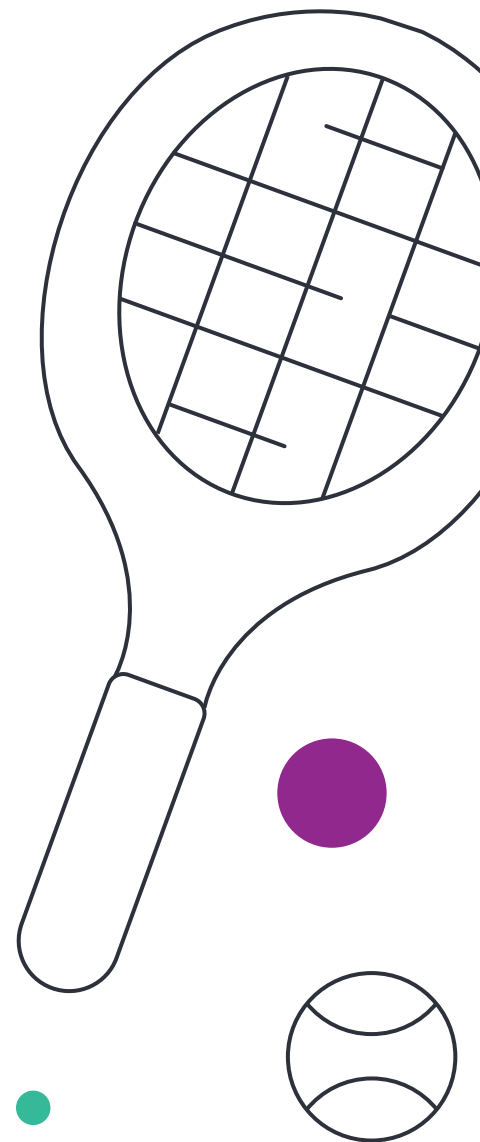
Is that the same reason you have such a heavy UX focus on your FAQ also?

Well, yes. We are using the FAQ as a first line of defense in the hope it will answer all the easier questions and leave the complicated questions for our agents to handle.

Has this focus cut your contact rate?

I wish I could say yes, but no. It answers a lot of basic questions, but we still get a lot of calls, because of cancellations and other specific scenarios. As I mentioned, the biggest contributor to our lower contact rate is WhatsApp messaging. We've noticed a very substantial drop in the number of calls and emails.

Sorry to back-track, but I couldn't help but notice when you talk about the standard of time to respond to each channel, it's exactly the same as every other CSM I've ever spoken to. Do you have a way of finding out for yourself or is there some sort of CS bible out there I'm unaware of?



Onefit

Although we did some research, and I don't think there is some sort of Bible that exists. It's just the norm. How are they created? I guess people just did some trial and error and found them out, then took them to their next company.

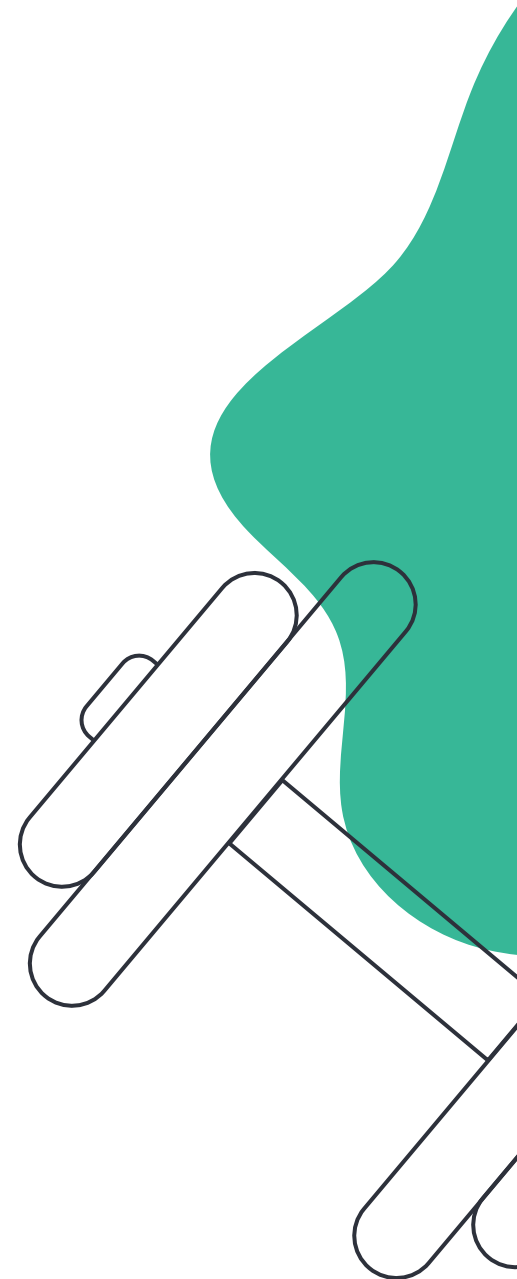
It's the same with this. I learned 30 seconds for a chat response was the norm from my team lead at *Deliveroo*. She learned it from her previous company. Through experiences, we create our own norms. Also, we ourselves are customers, so we also think, "Ok, what would we like to receive as a service?"

That's an interesting way to look at it. Do you ever make decisions on how you operate, based on your personal experiences as a customer?

Well, my background is in psychology. So that's probably why I take my personal experiences into account. But then again, we also conduct user research to understand who our user really is. So we combine our own experiences with UX to get the right idea.

I guess it's this sense of empathy that allows your team to have such a high employee retention rate. What are you doing to keep people around for so long?

What I do first and foremost, is treat my team, not as numbers but as people. Which sounds very cheesy but I personally, in my career, have had



Onefit

some tough times. What kept me motivated was having a manager that gets me, actually listens to me and treats me as a friend. So this is how I treat my team.

When times get tough, we have a big backlog or there is a crisis, I order doughnuts and healthy snacks for everyone just to create a group feeling and think, "Hey we're in this together". I want it to feel like we are a family, not just colleagues working next to each other.

I guess it helps that you're still a team of 16 not 50, right?

Exactly. Also, life happens. So I tend to be really flexible towards my agents. If they need to attend something important, I understand. I also allow my agents to work from home occasionally, I think this is really beneficial to their mental health.

Yes, I totally agree, Alright Ximena, any last words of wisdom for someone experiencing the pains of scaling?

Listen to your team. If they're saying they're overwhelmed or they need someone else. They're right. They're the first line of experience. Don't be afraid to act on what your team tells you. Most importantly, don't wait until it's too late.



Onefit



**Automation
is important,
but there are
some
customers
we want to
talk to**

Chapter 8

Making sure everybody is on the same page

I gave Anita a buzz to hear about her experiences on merging teams, scaling as fast as possible and why lowering your contact rate isn't always the right answer.

So Anita, you've had an extensive amount of experience scaling customer support teams. Which ones stand out the most?

I've had quite a lot of experiences scaling teams. I would say scaling from 0-100 full-time units at Xerox stands out for sure. Now, working for Kamera Express, I'm working on a much smaller scale. We have 45 agents, a third of which are multilingual. We started with 30 at the beginning of the year and plan to increase rapidly in 2020.

So you literally started the Xerox CS team from scratch?

Yeah, So I was working on a large account already, we already had 400 people working on that brand. But only on the sales part, but we didn't have a

Anita Boschman

Customer Support Manager
at Kamera Express



Anita boasts an impressive timeline in customer support, focusing predominately within the photography field in Europe. With a strong belief in empowerment through coaching and a keen eye for technology, Anita has been nominated for a number of customer support related awards. Her latest conquest of merging two teams has proven there's not much Anita won't take on when it comes to scaling.

Kamera Express has been the photo retail specialist of the Benelux for more than 20 years. Their unique use of both online and retail stores, accompanied by their integral focus on customer support has led them to become industry leaders. After chatting with Anita it's easy to see why.



customer service team. Our service levels were not right, so I asked if we could pilot a support team. They said yes, but in 2 months they wanted 100 new agents.

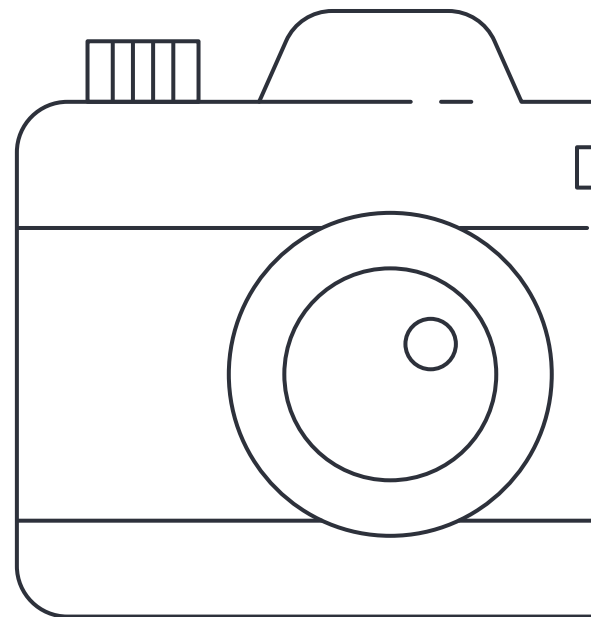
100 agents in 2 months!? I mean how?

The main challenges were to do with training and defining what skills people have and how we wanted this to fit into our new, at this time, non-existent culture.

So was it a 'make it up as you' go situation?

So what we needed to do was get the company values out to the agents. So what I did was I used our overall company values and educated team leads. Then, we overstaffed on team leads, so that at least agents had a point of contact for any questions they had. In terms of KPI's, I tried to set the targets low and manage the expectations of managers. However, that being said you need standards. This was mainly to see what our starting point was. To see in terms of extra training and coaching, where we needed to improve.

That idea of making sure all employees are on the same page and providing consistent service is so important. Was that something you also struggled with when merging *Kamera Express* and *Foto Konijnenberg*?



That was quite a struggle. Still is. We had to set a whole new set of standards. *Kamera Express* was better at productivity and client friendliness. *Konijnenberg* had better service. So I mixed and matched each company's skills. However, overall I had to train the team as one on our mission/vision.

How did you train these people on the new standards?

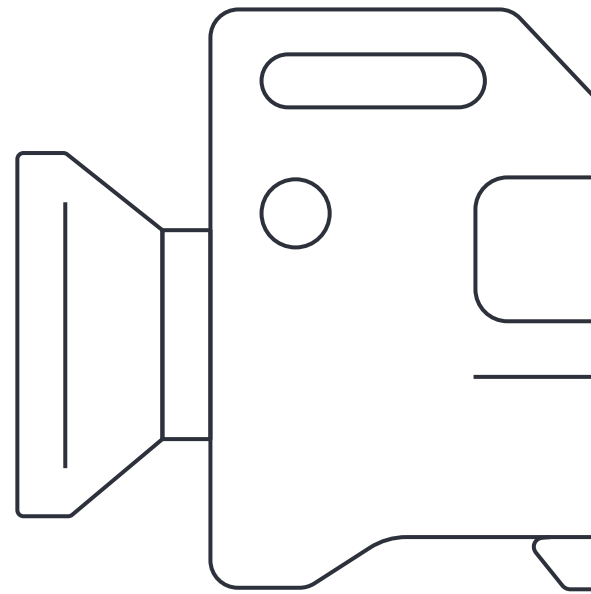
Well, we didn't stop operations, we didn't have time. The shop was open the whole time. What we did was take groups of agents out for a session and explain why we took the steps we took, why it's important and gave ongoing training and quarterly reviews. We mainly focused on the overall values that needed to be portrayed in their service. Part one was just making sure that they understand. Then executing.

How have you tackled the 'execution' part of scaling your merged team?

Well, we've taken a 3 phase approach:

Phase One: We've been working on a manual, explaining the systems we use and the procedures we have. Making sure that everyone is on the same page, on things like how to handle returns or requests, etc.

Phase Two: We are working with our e-commerce manager to have a chatbot to help on the site and improving our FAQ system.



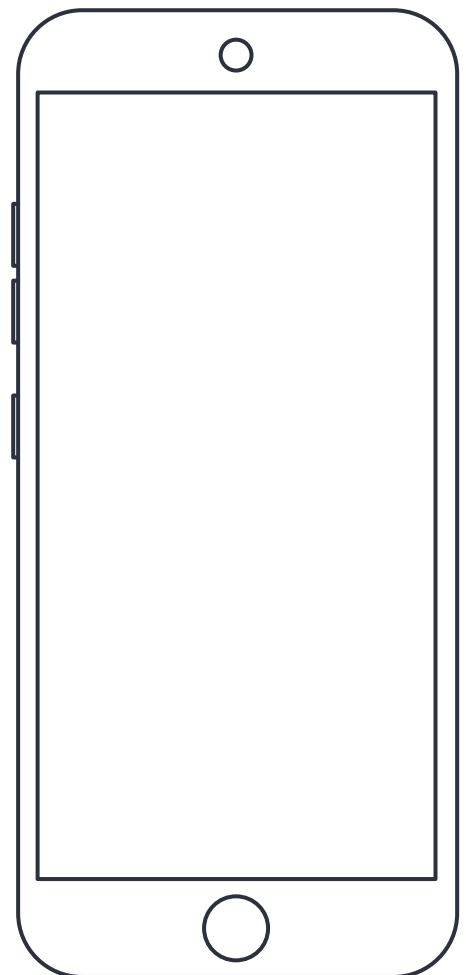
Phase Three: We are trying to expand the number of channels that customers can reach us on. Starting with WhatsApp in January. Facebook messenger is one we already use. However, most customers call us actually.

So what made you choose WhatsApp as your next channel?

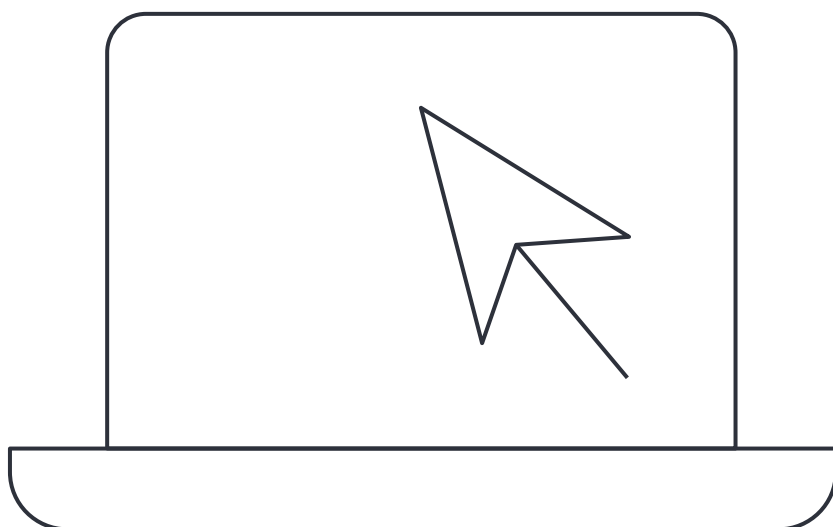
One of our philosophies is that we should be easy to contact. WhatsApp is easy for more people, used by a lot of people, and looking at our demographic, most of them use WhatsApp. I also think that WhatsApp will decrease our phone conversations. WhatsApp tickets have an average reply time of 30 seconds, and 70% of our incoming calls should be answered within 30 seconds. Also, you don't need as many people on WhatsApp as on the phone. It's a matter of efficiency.

One last question Anita. Speaking of efficiency, how do you feel about automation as you continue scaling your team into the future?

Yes, there are elements that are great. As I mentioned, we use a chatbot. However, there are some customers we *want* to talk to because we advise a lot. It's basically part of the sales process. People call to ask a question about the camera etc. If we were to automate everything, there's no opportunity for up-selling or cross-selling. The personal touch attached to calls and non-automated interactions is essential to up-selling.



Basic stuff should be automated, but questions where we could win or lose a client, we want those for ourselves.





**Real-time
data puts you
in the unique
position that
you can
observe
whilst you
grow**

Chapter 9

It's the data-driven way or the highway

Jan was nice enough to take time out of Friday afternoon happy hour to talk about the benefits of outsourcing, the power of data and why the human touch isn't always the crux of good support.

So Jan, I understand Talixo has scaled pretty drastically over the last couple of years. I'm guessing your support team has followed suit?

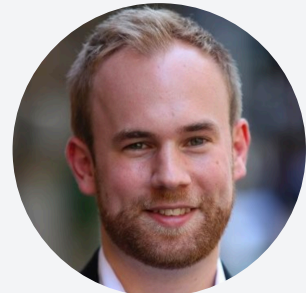
Yes. When I started at Talixo 18 months ago there were 15 agents. Now we have 35 full-time employees and roughly 7 or 8 part-time workers.

Wow, ok. Are you all in-house in Berlin?

No, no. We are spread over 3 sites. Berlin which is our HQ, we also have an outsourced service provider in Sofia and then as of very recently, we are building up a team in Krakow. We decided on Krakow because our whole tech team is already over there.

Jan Brenneke

Chief Supply Officer at
Talixo



Transitioning from business development, Jan has brought his strategic eye to the industry of customer support. With a passion for performance optimization and data-drivenness, he has led the Talixo team through a mammoth international scaling over the last 18 months.

Making waves around the globe, Talixo is the world's leading B2B ground transportation solution. Catering to frequent corporate travelers their easy to use app now provides transport in over 1000 cities world wide.



Makes sense. What made you decide to outsource in Sofia?

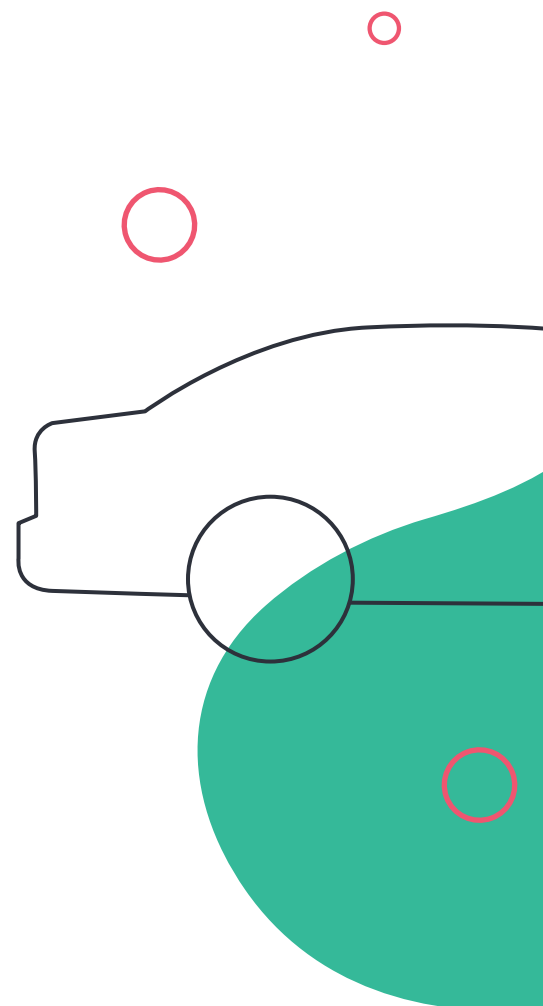
It wasn't cost, as everyone always assumes. It's not significantly cheaper than in Berlin. The two main arguments were that it became kind of hard to find enough candidates that would apply for a customer service position in Berlin. Or the candidates weren't qualified, so we ran into the problem that we had to scale up and we needed to ramp up the workforce. But in Berlin, it was very difficult to do so.

And the second reason?

The second reason was by opening up a new team you promote healthy competition with the established team so that you can also benchmark them against each others and they become less dependent and more flexible.

A lot of support managers are against outsourcing by the fact that they feel the external team is detached from the business. Is that a challenge for you?

That's always a challenge when using a service provider (SP). I think it really depends on which SP you use. So what was important for us when looking for an SP, was that they were small and that we could speak directly and openly with management. Someone who was similar in culture and similar in working style. It makes it way easier to align processes and make sure information runs



smoothly. It's all about making sure you have strong communicators on either side.

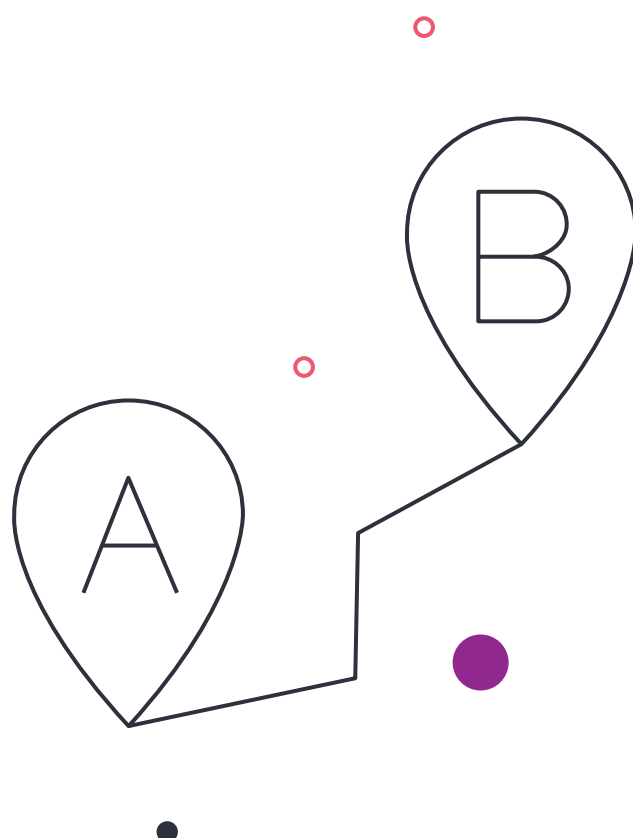
It sounds like you have everything under control. Do you have certain benchmarks whereby you know you need to scale?

To measure this you have to look at your interaction to booking ratio and the interactions per agent ratio. Then basically, you reverse engineer the number of employees you need. The goal is to lower both of these variables. When you have a stable growth forecast for your main interaction driver - in our case the number of bookings - you can very accurately forecast your scaling benchmarks.

So it's about reading the metrics. I guess that can also be smoothed out by accurate forecasting. Was *Talixo's* growth planned and gradual or did it spike?

It was a slow build-up. So what's great about *Talixo's* forecasting is that we deal with pre-booked transfers, not ad-hoc like *Uber*. For example, say you have a vacation coming up in June. You already pre-book your transfer to the airport now. So that makes it easier for us. We don't have these extreme spikes, so we can more accurately forecast.

That makes life a lot easier. Out of curiosity, because your app is so easy to use, do you have a low contact rate?



I mean, I wouldn't necessarily say that. We receive about 3500 calls and 2000 emails per week.

That's quite a lot. What're some things you're working on right now to optimize your operations?

What we focus on here is to see which channels we want to guide our traffic through. So, in general, it's better to move more contacts towards chat. Chat is a more efficient channel and you can work on up to 5 chats at once. However, you can only take 1 call at a time. So what you want to do is move as much volume as you can to a channel like chat, because it's more efficient.

And how do you do that?

Yeah, it's tricky. It's about experimentation. We're planning to implement chat as the preferred mode of communication in the driver app and customer app. At the moment the most common is SMS or our hotline number. Basically, making it easier to use, making it completely integrated and simple.

You must have to work with UX and UI teams to make this possible?

Yes, this requires very close alignment with tech teams.

Would you consider your approach to scaling quite data-driven? What metrics do you measure?



You can only steer a support team in a data-driven way. There's no alternative. The metrics we look at are standard in the industry. So, your accessibility and how many calls are being put through to an operator. Handling time is not so relevant here. However, we look at productivity metrics, so how many interactions can each agent handle per hour and how many interactions can a team do per hour.

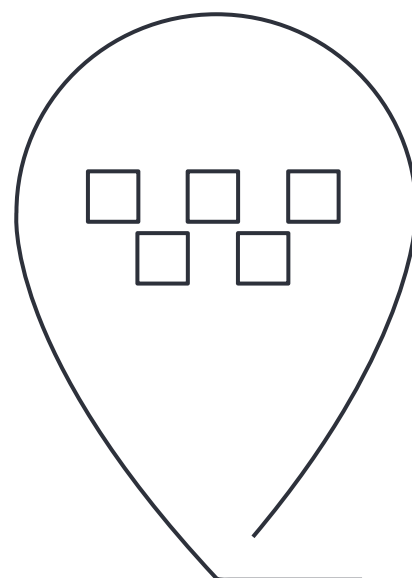
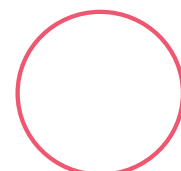
Does this guide you to know which channels you should focus on?

Yes, exactly.

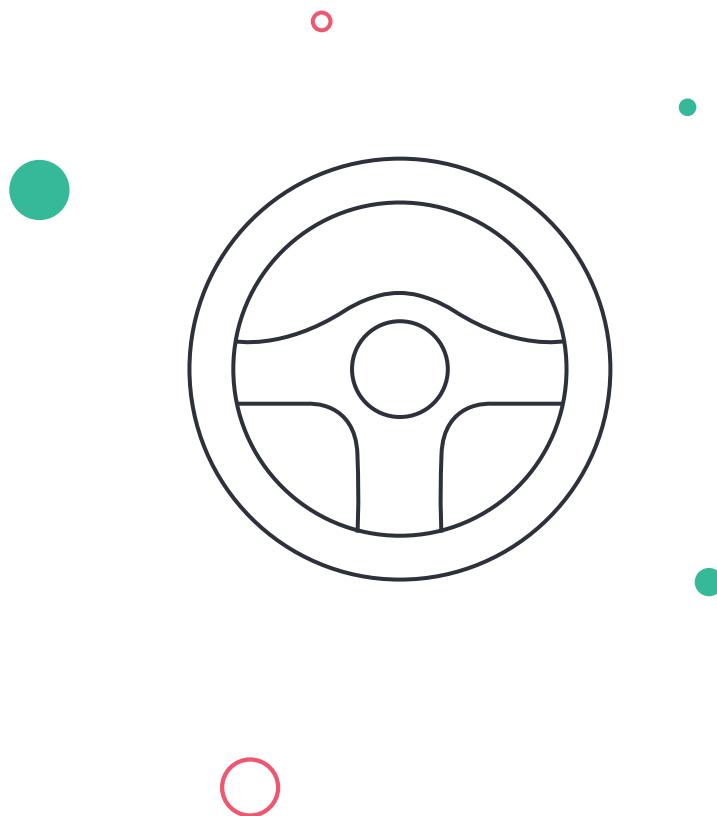
Do you feel like, with a strong focus on data, the 'humanness' in your interactions is lost? Is that a concern for you?

For us not so much. Of course, when we interact with customers we want there to be a human element to our interaction and for them to feel comfortable. But for a service such as ourselves, the ideal is to reduce calls and emails as much as possible and promote self-service because what is important for our customers is the ease of operation. There should be no need for a customer to even get in contact with us.

Ease is always good. Alright Jan, any words of advice for those reading?



In customer support, in general, it's important to be super data-driven. It's one of the few industries that it is very accessible to do so. This allows you to monitor as you scale. A lot of people when scaling only see the problems when it's too late. Having access to real-time data puts you in the unique position that you can observe whilst you grow.





**It's not about
having
enough
people there,
it's about
hiring the
right ones**

Chapter 10

Hey Siri, how do I achieve a 98% CSAT?

After figuring out that Perm and Amsterdam are not in the same timezones, Polina and I finally got the chance to catch up. We chatted all about her experiences with custom video messaging, elite recruitment and how Miro snagged a 98% CSAT score.

Hi, Polina. So, Miro is definitely no stranger to the scaling process. Just out of curiosity, when you started 3 years ago, how many agents did you guys have?

I was the 4th agent, now there are 18 people in the team. Overall, in terms of company employees, I was the 45th employee. Now there are more than 250 and we are growing everyday!

Are all of your agents located in Perm?

So the majority of us are located in Perm because we cover most of the timezones for Europe and Russia. However, we have customers all around the world, so we have to provide 24/7 support. That's why we have 2 agents in LA.

Polina Parshakova

Team Lead at Miro



After speaking to Polina, two things become apparent: her passion for her job and her determination for improvement. Both of which she brings to her leadership of the impressive team at Miro. With a keen eye for operational efficiency and recruitment, Polina is leading the charge as her team scales to infinity and beyond.

Their tagline says it all: 'Miro. Where distributed teams get sh!t done'. When it comes to collaborative platforms for cross-functional teams, Miro is at the top of the game. With over 3 million users worldwide and a CSAT score of 98%, it's no wonder their team is considered so highly.

miro

Over the last 3 years, what has your experience scaling the team been like?

It's been super crazy. Since I've been team lead we've grown from 7 to 18. We layered our team. So we have our first-line, the so-called CSR's. They are invincible people who can answer any question.

And the second-line?

We call them technical support engineers. They deal with fewer issues but are more deeply technical. We have TSE's here in Perm and are hiring one in LA as well.

How was the scaling process for you guys? Was it planned or more of a crisis aversion?

We tried different approaches in terms of forecasting. We tied the size of our team to how many tickets we receive and tried to find some sort of correlation with the marketing numbers. We check once per quarter, if we are running ok and as predicted. So it was gradual, with no big spikes. We planned for how many people we need and where they are needed. To cover the entire day in both LA and Europe.

You said you provide 24/7 support. How do you ensure that? Is it shift work or more of a follow-the-sun principle?



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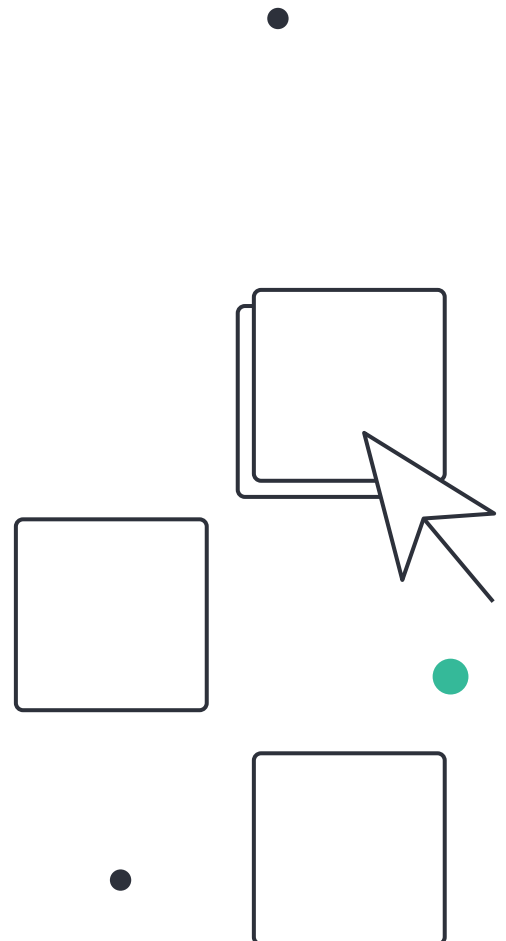
Well, when it was the early days, everyone was in Perm. So we had people working late-night shifts, which is super bad for your health. So at some point, we decided to ditch this idea, for a more FTS principle. In Perm, the latest shift ends at 2 am and the LA shift starts at 11 am, this way we cover 24/7 and are covering requests as fast as possible.

**Is that why you hired the two agents in LA?
To alleviate the pain of working throughout
the night? Or is it more of a cultural
alignment?**

There are several reasons. The first is pretty simple, we wanted to make it healthy for our employees. Number 2, was to build a strong internal culture. We believe to provide a great customer experience it is more fruitful to work closely with your sales, tech and UX teams. That's why we don't outsource either. What do I mean by that? Whilst Slack is great, it's better to be able to communicate with members of different teams immediately in order to solve the problem quickly and to a high standard.

When did you hire your first agent in LA?

That was in January 2019. We definitely noticed a change in terms of how quickly we could respond to urgent requests. We also noticed how our CSAT changed. Most of the appraisal comments customers write to us are about speed.



miro

So your CSAT spiked after the hire?

Yeah, it really helped to improve this metric. In Q1 last year we had a 90% CSAT score, and right now we have a 98%.

Woah! That's incredible.

Thanks. We try to continually improve the quality of how we respond. It's not only about having people there, it's about hiring the right people. We have a pretty tough hiring process. We only just recently calculated that only 2% of applicants get the offer. So, we try to find the right culture fit as well.

What is unique about the recruiting process that has allowed you to hire such a high standard of employee?

We have a really nice approach when it comes to the team interview. We used to do a team interview with the managers present. However, 6 months ago we decided to leave the candidate and the team alone. This helps the team to get a good feel for the candidate and for the candidate it gives them an opportunity to be a lot more open and honest and ask those pragmatic questions they may not ask a manager.

It's definitely working for you. I mean 98% CSAT, come on! What's your secret?

We are trying not only to have enough people in



miro

terms of quantity but to focus on educating them well. This is so that they can resolve issues quickly and to a high standard. We started creating career ladders, so that agents knew how they could become more successful and move forward. We promoted great responses by posting them in Slack to give recognition to hard-working agents. We also introduced bonuses, helping us scale without losing quality.

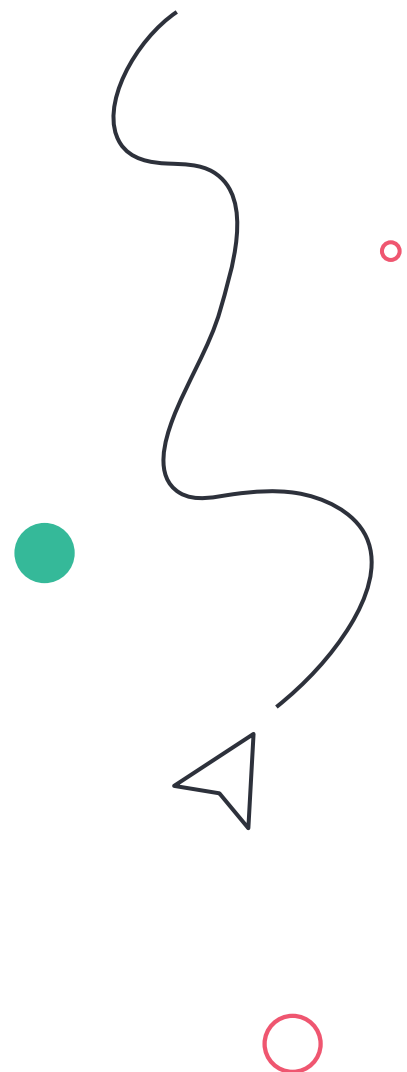
Awesome, have you ever used internal QA?

Yes, of course. Initially, I rated responses on my own, based on my own criteria. Based on solution correctnesses, voice & tone, language, structure and visual attractiveness of the message. It was my own kind of internal QA.

So you did this all by yourself?

Yes, but as the team started to grow, I couldn't handle everything myself, we decided to try peer to peer assessment. It was risky because it required a lot of trust from agents. Slowly but surely, it became a weekly routine. We created a bot in Slack that allocated who is reviewing who each week and we pick 8 tickets per week to review.

You obviously have such a strong focus on your team, and you guys work so well together. Have you implemented any sort of automation tools to assist with this?



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Uh, yes. We practice different things and play around with them. But the biggest issue we've faced with automation is that previously people were asking basic questions about the product. Now they are asking more complicated questions that are often specific. These can't be answered by the knowledge base or a chatbot. We need real people for these queries.

Do people revert back to calling when it comes to these specific queries?

It's more chat. First of all, we don't actually offer any phone support. We actually record live, custom gifs and videos for our users. This is so that we can show them in detail what to do.

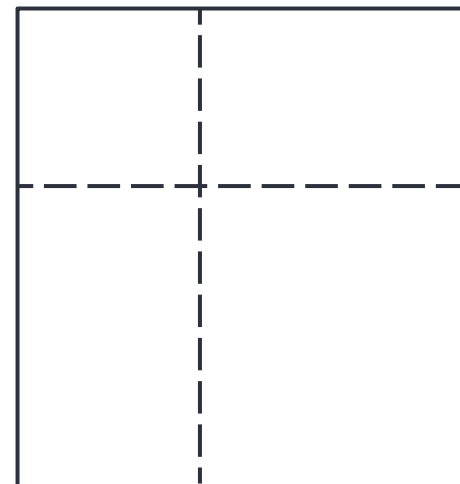
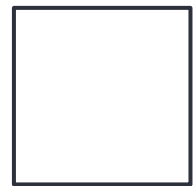
Wait, wait. So the videos aren't pre-recorded? Do you create specific videos for each case?

We do it custom and specific for each case.

Wow. That's awesome. How did you think of that?

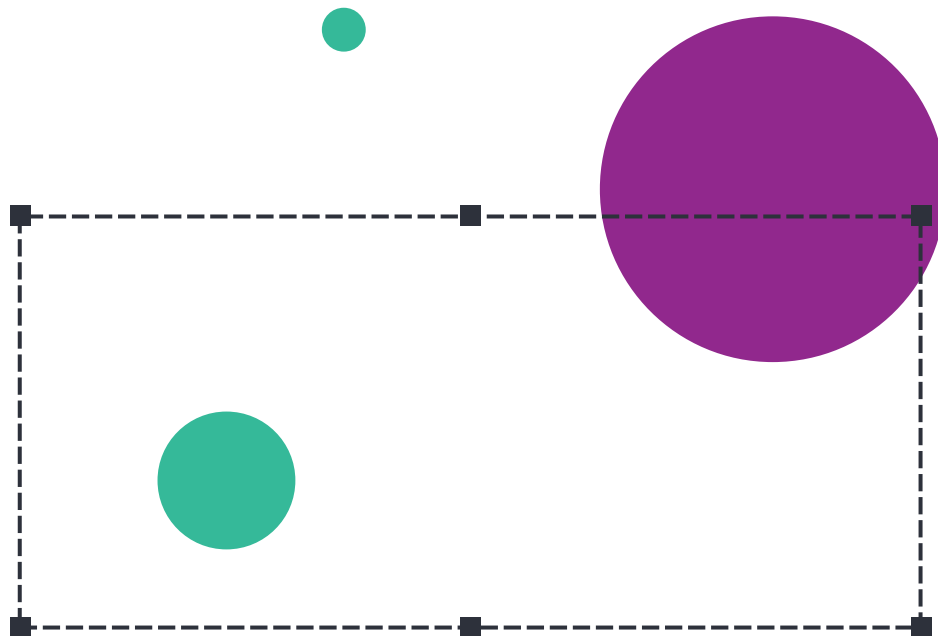
Well, one of our main approaches is to think, "How would I like this question to be answered?" I guess we try to be human beings.

Ok. Well from one human to another, what would be your best piece of advice for anyone reading this whose currently scaling their support team?



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Hmm. Be brave, be bold, experiment. It's ok to try new things and get inspiration from others. But also be responsible and patient. This is how you build a better place to work.



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Conclusion

Scaling your support team is inevitable. However, it doesn't have to be daunting. Yes, it will be chaotic. Yes, there may be times where you don't know what to do. But what is important, is to adapt and learn.

Take from what others have done before you, but also be creative. Appropriate these ideas. Mold and shape them and make them your own. Because when it comes to scaling, there is no single right answer, only what works for you.

From reading this e-book, we hope we have enlightened you to the fact that finding what's right for you comes down to one thing. Well, actually two things. Trial and error. Whilst each interviewee in this book has taken a different approach to scaling, what they have in common is that they have tried, they have failed, and they have turned these failures into their own version of scaling success.

We would love to hear more about all of your unique experiences also, so please feel free to share with us. If you haven't already, check out our blog on [Kaizo.com](https://kaizo.com), where we share our distinctive (and often controversial) thoughts on the latest topics in customer support.

You can also email us at hello@kaizo.com, or follow us on our socials. If you liked this book, follow us on our socials to keep up to date with our latest content.

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Happy Scaling!

How Kaizo can help

The Kaizo platform transforms your team's performance metrics into powerful insights. It enables you to effectively guide your agents towards improving their skills, self-managing their goals and delivering better service. The platform provides the tools to upgrade operational workflow and efficiently scale your team. Kaizo empowers teams to use their time and resources more efficiently, providing a more productive and engaging digital work environment.

- Uses gamification to **boost agent engagement** and teams' **employee retention**.
- **Saves time** on onboarding and training with integrated agent assessments.
- **Improves your team's productivity** and allows you to manage more agents per team lead.
- **Increases agent efficiency** meaning less hiring as you scale.

For more information, check out **Kaizo.com**

