Cisco Contact Center
Global Survey 2020
Introduction

Today’s lightning speed competitive business environment is forcing contact centers to think outside the box and look for new and innovative ways to attain and retain customers.

At the same time, consumer expectations continue to rise, driven by technology advances and the vast amount of always-on digital channels available to them. In many cases, these digital interactions are outpacing human interactions, driving new ways of reaching, serving, and communicating with customers inside and outside the contact center.

Take a peek

The results of our survey gives us a peek at what contact center decision makers are thinking. What’s important to them and what keeps them up at night. How they’re keeping pace with demands of the business, customer expectations, and technological advances. Take a look at what we uncovered and let us know what you think.
Overview
Key findings
Top challenges in the contact center
Top capabilities
Customer experience
Agent experience
Artificial intelligence
Data-driven insights
Cloud transformation
Open architectures
Integrated communications suite
Challenges
70% view security policy management, enforcement and customer data privacy as the two top challenges in contact centers

Capabilities
Over 90% agree the most important capabilities for a contact center solution are intelligent routing, look/feel of UI, and integrated omni-channel

Cloud migration
62% plan to implement a cloud contact center within next 18 months

Artificial Intelligence
Over 80% consider BOTS and AI robotic automation to be an important function of the contact center

Customer experience
93% agree that technology is very important in creating a better customer experience

Agent experience
93% feel technology is highly important in creating better agent experiences

Data analytics
90% consider customer journey data analytics an important function of the contact center

Integrated product suite
94% consider it important to have all their communications and collaboration functions well integrated into a single complete offer from their contact center supplier
The contact center is one of the most **mission critical** customer-facing business functions. The majority of survey respondents agree these are the most significant problems to their contact center.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ensuring security policy management/enforcement</td>
<td>77%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ensuring customer data privacy</td>
<td>77%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Difficulty analyzing data</td>
<td>74%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agent turnover</td>
<td>73%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fragmented customer experiences</td>
<td>72%</td>
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Security policy management/enforcement and customer privacy
The contact center is one of the most mission critical customer-facing business functions and is often deemed “low hanging” fruit for fraud. Because contact centers process and store a great deal of customer information, in the cloud, contact center executives are challenged with staying on top of the latest security and privacy technologies and policies.

Difficulty analyzing data
Organizational data siloes continue to inhibit exposure to the full customer journey, making it impossible for contact centers to understand what their customers are experiencing. The need to consolidate customer journey data from all digital touchpoints and systems of records – in real time, is critical to improving customer loyalty, CES, NPS, and CSAT scores.

Agent turnover
Overwhelmed with too much information, technology and process issues, multiple disconnected applications, and lack of context about the customer has led to an increase in agent turnover resulting in time-consuming and costly onboarding costs.

Fragmented customer experiences
Poorly designed omni-channel experiences, unintelligent routing, and the inability for contact center staff to have convenient access to experts across the organization has resulted in fragmented customer experiences that result in high churn.
Top capabilities for contact centers

Over 90% of our survey respondents agree these are the 3 most important capabilities when selecting a contact center solution:

1. **Intelligent routing.** Precisely routing customers to the right resource with the right skills, the first time, plays a key role in the customer and agent experience.

2. **Integrated omni-channel.** Contact centers must allow their customers to reach them how they want, when they want, and over the channel of their choice.

3. **Look/feel of user interfaces.** Creating intuitive experiences for contact center staff enables them to stay engaged, minimizes screen-time burnout, and improves their overall productivity and efficiency.

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The focus on customer experience (CX) is at its all time high, and contact center executives clearly understand the impact this has on the success of their business.

Studies by industry thought leaders like Gartner, Forrester and McKinsey all indicate that how a company delivers goods and services to its customers is as important or more important than what it delivers.

But this is easier said than done. Adopting customer-centric processes, culture, and mind-set to implement and manage customer experience skillfully is challenging to most companies.

Fragmented customer experiences, siloed data, high agent turnover, lack of visibility into customer journey, and poor communications across the business remain some of the top challenges for contact centers in achieving their CX goals.
Customers are demanding better experiences

- 74% Feel agent experience has a significant impact on customer experience
- 79% Agree customer experience has a significant impact on business results (i.e. revenue or sales)
- 93% Agree technology is very important in creating a better customer experience
Innovation is viewed as critical for agent experience

Whether digital or human, agents are seen as the difference-makers in creating meaningful experiences for customers.

Our study revealed that ¾ of respondents feel that agent experience has a significant impact on customer experience.

Minimizing cumbersome, repetitive tasks, and equipping agents with AI-powered context and knowledge in real-time, empowers them to deliver timely and accurate responses customers expect.

Respondents indicate that improving agent morale and job satisfaction leads to reduced turnover which, as you can see, is super costly to the business.

Average cost to onboard an agent

Between $10K and $20K

Average time to onboard an agent

2 to 4 weeks
What frustrates agents?

Top 3 technology issues that frustrate agents

1.Disconnected back-end systems
2. Too many applications to use
3. Cumbersome desktop user interfaces

Top 3 business process issues that frustrate agents

1. Cumbersome and repetitive tasks involved in closing out tickets
2. Slow processes due to outdated technology
3. Too many steps involved in processes

Engage with agents quarterly to identify what’s working and what’s not
Agents rely heavily on technology to do their job well

- 92% Agree that user experiences are important to their agents
- 76% Agree that agents working through technology issues or process issues is their greatest challenge
- 93% Feel technology is highly important in creating better agent experiences
Artificial intelligence is key for augmenting the contact center

We’re in the midst of some of the greatest technological advances in artificial intelligence (AI) and its derivative technologies, including machine learning (ML) and natural language processing (NLP).

AI is being used in the contact center to amplify its performance, solving a number of problems, and creating efficiencies by offering new ways to automate tasks before, during and after the customer interaction.

Customers expect to have easy AI self-service options when doing business with a company. Yet we learned from our survey that only 48 percent of contact centers have deployed customer-facing chatbots.

Chatbots, conversational IVRs, and intelligent agents improve the agent-customer experience, helping to minimize agent burnout, while improving the quality of time spent with customers who need help from a human agent.
Consider BOTS and AI robotic automation to be an important function of the contact center.

Experience a reduction in call volumes when chatbots are deployed.

Say having too many manual processes and lack of automation is a significant problem in the contact center.

80%

70%

71%
What style of connection do you need?

When a customer has a bad experience, the business should know about it. Data analytics provides insights into a customer’s journey, behaviours and patterns and enables contact centers to become proactive versus reactive in delivering the experiences their customers expect and demand.

We learned from our survey that most contact center business leaders consider end-to-end real-time and historical reporting an important function of the contact center. And many indicate that the inability to track customer journey/history of interactions is a significant problem for the contact center.

Data, when combined with artificial intelligence, provides a powerful tool to enhance how contact centers engage with their customers proactively and uncover the “truth” of how customers are experiencing their brand. In this way, businesses can change those experiences to make them better and more profitable.
Consider customer journey data analytics an important function of the contact center.

Say that inability to track customer journey/history of interactions is a significant problem for the contact center.

Consider end-to-end real-time and historical reporting an important function of the contact center.

Over half of companies are sharing contact center data analytics with their CEO.

Data-driven insights are central to the business.
How soon do you plan to implement a cloud-based contact center?

- Already have implemented: 28%
- Within the next 6 months: 35%
- Between 6-18 months from now: 27%
- More than 18 months from now: 5%
- No current plans to transition to cloud: 5%

62% plan to implement a cloud contact center within the next 18 months.

The cloud transition is happening now.
Top 3 reasons for transitioning their contact center to the cloud:

1. Easier to manage and scale
2. Keep software current at all times
3. Continuous feature delivery of advanced capabilities
Some businesses have near and long-term plans to move to the cloud.

However, due to the large investments made in contact center technology and integrations, and due to migration complexity, many are thinking about how, when, or if they should go to cloud.

This trend holds across segments and geographies.

Contact centers see strong incentives for moving to cloud

Top 3 business outcomes expected from moving their contact center to the cloud

1. Improved IT efficiency
2. Better customer experience
3. Enhanced agent productivity
Contact centers view seamless integration to cloud services as highly important

Those who own their contact center system agree seamless integration and access to cloud services is highly important.

Top 3 reasons why some contact centers have no current plans to transition to the cloud:

1. We want to maintain control
2. We are too invested in on-premises
3. Complexity involved in transitioning to cloud
An open platform is essential for contact center integration with applications

- **80%**
  - Consider having Integration with a voice (PBX) communication system and UCC (messaging) system important to the contact center

- **67%**
  - Contact centers are connected to three or more systems and applications

- **2/3**
  - Contact centers are integrated with other business applications such as CRM, ERP, and ticketing
True productivity gains require a fully integrated product suite

70%
Say poor communication across organizations is a significant problem in their contact center

94%
Consider it important to have all collaboration functions well integrated into a single complete offer from their contact center supplier

Businesses are seeing that many contact center interactions are requiring real-time expertise beyond the contact center to the rest of the organization, including experts and teams.

But most organizations have a proliferation of disjointed communication, messaging and collaboration tools that are not integrated with the contact center. This in fact worsens agent workloads, amplifies organizational silos and strains IT resources.
Contact centers depend on subject matter experts

Top 3 reasons for integrating the contact center with UC and collaboration systems

1. Having easy directory and chat integration to be able to reach subject matter experts (SME) with a single click
2. Being able to consult a SME via chat during calls with customers
3. Being able to screen-share with SME to view information relevant to the call
Cloud is the vehicle for innovation. Chart your course in three critical areas.

1. **Agent innovation**: Enhance and augment their experiences with an eye on retention.

2. **Journey and sentiment analytics**: Leverage data-driven and cloud-powered insights to understand how your customer relationships stand.

3. **Self-service and exception management**: Build the business case for new forms of self-service with the understanding that human assisted exceptions will become the norm.

**Three actions to consider**
Cisco is a global leader in cloud contact centers, delivering the most complete contact center portfolio, combined with world-class cloud calling, meetings, team collaboration, and customer experience management solutions, and the most advanced audio/video devices and headsets.

Cisco is the market-share leader for contact centers. We’re number one in North America and number two worldwide. We have more than 30,000 loyal customers and more than 3 million agents installed globally.

Our cloud solution is based on Webex, one of the world’s best known, scalable, and reliable cloud platforms. Cisco releases a significant cloud update every month and a major on-prem update semi-annually, advancing our commitment to providing all customers advanced technology and business success.

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