Lizelle Strydom and Mithum Singh talk digital adoption in the call centre

By Lindsey Schutters   1 Feb 2024

At the moment, the Apple Vision Pro is probably the hottest topic in tech. Full disclosure, I hate VR. Actually, let me qualify: I don't like the idea of putting screens very close to your eyeballs in a headset or a pair of goggles that blocks humans off from the rest of the world. I don't see it as a value for society right now, but then I spoke to Mithum Singh, chief services officer at CCI and the MD of CareerBox, Lizelle Strydom.

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Digital transformation

"Personalisation is becoming a big thing around AI trends. So to give you an example, if you take the Nike business, you can buy sneakers today that are fully customised," explains Singh. "You can customize it to your colours. You can put the tick in a specific, is a colour that you want."

"You can put laces in that are specific to yourself. So very, very personalised. And I'll bring it into the contact centre is, and link that with VR just for a minute…"

"You've got a VR headset. And that kind of agent that we've got that Lizellel would recruit for us in the business would be an entry level individual that has never set on an aircraft, but has got to sell a business class seat to a American sitting in in Chicago. And all of a sudden, the customer says, 'what does that business class seat look like on the A380? I've never sat on an A380'."

"Perfect. Here it goes on this VR headset, and this agent is able to navigate through this and able to give you real life kind of view on it. You know, the fact that you can do VR glasses these days could be, you know and is a trend that needs to be looked at into it. We will then utilise some of those aspects to do training."

The AI threat

"Actually, we haven't seen a decline. We've seen an increase. I think our view on why the increase in the demand is based on while AI is evolving, it's taking more of the entry level, quick, automated jobs, and the more complex jobs where there is complex requirements are what's coming in," explains Strydom.

"There's now a high demand that AI is not quickly fixing that customers now want to speak to somebody, or it's (the query) more complicated than a bot requirement, and that's where we're seeing the demand come from."

"So it's actually increased particularly in the u the particularly in the US space. I can't say in a specific industry. We saw an increase (at the end of 2023) because of Black Friday. So online sales, we've seen an increase there."

"We've seen an increase in telco and in aviation. There's a large focus on our ability as South Africans and Africans' natural ability to solve complex requirements, and the impact that AI has had."

Effective data use

"From a data perspective, we sit on mountains and mountains of data, and we measure at a 15-minute intervals all aspects of what's transpiring. We get calls that are in the US or in in the UK, which hits us literally within a couple of split seconds," say Singh

"We have to then staff to that particular demand, which could be English speaking, Spanish speaking – in the South African context: English, African, Zulu, Sotho, Tonga, Venda, etc… that would come in, and we need to be ready for that from a language perspective or a skills perspective."

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"We had Florida floods a couple of couple of months back, and the airport gets shut down. Now you gotta redirect all of those flights and they're all calling you all at the same time. You now gotta get on to them and AI isn't able to help you with the emotional element of it."

"How do we start linking some of that data to some other aspects? Well, we know Lindsey flies every two weeks, and he's on a route between Johannesburg and Cape Town, or he's on a route between Chicago and New York. Now we almost pre-empt that from a from a predictive analytical perspective."

"We know you're gonna book a flight on Friday, and we've taken the initiative to tell to secure your seat. We know you like J45. We've secured J45 for you. We know that when you're on that flight, you are gonna purchase a, b, and c drinks or you enjoy chicken. So therefore, your chicken meal will be ready for you."

> " *That personalisation piece, I think, is something that AI will enhance and augment that that experience for the agent on the front line.* "

ABOUT LINDSEY SCHUTTERS

Lindsey is the editor for ICT, Construction&Engineering and Energy&Mining at Bizcommunity

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