



The Future of Work Is Now

**NEW RESEARCH SHOWS THE BENEFITS
OF AN AUGMENTED WORKFORCE**



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Introduction

Are business leaders truly ready for the impact that AI will have on their business, their organization, and their workforce?

Will an augmented workforce—the future of people and solutions like Intelligent Virtual Assistants (IVAs) working harmoniously together—become our new reality?

Intelligent Virtual Assistants are the next generation of Intelligent Automation helping organizations scale human interactions that attract, acquire, and grow customers.

We surveyed 472 CEOs, CIOs, and Marketing executives for their opinions and thoughts about this new hybrid approach to work, where people and Intelligent Virtual Assistants work side by side to increase productivity and performance, driving better results while increasing job satisfaction.

What we discovered through this research is enlightening, inspiring and game-changing. In this eBook, we'll explore the top four insights we learned from business leaders from smaller, mid-market companies, to large enterprise organizations across multiple industries, as well as through one-on-one interviews conducted with other executives who are already leveraging an augmented workforce.

Four Key Insights Conversica Discovered During Our Augmented Workforce Survey

Key Insight #1

The #1 benefit to an augmented workforce is top-line growth

Key Insight #3

Business leaders are optimistic that augmenting customer-facing teams will deliver a superior customer experience

Key Insight #2

Business leaders would augment their teams with Intelligent Virtual Assistants to drive higher productivity and performance

Key Insight #4

The augmented workforce will create more jobs than are eliminated by AI

The Future of Work Is Now

76% of those we surveyed, already embrace Intelligent Virtual Assistants and are enthusiastic about the potential benefits of an augmented workforce. These leaders are all actively working to implement within 12 months, or have implemented, an augmented workforce and some of them are already seeing success.

So what are Intelligent Virtual Assistants and how do these AI-powered virtual team members typically augment the workforce? Intelligent Virtual Assistants accelerate revenue across the customer journey by autonomously engaging contacts, prospects, customers, or partners in human-like, two-way interactions at scale to drive towards the next best action; whether that's scheduling a Sales meeting, gauging interest to buy additional products or services, or politely but persistently collecting overdue payments.

Business leaders see that Intelligent Virtual Assistants will have a dramatic impact on the nature and the future of work. Here is what they believe these AI Assistants will do:

71%

Drive top-line growth for business

58%

Provide a better customer experience

53%

Offload repetitive, routine tasks

50%

Increase job satisfaction

46%

Foster higher performing teams

23%

Remove capacity limits on productivity

Not only are Intelligent Virtual Assistants a strong catalyst for driving company performance, but they are also creating opportunities for businesses to improve their customer experience while gaining an advantage over their non-AI implementing competitors.

Studies show that the introduction of AI-powered virtual team members into the workforce can make employees more efficient, foster high-performing teams, and remove the capacity limits unintentionally imposed by outdated, manual processes.

Clearly, there is great value in augmenting the workforce, first and foremost being **top-line growth** experienced by a majority of early adopters. Yet CEOs, CIOs and Marketing leaders all agree that increased **productivity and performance** is a key benefit as well.

Customer experience is improved by an augmented workforce as communications and on-boarding are optimized, and responsiveness is increased as capacity limits are easily overcome by Intelligent Virtual Assistants. These AI-powered Virtual Assistants are driving **intelligent automation** to the next level, moving from simply automating business processes, to automating more complex human-like conversations and interactions.

Still, business leaders are cautious and concerned about potential reductions in headcount due to the implementation of AI applications. But this apprehension may be eased by recent statistics showing that instead of reducing corporate headcounts, **job increases have resulted from the implementation of Intelligent Virtual Assistants to improve individual productivity and team performance.**

In fact, an augmented workforce does not aim to replace people but helps workers become more productive, perform better and to focus on the aspects of their jobs that bring them greater satisfaction and fulfillment.

Common Use Cases for Intelligent Virtual Assistants

Intelligent Virtual Assistants automate the repetitive, routine business interactions and tasks that require a back and forth dialogue in order to drive customers through the buyer journey. Common use cases for Intelligent Virtual Assistants include:

Sales and Marketing: Sales Development can adopt **Intelligent Virtual Assistants, like a Sales AI Assistant, to act as a virtual Business Development Representative (BDR). In fact, a Sales AI Assistant can act better than your best BDR** to follow up with prospects over email or SMS text with thousands of leads to secure sales appointments. These **Sales AI Assistants** can tackle more leads than humanly possible and automate the routine and mundane tasks that most Sales team members don't enjoy doing.

Customer Success: **Intelligent Virtual Assistants can even be used to augment Customer Success teams in their efforts to retain and grow customer engagements.** Customer Success AI Assistants can request feedback from customers on the latest products or services, set up quarterly business reviews, upsell and cross-sell customers, and even input response records into the CRM

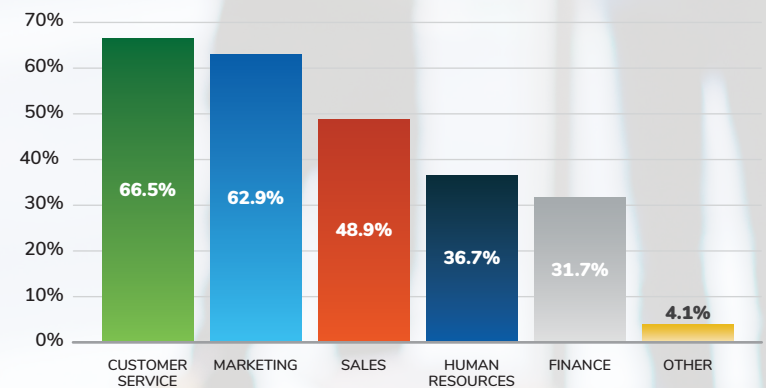
system. Automating Customer Success helps companies ensure that no customer is left uncared for due to resource constraints.

Finance and HR: Finance and HR teams also benefit from Intelligent Virtual Assistants. **Finance AI Assistants** can process paperwork and payments quicker and **HR AI Assistants** can automate the discovery of the best-qualified candidates from large pools of applicants more rapidly than any human team member could.

Intelligent Virtual Assistants can automate in human-like manner hundreds of conversational interactions, autonomously take the right action, and update systems with any new information gathered in the process. The outcome is greater productivity, performance and efficiency, and team members are able to focus on the parts of their job they do best.

The executives we surveyed anticipate adding Intelligent Virtual Assistants, to the following areas of their business: Customer Service: **66.5%**, Marketing: **62.9%**, Sales: **48.9%**, Human Resources: **36.7%** and Finance: **31.7%**.

In which departments do you anticipate using Intelligent Virtual Assistants?



How Quickly Are Companies Embracing an Augmented Workforce Using Intelligent Virtual Assistants?

How fast are companies making the leap from simply automating business processes to more intelligent automation and the use of Intelligent Virtual Assistants within their workforce? Their timeline for implementation is almost immediate: within the next three to 12 months.

Key Insight #1

The #1 Benefit to an Augmented Workforce is Top-Line Growth

There are numerous advantages to an augmented workforce. But the top benefit realized by those implementing an augmented workforce is actually different from the benefit that most of the business leaders participating in our survey thought it would be.

Most of the executives we surveyed felt confident that **improved efficiencies** would be the top benefit of workforce augmentation. While an augmented workforce does deliver increased efficiencies, the actual greatest benefit seen by those executives that have already implemented AI into their teams is **top-line growth**. Clearly, Intelligent Virtual Assistants are exceeding expectations in a very positive way.

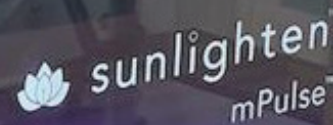
This discovery shows that there is a common misconception that AI-based solutions will not deliver on their promise. Yet it also shows that the promise of Intelligent Virtual Assistants is real, it is performing beyond expectations, and it is driving increases in top-line growth for those companies that are augmenting their workforce.

Among companies who have implemented AI technology, more than **72%** of executives rated **top-line growth** as the biggest upside when people and AI Assistants are combined in the workforce.

Customer Spotlight

SunLighten Earns \$1M More with Intelligent Virtual Assistants

For the nearly 90% of CEOs and CIOs that said AI technology is critical or important to their organizations, they'll be pleased to know that AI delivers big on ROI. Take health and wellness company SunLighten, for example. This company credits \$1 Million in revenue to its augmenting of its workforce with Intelligent Virtual Assistants. "We are approaching \$1 million in a year of revenue that was touched by Conversica. That's \$1 million in AI-assisted revenue. We're an example of how the future is already happening," said Kris Saim-Gentry, Marketing Director, SunLighten.





Key Insight #2

CEOs, CIOs, and CMOs Would Augment Their Teams with Intelligent Virtual Assistants to Drive Higher Productivity and Performance

Companies invest a lot of money, resources and time in Sales and Customer Success teams to ask the question: “are you interested?”

Leads and customers are asked “are you interested in...” booking a test drive, setting a meeting with a Salesperson, scheduling your next quarterly business review, renewing your account, or adding a product or service to your subscription. On the surface, it seems like a simple question. But asking this question in a way that instigates a response is much more difficult. Fortunately, an Intelligent Virtual Assistant can ask “are you interested?” persistently, politely and at scale; yielding better business outcomes at a lower cost.

An overwhelming **97%** of executives surveyed indicated they would use Intelligent Virtual Assistants to offload routine tasks from workers so they can focus on higher-value, creative, and relationship-building tasks.

68% of executives believe adopting Intelligent Virtual Assistants will allow for greater creativity by knowledge workers in their jobs.

Predictions for AI adoption to improve workforce productivity leaped over **55%** in less than two years. **52.6%** believe it will eliminate repetitive, routine tasks done by people in most professional jobs.

Why does this matter? Because organizations and teams with higher employee engagement and lower active disengagement perform at higher levels. A 2018 Gallup poll found that companies with high levels of employee engagement and low levels of disengagement achieved an earnings-per-share growth that was four times higher than their competitors. Additionally, these companies reported having 21% higher profitability, better customer engagement, and higher productivity and retention.

Key Insight #3

Business Leaders Are Cautiously Optimistic That Augmenting a Customer-Facing Team Will Deliver a Superior Customer Experience

How about customers? Does an augmented workforce drive them away or attract them to a company? Intelligent automation actually presents new opportunities to connect companies to their customers, suppliers, and partners quickly and more efficiently, as these customers navigate an ever-expanding digital landscape.

According to a recent [Forrester](#) report, “Customers want better experiences, and employees want to feel more empowered in their jobs. There are very few technologies that can play a significant role in both customer and employee engagement — AI, automation, and physical robotics technologies can play this dual role in how enterprises engage with both their customers and employees.”

McKinsey has estimated that mass-personalization can lift sales by 10% or more

Customers Are Better Served Through an Augmented Workforce

Our own research indicates that Marketing, Sales and Customer Success teams who directly interact with prospects and customers alongside Intelligent Virtual Assistants will more consistently deliver a superior customer experience than those who don't.

Marketing departments invest a significant portion of their budget on demand generation in a quest to generate more leads and drive higher contribution to pipeline and revenue. The addition of Intelligent Virtual Assistants to a team can immediately engage all leads and provide 100% lead follow-up and coverage.

Intelligent Virtual Assistants accelerate revenue across the customer lifecycle. IVAs for Sales and Marketing help companies find and secure customers more quickly and efficiently by automatically contacting and engaging with leads, and by qualifying them earlier and faster in the customer journey. Post-sale, IVAs for Customer Success help retain, upsell and cross-sell existing customers. The level of scale and personalization performed by an AI-powered Virtual Assistant is not humanly possible.





Customer Spotlight

Fuze Augments Its Workforce

Leading global cloud communications company Fuze augmented its workforce with Intelligent Virtual Assistants.

“It has definitely opened our eyes to what’s possible and it is now starting to permeate into other parts of our business,” says Ted Engel, Vice President, Worldwide Commercial Sales at Fuze. “I see opportunities in sales, I see it in services, I see it in support, and I see it in the back office. I think eventually there will be a bot for essentially every function of the business.”

Key Insight #4

The Augmented Workforce Will Create More Jobs than Are Eliminated by AI

96% of executives surveyed responded positively to increasing team productivity without having to reduce headcount in their workforce and this sentiment was consistently high among CEOs, CIOs and Marketing leaders. However, in the following question, **73%** responded that they would reduce workforce if they could maintain service levels through the use of Intelligent Virtual Assistants.

Business leaders are conflicted about this and that’s to be expected in the early days of AI adoption. Support for reducing headcount was stronger among CIOs: **85.4%**, while CEOs were slightly less apt to reduce headcount: **79.8%**. Marketing leaders were the least supportive of reducing headcount, with only **65.9%** saying they would do so if they could maintain the same level of service through Intelligent Virtual Assistants.

AI Results in Team Growth

According to [Fast Company](#), a ZipRecruiter survey that polled 11,000 workers found that **58%** of job seekers think that AI will destroy more jobs than it creates. However, according to ZipRecruiter [Future of Work Report](#), AI created three times as many jobs as it destroyed in 2018.

68% of executives believe adopting Intelligent Virtual Assistants will allow for greater creativity by knowledge workers in their jobs.

Our research also shows that organizations who have adopted Intelligent Virtual Assistants have re-allocated budgets to grow teams, not reduce them.

Summary of Key Insights

Our research concludes that leaders see the top benefit of an augmented workforce is top-line growth; C-suites are ready to augment their workforce to drive higher productivity and performance; business leaders are optimistic that AI will create a better customer experience; and the augmented workforce will create more jobs than it eliminates.

Analysts Endorse an Augmented Workforce

Gartner sees the augmented workforce as one of the greatest AI benefits, referring to it as “[AI augmentation](#) — a combination of human and artificial intelligence, where both complement each other.” Further, **58%** of our survey respondents said they felt **AI would enable new careers for those entering the workforce.**

Gartner Says By 2020, Artificial Intelligence Will Create More Jobs Than It Eliminates

According to Gartner, AI will create 2.3 million jobs in 2020, while eliminating 1.8 million. “2020 will be a pivotal year in AI-related employment dynamics,” according to Gartner, Inc., as [artificial intelligence](#) will become a positive job motivator. Starting in 2020, AI-related job creation is forecast to cross into positive territory, reaching two million net-new jobs in 2025.

Gartner states that the augmentation of the workforce with AI technology will generate \$2.9 trillion in business value and recover 6.2 billion hours of worker productivity in 2021. Gartner also predicts that “AI applied to nonroutine work is more likely to assist humans than replace them as combinations of humans and machines will perform more effectively than either human experts or AI-driven machines working alone will.”

In 2017, [Gartner predicted](#) that by 2022, one in five knowledge workers would rely on AI to do a job. However, our recent 2019 survey shows a vast majority of business leaders are actively working to implement, or have already implemented, an augmented workforce.





Endnotes

Jim Harter, [Employee Engagement on the Rise in the US](#) (Gallup, 2018)

Brandon Purcell & J.P. Gownder, [AI, Automaton, And Robotics,...Oh My!](#) (Forrester, 2019)

Lydia Dishman, [Is AI killing jobs? Actually, it added 3x more than it replaced in 2018](#) (Fast Company, 2019)

Chris Pemberton, [Cultivate Enterprise Intelligence With AI](#) (Gartner, 2017)

Chris Pemberton, [Use Artificial Intelligence Where It Matters](#) (Gartner, 2017)

Rob van der Meulen & Christy Pettey, [Gartner Says By 2020, Artificial Intelligence Will Create More Jobs Than It Eliminates](#) (Gartner, 2017)

Additional research conducted by [Conversica](#) and the [Future of Work Report](#) from ZipRecruiter informed this eBook.



About Conversica

Conversica pioneered the category of Intelligent Virtual Assistants, helping organizations attract, grow and retain customers at scale. First launched in 2009, the flagship Conversica® Sales AI Assistant has over a decade of expertise helping companies find and secure customers more quickly and efficiently by autonomously contacting, engaging, qualifying and following up with leads via natural, two-way conversations. Reaching out to over 100 million people on behalf of thousands of companies, Conversica's AI Assistants are built on a proven and patented intelligent automation platform integrating natural language understanding (NLU), decision

and policy management, natural language generation (NLG), autonomous action chains and deep learning capabilities that engage prospects over multiple communication channels and in multiple languages. Conversica was founded in 2007 and is headquartered in Foster City in Silicon Valley with additional US offices in Seattle, Bellingham and Kansas City, as well as offices in Chile and the UK. Conversica is a portfolio company of Providence Equity, Kennet Partners and Toba Capital.

To learn more, visit [conversica.com](#) and follow the company on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#).