






Deploying AI in customer support

A practical guide

 AI Summarizer


Conversation Summary

1. Kate contacted Mike regarding automation for his plan.
2. Kate offered an Advanced Automation add-on for \$10/user/month.


Was this summary helpful?  


[Save as note](#)

Create new automation


 When

New conversation (inbound) is received

 If


 Sentiment is Negative

Need help with Shipping

 Sarah Thompson
saraht@cssolutions.com

Hi there,

Can you update the shipping address on my recent order?

Hey Sarah,  AI Suggested Response

I can help with that. I've updated your shipping address to the one ending in 123 Main Street. Your order will now be delivered there. Let me know if you'd like me to resend the confirmation email.

[Send](#)

What is the impact of AI on your
daily support operations?

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Foreword

People today are wired to expect speed. We are used to getting everything we want, as soon as we want it.

Instant rides, one-click orders, same-day deliveries, you name it. Oh and no ads before YouTube videos. We want our videos to start as soon as we click on them.

This expectation naturally extends to customer service as well. Nobody wants to wait several hours or days for an answer to their queries - they want helpful resolutions as quickly as possible.

And although customer expectations keep increasing, support budgets remain flat. **Customer support leaders are under pressure to do more with the same resources.** This reality - the demand for faster, more accurate customer service with limited resources - is **driving organizations and leaders to explore AI as a solution.** They see it as a way to meet rising expectations while keeping costs under control.

And that's what we will be discussing in this guide. We'll go over -

- What AI can actually do for customer support
- How to deploy AI effectively to capture these benefits
- The pitfalls with AI that most support tools offer

What is the impact of AI on your daily support operations?

For support teams in modern organizations, having AI capabilities is crucial. AI enhances the support process end-to-end by taking over all of the busywork - for example, tagging and categorizing incoming queries or dealing with repetitive queries.

By handling these repetitive tasks, **AI frees up agents to focus on what truly matters** - engaging with customers, solving complex issues, and delivering a more human, thoughtful support experience.

Consider this scenario - a customer requests a refund on an invoice they just paid. Here's how it would be handled without AI vs after implementing AI.

Before AI

- The agent reads the customer's email and figures out it's a refund request.
- They search for the refund policy in internal documentation.
- They verify if the request qualifies under the policy.
- They log into Stripe to fetch the invoice.
- If valid, they manually trigger the refund.
- They draft a reply to the customer explaining what's been done.

This process is time-consuming, repetitive, and error-prone, especially when agents are handling a high volume of tickets.

After AI

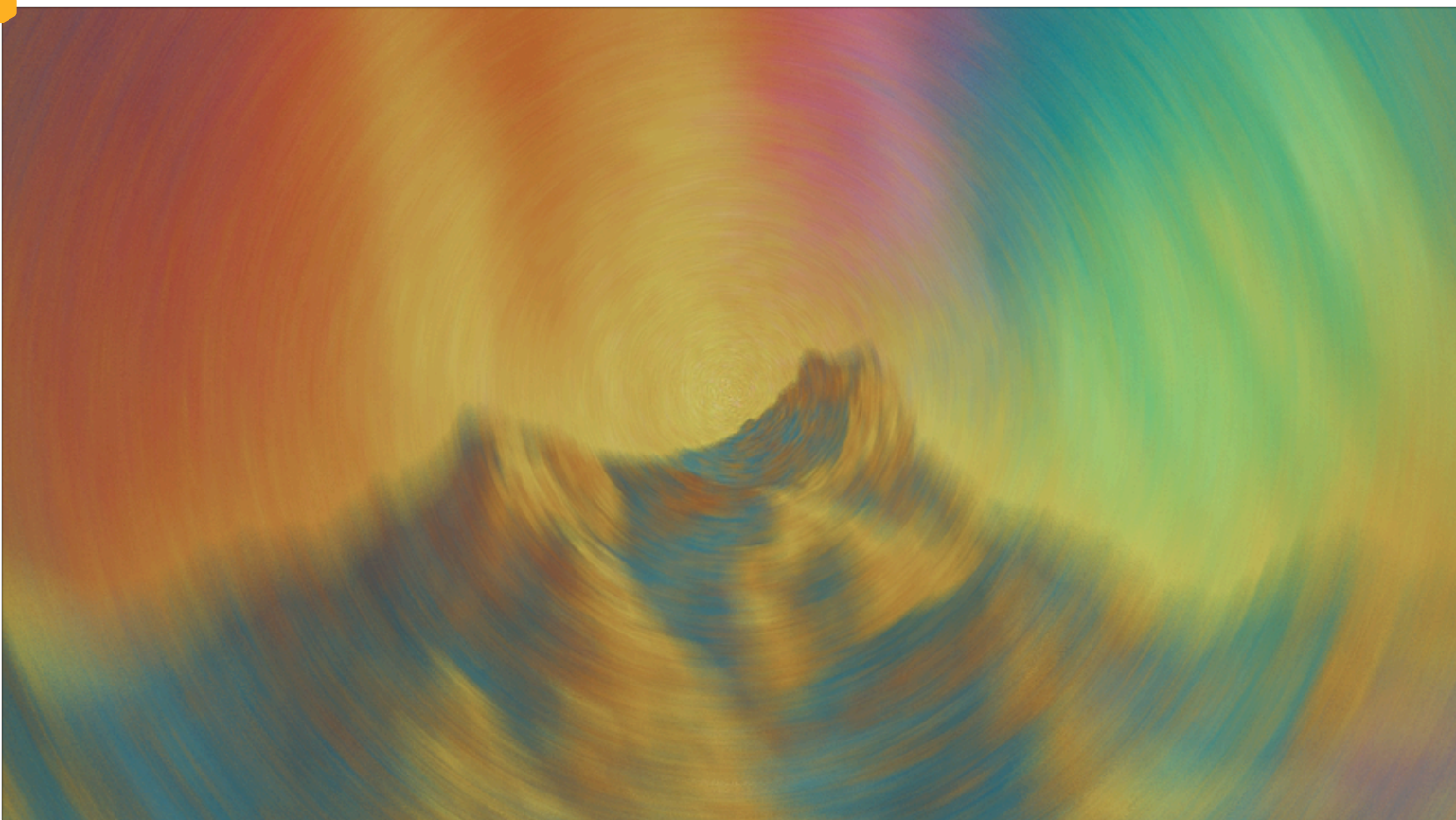
- AI identifies the intent from the message (refund).
- It scans help docs to check refund policy conditions.
- It validates the request automatically.
- It pulls the invoice from Stripe.
- If eligible, it triggers the refund.
- It informs the customer instantly.

A routine task like this is completed without any agent involvement. And the customer gets a faster, more consistent resolution.

This is just one example of how AI can make support operations smarter and faster, and empower your agents to handle the more complex, high-stakes conversations.

When you have AI on your team, it's like having a **super-efficient teammate who never sleeps, never drops the ball, and handles all the busywork at lightning speed**. It allows teams, even lean ones, to bridge the gap between rising customer expectations and limited bandwidth.

But how exactly does AI work? Here's an interesting little nugget for you.



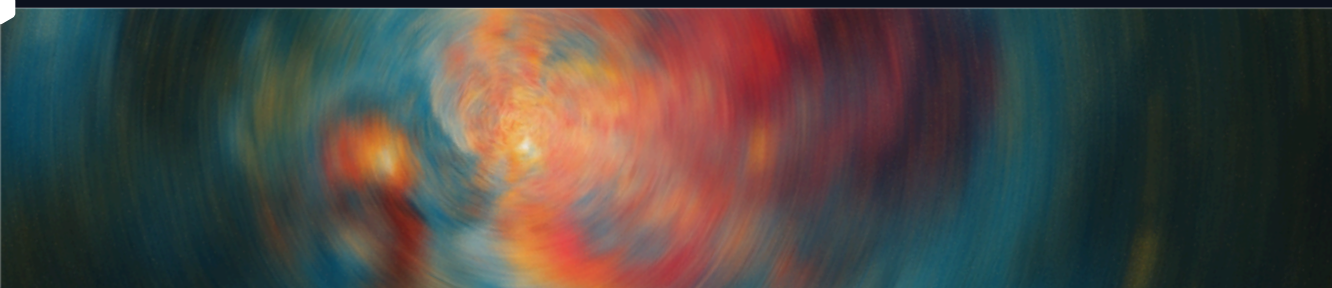
Here's how AI works:

AI relies on structured data to function effectively. That data can come from your help center articles, past support conversations, internal documentation, or even ticket metadata. The more high-quality data you feed it, the better it gets at understanding, reasoning, and responding accurately.

To make sense of all this information, AI breaks it down into smaller pieces, or "chunks," that it can store and reference at any given point. When a customer query comes in, the AI quickly scans these chunks to find the most relevant information, much faster than any human agent could. The speed and accuracy of this retrieval can vary depending on the model used and how well it's trained.

What makes AI even more powerful is its ability to learn over time. Every time an agent rephrases a suggestion, corrects a response, or takes a different action, the system learns from it. These interactions create feedback loops that help the AI improve how it classifies, routes, and replies in the future.

Now, let's look at how you can actually deploy AI in your support setup to unlock these benefits.



Deploying AI in customer support with Hiver

Hiver's AI philosophy is built around two guiding principles:

1. Bundle AI capabilities by level of involvement

Some features assist agents, some act autonomously, and others surface insights.

2. Map AI to the customer service lifecycle

Every feature is tied to a clear stage in the support journey - from deflecting repetitive queries, to organizing incoming tickets, helping agents respond faster, resolving issues efficiently, and finally optimizing performance.

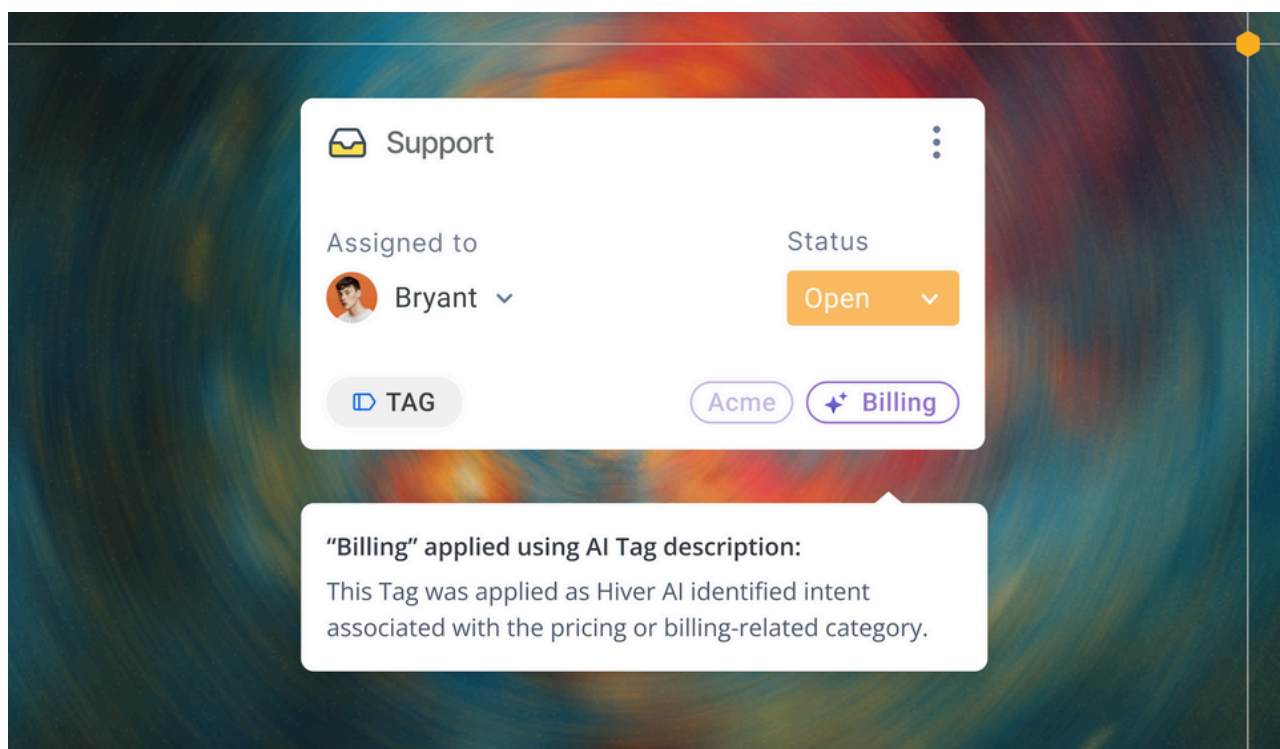
Keeping that in mind, Hiver's AI is organized into four clear bundles:

- **AI Agents** → Autonomous features that handle repetitive tasks with little to no human input.
- **AI Copilot** → Features that assist agents in real time but leave the final action to them.
- **AI Insights** → Helps support leaders understand team performance and surfaces insights across conversations like emerging issues or customer health risks.
- **AI QA (Quality Assurance)** **COMING SOON** : Every conversation gets reviewed automatically. It uncovers patterns in tone, accuracy, and resolution quality, then provides recommendations to improve your team's performance.

Hiver's AI capabilities at every stage of the customer support journey

AI Agents

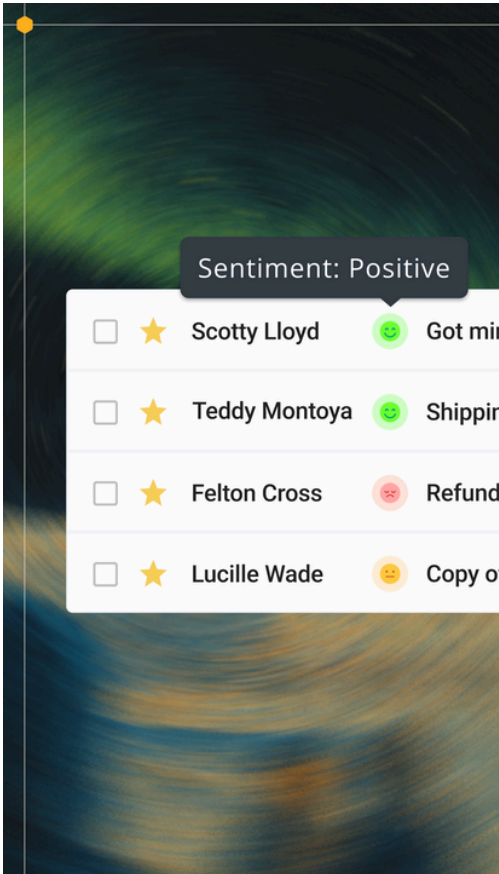
Hiver's AI Agent acts as the first line of defense. It handles all of the busywork like **routing queries to the right place and resolving common requests instantly** - freeing up agents to focus on more meaningful, complex tasks.



AI Tagging: Auto-tag every conversation instantly

It learns from your past conversations and how your team has labelled or tagged conversations by category or intent. It then **automatically assigns the most relevant tag to new customer conversations** as they come in across channels. This keeps your queue organized and makes volume easier to manage. Managers can quickly see the common issues and trends behind incoming tickets.

Example: For an e-commerce team, AI Tagging can automatically group queries like "order delay," "returns," or "payment issue" - and route them to the right team member.



AI Sentiment Analysis: Know how your customers feel

A large part of support is about empathizing with customer emotions, but on channels like email or chat it's hard to gauge feelings without verbal cues.

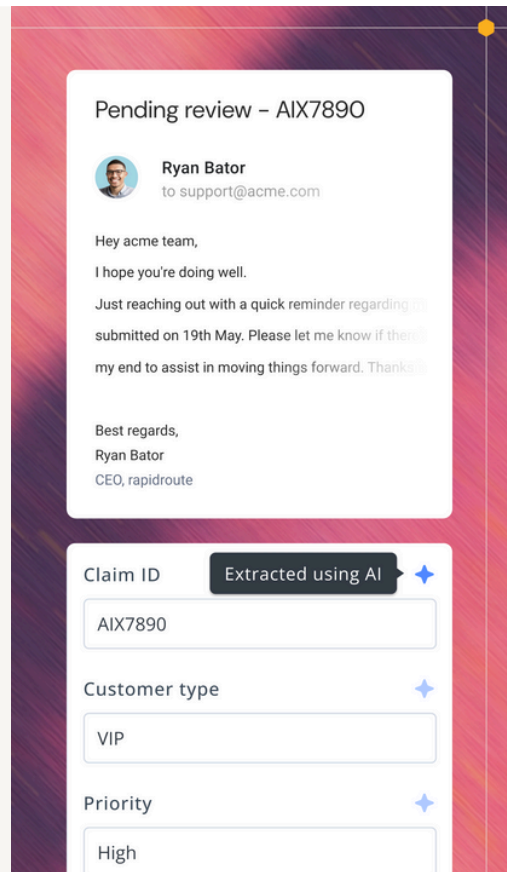
AI Sentiment Analysis bridges that gap by **reading the tone of every message and classifying it as positive, neutral, or negative**. Conversations with a negative tone can be routed to more senior members on the team so that it can be dealt with in the right way. This helps your team respond with the right priority and empathy.

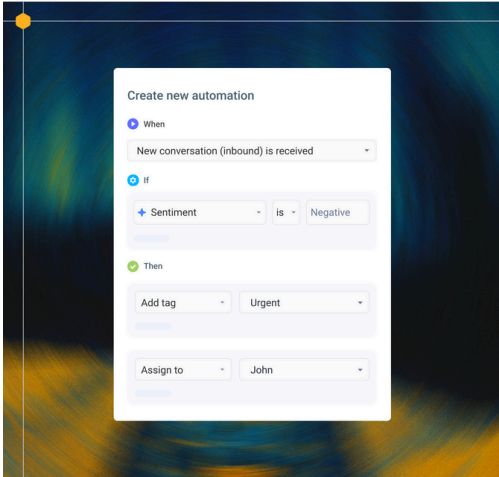
AI Data Extract: Extract important details from every conversation

It scans incoming customer emails to identify important values like order ID, account type, and claim number. It then **automatically writes these into your Custom Fields**, ensuring the data is captured consistently every time.

Example: Imagine a retail customer emails about a missing order. Instead of the agent manually scanning the message for details, AI Extract automatically pulls out the order ID, shipping address, and payment status.

These values are instantly written into the right fields, tagged to the conversation, used to route the ticket to the fulfillment team, and can even be auto-updated in your CRM.





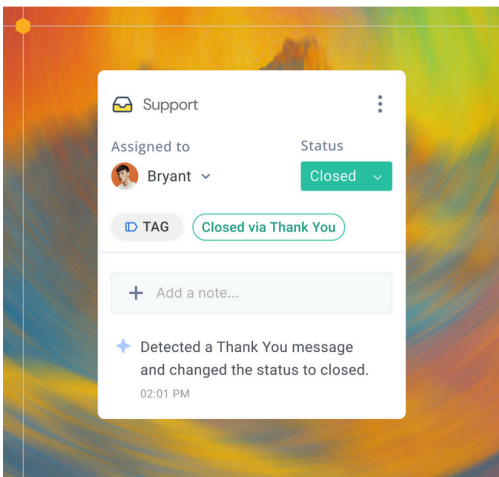
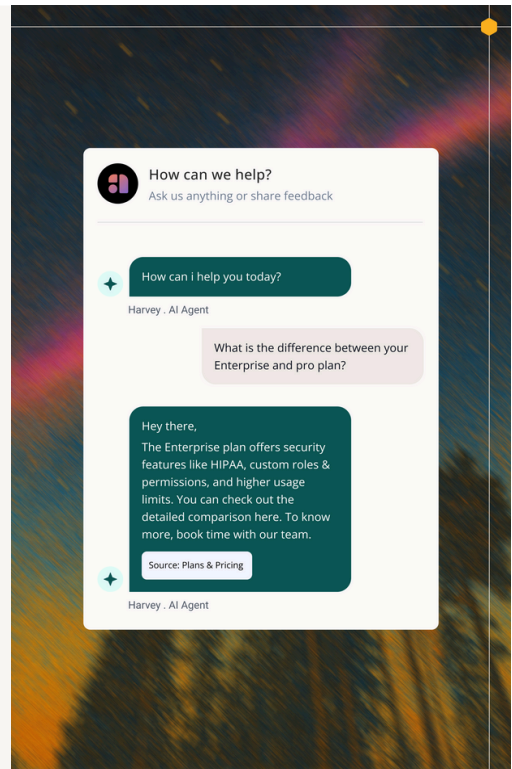
AI Workflows: Set up 'if-then' automations

Hiver's AI Automation lets you **set up if-then rules to handle repetitive tasks**. AI can detect sentiment, tag a conversation, perform an action in a third-party system like your CRM or billing tool, and then inform the customer, all without manual intervention.

AI Answers: Take FAQs off your agents' plates

It takes care of common and repetitive queries across channels by **pulling accurate information from your support docs and then responding to the customer** in your tone of voice. Your customers get an instant response and agents can spend their time on more complex queries.

Example: A customer asks, "How do I reset my password?" or "What's your refund policy?" Instead of an agent repeating the same steps, AI Answers instantly serves the right response. If the query goes beyond a simple FAQ, it hands the conversation to an agent with all the context intact.



AI Thank You Detector: Close out non-actionable replies instantly

It identifies replies like "thanks," "noted," or "appreciated" - the **kind of messages that don't need a response** - and automatically marks those conversations as closed. This keeps your queue clean and prevents the reopening of tickets that can affect SLA and resolution time metrics.

AI Copilot

Hiver's AI Copilot is a real-time assistive AI that works alongside agents to make every customer interaction faster and more effective. Copilot amplifies each agent's impact, helping them deliver high-quality support at scale.

AI Copilot stays with agents throughout the workflow, from the first customer message to the final resolution. It offers contextual answers, drafts replies, refines tone, and rephrases messages to match your brand voice.

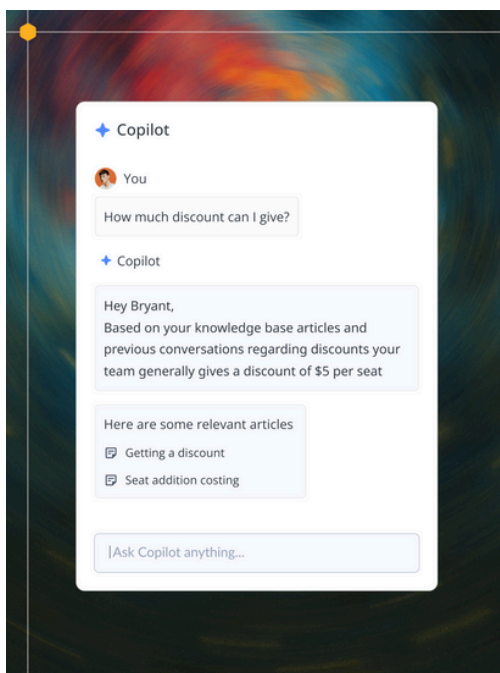
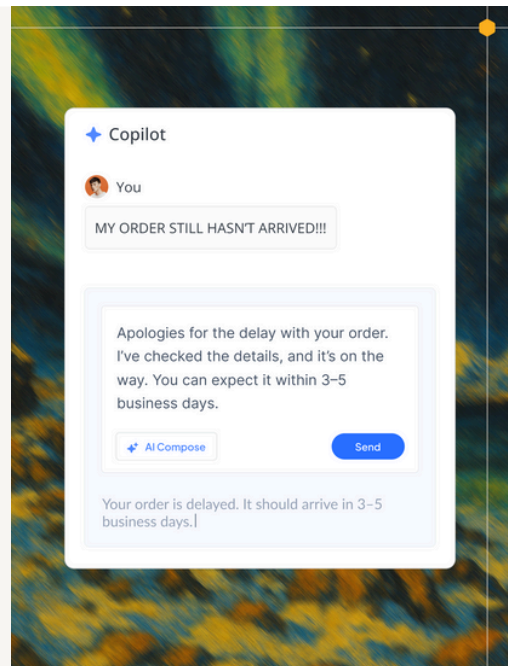
AI Compose: Compose clear and concise responses

AI Compose helps agents **fix grammar, adjust tone, and draft replies** in your brand's voice. It shortens response time and keeps communication clear and consistent.

Example: Customer writes in all caps: "MY ORDER STILL HASN'T ARRIVED!!!"

Agent drafts: "Your order is delayed. It should arrive in 3-5 business days."

AI Compose rewrites: "Sorry for the delay. I've checked and your order is on the way. It should reach you in 3-5 days."



Ask AI: Pull up answers from your knowledge base and internal docs

With Ask AI, your team can ask free-form questions and get accurate, contextual answers from help docs, past conversations, or linked knowledge bases. This **saves agents from digging through scattered documentation** and makes them more efficient.

Example: Earlier, if an agent needed a refund policy detail, they had to pause the chat, search the knowledge base, or ping a teammate. With Ask AI, they can simply type the question in the thread and get the answer instantly, without switching tabs.

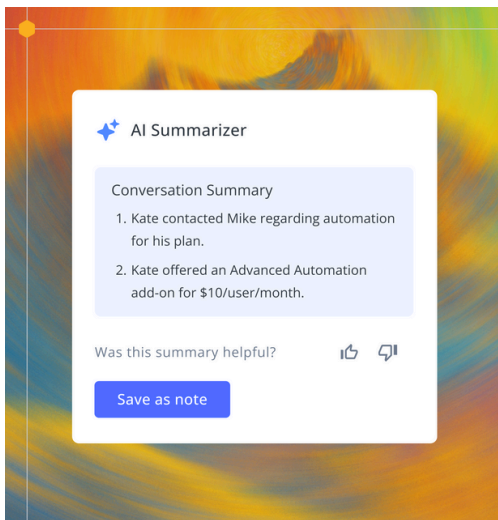
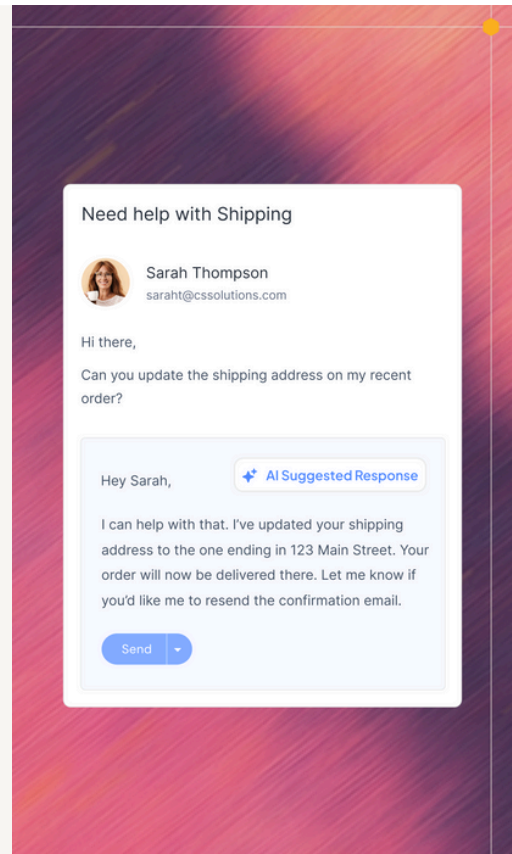
AI Suggested Responses: Get a response suggestion every single time

It analyzes the conversation's context along with past ticket data to generate accurate, thoughtful replies your agents can send as-is or tweak with a click.

Example: Customer: "Can you update my shipping address?"

Without AI: The agent writes a full response from scratch with extra steps for verification.

With AI Suggested Responses: "I've updated it to 123 Main Street. Your order will be delivered there. Need me to send a confirmation email?"



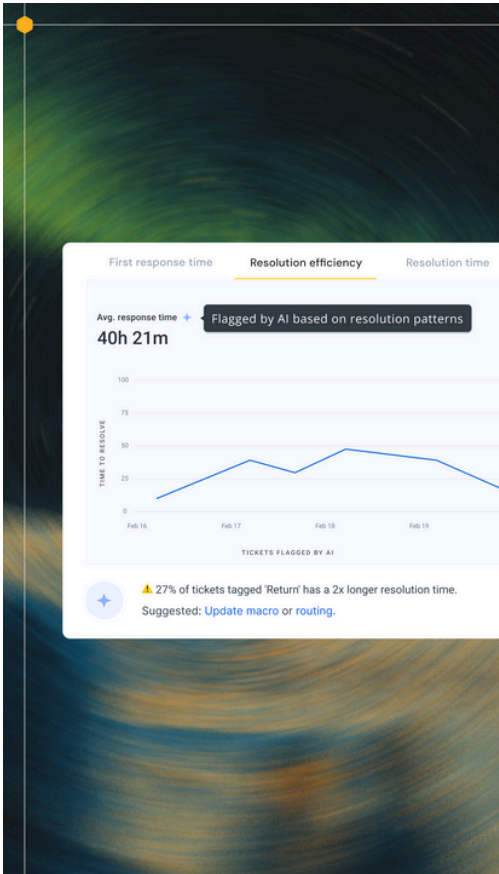
AI Summarizer: Bring you up to speed in seconds with summaries

It turns long conversations into short, easy-to-read overviews. By pulling out the key points, **agents don't have to scroll through every line to understand what's going on.** This speeds up handovers and ensures nothing important gets missed in complex conversations.

AI Insights

Hiver's AI Insights helps support teams continuously raise the bar. It analyzes everyday customer conversations and translates them into clear, actionable takeaways.

Instead of simply reporting activity, **AI Insights shows what's happening and why**, from uncovering recurring customer pain points, to flagging underperforming workflows, and spotting early signs of churn.



AI Resolution Assist: Spot what's slowing you down

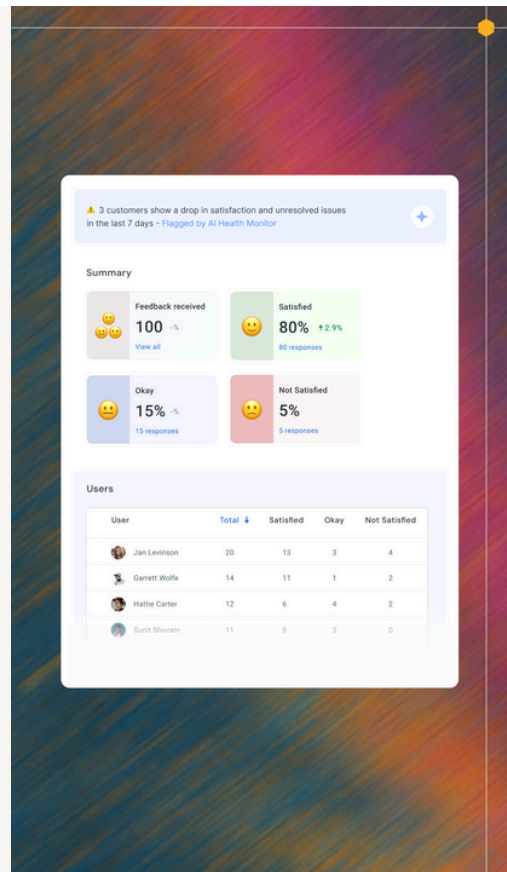
Identifies why tickets aren't resolved on time and where the bottlenecks lie. It looks at **resolution patterns across your support channels and flags problem areas**, like certain tags or topics with unusually long resolution times.

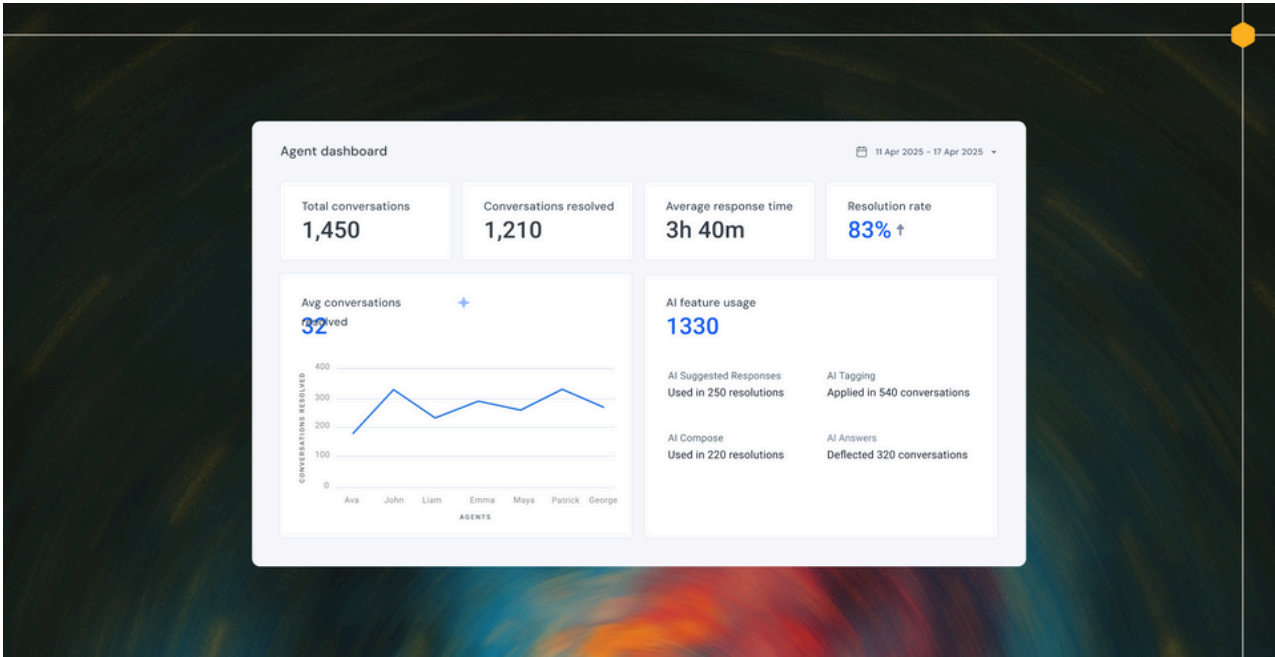
Example: A spike in "refund" tickets starts taking much longer to close than other requests. AI Resolution Assist highlights that these tickets are stalling because they often require manager approval, giving the team a bottleneck to address.

AI Customer Health: Stay ahead of churn risks

Tracks patterns across conversations to flag at-risk customers, using signals like unresolved issues, repeated DSAT scores, or negative sentiment trends over time. It gives your team **early warning signs before customers churn**. Support managers can intervene, follow up, or loop in account teams to prevent escalation.

Example: A long-term customer has logged three support tickets in two weeks, all about billing errors. AI Customer Health flags them as "at-risk," so a manager can personally reach out and reassure them the issue is being resolved.





AI ROI Analysis: Track and tune AI impact over time

It's not enough to just plug in AI - you need to know how well it's working for your team. AI ROI Analysis gives you clear visibility into performance, **showing where AI is making an impact and where it's falling short**. With agent dashboards and feedback loops, you can track adoption, measure time saved, and spot areas for improvement.

AI Knowledge Base Suggestions (coming soon!)

This feature will help your team scale self-service effortlessly. It scans every incoming customer query and checks whether your help center has an answer. When it spots gaps - say, customers keep asking how to integrate an app, but there's no article on it - **it will automatically flag that as a missing topic and generate an outline for your team**.

For example, if multiple customers keep asking, "How do I change my billing contact?" but there's no existing help article, the system identifies the gap and drafts a new outline, complete with suggested titles, headings, steps, and related FAQs. Your team can simply review, refine, and publish it in minutes.

As your help center expands with these AI-powered suggestions, customers will find answers faster and **rely less on your support team for repetitive queries**. Ticket volumes drop naturally, and your agents can focus on more meaningful, high-value conversations.



AI QA

COMING SOON

Hiver's AI QA ensures customer replies consistently meet your team's quality standards. Instead of manually reviewing a small sample of tickets, **AI QA evaluates every conversation in real time, scoring them against your chosen criteria** and surfacing issues before they impact customers.

Here's what it can help your team accomplish:

- **Custom scoring criteria** - Define your own rubrics, see agent/team trends, and link scores with CSAT. Get alerts when quality drops below set thresholds.
- **Live QA feedback** - While drafting, agents see score updates and inline prompts for missing information or unanswered questions.
- **One-click AI fixes** - Add greetings, rephrase for clarity, or include missing info instantly to save time and keep replies consistent.
- **Score display** - A simple badge shows if replies meet standards (**green** = good, **red** = needs attention).
- **On-send validation** - Before sending, a final check flags any missing essentials so nothing critical is overlooked.

Getting started with Hiver AI

One of the biggest differences between Hiver and all the other existing support tools available in the market is just how easy it is to deploy Hiver AI. You don't require coding skills or a 15-step configuration guide. **Getting started with Hiver AI is plug-and-play:** you can be up and running in 15 minutes. Here's how:

- Go to the Hiver admin panel and toggle on AI Copilot. Connect help docs and SOPs, build response templates and macros in Hiver. **The Copilot will use them to help agents draft replies instantly,** directly within the support channels your team already works from.
- At the same time, AI Agents start learning from past conversations and your help center content to triage, route, and even resolve queries autonomously. **Every agent action or override becomes a feedback loop,** helping AI Agents get smarter and more accurate over time.
- And that's it. Within a couple of days, AI Insights will start surfacing delays, gaps, or at-risk customers. **Support teams are no longer limited to fixing issues only after they happen** - they can spot trends early, close process gaps, and deliver a smoother customer experience.

Where are most support tools going wrong with their AI capabilities?

If you look around today, you'll notice that most customer support software call themselves "AI-powered." Irrespective of how effective their AI features are, they all want to flex it.

But if you look a little deeper, you'll notice that the users of these tools (customer support teams) have seen very little real impact in their day to day work due to these AI features.

In most cases, one of two things is happening. Either the AI features are too complicated to set up, or they're so watered down that they're there just to look good on a feature list.

Let's look at these problems in a little more detail.

PROBLEM 1

AI adoption is unnecessarily complicated

With many customer support tools, just getting started with AI and integrating it into your workflow is an arduous task. There's a **lengthy setup process where you need to train the AI on your customer data** - past conversations, ticket history, help articles, and so on.

This isn't a one-time job.

You're expected to continuously feed the system fresh data from different tools you use, ensure everything is mapped correctly, and keep fine-tuning the AI model over time by giving it feedback.

A Zendesk [user explains](#) his challenges - ***“We tried the native ZD AI. tbh, it's only as good as your help center content is. if your articles are perfect and cover everything, it might work for you. For us, most of the real answers were buried in past ticket conversations.”***

To make matters worse, the platforms offering these AI features aren't always intuitive. Important controls are buried deep inside confusing menus, making it hard for teams even to access or adjust the AI features they're paying for. Instead of saving time and effort, AI becomes another project to manage, often needing a full-time admin just to keep it running.

“Just like any AI, it still takes a while to train Fin to answer like you need, and while you can test it offline, you'll never really know until dealing with actual customers.”

Jessika R., Program Facilitator

PROBLEM 2

Accessing the features will burn a hole in your wallet

Most customer support tools lock their AI behind the priciest plans or expensive add-ons. Freshdesk, for example, only offers AI as add-ons, and that too if you're on the Pro plan or higher. **Freddy AI Agent sessions cost \$100 per 1,000 sessions (after the first 500 free sessions). And Freddy Copilot costs an extra \$29 per agent per month.**

Zendesk follows a similar model. While some AI basics are available on the \$55/agent Professional plan, anything useful is tucked into a separate Copilot add-on - another \$50 per agent per month.

One Zendesk [user says](#) - ***“The pricing can be a bit steep for small businesses, especially if you want access to advanced AI features.”***

Another [user notes](#) - ***“Several powerful features, especially the advanced AI tools come as paid add-ons rather than being included in the mail plans, which can limit access to the full potential of the platform.”***

Others, like Intercom, have adopted usage-based pricing, which can be even trickier. **Its AI agent, Fin, costs \$0.99 per resolution.** The more queries it resolves, the faster your bill grows. For high-volume or seasonal teams, that can mean thousands in extra charges at the exact moment AI should be saving them.

Here’s what an [Intercom user](#) has to say about Fin’s pricing -

“At approximately \$0.99 per resolution, each interaction that the AI fully handles—whether it’s a detailed exchange or just a quick, single response - incurs a charge. This means that even simple or incomplete conversations, such as when a customer leaves mid-chat, can contribute to costs. Over time, especially for businesses with high customer inquiry volumes, these charges can add up rapidly. The unpredictable nature of these expenses can make budgeting difficult.”

Marvin B., Junior Partner Support Specialist

To put the real impact into perspective, let's compare what a 25-member support team would pay annually on Intercom's Advanced plan (\$85/agent/month) versus Hiver's Growth plan (\$29/agent/month).

Both plans offer similar core features, but the difference shows up in AI costs. Hiver's AI add-on is a flat \$20 per agent per month for all AI features, while Intercom charges \$29 per agent per month for its AI Copilot, plus \$0.99 per resolution for its Fin AI agent.

Plan	Base Cost (Annual)	AI Cost (Annual)	Total Annual Cost
Intercom (Advanced Plan)	\$25,500 (25 x \$85 x 12)	\$8,700 (Copilot: 25 x \$29 x 12) + \$11,880 (Fin: 1,000 resolutions/month x \$0.99 x 12) = \$20,580	\$46,080
Hiver (Growth Plan)	\$8,700 (25 x \$29 x 12)	\$6,000 (25 x @20 x 12)	\$14,700

Annual Savings with Hiver: \$31,380

As you can see, the cost difference is staggering - Hiver comes in at nearly one-third the cost of Intercom.

PROBLEM 3

AI reduced to just chatbots

When support tools mention they have AI features, it's usually a glorified chatbot. These bots are **trained to handle FAQs or a narrow set of predictable questions**. They can help deflect some repetitive queries, but that's about it.

Plus, this works only on chat, leaving out the full spectrum of service channels like email, social media, phone, or WhatsApp.

The problem is that modern support teams need much more. A chatbot that offers canned replies doesn't triage conversations, route them, surface context from connected apps, or make agents faster at solving complex issues. Instead of being an intelligent partner across the workflow, **AI ends up boxed into one corner of the customer experience**.

When AI is reduced to chatbots, it barely scratches the surface of what's possible, and teams are left wondering if the hype was ever real in the first place.

How Hiver approaches AI differently

Hiver takes a very different approach to AI. It's not weighed down by complex setup - getting started is a simple plug-and-play. It doesn't have AI layered onto a complex CX stack as an afterthought. Instead, it has AI capabilities embedded across the entire support journey - from triaging and routing, to drafting replies, to surfacing insights.

And when it comes to pricing, Hiver AI isn't hidden behind the most expensive tiers or multiple confusing add-ons. Every AI feature you've read about above, across the entire customer support journey - triage, resolution, and insights, is available as an add-on that costs \$20 per user per month.

Because AI shouldn't be a luxury reserved for teams with large budgets.

Here's a look at how AI pricing stacks up across Hiver, Zendesk, Freshdesk, and Intercom for a 20-member support team.

Platform	AI Pricing model	Monthly AI Cost (20 agents)	Annual AI Cost
Hiver AI	\$20/user/month (all features)	\$400	\$4,800
Zendesk AI	\$50/user/month (Copilot add-on)	\$1,000	\$12,000
Freshdesk (Freddy)	\$29/user/month Copilot = \$580 + \$100 per 1,000 sessions usage	~\$680	\$8,160 (assuming 1K sessions/month)
Intercom (Fin + Copilot)	\$29/user/month Copilot = \$580 + \$0.99 per resolution	~\$1,570	\$18,840 (assuming 1K resolutions/month)

AI that creates actual impact

The promise of AI in customer support often sounds impressive, but in practice many tools only deliver a fraction of what teams really need. Too often, features are limited to basic chatbots, hidden behind expensive add-ons, or so complex to set up that teams give up before they see any value.

For AI to truly move the needle in customer support and create real impact, it should enhance every stage of the journey - from triaging and routing conversations, helping agents resolve issues faster, to surfacing insights that drive better decisions - and it should work seamlessly across all channels.

Hiver's approach to AI is different. Not only is it embedded at all points in the customer support journey, it's also affordable and has a plug-and-play configuration. At the end of the day, AI is meant to make life easier for your support team and that's what Hiver sets out to do.

484,070,281

Support conversations resolved till date

Trusted by 10,000+ teams to
handle customer service efficiently



AI-powered support that's faster and more thoughtful!

Unlimited users on Free plan ✦ No credit card needed

Get it free

Book a demo

