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The State of Customer Support in 2022

Hiver surveyed and analyzed customer expectations in 2022 and beyond.

Introduction

How are customer needs changing today? What is the standard of customer support they expect from companies? What frustrates them the most?

'**The State of Customer Support in 2022**' is a comprehensive report by Hiver that aims to understand customer needs and expectations in 2022.

Hiver surveyed 1200+ consumers in the US to arrive at detailed insights on:

- The support channels they use to interact with brands

- Pain points they experience during support interactions

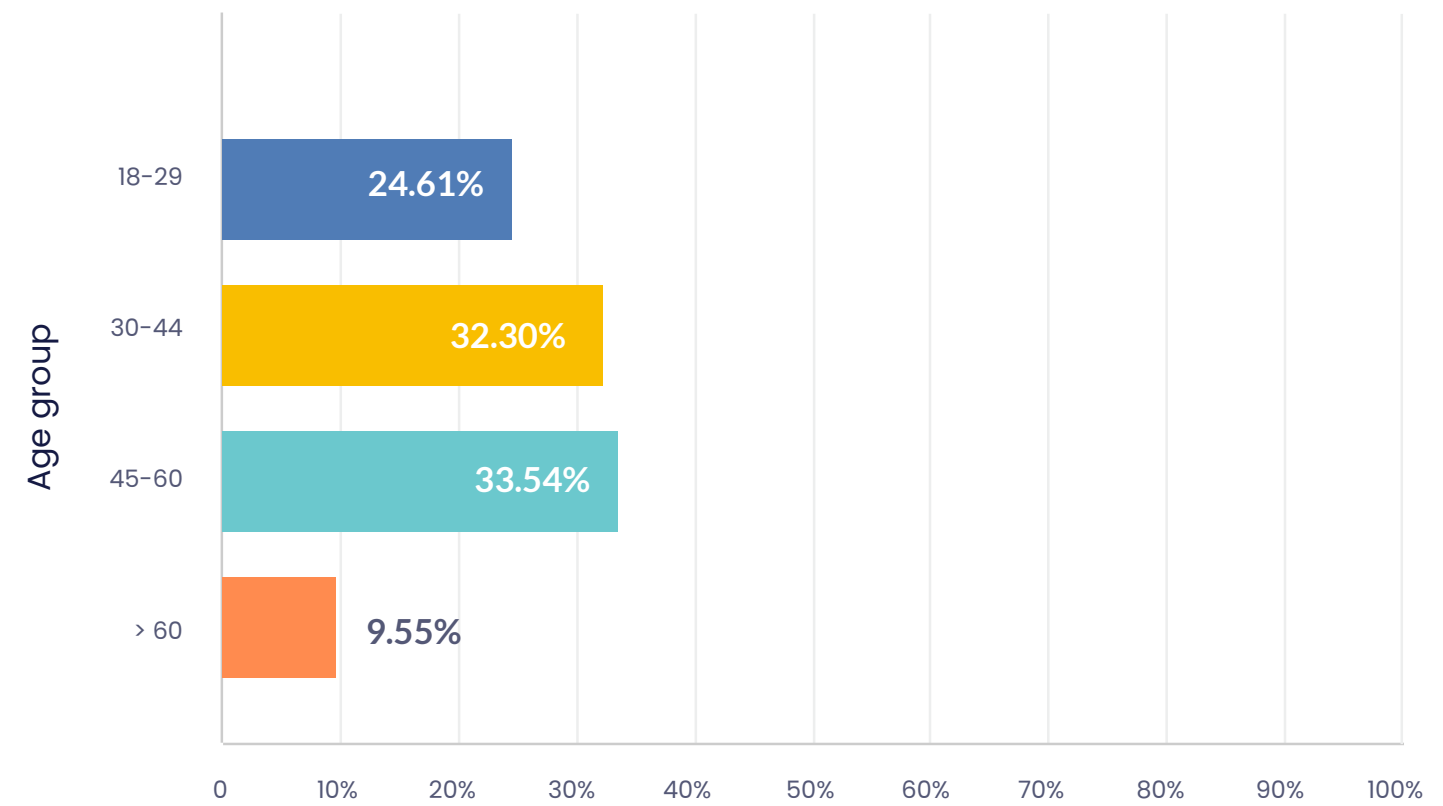- Their expectations from customer support teams
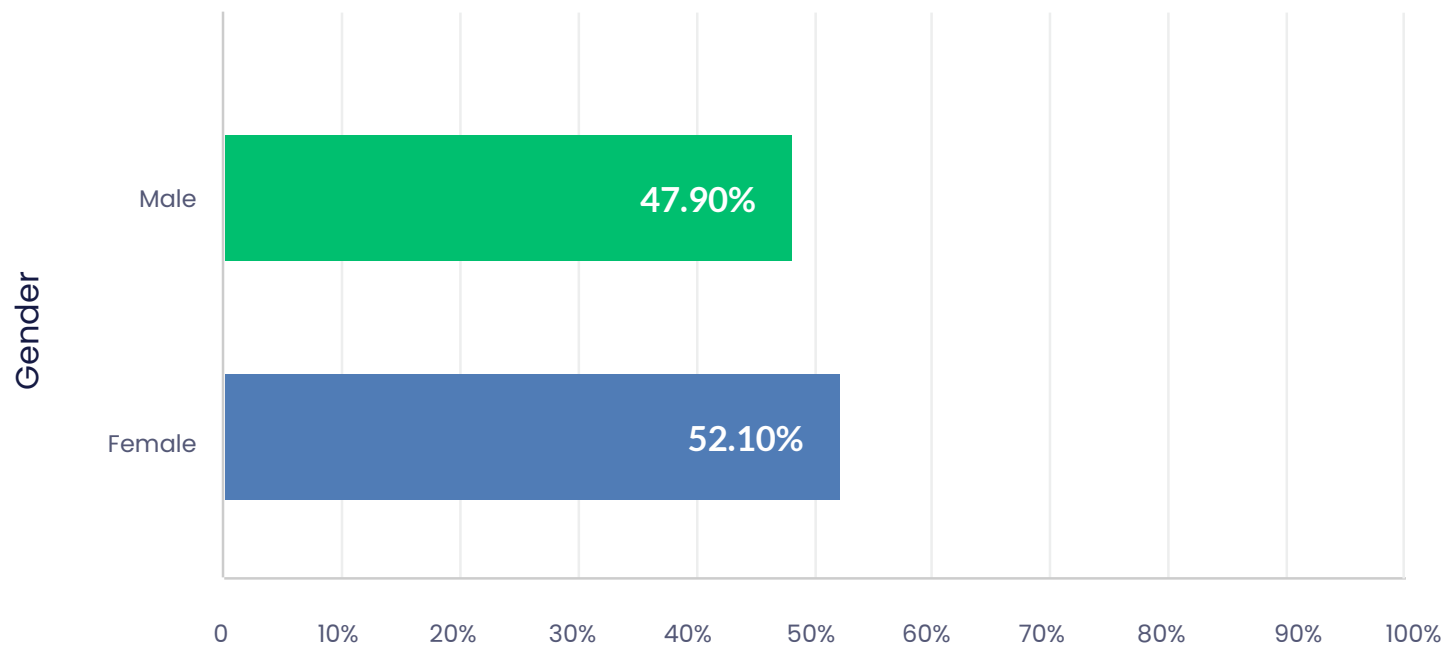
And more.

Let's dive into it.

Audience Profile

Age

Age group	Percentage
18-29	24.61%
30-44	32.30%
45-60	33.54%
> 60	9.55%

33% of our respondents are between 45-60 years of age. And, 32% are between 30-44 years.

Gender

Gender	Percentage
Male	47.90%
Female	52.10%

52% of our respondents are female. And, 48% are male

Key Findings

40%

of customers get frustrated by long waiting times on the phone

38%

of customers point out that chatbots aren't able to relate to their issues

51%

of customers feel getting support via email is highly time-consuming

52%

of customers want their queries resolved within 24 hours

72 %

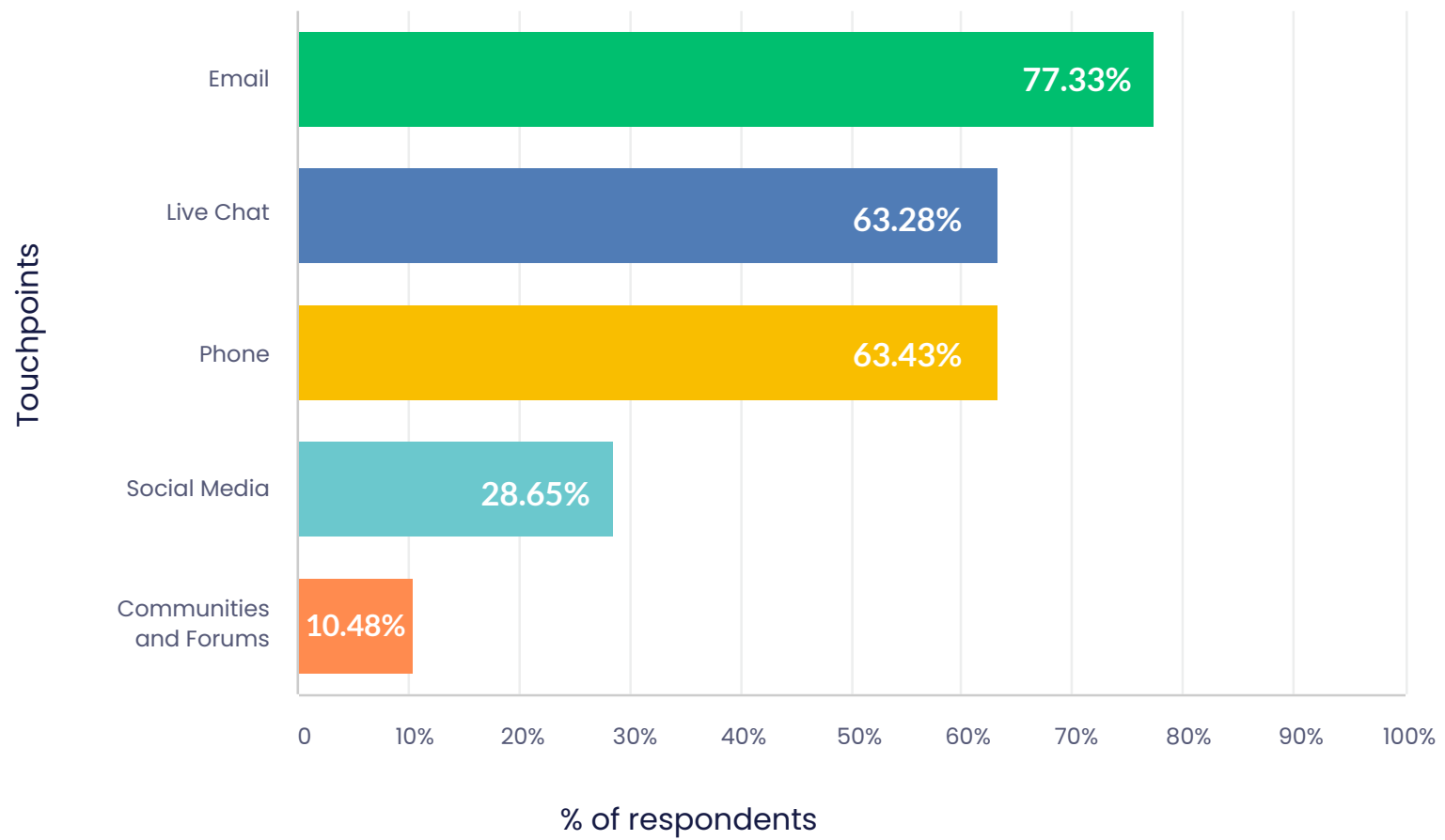of customers plan to switch to another brand after a negative support experience

The Multi-Channel Approach to Customer Support

Modern-day customers use multiple channels to communicate with businesses. And so, it's up to you to be present where your customers are, to ensure they get the right support, at the right time, and at the right place.

To do this, it's essential to understand what channels your customers use the most. Let's find out!

Top support channels customers use to contact businesses

Touchpoints

- Email — 77.33%
- Live Chat — 63.28%
- Phone — 63.43%
- Social Media — 28.65%
- Communities and Forums — 10.48%

0 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

% of respondents

Takeaway

77% of customers use email to communicate with businesses, while 63% use Live Chat. Email's asynchronous nature makes it the most popular support channel. Live Chat is also one of the preferred channels, as it helps customers get real-time support.
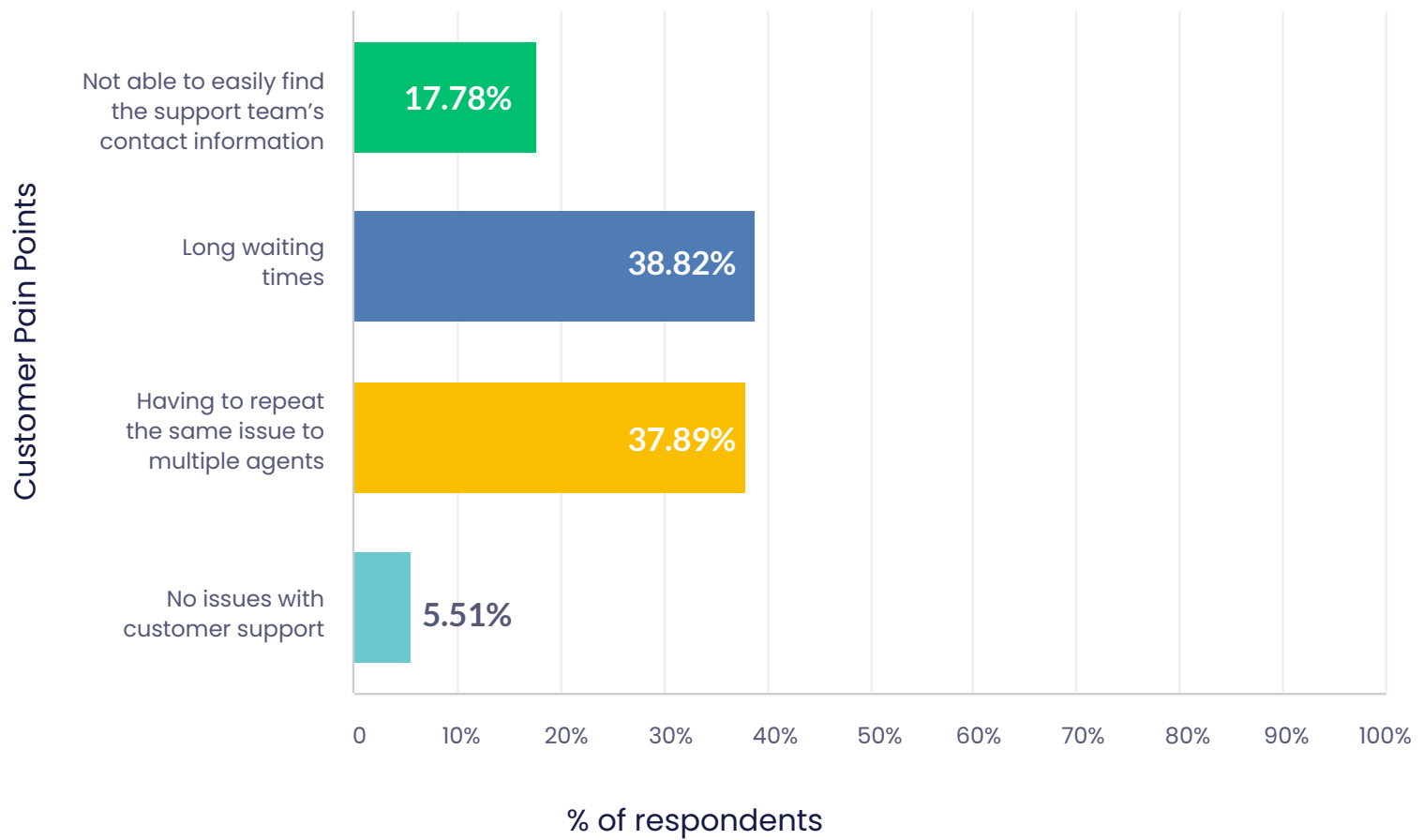
The Root Cause of Customer Pain Points

We hate it when our customers get annoyed, don't we? But, why do you think this happens? What is the root cause of your customers' frustration?

Are your customers annoyed at the quality of service you provide? Is it the long waiting times they have to endure? Or does it have to do with your agents not being helpful enough?

What annoys customers the most when getting help via phone?

Customer Pain Points (y-axis)

- Not able to easily find the support team's contact information: **17.78%**
- Long waiting times: **38.82%**
- Having to repeat the same issue to multiple agents: **37.89%**
- No issues with customer support: **5.51%**

% of respondents (x-axis)

Takeaway

3 out of 4 customers get frustrated by long waiting times and having to repeat queries multiple times. And surprisingly, only 5% don't face any issues when contacting a brand's call centre. Clearly, support teams have to do better with the speed of service and find ways to minimize customer calls getting transferred.

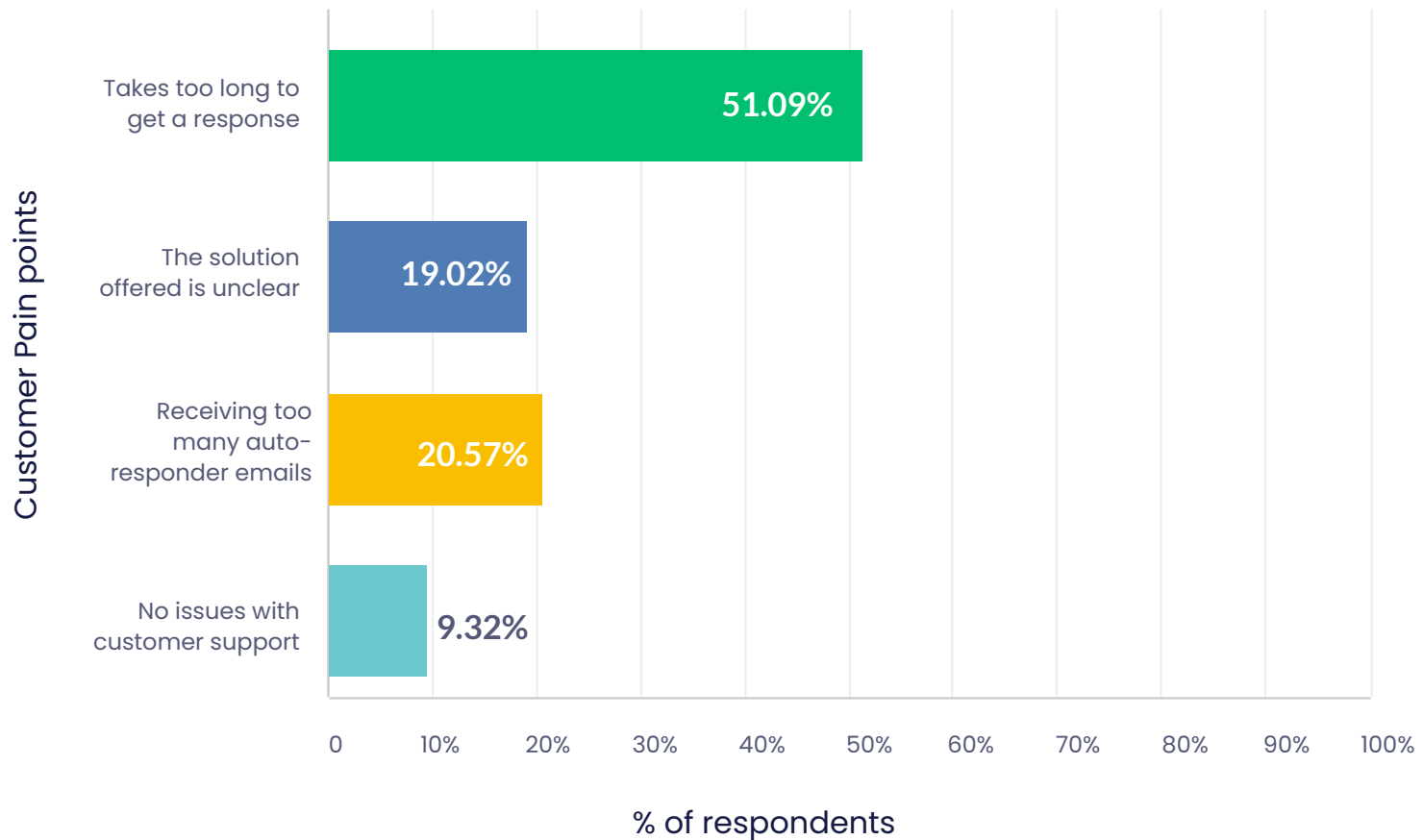## What annoys customers the most when getting help via chat?
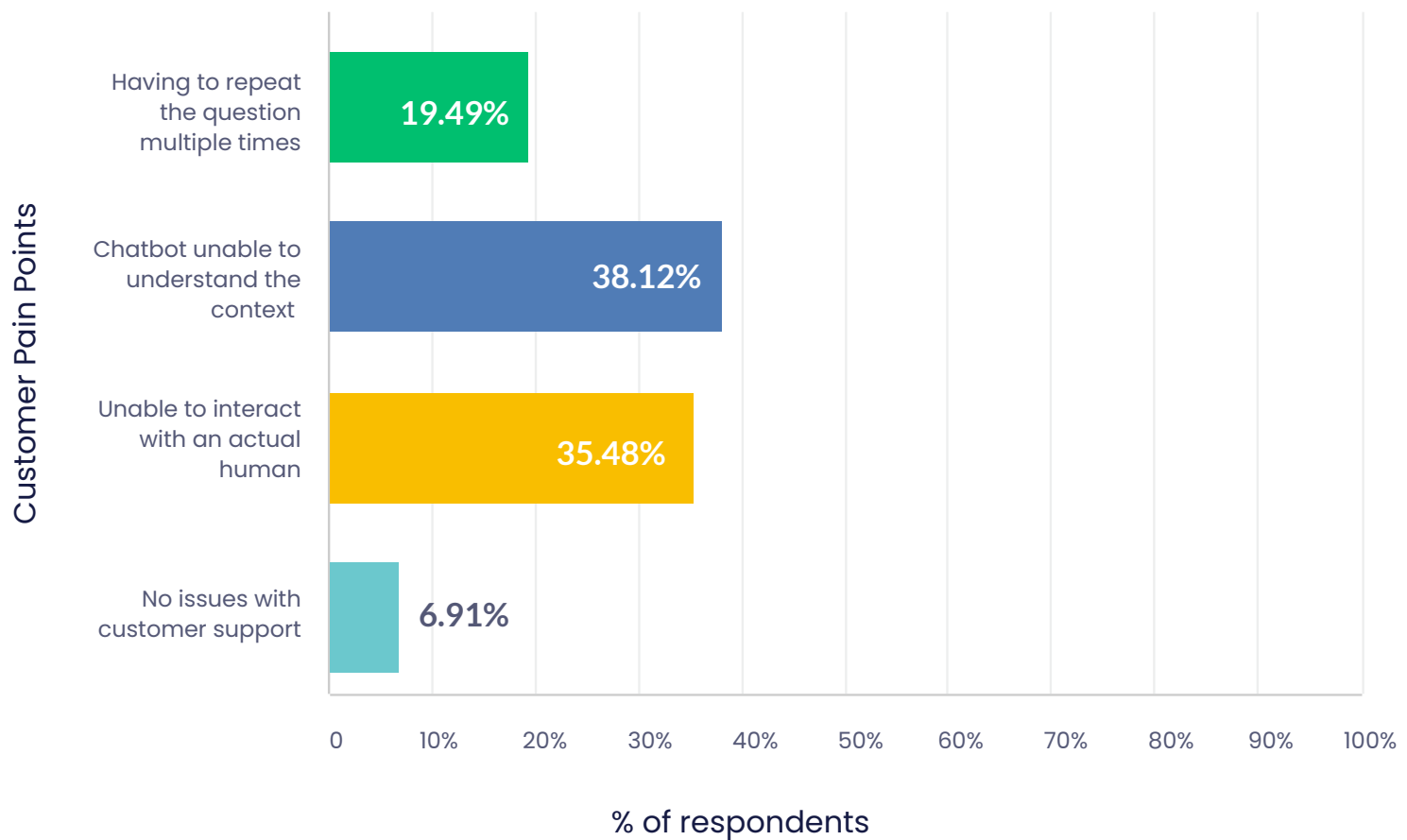
Takeaway

Close to 40% of consumers are frustrated that chatbots aren't able to relate to their issues. About 35% state that they prefer communicating with an actual human.

This explains the need for chatbots to understand the context behind customer queries before providing an answer. And, if the chatbot cannot understand the question, it must possess the intelligence to transfer the chat to an actual support rep.

2.3 What annoys customers the most when getting help via email?

Customer Pain points / **% of respondents**

Customer Pain point	% of respondents
Takes too long to get a response	51.09%
The solution offered is unclear	19.02%
Receiving too many auto-responder emails	20.57%
No issues with customer support	9.32%

Takeaway

Email is the most critical support channel, yet 51% of customers have to wait too long for a response, and 19% say that the solutions offered are unclear.

Businesses need to do better here. A powerful customer service platform can solve many of these issues. One such platform is Hiver - it offers SLAs for ensuring timely responses and built-in templates that aid clear communication.

vacasa

Vacasa, a popular travel company in North America, handles **support emails 80% faster with Hiver.**

"

With Hiver, we reply faster to clients. I can see how the workload is distributed within my team. My team is more organized than ever.

"

Sonia Cruz

Owner Care Manager for South America, Vacasa

[Read the full story](#)

The Path to Customer Query Resolution

We now know what annoys customers the most.

But, one of the most critical stages of any customer support interaction is the actual resolution. How do customers feel about how their queries getting resolved? Do they think brands are doing a good job at it?

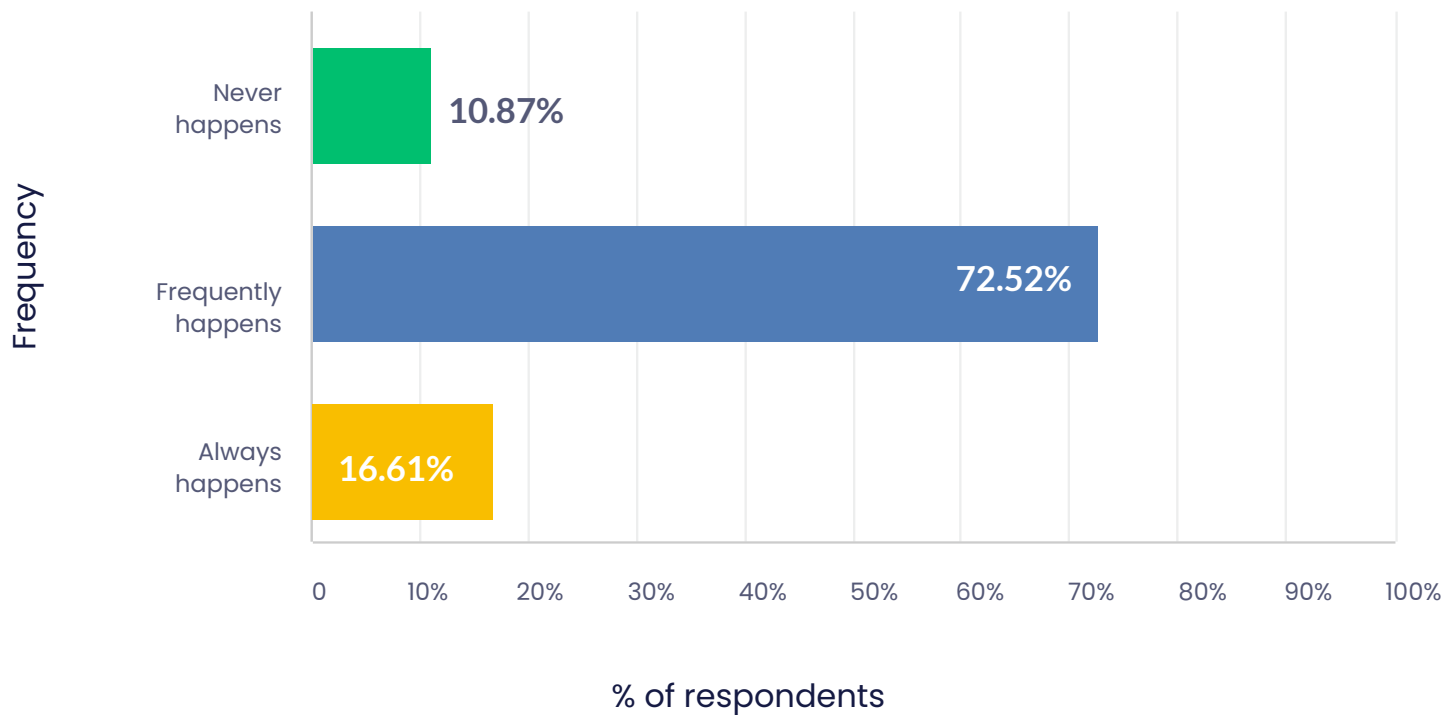3.1 How soon do customers expect their queries to be resolved?
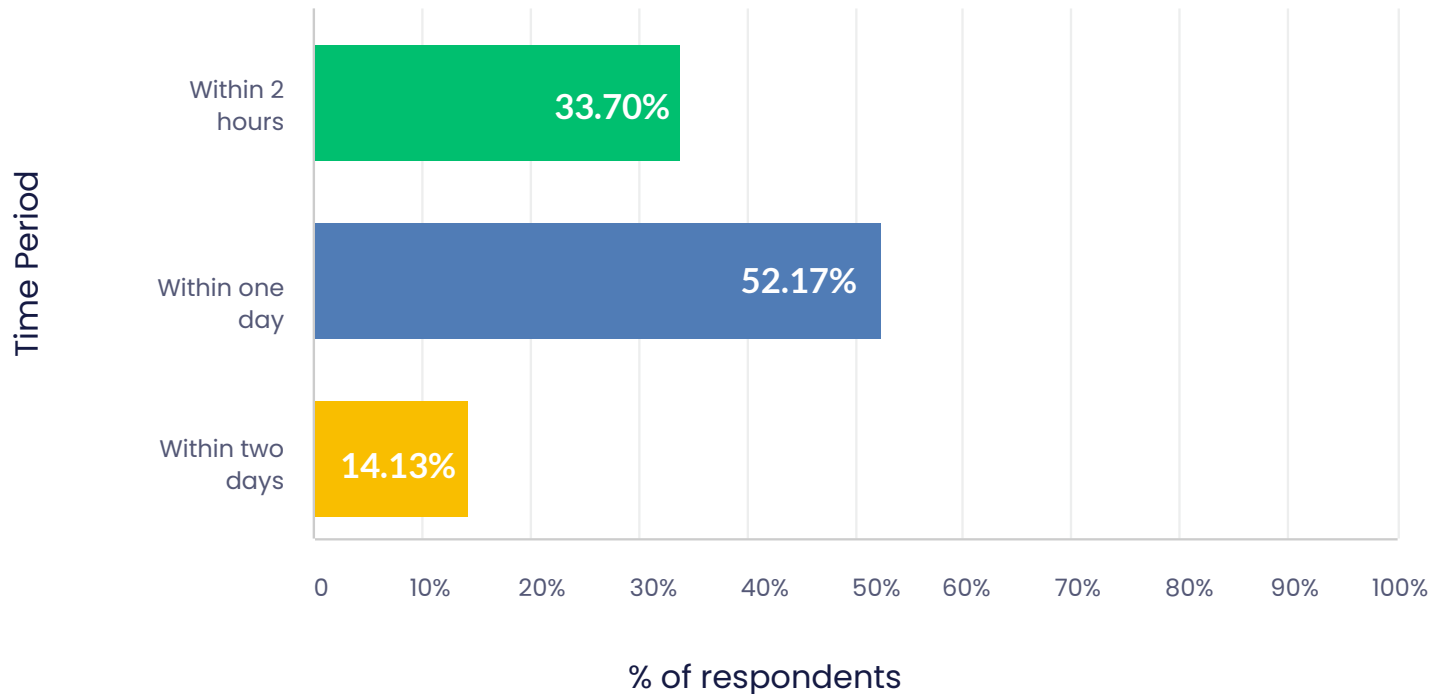
Takeaway

It's no longer okay to make customers wait for days. Every 3 out of 4 customers want their queries resolved within 24 hours.

Speed of resolution is key. A customer service platform, like Hiver, can help you track and improve speed of service.

This is how **Air Comm**, an award-winning wireless communications and solutions provider, delivered **25% faster customer service using Hiver**.

3.2

How often do customers wait longer than usual for a solution?

Never happens — 10.87%
Frequently happens — 72.52%
Always happens — 16.61%
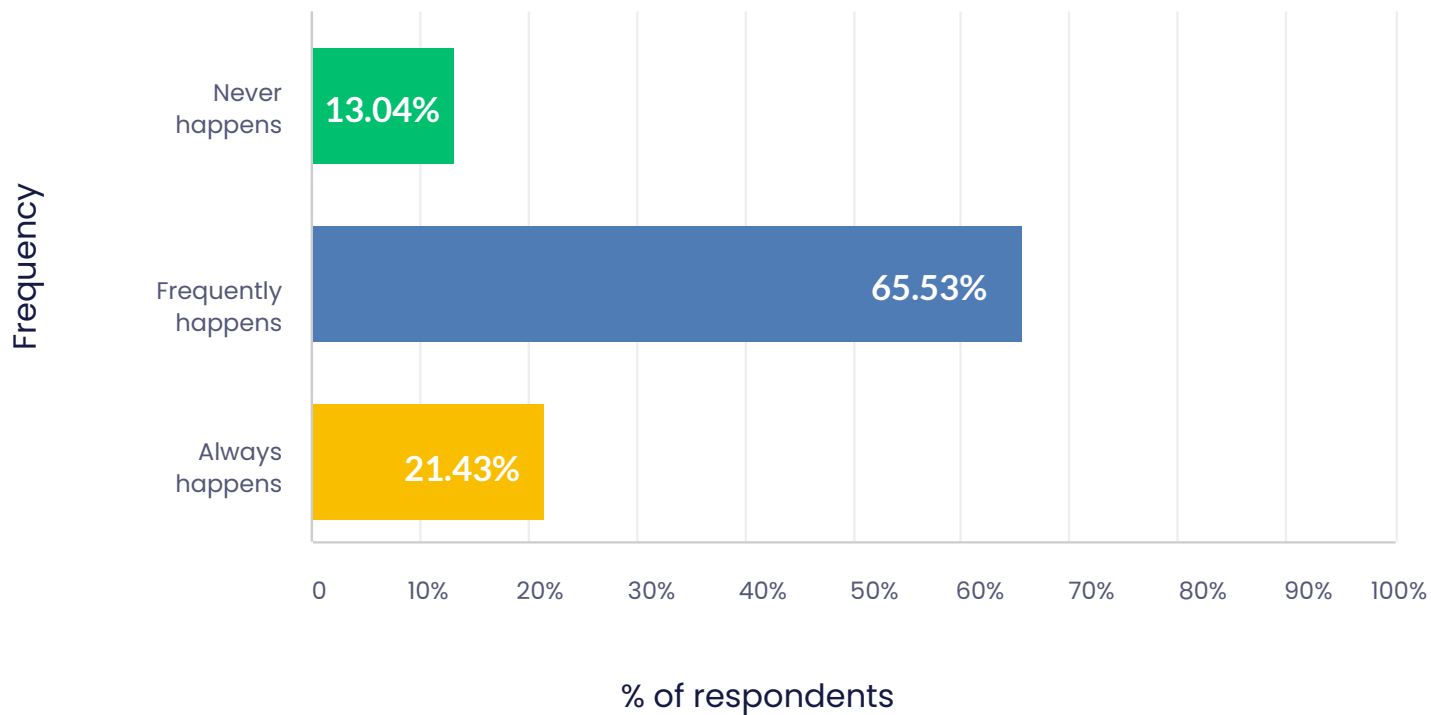
Frequency (y-axis)

% of respondents

Takeaway

Almost 73% of consumers FREQUENTLY wait longer than usual for an answer.

Many times, support agents might be dealing with complex queries and will need time to figure out solutions. In such cases, communicate a clear timeline with the customer to set expectations.

How often do customers have to repeat issues when contacting support teams?

Frequency

- Never happens: **13.04%**
- Frequently happens: **65.53%**
- Always happens: **21.43%**

0   10%   20%   30%   40%   50%   60%   70%   80%   90%   100%

% of respondents

Takeaway

Almost 66% of consumers FREQUENTLY repeat their issues to multiple support agents or across multiple support channels

It's vital to capture any and all information on a query and ensure it is easily accessible for all support team members. So, even if multiple agents are working on the same query, they don't have to ask the customer to repeat the details.

Implications of Bad Customer Service

Long waiting times, constantly repeating queries to multiple agents, and more. Customers don't have it easy today.

Earlier, bad support experiences didn't have a business implication. But modern-day customers are spoilt for choice. How do they react to a negative support experience?

What do customers do after a negative support experience?
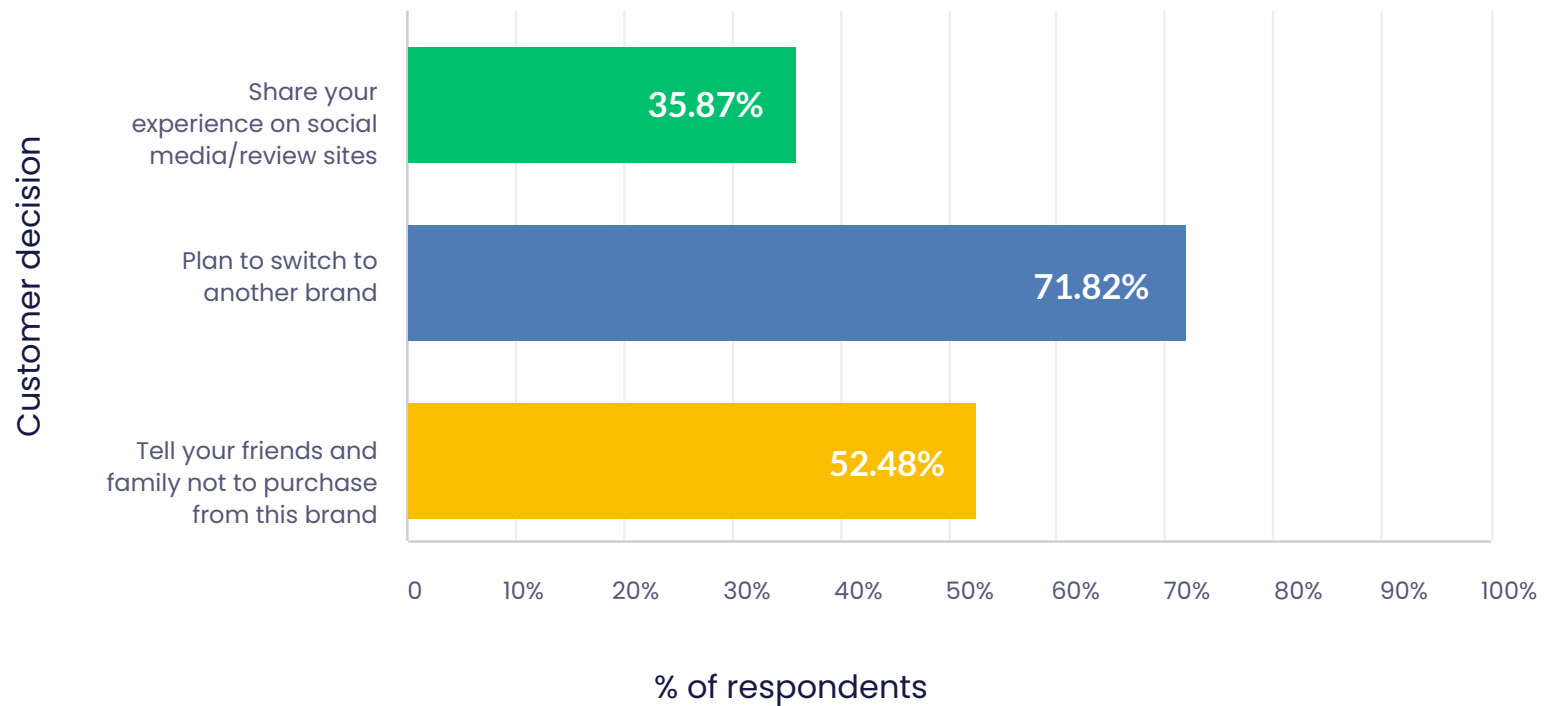
Takeaway

3 out of 4 customers will plan to switch brands after a negative support experience. It's also alarming that almost 52% of them will inform their friends and family not to purchase from the same brand

Customers today are highly vocal and spoilt for choice. This makes it even more essential to deliver excellent experiences consistently.
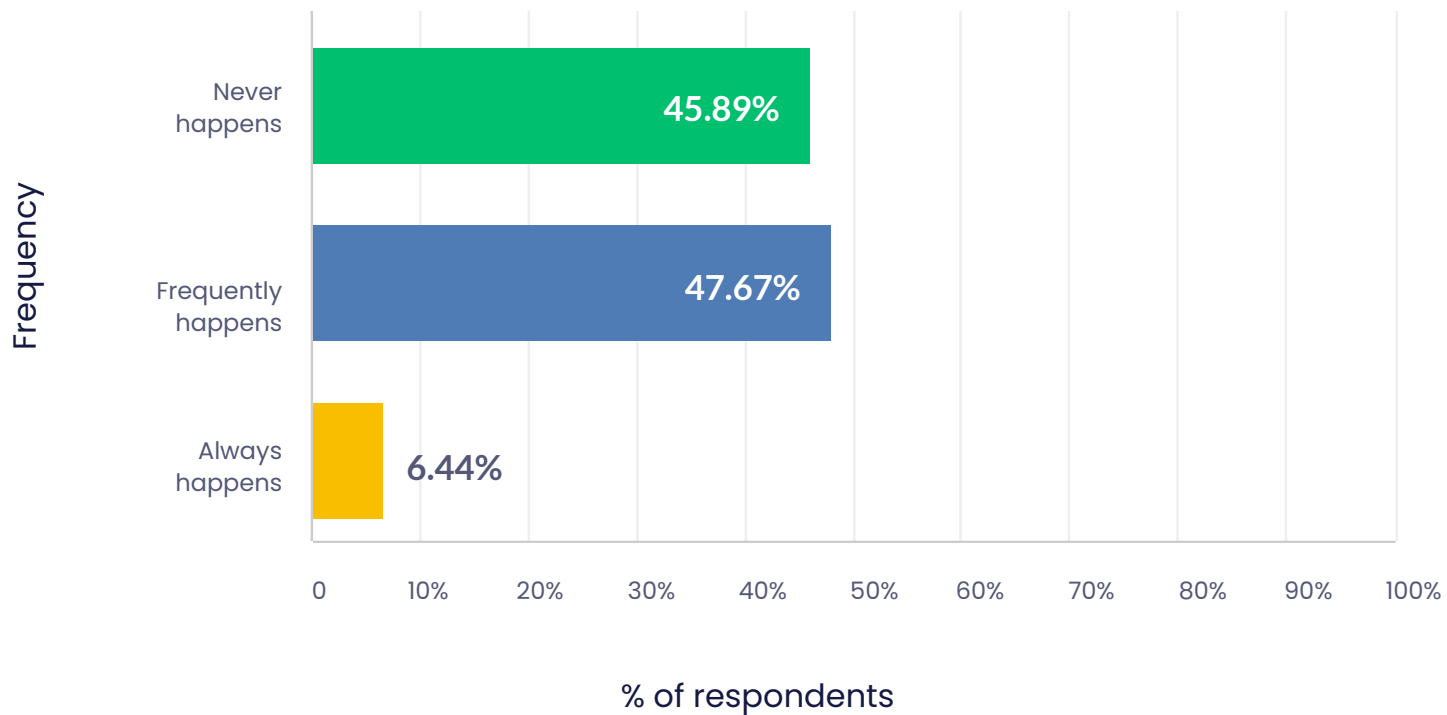
Customer Loyalty is the Holy Grail

Great support experiences lead to satisfied customers. Do it consistently, and satisfied customers become loyal customers.

However, are customers made to feel special by businesses? Do they think that support teams go the extra mile for them to win their loyalty?

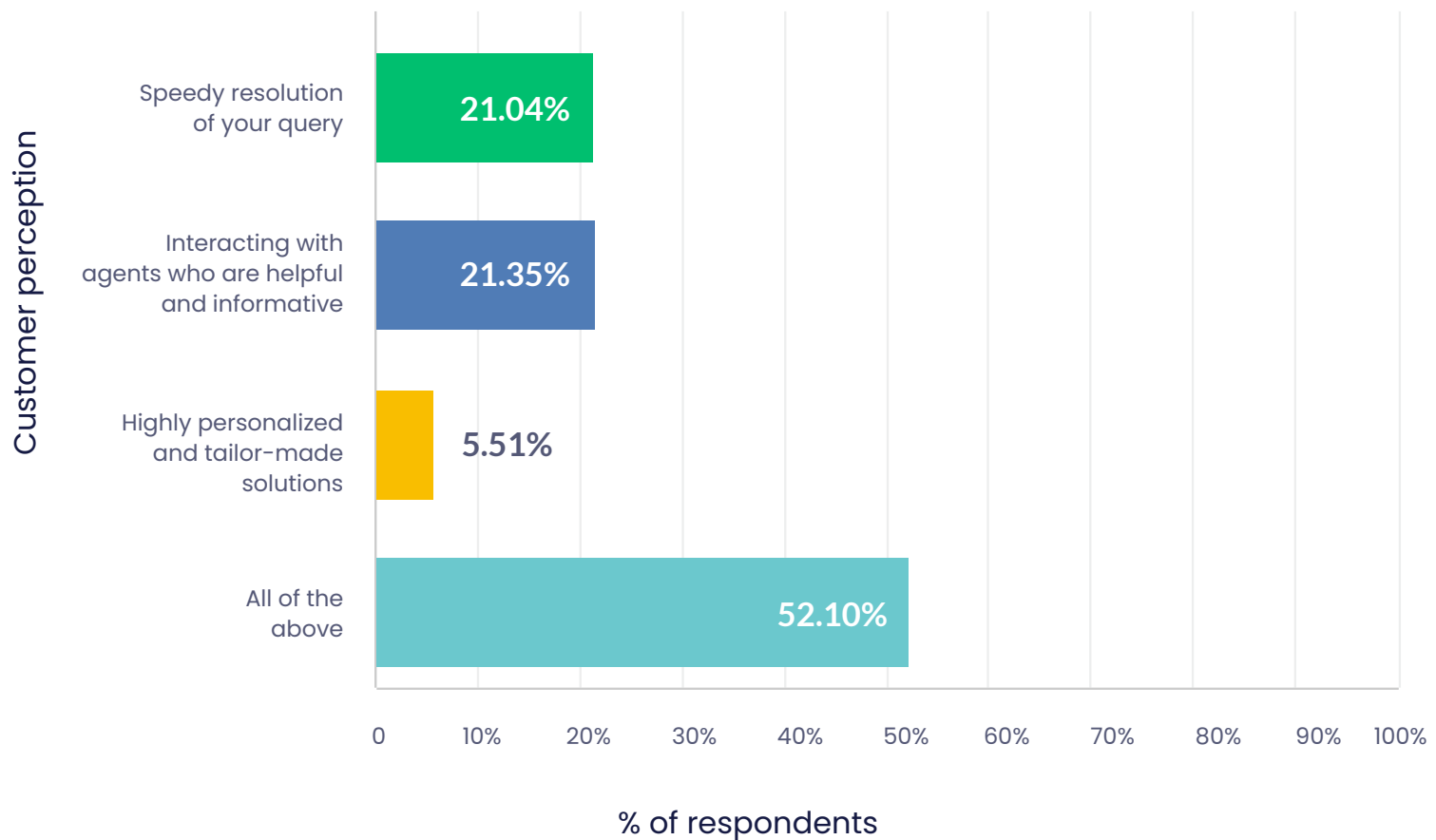## 5.1 Do support teams make customers feel valued and special?

Takeaway

Almost 47% of consumers believe support teams make them feel special and valued. However, 45% of them think that this never happens.

It clearly shows that there's a lot of scope for improvement. Brands shouldn't stop at the bare minimum but go the extra mile and provide genuinely stellar customer service.

5.2 Last but not least, how do customers perceive a 'great support experience'?

Customer perception (y-axis) / **% of respondents** (x-axis)

- Speedy resolution of your query: **21.04%**
- Interacting with agents who are helpful and informative: **21.35%**
- Highly personalized and tailor-made solutions: **5.51%**
- All of the above: **52.10%**

Takeaway

Like mixing the right beans brews a good coffee, multiple key factors are at play in creating support experiences that customers like.

And the data proves it. 52% of consumers consider a great support experience as one that is quick, personalized, and involves interacting with knowledgeable agents.

Conclusion and Way Forward

It's clear that customer service plays a critical role in driving brand loyalty. That being said, it's quite surprising to see brands fall short of customer expectations in many ways.

Customers today want fast, efficient solutions to their queries. Ease and convenience is what matters.

This extensive report will help you understand the possible painpoints your customers might be facing. It will also enable you to create more efficient support processes, drive positive customer sentiment, and build long-lasting customer relationships.

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How Hiver can supercharge your customer service strategy

Hiver is a customer service platform that **works right inside Gmail**. It helps organizations worldwide manage customer communication across multiple channels such as email and live chat.

Hiver helps over 1800+ companies including the likes of Oxford Business Group, Harvard University and Lonely Planet, deliver memorable customer experiences.
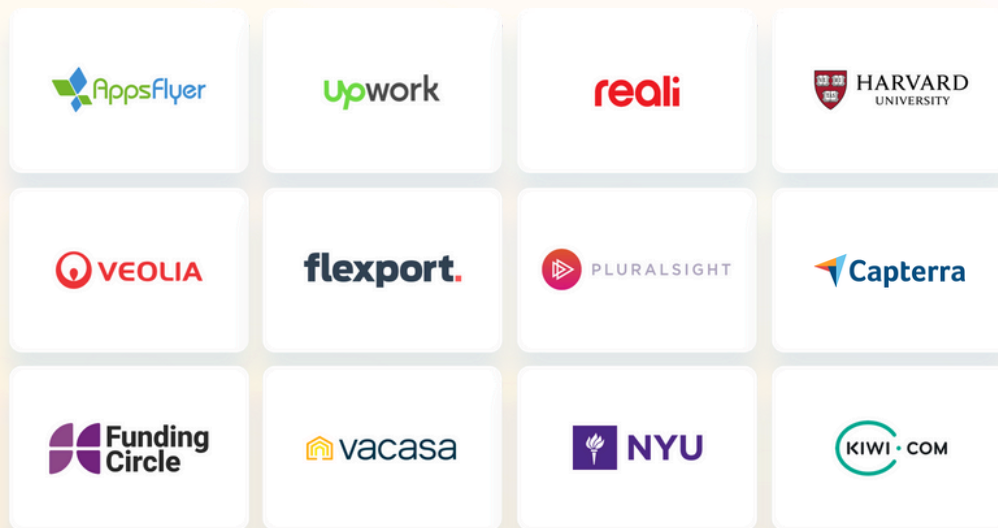
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✉ support@hiverhq.com