

How many vendors of GenAI Chatbot and Agentic AI CX solutions are using 'Thought Leadership' research?

Methodologies and key findings

Analysis completed by Davies Hickman

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Thought leadership research has become a vital tool in the marketing mix for technology vendors selling to enterprises across the globe.

At Davies Hickman Partners, we wanted to understand how many GenAI Chatbot and Agentic AI CX solution providers were using thought leadership research.

In July 2026, we completed an analysis of 37 leading vendors to quantify and understand the use of thought leadership research

We explore the methodologies and key findings.

This report summarises our analysis.

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How many vendors have published research in the last year?

20 out of 37 vendors have published 'thought leadership' research in the past year

Davies Hickman's analysis looked at 37 vendors offering GenAI Chatbot and Agentic AI CX solutions. Of these, 20 had relevant original or commissioned research from the last year. The rest either had no clear qualifying research or mainly published blogs, product pages, case studies or general thought leadership.

For consistency, the review focused on research published or carried out from May 2025 to the present, where dates were available. For the qualifying reports, the review considered executive summaries, methodology notes, headline findings and any available supporting data or charts.

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Which vendors did we analyse?

Ada	Aisera	Amazon Connect
Avaamo	Avaya	boost.ai
Chatbase	Cognigy	Crescendo
Decagon	DigitalGenius	DRUIDAI
Five9	Forethought	Freshworks
Genesys	Glia	Gorgias
Intercom Fin	Kore.ai	LivePerson
Netomi	NICE	Oracle
Parloa Platform	PolyAI	Salesforce
Sierra.ai	Sprinklr	Talkdesk
Tars Platform	Tidio	Voiceflow
Webex	Yellow.ai	Zoho Desk
Zowie		

What type of market research are vendors using?

The research methods were mixed including:

- **consumer surveys** exploring attitudes towards AI-powered service, chatbots and digital support
- **surveys of business leaders**, CX leaders, support professionals and contact-centre decision-makers
- **platform and benchmark data**, including ticket volumes, AI-agent usage and anonymised customer interactions
- **mystery-shopping** or testing approaches to see how AI customer service works in practice.

This gives the research base several perspectives. Consumer surveys show what customers want from AI. Business surveys show what organisations are investing in. Platform and benchmark data show how service operations are changing.

What are examples of research methodologies?

Most vendor research had clear sample sizes and, in many cases, clear fieldwork or publication dates:

- Ada's 2026 Agentic CX research surveyed 2,000 consumers and 500 enterprise CX/AI leaders across three continents
- Intercom's 2026 report was based on 2,470 support professionals across NAMER, EMEA, LATAM and APAC
- Gorgias surveyed 400 e-commerce decision-makers and used anonymised platform data from more than 16,000 brands
- Salesforce surveyed 3,075 service professionals worldwide
- Freshworks drew on data from more than 32,000 teams, 1.2 billion tickets and 138 million conversations
- Talkdesk surveyed 400 US small business owners in August 2025.

What were the main topics of the research?

The research topics covered were highly consistent. Most reports focused on customer experience, customer service transformation, AI agents, contact centres, automation, human escalation and trust.

Several also covered agentic AI, where AI is not just answering questions but taking action, resolving issues, routing work, supporting agents or managing parts of the customer journey.

Topic categories overlap, as some reports covered more than one of them.

Topics of research



Key findings - Thought
Leadership research from
vendors of GenAI Chatbot
& Agentic AI CX solutions

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Key findings

Customers are not anti-AI - they are anti-bad AI

A clear finding is that customers are not necessarily against AI. They are against poor AI. Customers value speed, convenience and 24/7 availability, but only when AI can resolve the issue. If AI fails, loops the customer around or blocks access to a human, it can damage the experience.

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Key findings

AI works best when it solves the problem

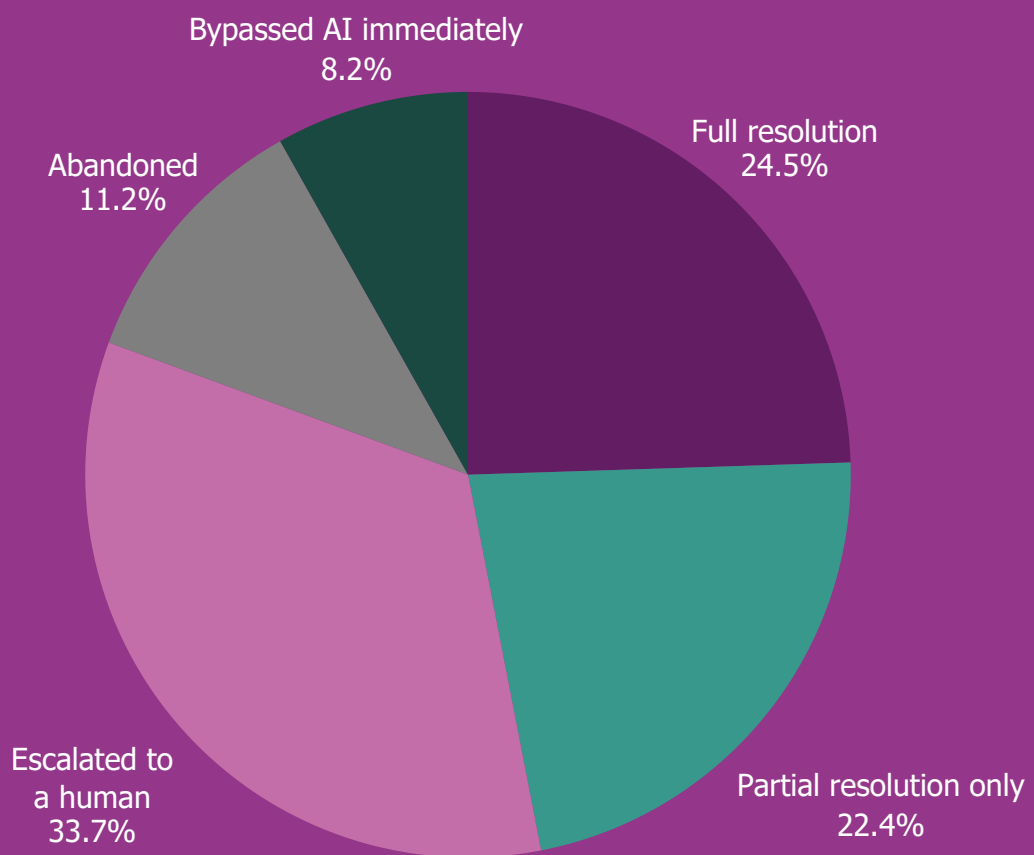
The research suggests that customers are more willing to accept AI when it gives them a clear answer, resolves their issue or moves them quickly to the right support. This means the real test is not whether a company has introduced AI, but whether the AI improves the customer's experience. A chatbot that answers quickly but does not solve the problem can still leave customers frustrated, especially if it makes it harder to reach a person.

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Key findings

Example research data - Ada

Only 1 in 4 consumers say their issue was fully resolved without a human



Source: Ada, Agentic CX in 2026: What consumers expect and most enterprises miss, March 2026.

Key findings

Companies need to measure more than cost savings

Businesses should not judge AI success only by deflection, containment or cost reduction. These measures may show that fewer customers reached a person, but they do not prove that the customer's problem was solved. The more detailed vendor research argues that AI value should be assessed through resolution quality, customer outcomes, agent productivity, trust and business impact. In other words, the focus should be on whether AI is improving service, not just whether it is reducing the number of human conversations.

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Key findings

Adoption is growing, but maturity is uneven

Another major theme is the gap between AI adoption and AI maturity. Intercom Fin highlights the gap between broad AI investment and mature deployment. Glia makes a similar point in contact centres: 75% use AI, but only around a third embed it into daily workflows and measurement, while only 27% measure AI's impact.

Salesforce also points to rapid growth in AI service-agent adoption, rising from 39% to 66%. This suggests AI agents are moving beyond experimentation, but the wider research shows that deployment alone is not the same as maturity.

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Key findings

Human agents still matter

AI is changing the role of human customer service teams rather than simply removing them. Human agents remain important for complex, sensitive or emotional interactions. Across the vendor research, people are still critical to judging the right response to customers, imparting empathy, escalation, quality control and managing AI-supported systems.

Trust and transparency also appear repeatedly as themes to the research. Customers may accept AI in service journeys, but they want it to be clear when AI is being used, and they want access to a human when needed.



87% of consumers
say businesses
should disclose when
they are interacting
with a conversational
AI

Source: Salesforce, New Research: AI Service Agents Are Scaling and Delivering CSAT, May 2026.

Key findings

Better service not just lower cost

The vendor research suggests that customers are more willing to accept AI when it gives them a clear answer, resolves their issue or moves them quickly to the right human support. This means the real test is not whether a company has introduced AI, but whether the AI improves the customer experience. A chatbot that answers quickly but does not solve the problem can still leave customers frustrated, especially if it makes it harder to reach a person.

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30% of consumers
stopped doing business
with a company in the last
year because of a bad
experience

Source: Genesys, 2026 State of Customer Experience
Report



How Davies Hickman Partners can help your marketing

Overall, the vendor research shows confidence about AI. It shows that thought leadership research can help to convince the thousands of businesses and organisations that it is the right time to invest fully in Gen AI Chatbot and Agentic AI CX solutions.

Davies Hickman has excellent experience of undertaking thought leadership research in the CX marketplace. We created the 'omni-channel' concept and were the agency behind the widely quoted Autonomous Customer research series for BT and Cisco.

Davies Hickman has deep expertise in undertaking global research:

- consumer surveys
- business surveys
- contact centre agents
- senior executives
- advanced statistical analysis
- graphic design concepts and executions
- presentations, panel discussions and workshops with clients.

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