Potential Impact of Automation Technology in the IS/IT Customer Service Industry

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Our era is marked by rapid technological advancement, and one area of technology that is especially relevant right now is artificial intelligence (AI). The use of AI is not only reshaping our personal lives but also impacting how we work and whether certain jobs will continue to be executed by people. This study examines the potential impact such intelligent-automation technology will have, specifically in the information services and information technology customer-service industry. An interpretive research approach was used throughout the study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight participants of different customer-service organisations, each offering in-depth insight into their opinions of and experience with the application of AI technology for customer-service process automation. The participants were all at the managerial level or higher and were key decision-makers in their respective customer-service departments. The findings indicate that the research area is relevant for each of the participants. Various use-cases for the application of AI for customer-service departments have been identified, such as intelligent ticket-request routing based on foreign language recognition and assistance for agents through automatic answer suggestions. The main challenges and barriers to adoption that have been identified are the amounts of data needed to train AI, privacy concerns, the rarity of people with the right expertise to make AI work and the overload of AI solutions on the market. The study highlights that automation of customer-service processes is inevitable for many large companies, but there are multiple challenges and risks that must be considered to make effective decisions about the timing of automation-technology integration.