

Southeastern reduces time to resolve cases and improves customer experience with Now Assist for CSM

In partnership with UP3, Southeastern implemented ServiceNow Now Assist for CSM, taking advantage of the powerful AI capabilities to increase Customer Service Agent productivity and further improve their already exceptional customer experience.



 Industry: **Transport**

 Company size: **4,000+**

 Location: **United Kingdom**

 UP3 services: **ServiceNow Managed Service**

 ServiceNow products: **ServiceNow CSM Pro +, ServiceNow ITSM Pro, Virtual Agent, Now Assist for CSM**

Outcomes:

- ✓ Case Summarisation implemented in just three weeks
- ✓ Reduced time to resolve cases – saving an average of 13 seconds every time a chat is handed over to a human agent, saving approximately 130 minutes a week and 108 hours a year
- ✓ Improved Agent productivity & capacity
- ✓ Improved customer satisfaction
- ✓ The scope extended to include Chat Summarisation and evaluating Chat Recommendation

Overview:

Southeastern Railway operates one of the busiest networks in the country, running over 1,700 trains a day across the South East of England, carrying 500,000+ daily passengers. With so many daily customers, the Customer Relations team is an essential service to support people before, during, and after their train journeys.

All customer queries, complaints and praise come through this team, which consists of 72 staff in contact centre roles and 16 at head office. During a typical four-week period, the team receives between 40,000-100,000 customer contacts. This could range from simple refund requests to more complex queries, like questions about ticketing terms and conditions.

In recent years, these customer queries have increasingly shifted online. Pre-pandemic 35% of all contacts came through digital channels. It's almost triple that now with 90% of customers opting to contact Southeastern digitally. Customer expectations have risen, and they increasingly expect quick solutions to their queries via digital means.

“This is just the beginning of our Gen AI journey with ServiceNow and UP3. The ability to automatically summarise cases and chats increases productivity which means that Contact Centre Agents can focus on customer experience.”

- David Banham, Customer Relations Operations Manager

The challenge:

Southeastern's Customer Relations team already used ServiceNow as its CRM system to manage passenger queries. Southeastern had recently implemented ServiceNow's AI-powered Virtual Agent, enabling customers to contact Southeastern via online chat, in addition to telephone, email and online web form.

With Virtual Agent, Southeastern saw dramatic improvements in its customer service. Virtual Agent now handles around a third of Southeastern's customer queries, with 80% of those resolved autonomously. Overall, each interaction with Virtual Agent is 825% more cost-effective than a phone call. Virtual Agent freed up human Contact Centre Agents to focus on more complex problems, providing a better customer experience and ensuring greater job satisfaction to Contact Centre Agents themselves. However, the volume, complexity and variety of interactions that were routed to the Contact Centre Agents raised its own challenges.

Southeastern needed to help its Contact Centre Agents to quickly respond to and resolve these more complex customer queries. This was essential to ensuring that customers quickly received the high levels of support they expected and that Southeastern maintained and improved its high customer satisfaction scores.

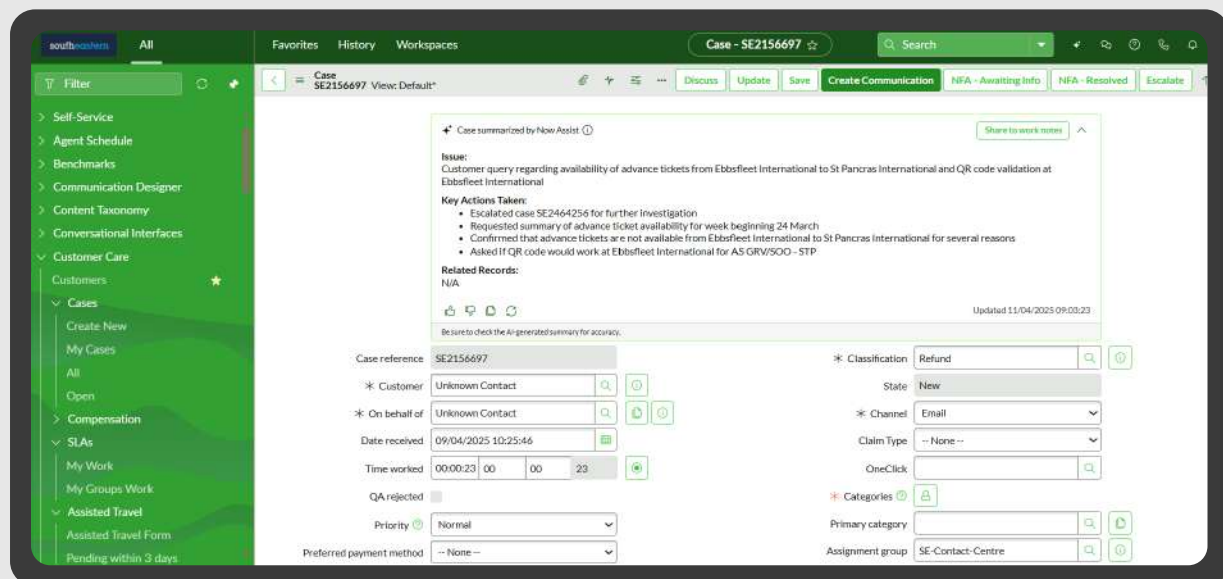
The solution:

As a UP3 ServiceNow Managed Service customer, Southeastern benefits from ongoing access to an expert team of ServiceNow practitioners who already understood Southeastern's business challenges, transformation objectives and how they were currently working with the platform. UP3 identified that the quickest and most effective solution would be to take advantage of the AI capabilities of ServiceNow's Now Assist for CSM. UP3 worked with Southeastern to initially deploy Case Summarisation which uses AI to summarise chats into an easily digestible format for Southeastern's Contact Centre Agents. It also provides a summary of customer records, including tickets and journeys.

Southeastern was so impressed with the ease and speed at which UP3 implemented Now Assist for CSM, and with the capabilities of Case Summarisation, that they broadened the initial scope. UP3 went on to implement Chat Summarisation and are already evaluating Chat Recommendation with a view to deploy it soon to further improve average handling time. This would save their Contact Centre Agents further time, providing customers with solutions faster, by quickly analysing and summarising the Chat interactions that came through from the Virtual Agent.

Southeastern could see the clear value in these capabilities and made the decision to uplift its licensing to Service Now Pro+ so it had access to these features. Because Southeastern's instance of ServiceNow was built on custom tables, it couldn't rely on an out-of-the-box solution and needed a partner with strong customisation skills. There was no published use case of Now Assist being successfully configured against custom tables at the time. However, thanks to the collective power of UP3's AI Centre of Excellence, the team configured a solution using the Now Assist Skill Kit.

While this is just the first step in Southeastern's AI journey, the ambition is clear. Now Assist capabilities will help save the Customer Relations team considerable amounts of time and speed up the service they provide. Most importantly, it delivers success for all concerned: a better experience for customers, higher job satisfaction for employees, and greater efficiency for Southeastern.



An example of what Contact Centre Agents see when a case is handed over from Virtual Agent.

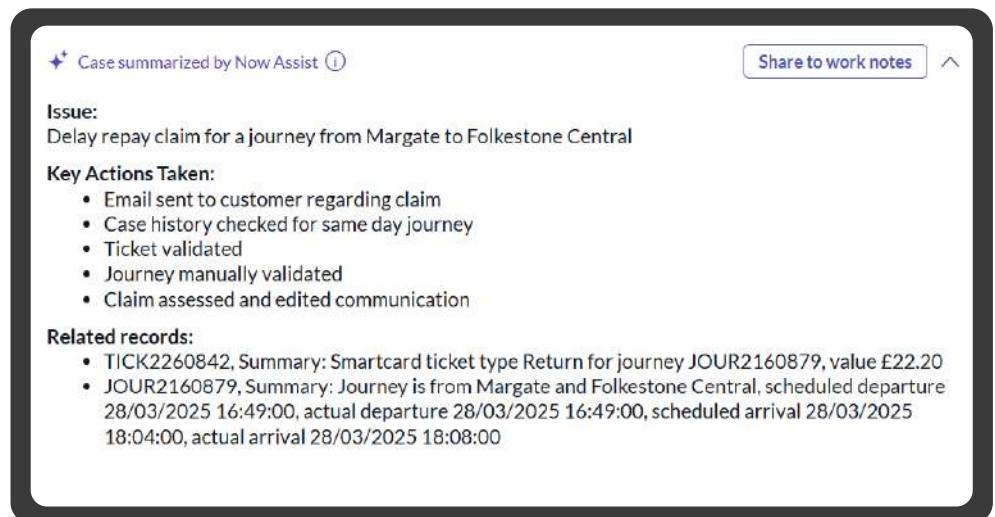
The outcome:

Thanks to UP3's team of ServiceNow experts, the implementation of Now Assist for CSM was completed within just three weeks. Which means Southeastern were able to quickly see the impact of the deployment, as well as an instant return on their investment.

With the new GenAI features deployed, Southeastern's Contact Centre Agents now receive a clear summary of each customer's case and chat, as well as a recommended response for each query. This summary includes key actions the customer has taken, historical communications, and any related information to ensure the agents have a holistic view of the query to help provide the customer with a happy resolution.

- **Reduced time to resolve cases** – Quicker handling time on chat interactions that were diverted from the Virtual Agent to a live agent. Southeastern saw a reduction of 13 seconds average handling time when a chat was handed over to a live agent, thanks to Chat and Case Summarisation. This saves a total of 130 minutes per week, adding up to 108 hours in a year.
- **Improved Agent productivity & capacity** – Less time is wasted on Contact Centre Agents getting up to speed on cases and reviewing interaction history, meaning they can address customer issues faster and focus on more value-add activities.
- **Improved customer satisfaction** – Case and Chat Summarisation helps human agents get up to speed faster, enabling them to focus on delivering the best possible experience for customers, leading to improved customer satisfaction as they don't have to repeat themselves.

UP3's deployment of Now Assist for Southeastern is only the first phase of an ongoing roadmap to use ServiceNow's AI functionality to continuously improve the customer journey. It's a shining example of how UP3's ServiceNow Managed Service provides ongoing value to organisations seeking to stay at the forefront of digital transformation and customer satisfaction.



An example of Case Summarisation by ServiceNow Now Assist

“Honestly, it’s been the easiest of implementations and we can already see the instant benefits, but more importantly we can see the future of developments this could lead to. Job well done to all involved.”

David Banham, Customer Relations Operations Manager