ACROSS THE TABLE

BUSINESS CONSULTING

BUSINESS JOB 06 · EPISODE 6

Intercom Fin vs Zendesk AI vs Gorgias

Letting AI answer the questions you have answered four hundred times already

Knowledge Article 06

AI Stack Series · acrossthetable.biz

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THE JOB THESE THREE DO

Most customer questions are the same ten questions. What are your hours, do you deliver here, where is my order, how much is it, can I change my appointment.

Answering them takes real time and none of it is skilled work. Worse, they arrive at eight in the evening and on Sundays, so either you answer then or the customer waits.

These three put something in front of those questions that answers them immediately, and passes the genuinely difficult ones to a person.

> **BEFORE YOU SWITCH ANYTHING ON**
> These tools answer from your own help content. If your help pages are thin or out of date, the AI will be confidently wrong at your customers, at scale, while you sleep. Fix the content first. That is not optional preparation — it is most of the work.

WHO EACH ONE IS

Intercom Fin — the conversational one

What it is: Support agent that answers from your help content and hands off to humans.

Best for: Businesses already running support in Intercom.

Watch out for: Answers only get good after your help docs do.

Fin answers from your help documents and hands over to a human when it cannot. It is priced per question resolved, which is unusual and worth understanding before you commit.

Zendesk AI — the big operation one

What it is: AI layered onto Zendesk tickets, macros and knowledge.

Best for: Existing Zendesk teams.

Watch out for: Best value only if you already own the suite.

Zendesk AI is a layer on top of Zendesk. If you already run support in Zendesk this is the obvious move. If you do not, buying the whole suite to get the AI is rarely worth it.

Gorgias — the online shop one

What it is: Support desk built around ecommerce orders.

Best for: Shopify stores answering order questions.

Watch out for: Ecommerce-shaped. Poor fit for services.

Gorgias is built specifically around online orders — where is my parcel, can I change my size. For a shop on Shopify it is excellent. For a service business it is the wrong shape entirely.

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HOW THEY COMPARE

	Intercom Fin	Zendesk AI	Gorgias
Best for	Conversational support	Full service operations	Ecommerce support
Ease of use	Intermediate	Intermediate	Beginner / Intermediate
Small-business fit	High	Medium	High for ecommerce
Larger-business fit	High	High	High for ecommerce
Its main job	Answer customer questions	Manage support operations	Support online shoppers
Choose this if	You have knowledge-based support	You run a larger service operation	You run an ecommerce company
Price	Priced per resolution.	Add-on per agent/month.	Per month by ticket volume.

Read the small-business fit row carefully. Zendesk is Medium, and Gorgias is high only for ecommerce. The right answer depends more on what kind of business you run than on which tool is best.

HOW A BUSINESS ACTUALLY USES EACH ONE

A business with good help pages

Someone asks about returns at ten at night. Fin answers from the returns page, correctly, immediately. The customer is satisfied and nobody was woken up. This only works because the returns page was written properly first.

A company already in Zendesk

Thirty people answering tickets. The AI drafts replies and sorts incoming tickets by subject. The value is in the existing system getting faster, not in a new system arriving.

A Shopify shop

Eighty per cent of messages are "where is my order". Gorgias reads the order status and answers with the tracking number, without a person touching it. The remaining twenty per cent reach a human faster because the queue is shorter.

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WHAT IT COSTS

Pricing works differently for each: Fin charges per question resolved, Zendesk AI is an add-on per agent per month, and Gorgias charges by ticket volume.

These are the most expensive tools in the series so far, and the hardest to compare. Work out your monthly question volume before you look at any pricing page, or you cannot tell which model suits you.

WHERE THIS SITS IN YOUR STACK

Now let’s build the technology around your AI customer-service agent. The AI handles the initial customer conversation. Customer information can connect to your CRM. If the person wants an appointment, Calendly can handle scheduling. If it’s an ecommerce business, Shopify provides the commerce environment. Technical problems can become work for the technical team, while Slack can alert employees when human intervention is required. The AI becomes the front door — but your other business systems still handle the work behind that door.

The pieces around it:

- HubSpot or Salesforce — CRM
- Slack — employee escalation
- Calendly — appointments
- Shopify — ecommerce context
- Jira — technical issues

THE CEO DECISION

- Are your help pages good enough for a machine to answer from? If not, that is the project — not the software.
- What proportion of your questions are the same ten questions? Under half, and this will not pay.
- What happens when it cannot answer? The handover to a person is the part customers judge you on.
- Will you read what it told people? An AI answering customers unsupervised for a month is a risk, not a saving.

APPLY IT TO YOUR BUSINESS

Go through the last fifty customer messages and sort them into two piles: questions you have answered many times before, and questions that needed you.

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If the first pile is most of them, work out what those repeated questions are and write proper answers on your website. You may find that alone cuts the volume enough that you do not need any of these tools yet.

YOUR QUICK REVIEW

- ☐ What are the ten questions I answer over and over?
- ☐ Are those answered properly on my website today?
- ☐ How many customer messages do I get in a month?
- ☐ What proportion genuinely need me?
- ☐ When the AI cannot answer, what happens next?
- ☐ Who reads what it said to people, and how often?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Tool	Where to find it	What it is for
Intercom Fin	www.intercom.com/fin	Businesses already running support in Intercom.
Zendesk AI	www.zendesk.com/service/ai	Existing Zendesk teams.
Gorgias	www.gorgias.com	Shopify stores answering order questions.
Across the Table AI Assessment	acrossthetable.biz/#assessment	Fifteen minutes. Tells you which of the twenty jobs to start with.
The Scaling Edge	acrossthetablebiz.substack.com	Weekly newsletter for owners without a business background.

CONTINUE LEARNING

This is Business Job 06 of twenty. Episode 7 is Write the Copy — Jasper, Copy.ai and Writesonic.

Explore The Scaling Edge and the Across the Table Business Learning library for the rest of the series.

READ AND CONNECT WITH ACROSS THE TABLE

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The Scaling Edge newsletter: https://acrossthetablebiz.substack.com

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