CONVERSATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

The Irony of Technology

Conversational intelligence and the commercial insight you cannot buy

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01

The problem the industry hasn't solved in twenty years

Access to healthcare professionals keeps shrinking. Every market feels it: fewer appointments, shorter conversations, more competition for the minutes that remain. Yet the industry's response has barely moved in two decades. The model is still knock-knock: quantity over quality, activity over impact, the same call targets that were set when access was easy.

Digital was supposed to fix this. It didn't.

The omnichannel wave missed its two core promises. It could not recreate the trust between an HCP and a rep in a digital environment, and it never produced the customer understanding it advertised. Email opens and webinar attendance tell you almost nothing about what a clinician actually thinks. The richest customer knowledge in the industry stayed exactly where it had always been: in the heads of the field force, who, fearing for their jobs, sat on their golden eggs of customer intelligence and shared as little as possible.

Now comes the twist. The AI technology many expected to finally replace the rep is doing the opposite: it is putting the rep back at the centre of the commercial model. This is not a prediction. It is happening today, and the companies moving first are building an advantage the rest will struggle to buy back.

02

The conversation is the dataset

Conversational intelligence is simple to describe. With the HCP's consent, the sales conversation is recorded, transcribed and structured by AI into the things that matter: a summary, the messages delivered, the objections raised, the reactions to them, and the actions agreed. The output can flow straight into the CRM without the rep typing a word.

Most companies adopt it as a coaching tool, and as a coaching tool, it earns its keep. But coaching is the entry layer, not the destination. The global conversation-intelligence lead at one of the world's largest pharmaceutical companies put it bluntly when we interviewed him:

> *If the technology stops at note-taking and coaching, you've bought the world's most expensive note-taking tool.*
>
> GLOBAL CONVERSATION-INTELLIGENCE LEAD, ONE OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES

The real value sits one layer up. Consider what every other dataset in the commercial stack has in common: it is self-reported. Sales figures, ticked boxes in the CRM, activity logs, segmentation surveys; all of it describes what we did or what we believe. Conversational intelligence is the first dataset built from what the customer actually said. It is the voice of the customer, captured at scale, in the one channel where HCPs still speak candidly: a face-to-face conversation with someone they trust.

That makes it the one source of commercial insight you cannot buy. No syndicated data provider sells it. No competitor can copy it. And it compounds with every recorded call.

EVERY OTHER DATASET

Sales figures, ticked boxes in the CRM, activity logs, segmentation surveys — **self-reported**. It describes what we did, or what we believe.

CONVERSATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Built from **what the customer actually said** — the voice of the customer, captured at scale, face to face, with consent.

03

One platform, three layers of value

The case is best made as a triangle: what conversational intelligence does for the people having the conversations, for the people running brands and field teams, and for the leadership team steering the business.

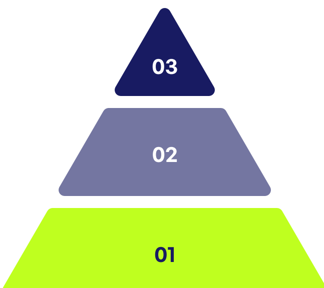
01 For the sales rep

SHARPER AT THE FRONT

The rep gets a mirror, not a magnifying glass. Call summaries, forgotten commitments resurfaced, concrete nudges on questioning and agenda-setting, all drawn from their own real calls rather than a role-play exercise. Admin falls away as the CRM fills itself. The timing matters too: as HCPs turn to AI tools for product information, the rep who merely details is becoming redundant. Coaching grounded in real conversations is how a field force shifts from message delivery to value-driven dialogue.

SOLVING FOR
Reps coached on role-play, not real calls, losing relevance as HCPs get product facts from AI.

DRIVES
A field force that shifts from delivering messages to leading the conversation, with the CRM filling itself.



02 For brand leads and field sales managers

DYNAMIC PLANNING

Aggregated across a team or a market, the same recordings become an outside-in signal no market research wave can match. Which objections are growing? Which message is landing, and which is being politely ignored? Which content do clinicians actually ask about? Brand plans stop being annual documents and become living ones: messages adjusted monthly, content reworked where doctors find it dull, field coaching grounded in data rather than the occasional ride-along. Targeting sharpens as well; when objections differ by region or brick, you can steer who goes where, with which wording, through which channel.

SOLVING FOR
Brand plans frozen for a year, with no live read on which messages land or which objections are growing.

DRIVES
Living plans: messages, content and targeting adjusted monthly from what's actually said in calls.

03 For the leadership team

CONSTANT COMMERCIAL STEERING

At the top of the triangle, the aggregated picture becomes a steering instrument: market dynamics, competitive movements and adoption barriers, read weekly from real customer conversations and translated into suggested action rather than another report nobody opens.

SOLVING FOR
Steering on research and plans that are close to two years old by the time they reach the customer.

DRIVES
Weekly steering from real conversations, with market shifts and adoption barriers turned into action rather than another report.

In one go, a leadership team gets three things it can get nowhere else:

- ✓ A field force that improves with every call
- ✓ Business plans that adjust dynamically across physical and digital channels
- ✓ The ability to steer the business commercially, constantly, from the customer's own words

04

From yearly cycles to weekly steering

Think about the traditional cadence. Market research fielded now reports in six months. The brand plan written from it follows months later, and execution months after that. By the time the message reaches the customer, the thinking behind it is close to two years old. In a market moving this fast, that isn't planning; it's archaeology.

There's a principle in long-range marksmanship: one degree off at the muzzle, a mile off at distance. Campaigns behave the same way. A plan that is slightly off in month one and left to run unchanged for six months doesn't miss by a little. Conversational intelligence is the instrument that shows the drift while there is still time to correct it.

Concretely, a competitor spike appears in four bricks of a territory. The old reflex is to wait for the quarterly analysis. The new one is to send your best reps in that same week with recorded debriefs, surface what is actually driving the shift, adjust the objection handling, and contain it before it spreads to twelve bricks. The cycle from signal to action compresses from months to days.

SIGNAL TO ACTION — THE CYCLE COMPRESSES

THE TRADITIONAL CADENCE	**Market research** reports in six months	**Brand plan** months later	**Execution** months after that	≈ two years old at the customer
WITH CONVERSATIONAL INTELLIGENCE	**Signal** heard in this week's calls	**Action** adjusted the week after		months become days

05

Already proven at scale

40,000+ recorded calls across one global field force	**~80%** HCP consent rate — eight in ten clinicians say yes	**Day 1** CEO mandate: launches with every new brand

This isn't a pilot fantasy. We interviewed the global lead for conversational intelligence at one of the world's largest pharmaceutical companies, where the technology now runs across the field force. The numbers are worth pausing on: more than 40,000 recorded calls, with HCP consent rates around 80%. Eight in ten clinicians say yes when the ask is simple and honest. And rep resistance, the obstacle everyone predicts, faded once governance made the ground rules explicit: participation is voluntary, recordings are never used for performance management, and data is kept no longer than processing requires.

Two findings stand out. First, the company's CEO now mandates that conversational intelligence launches on day one with every new brand; investment in the field force is holding firm, and the field force itself is being re-armed. Internally, reps are now described as the company's sensors on the ground. Second, a rollout lesson: markets that started with in-call recording of the customer's voice adopted far more deeply than those that eased in with post-call note-taking. Go for the real thing from the start.

06

The window will not stay open

The major CRM platforms are building this capability into their core offerings. Within a few years, recording and summarising calls will be table stakes across the industry. What will separate companies then is not the software but what they did in the meantime: the volume of voice-of-customer data accumulated, the trust earned with HCPs and with their own reps, and above all the activation muscle, the organisational habit of turning what was heard last week into what is done next week. Because insight that never leaves the office might as well not exist. The hard part of conversational intelligence isn't the recording or the transcription; it's building the routines that connect what customers say to what brand teams adjust, where field effort goes, and how leadership steers. That muscle takes time to grow, which is precisely why the advantage belongs to those who start now.

→ IN CLOSING

The irony of technology

The technology that was supposed to make the sales rep redundant has instead made the conversation the most valuable asset in the commercial model. Trust gets the rep into the room. Conversational intelligence makes sure that what is heard in that room changes what the company does the following week, across every channel, at every level of the organisation.

The companies that win the next phase of HCP engagement will be the ones that listen best, and act fastest on what they hear.