

Conversational AI Emerging Providers Buyers Guide

Software Provider and Product Assessment



EXECUTIVE
SUMMARY

***ISG** Research



Key Takeaways

Conversational AI emerging providers are advancing natural language interaction through specialized, modular and ecosystem-driven approaches. These platforms support information access, task execution and guided workflows, and vary in maturity across model flexibility, deployment options and governance. Enterprise value depends on integration depth, targeted use-case fit and the ability to scale conversational capabilities across operational contexts.

Software Provider Summary

The ISG Buyers Guide™ for Conversational AI Emerging Providers evaluates 10 software providers offering products that support natural language interaction, generative and agentic AI, workflow execution, analytics, governance and enterprise integration. The research ranked the top three overall leaders as SoundHound AI, Kaltura and Kore.ai. Providers were classified using weighted performance in Product Experience and Customer Experience for ISG quadrant placement. Kaltura, Kore.ai, Omilia and SoundHound AI were rated Exemplary, with Mistral AI rated Innovative. Coveo was rated Assurance, and Cohere, Creative Virtual, Inbenta and Soprano were rated Merit.

Product Experience Insights

Product Experience, representing 80% of the evaluation, focuses on Capability (50%) and Platform (30%), which includes adaptability, manageability, reliability and usability.

SoundHound AI, Kore.ai, Omilia and Kaltura achieved the highest performance as Leaders in this category, supported by broad conversational AI capability coverage and enterprise-grade platform support across adaptability, manageability, reliability and usability. Leaders demonstrated enterprise-grade platform capabilities across varied deployment models and use-case contexts.

Customer Experience Value

Customer Experience, representing 20% of the evaluation, focuses on validation and TCO/ROI. Coveo, SoundHound AI and Kaltura were the Leaders in this category, demonstrating strong customer advocacy and clear investment in successful outcomes. Providers with lower performance often lacked sufficient information to demonstrate customer success or articulate a structured commitment to customer experience.

Strategic Recommendations

Enterprises should evaluate emerging conversational AI providers based on specialization, deployment flexibility and fit with existing enterprise architecture. Selection must prioritize model flexibility, ease of integration, workflow execution, governance controls and scalability across defined use cases. Start adoption with targeted, measurable deployments before expanding conversational AI across broader operational and customer-facing workflows.



The Findings

The software providers and products evaluated in this research offer product and customer experiences, but not every feature is equally valuable to every enterprise or is needed to support the relevant business processes and use cases. Moreover, having too many product capabilities may be a negative factor for an enterprise if it introduces unnecessary complexity. Nonetheless, you may decide that a more comprehensive set of capabilities is important and meets your enterprise’s requirements.

An effective customer relationship with a software provider is vital to the success of any investment. The overall customer experience and the full lifecycle of engagement play a key role in ensuring satisfaction and long-term success. Providers with dedicated customer leadership, such as chief customer officers, tend to invest more deeply in these relationships and prioritize customer outcomes in line with TCO and ROI expectations. It is equally important that this commitment to customer success is evident throughout the provider’s website, the buying process and the customer journey.

Overall Scoring of Software Providers Across Categories

The research finds SoundHound AI atop the list, followed by Kaltura and Kore.ai. Providers that place in the top three of a category earn the designation of Leader. SoundHound AI has done so in five categories, Kaltura and Kore.ai in four, and Omilia and Coveo in two categories.

**Conversational AI
Emerging Providers**
Overall

Providers	Grade	Performance
SoundHound AI	B++	Leader 76.3%
Kaltura	B+	Leader 72.9%
Kore.ai	B+	Leader 70.7%
Coveo	B+	69.3%
Omilia	B	67.9%
Mistral AI	B	64.8%
Cohere	B-	61.0%
Soprano	C++	55.3%
Creative Virtual	C+	48.4%
Inbenta	C+	47.0%

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David Menninger leads the overall team for software research and advisory for supporting IT and expertise in AI software at ISG. With over three decades of experience in enterprise software, Dave's leadership has advanced digital transformation with information and insights for enterprises around the world.