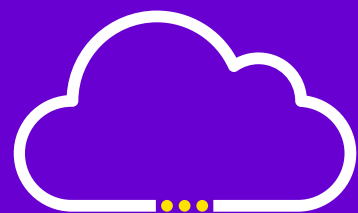# Winning the customer experience battle

Embracing a modern cloud contact centre solution

Delivering excellent customer experience is a priority not a choice

We are all customers. We like to get our problems solved quickly, accurately, and whenever it's most convenient to us. We all expect businesses to respect our time, to know our historical customer data, to personalise their interactions to suit our preferences and needs.

If you expect this much from a brand, why would you offer your customers any less?

Granted, it's not always as easy as it sounds. The shift to a digital-first world has complicated things; the coronavirus pandemic has turned six years' worth of digital transformation into six months; customers are online more than ever – keeping up with all these changes is definitely harder than it would've been five years ago.

Yet, customer experience (CX) has never been as important as it is now. More than two-thirds of companies now compete primarily based on CX[1] – meaning your competitors are currently doing all they can to keep their customers happy, and attract new ones, with rave reviews and a high Net Promoter Score (NPS).

Clearly, your customers' happiness should be at the forefront of your business strategy, but how?

Simple – great CX is your path to success, and the right contact centre solution is the means to achieve it. It's time to ask yourself:

- **What do our customers want?**
- **What CX challenges do we face?**
- **How can technology help us?**

This whitepaper will give you all the information you need to answer those questions. It will highlight changing trends in CX, the challenges posed by these changes and how the right contact centre technology can overcome them.

What do your customers want?

Let's think about the last interaction you've had with a brand for a minute.

You probably had an issue. After a quick online search, you find their customer service phone number and try to call, but a recorded message tells you there are no agents available at that time.

You're late for a video meeting and have no time to wait for someone to pick up. I'll send an email', you think, but after a few exchanges, you realise you're not getting anywhere with slow email responses.

A live chat would have been ideal, but as they don't offer one, you'll have to call back.

Once your meeting is over, you call back customer service – waiting for a good ten minutes this time before you get through to someone – and you explain you had discussed your issue by email with another agent.

They have no idea what you're talking about, so you spend another ten minutes explaining your problem again, and another ten waiting for the agent to retrieve your customer information.

Sounds familiar?

That's because it is, but also because as customers we don't easily forget bad interactions: 46% of customers remember bad experiences from over two years ago. In comparison, only 21% remember good experiences from the same period.[2]

Getting it right first time is critical. Businesses that recognise new customer behaviours and requirements, and most importantly, act upon them by employing the right customer communications solution, will see their customer churn reduced, their revenues increase, and their productivity skyrocket.

**Truth is, your customers want exactly what you'd expect from your business:**

- Your customer service operations to be quick and accurate

- Your agents to be friendly and efficient

- Your business to be able to communicate through different channels

- Up to date and easily accessible customer information

The reality, is that failing to keep up with the growing demand for excellent customer experience will be detrimental to customer retention and growth.

46%
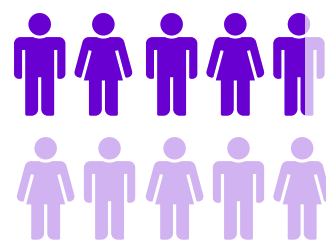
of customers remember bad experiences from over two years ago

21%
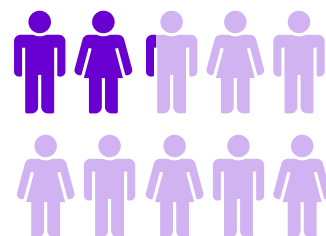
remember good experiences from the same period

Long hold times

There is nothing more annoying than 'on hold' music. Especially as you're keen to get a problem solved as quickly as possible and waiting for an agent to help you is the worst possible use of your time.

Customer expectations of a quick response (i.e., within five minutes) have drastically increased, as have expectations for an immediate response. Livechat expectations increased to 29%, expecting immediate and 43% within 5 minutes. Chatbot response expectations grew by 40% immediate and 32% within 5 minutes. For voice calls, 28% of customers expect an immediate response.[3]

Expected response times
(Query answered within 5 minutes)

43% Web Chat

45% Email

33% of customers expect an immediate response, for voice and video call

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What your customers want:

Speed and convenience

It certainly doesn't come as a surprise to learn that over 60% of customers value the ability to resolve issues quickly as the top aspect of a good customer service experience.[4] Customers want to know your business is respecting their time – understanding customer interactions should be convenient and scheduled around their time, not yours. As a matter of fact, two-thirds of customers say valuing their time is the most important thing a company can do to provide them with good service.[5]

60%
of customers value the ability to resolve issues quickly

The agent doesn't have sufficient information on file

One transferred call after another, too often your agents are not equipped to solve customer issues.

One isn't trained to deal with such problems; another thinks that a back-office agent will be able to help but they don't have the information at hand; a third asks your customer to call back.

Almost 70% of customers find it annoying to have their calls transferred to a new agent.[4] Often just because the first one didn't have all the information necessary to solve their issue during the first interaction.

70%
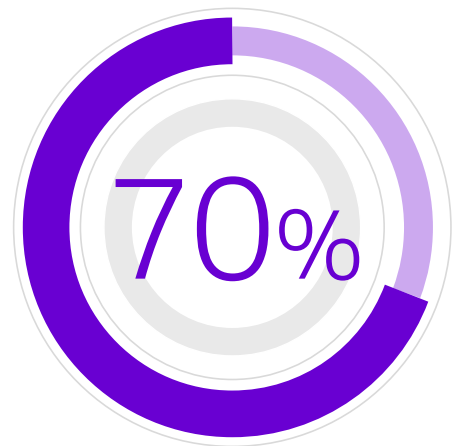
of customers find it annoying to have their calls transferred to a new agent.

What your customers want:

Accuracy of information and first contact resolution

In the perfect CX world, the agent who answers your customer's call, or interacts with them by email or chat, should be the perfect person to solve their issue. Your agents should be able to easily access customer information and data, avoiding unnecessary transfers to other departments – therefore improving first contact resolution.

57% of customers find that an agent's knowledge and resourcefulness played a key role in positive customer service experiences.[6]

# Support is available only through disjoint channels

Customers like to get what they want, how they want it. They want to feel special, important, and understood.

Younger generations are more likely to get in touch via webchat and social media, while older ones prefer voice and email.

Sure, your business will likely offer at least two or three of those communications channels, but what happens if your customers want to seamlessly go from one onto the next – from a call to webchat, or from email to a call?

We all know how exasperating it is to repeat ourselves tens of times just because of disjointed business channels.

Nonetheless, around 50% of customers use more than four channels to interact with customer service,[7] but one-third are frustrated by having to repeat themselves to multiple agents.[8]
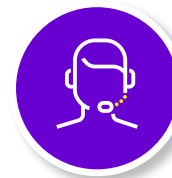
What your customers want:

Control and personalisation

Having multiple communications channels is all well and good, but what your customers really want is control. The control to move to a webchat if they're busy and can't be on a call anymore, knowing that the agent on the other side already knows of their previous interaction and can continue helping them without having to start over.

By connecting your channels and allowing them to share data, your agents are more likely to deliver a personalised experience – another vital aspect to deliver better CX.

33%
of consumers who ended their relationship with a company last year did so because their experience wasn't personalised enough.[9]

Unfriendly support agents

It's hard enough to have an issue with a product or service, the last thing anyone needs is a grumpy agent who doesn't know how to deal with and disregards your problems.

It doesn't take long to realise how important your agent friendliness is to customers. Take a minute to visit the TrustPilot page of your favourite brand: you'll be flooded with either positive or negative reviews, the majority mentioning how cordial an agent was – regardless of whether the issue was resolved or not.

Agent friendliness and empathy shouldn't be underestimated.

Emotional connection to an organisation means customers:

have a **306%** higher lifetime value
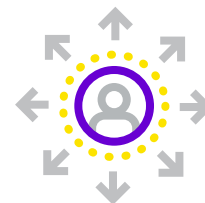
with **71%** recommending the organisation to their friends.[10]

Empathy

No matter how digital the world goes, customers still value the human touch as one of the top aspects of their experience. In a world where nothing is certain, your customers want you to understand their issues and empathise with them.

Empathy is not something any contact centre solution can bestow onto your agents, but it can still help them to add context to their interactions, to better understand your customers, and to ultimately provide them with more empathetic and intimate experiences.

To put it into perspective, consumers who **perceive your organisation as more human and empathetic** are **twice more likely to love your brand** and to be satisfied by it.[11]

The contact centre of the future

Just like customer requirements and demands have changed, so has the technology that can help your business give your customers what they want.

Obsolete, on-premise call centres, often disjointed from the rest of the business and incapable of meeting customer expectations, are a thing of the past.

Organisations hoping to win the CX battle should be looking at integrating a cloud-based omnichannel contact centre. Luckily, with the right partner, this isn't an unattainable option anymore.

A cloud contact centre solution is easier to deploy than its legacy counterparts, it doesn't require long-term CapEx investments, and it gives you the flexibility to scale depending on business needs.

With advanced features and tools, a cloud contact centre solution can solve all the challenges of the modern CX and help you keep your customers happy. The key to success is to identify the features that will make a difference to your CX strategy.

The contact centre of the future

Features that will help you thrive

Omnichannel

An omnichannel contact centre connects all your channels of communications to ensure a seamless and comprehensive experience for your customers, regardless of whether they interact with you by phone, email, or webchat.

Advanced queue management

Some customers might be vulnerable and will need to receive priority support. With advanced queue management, your agents can recognise VIP customers and prioritise them.

Call back

Having a call back feature means your customers won't have to wait on hold to reach you. Your solution should offer customers a call back at a time that suits them, fully respecting their time and schedule.

Intelligent routing

Intelligent routing can help you match customers with the best possible agent for their needs and improves first time fix rate. This can be based on skills or last spoken to agent.

Native CRM

Your agents need to have all the necessary information to help a customer quickly and accurately. By choosing a solution with a native CRM, you can gather useful information without having to employ another application. If you already use another CRM, you should be looking at a contact centre that can integrate with your software.

Integration with back-office

Contact centres are now a vital part of the business and as such, it's key they are fully integrated with your back-office. You should choose a solution that lets your agents easily collaborate with other business units.

Web-based interface

Especially in times of uncertainty, it's important to ensure your agents are able to work no matter where they are located. A web-based interface is the easiest way to give agents the ability to access the solution without having to download additional software.

Integrate with Microsoft Teams

Integrating with Microsoft Teams allowing for seamless communication and collaboration between agents and other team members, as well as efficient management of customer interactions. This can help improve customer service and support, increase productivity, and streamline operations. Additionally, since Teams is a widely used platform, it can be easily adopted by agents and other team members, minimising the need for additional training.

Conclusion

While customers are now more demanding than ever, meeting their growing requirements is becoming increasingly difficult.

To maintain and improve customer loyalty, your business needs to respect customer time, provide continuity of conversation across channels, and make sure that your agents can solve their problems as quickly and accurately as possible.

Getting it right is the only option. Customer experience has never been so important, yet many organisations are not equipped with the right solution to cope with ever-changing customer behaviours.

Recognising the benefits of a cloud-based omnichannel contact centre is vital to provide your business with the necessary competitive advantage.

From improved control and efficiency, to better agent engagement and business continuity, a cloud-based contact centre solution will make the difference between success and failure in today's digital economy.

> **" Getting it right is the only option. Customer experience has never been so important… "**

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