

Dixons Carphone Group adapts digital channels for COVID-19 demand



100+

live agents trained
in ten days

400K

digital interactions
per month

2week

launch timeline
for new virtual
assistant

CHALLENGE: As COVID-19 forced DCG to close its stores, and demand increased for online support and sales, the company needed to rapidly expand its service channels.

SOLUTION: Using Nuance Live and Async Assist and Nuance Virtual Assistant, DCG deployed more than 100 new chat agents and a conversational virtual assistant within just a few weeks.

RESULTS: DCG's chat agents handle around 35,000 conversations per week, and its virtual assistant handles nearly 100,000 interactions weekly.

Lockdowns spike online demand

Dixons Carphone Group (DCG) is a market leader in electronic goods and mobile device sales across eight countries, with brands including Currys PC World and Carphone Warehouse.

"It was an intense project, but the results are truly compelling."

— Chris Stroud, Director of Contact Centre Operations,
Dixons Carphone Group

As COVID-19 lockdowns were put in place across the UK, hundreds of DCG's physical stores were forced to close, creating a huge spike in sales across the company's phone and digital channels. With only 25 agents working in its live chat division, the service could easily have been overwhelmed.

"We were already working with Nuance to plan the modernisation of our communication channels," explains Chris Stroud, Director of Contact Centre Operations at Dixons Carphone Group. "All we had to do was speed up the plan."

Expanding live assist in days

The team had already started to direct more customers through its digital channels. With basic pathways designed and ready to deploy, DCG could start quickly servicing some of the new demand, while working with the Nuance team to expand its channels further.

The first phase transitioned 100 agents from providing email support to live assist through Nuance Live and Async Assist—a training process that was completed in just 10 days.

With all-new digital customer care journeys, the live assist function serviced more than 400K interactions each month during the peak period—three times the pre-lockdown volume. By moving contacts to a more efficient channel, DCG was able to reduce the impact on its contact centre and ensure customers were still receiving the highest standard of support.

“We didn’t have to worry about provisioning or onboarding too many people at once. We could just focus on building the best experience possible in complex circumstances.”

— Chris Stroud, Director of Contact Centre Operations, Dixons Carphone Group

A conversational virtual assistant—in just two weeks

The second phase of the project was even more ambitious: deploying a conversational virtual assistant.

There were just two weeks between initial design and go-live, with the virtual assistant providing automated answers to 20 questions—including those around standard support and how the retailer was addressing COVID-19. “The developers at Nuance put in hours of work to make our virtual assistant happen,” says Chris.

Now, approximately 80% of the 100,000 weekly customer queries are resolved between the virtual assistant and live assist supporting more than £2.7M in sales per week.

Over the coming months, DCG plans to build new journeys into the virtual assistant, and introduce backend integration and personalisation. The company predicts that an order status query alone could help the virtual assistant resolve as much as 30% of interactions currently serviced by live agents.

The foundation for a partnership

A short-term agreement between DCG and Nuance to cover the expansion was crucial to the project’s success. It offered DCG a greater degree of agility as the retailer expanded its team and adapted its digital channels during the COVID-19 crisis.

As lockdowns eased and stores started to re-open, online demand evened out—but the company’s expanded digital services are still servicing significantly higher volumes than before.

Using Nuance Live and Async Assist and Nuance Virtual Assistant, DCG has the foundation in place to expand and enhance its digital support and service offering, safe in the knowledge that Nuance technologies—and the teams that support them—can handle the pressure. “It was an intense project,” says Chris. “But the results are truly compelling.”

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Visit our website to learn more about [Nuance virtual assistants](#) and [Nuance Live and Async Assist](#), or email us at cxexperts@nuance.com.



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