



WHITE PAPER

Contact center trends: delivering better business results

In recent years, contact center technologies have made tremendous gains in cutting organizational costs and increasing efficiency. In today's world, however, they need to take on a more strategic role. Improving agent performance tracking can help enterprise employees increase customer satisfaction while helping companies meet overall business goals.

Contact Center Pipeline partnered with Cisco to examine how contact centers are measuring agent performance. The survey gathered leaders' insights on how well their metrics align with business objectives. The results revealed two interesting trends. First, most centers measure agent metrics. Providing them with opportunities for further training and for matching agents with specific types of customers for a better outcome. Second, agent performance indicators aren't necessarily in line with strategic business objectives.

Take a look at the metrics to see how your company can benefit

Survey participants used a variety of key performance metrics (KPIs) to rate agent performance. By and large, contact centers are happy with the performance metrics they use for individual agents.

Participants at all types of contact centers—customer support, technical support, and

sales—cited call quality as a crucial measure of agent performance, with 95% describing it as very effective or somewhat effective. 81% listed first-call resolution as a very or somewhat effective agent metric, and 91% said customer satisfaction surveys were very or somewhat effective.

While call quality remains the #1 KPI measured, companies are largely moving away from this metric as a way of tracking agent productivity. Usage has dropped 66.49%.

Business goals need to be aligned to agent performance metrics:

Just

61%

of centers felt customer satisfaction ratings correlated well with company business goals.

Less than

60%

believed call quality metrics correlated well.

And just

49%

saw a strong connection for first-call resolution.

Mapping agent Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to business goals

Operational KPIs are still being used more than business related KPIs such as revenue and conversion by agent.

	Map Well	Somewhat Map	Don't Map Well	Don't Map At All
Number of Calls	37%	39%	17%	7%
Length of Calls	35%	44%	15%	6%
First-call resolution	49%	35%	13%	3%
Customer satisfaction survey rating	61%	27%	10%	2%
Call quality	59%	29%	9%	3%
Number of sales/upsells*	47%	33%	14%	6%
Total sales revenue*	45%	32%	13%	10%
Avg. sale revenue per conversion*	35%	40%	17%	8%
Avg. sales revenue per call*	41%	33%	18%	8%

*Sales mapping ranking is based on input from a smaller subset of participants that have a sales function

How are agents delivering desired business outcomes?

Contact centers are now capable of delivering key insights that can improve customer loyalty, business growth, and innovation. Social media has amplified the customer's voice to a degree businesses can't afford to ignore. Providing outstanding service has never been so important.

As Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos has said, "The most important single thing is to focus obsessively on the customer. If you make a customer unhappy, they won't tell 5 friends, they'll tell 5,000 friends."

If centers tracked their existing metrics better, they would likely experience better alignment with business goals, as well as better individual call outcomes. These lessons reveal a critical best practice: Stop designing networks around service offerings and technology limitations and let function drive form. More often than not, that means additional segmentation.

A better way of tracking agent performance

Most contact centers use multiple, disconnected systems to track agent performance. Fewer than a third of organizations polled use an application to integrate this data. Instead, many waste time transferring it into Excel spreadsheets.

Less than a quarter of call centers obtain a real time view of their operations, preventing them from making agile decisions that could improve agent-customer interactions on the fly.

Only

27%

of participants described their data collecting process as very effective.

Aligning agents with customers

Collecting and analyzing agent performance data can lead to outstanding results if it's done right. One of the most effective things you can do is route calls to the agents best suited to handle them. In the survey, 57% of large, multiple-site centers employed that technique, while most single-site centers continued to use traditional routing processes, directing calls to the next available or least busy agent or using a round robin system.

Centers using agent performance data to route calls to the best available agent said the process mapped well to their company's business goals. With Cloud Contact Centers, organizations can choose among many criteria to determine what "best available agent" means to them. Many base these decisions on the kind of skills and training required for the call. Others make choices based on the communication channel, e.g., voice, chat, or email. Still others use customer account status or customer value.



Routing strategies used to match callers to agents

Routing Strategy	Overall	Single Site	Multisite
Next available agent	87%	89%	84%
Most idle agent	68%	66%	70%
Round robin	59%	43%	38%
Best available agent	52%	49%	57%

If you're not sure what to do, you can experiment with different protocols and measure results for the most positive outcomes.

Getting agents the information they need

To make customers happy and stand the best chance of solving problems on the first call, agents need quick and easy access to company subject matter experts, who are often outside the contact center.

The study revealed that at many centers, agents have no idea where subject matter experts are or when they might be available. Only 15% of survey participants said agents had “complete visibility” into experts’ schedules.

Today’s cutting-edge cloud contact centers incorporate enterprise unified communication tools which allows agents to instantly see the availability of people they need to contact and choose the means of communication that work best for them. These enterprise-grade features help speed up calls and improve problem resolution.



More Findings:

- More and more companies have multiple systems and initiatives underway to automate the data transport between disparate systems, yet dissatisfaction with these strategies has INCREASED
- Many organizations are decreasing emphasis on weekly reporting, finding that real-time and daily reporting is the only way to truly keep routing and call handling strategies aligned with customer demands

Can you relate to these changing trends?

About Masergy

Masergy is the software-defined network and cloud platform for the digital enterprise. Recognized as the pioneer in software-defined networking, Masergy enables unrivaled application performance across the network and the cloud with Managed SD-WAN, UCaaS, CCaaS, and Managed Security solutions. Industry-leading SLAs coupled with an unparalleled customer experience enable global enterprises to achieve business outcomes with certainty.