

## RIGHTNOW HELPS IROBOT SUCCESSFULLY PIONEER A NEW MARKET BY LISTENING AND RESPONDING TO ITS CUSTOMERS

Every company has to constantly learn from its customers. But when you're pioneering a new market, it's even more important to quickly find out what customers want. It's also essential to deliver great service and support—since your customers have no previous experience with your product.

That's why iRobot—makers of the Roomba® Vacuuming Robots—has embraced RightNow. With RightNow, iRobot can hear everything its customers are saying across all communication channels. The company can also provide exceptionally responsive support via phone, email, the web, and online chat. Plus, using RightNow's highly automated marketing capabilities, iRobot can nimbly and cost-effectively pursue a full range of up-sell and cross-sell opportunities.

With the help of RightNow, the company has grown revenue while simultaneously delivering a superior customer experience and keeping its operating costs under control.

“RightNow allows iRobot to collect valuable feedback from our customers,” says Maryellen Abreu, iRobot's director of global technical support. “That ability to hear the customer's voice and quickly respond to it is a major business advantage.”

### Successfully and Efficiently Handling Hundreds of Thousands of Customer Interactions Across Multiple Channels Every Month

Because few, if any, of iRobot's customers have ever owned any type of robotic product before, effective technical support is absolutely critical for driving broad consumer acceptance of the Roomba line. Also, a percentage of Roombas are bought by elderly customers or by Baby Boomers for their elderly parents. This demographic makes it even more important for iRobot to answer questions quickly, clearly, and accurately.

Interestingly, with more and more older consumers going online, web self-service was the best initial opportunity for iRobot to improve both the quality and cost-efficiency of its customer service. In addition to using existing material from its manuals, the company incorporated pictures and video clips into its RightNow knowledge base. It also continues to improve its knowledge base over time, based on both the types of questions its customers ask and the direct feedback they provide.

iRobot took further steps to make it as easy as possible for customers to find answers to their particular questions. For example, rather than having to identify the product they own by name, site visitors can simply click on a picture of it. Using RightNow's “Top 20” list of most commonly asked questions, iRobot also ensures that a maximum number of users can find the information they need without initiating a search.

As a result, iRobot is now automatically answering the questions of more than 97 percent of the roughly half a million customers who use its RightNow-based web self-service system every month.

“RightNow enables us to get the most value out of every communication channel and every contact center agent. It provides a complete, well-automated environment for getting customers the information they need, when they need it—while at the same time providing us with rich insight we need to ensure that all of our business decisions are truly customer-driven.”

— Maryellen Abreu, Director of Global Technical Support, iRobot

**Industry:** Consumer Electronics

### Goals

- Maximize adoption of their new technology by providing a great customer experience
- Optimize use of online communication channels
- Grow revenue from installed base
- Control costs

### Achievements

- Outstanding multi-channel service supports annual business growth
- 97% web self-service rate
- 30% reduction in phone calls, with headcount reduced accordingly
- Integration of service, order entry, and other processes saves time and reduces errors

Because iRobot uses RightNow to manage its phone and email interactions with customers, its contact center staff has a complete view of all past service interactions with every customer. This helps them get to the root of the customer's issue more quickly. It also spares customers the aggravation of having to repeat themselves for a second or third time.

Due to the resulting 30 percent reduction in incoming phone volume, headcount has been reduced accordingly. And call abandonment rates have been reduced by 18 percent—another sign of how the company's total customer experience has been significantly improved.

As an added benefit, the agents at iRobot's outsourced call center can refer to the knowledge base themselves when they answer a customer's question. This allows even new hires to answer questions clearly and accurately—while ensuring that information given across all channels is always consistent.

“RightNow enables us to get the most value out of every communication channel and every contact center agent,” says Abreu. “It provides a complete, well-automated environment for getting customers the information they need, when they need it—while at the same time providing us with rich insight we need to ensure that all of our business decisions are truly customer-driven.”

## Maximizing Per-Customer Revenue with Smart Email Tactics

In addition to using RightNow to create a great service experience, iRobot is leveraging its automated campaign management tools to execute upwards of 20 unique mailings totaling about one million messages every month. These mailings are designed to drive up-sell and cross-sell revenue—as well as to attract first-time buyers—by sending recipients targeted promotions based on the particular iRobot product they own or have expressed interest in.

Even though the company sells its products primarily through retail distribution, it is able to open up this direct dialog with its customers in a variety of ways. When customers register their products or contact technical support, for example, iRobot can capture the information it needs to send them appropriate offers. iRobot has also integrated RightNow with its online store, so customers who purchase directly from the company can also be included in any online marketing campaigns.

Instead of drawing on its internal staff to handle campaign management tasks, iRobot has turned to RightNow to provide a turnkey marketing service. iRobot provides RightNow with the basic content for each campaign—including text, hyperlinks, images, and a definition of the target audience. RightNow then creates the actual email message, sends it to iRobot for review, makes any necessary changes, and executes the mailing to the specified segment. The whole process takes about three days.

Prior to using RightNow for these campaigns, iRobot used an outsourced marketing service that was much slower and could only receive updated customer data from iRobot in periodic batches. With RightNow, iRobot can get its campaigns out much more quickly and efficiently. Just as important, all customer data is updated daily directly from the company's online store and contact database.

RightNow also executes monthly customer satisfaction surveys for iRobot, sending a questionnaire to 4,000 different customers every month. This helps iRobot track the impact of the improvements it continues to make in its customer experience—and pinpoint any emerging problems before they adversely impact the business.

“RightNow's responsive service and seamless data integration make it much easier for us to execute the kinds of mailings we need to drive incremental sales from our installed base,” says Dean Rist, director of direct marketing at iRobot. “And their system has proven flexible enough to support everything from the simplest technical bulletin to more complex multi-stage campaigns.”

## Reaping the Benefits of Software-as-a-Service (SaaS)

RightNow's SaaS delivery model provides additional benefits for iRobot—above and beyond those offered by the functionality of the software itself.

Abreu notes that the SaaS model doesn't limit RightNow's ability to integrate with iRobot's other applications. For example, when a customer using iRobot's online store stops to submit a question, the RightNow webform is automatically populated with the customer information from the online store. This saves the customer time and ensures the accuracy of the information.

RightNow also provides iRobot's online discussion board so that customer participation on the board can be viewed as part of their complete interaction record.

iRobot is also integrating other business systems, such as its return merchandise authorization application, with RightNow. This will further improve the productivity of its contact center agents and enable them to even better serve iRobot's customers.

Abreu adds that the speed and effectiveness with which iRobot has been able to deploy RightNow is in part due to the quality of RightNow's people, as well as its software.

"We've been impressed with how knowledgeable everyone at RightNow is and how committed they are to seeing us achieve our near- and long-term goals," says Abreu.

"RightNow has been a great partner for us as we seek to deliver the kind of customer experience that will ensure the loyalty of our customers and help us build a globally dominant brand."

## ABOUT IROBOT

Founded in 1990 by roboticists from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, iRobot designs behavior-based, artificially intelligent robots. To date, more than 2 million iRobot Roomba® Vacuuming Robots have been sold worldwide. For additional information about iRobot, please visit [www.irobot.com](http://www.irobot.com).

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please visit our website at [www.rightnow.com](http://www.rightnow.com) or give us a call for more information.