EMPOWER YOUR CUSTOMER SERVICE ORGANIZATION

How small and medium businesses can create stronger customer engagement using a cloud contact center

8x8 Communications Cloud

For customer service and sales, handling inbound calls is critical to the organization. The way your teams handle the call and the experience the customer has on the phone can have a major impact on how customers perceive your company. It can make the difference between a great company and a fair one.

Whether you're taking product orders over the phone, solving customer problems, or handling other customer needs, it's critical that inbound calls get routed to the right customer service representative (or agent) quickly—before customers become frustrated—and that agents have the capabilities they need to provide the best possible customer experience.

A modern contact center can help companies of all sizes deliver fast and prompt service, creating delightful customer experiences that differentiate your business from others. And modern contact centers are not exclusive to large enterprises. Thanks to the cloud, small businesses and small teams now have new, easy-to-use, and affordable options when it comes to deploying a superior contact center.

No longer do you have to contend with the complexity and capital costs of deploying on-premises contact center systems, the headaches and operating costs of maintaining legacy systems, or the unpredictable customer experience of an outsourced contact center.

The right cloud-based contact center solution can have a measurable impact on your bottom line by reducing your costs, maximizing employee productivity, and providing an exceptional customer service experience. And for companies that have never considered a contact center before, it can provide an easy and affordable way to get started. This white paper outlines the benefits of a cloud-based contact center and explores the features your company or team should look for in a solution.

The Benefits of a Cloud-Based Contact Center for Customer Service

A cloud-based contact center can be a game-changer for small businesses and teams. In fact, the majority of small and medium-size companies are transitioning from on-premises contact center models to cloud-based models.[1] According to a recent study, the cloud-based contact center market is projected to grow from $5.4 billion in 2016 to over $15 billion by 2021.[1] That's because the benefits of a cloud-based solution outshine most other options.

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

With a cloud-based contact center solution, agents can satisfy more customers in less time. Smart call routing can help connect customers to the right agent quickly, improving customer satisfaction and helping to drive revenue.

AGENT PRODUCTIVITY

By equipping agents with the right tools, a cloud-based contact center solution can boost agent performance. Agents can make, receive, or transfer calls and communicate with your customers effectively, while call monitoring and reporting options help organizations quickly address training problems and drive performance improvement. With a cloud-based contact center solution, workforce optimization becomes affordable and practical for smaller companies.

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FLEXIBILITY AND SCALABILITY

With some cloud-based contact center solutions, your business pays only for what it uses—no more, no less. Gone are the days of buying perpetual licenses, many of which sat dormant. As the business need arises, you can instantly scale your contact center to support more agents with little to no incremental professional services costs.

CUSTOMER CONTEXT

Cloud-based contact centers that provide built-in integration with customer relationship management (CRM) and customer service systems such as Salesforce and Zendesk put customer information at your team's fingertips. Agents can use details pulled from your CRM system to help provide context for the call and facilitate problem solving and other customer service activities.

LOW COST OF OWNERSHIP

A cloud-based contact center removes the need for costly onsite equipment and reduces or even eliminates the burden on your IT department. Organizations can immediately shift contact center expenses from Capex to Opex, save on the costs of software licenses, and opt for a pay-as-you-go model based on usage, matching resources with actual need.
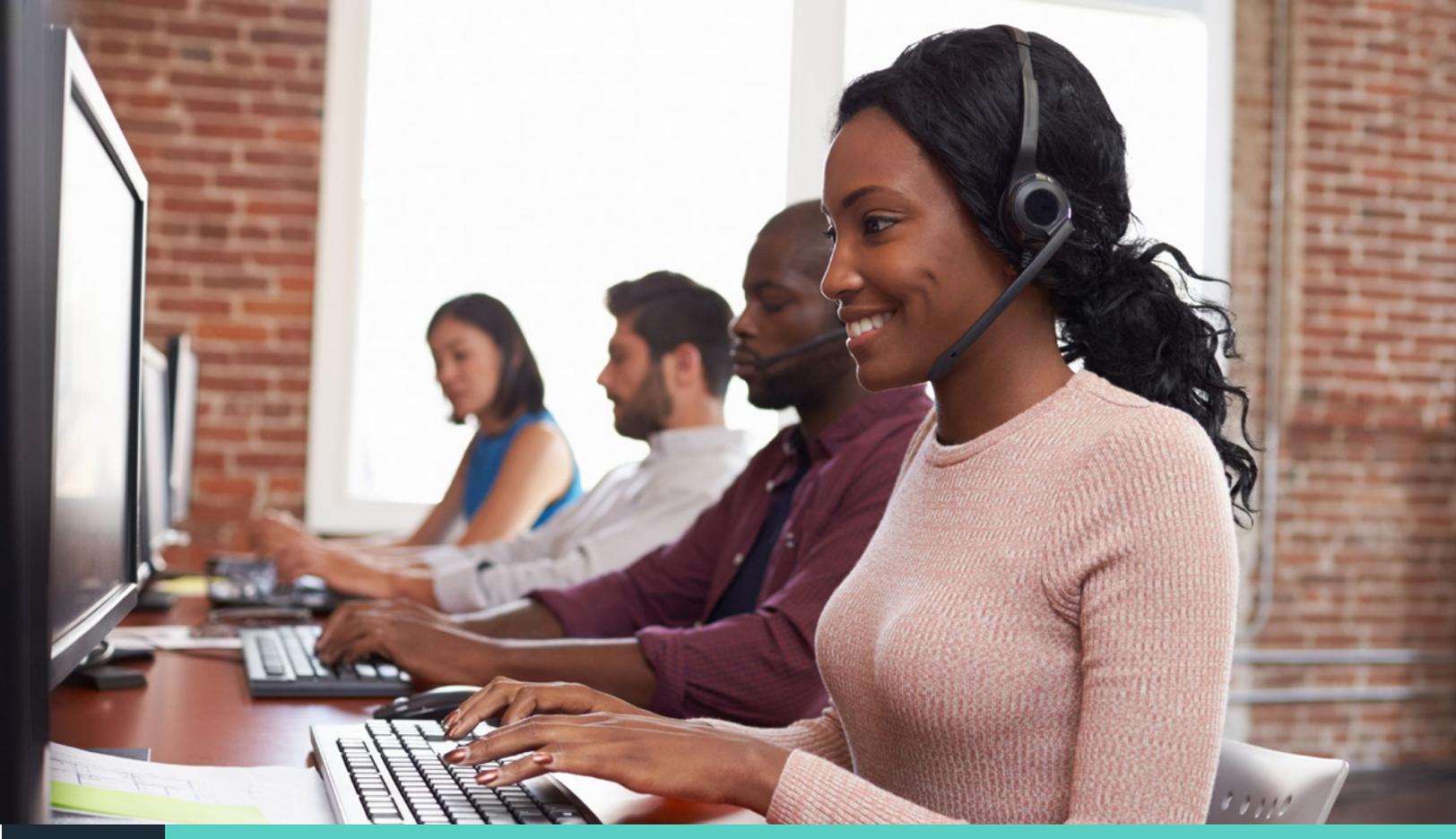
EASE OF IMPLEMENTATION

Cloud-based contact center solutions can offer quick setup and management through web-based interfaces. Organizations can also utilize advanced contact center technologies and implement new features along the way without bearing the overhead, complexity, and operational disruptions typically associated with onsite upgrades.

REAL-TIME ANALYTICS

Real-time data provides the ability to gain insights into how agents are performing. With real-time reporting, a company can improve agent performance as well as overall call results. With real-time and historical data at your fingertips, you can transform your contact center into a customer service center of excellence.

FEATURES OF CLOUD-BASED CONTACT CENTERS

- Inbound calling (with skills-based routing and automated workflows)

- Customizable interactive voice response (IVR)

- CRM integrations that provide customer context

- Scalability and flexibility

- The ability to record every interaction

- A focus on agent performance as opposed to system maintenance

- Web interface allows work-anywhere flexibility for remote workers

- Outbound calling with multiple dialing modes

- Options for seamlessly transitioning between inbound and outbound calling

- Easy-to-use, web-based interfaces

- Quick deployment

- No hardware investment

- Easy feature upgrades

- Enhanced business continuity and disaster recovery

- Reduced in-house IT burden

What to Look for in a Solution

The right cloud-based contact center solution depends on the specific features your organization needs. Here are some features to look for:

EASE OF SETUP

Simple setup will allow you to get your contact center up and running quickly and with minimal or no effort from the IT team, so you can start seeing a faster return on investment.

ADVANCED CALL ROUTING

Your cloud-based contact center should allow you to implement customized, advanced call routing so your customers reach the right agent quickly and easily, helping to drive customer satisfaction and revenue.

EASY ADMINISTRATION

After setting up the system, easy administration means that nearly anyone can maintain and manage the system with little or minimal training, saving valuable time.

SCALABILITY AND FLEXIBILITY

Contact centers often have variable call loads that fluctuate over time depending on seasonality or business activities. Your cloud-based solution should make it easy to add additional capacity, allowing you to scale up or down to expand your business based on customer demand.

COMBINED INBOUND AND OUTBOUND CALLING

By combining inbound and outbound calling capabilities in one solution, you can save money, streamline administration, and make best use of your contact center resources.

POWERFUL MANAGEMENT TOOLS

Management tools allow organizations to improve customer engagement, helping to create the exact agent workflow and customer experience you need.

REAL-TIME REPORTING AND MONITORING

This feature should provide a real-time dashboard with status reports, alerts, and other critical information that can be accessed from any device, so you'll always have your finger on the pulse of your contact center.

CALL MONITORING

Call monitoring should allow you to listen to calls as they happen, enabling supervisors to provide one-to-one assistance when needed.

CALL RECORDING

Call recording, and cloud storage of those recordings, means you'll have a copy of every call, whether for training purposes or for troubleshooting if a problem arises.

REAL-TIME ANALYTICS

By having instant access to customer information, call activity, and agent performance, you can make better decisions about how to allocate resources for your contact center. Since cloud-based contact centers are subscription-based, often with a pay-as-you-go plan, understanding your activity levels and agent performance will let your organization downsize when appropriate—and upsize to handle increased traffic.

Enterprise Technology That's Built for Small and Medium Businesses

In today's ultra-connected world, customer service staff can communicate with your customers in a number of impersonal ways. But hearing an actual voice is an easy, proven way to build and reinforce those relationships, make impersonal transactions more personal, and build the customer trust that's necessary for business success.

Effective contact centers can help. A contact center built on cloud-based technology offers everything a smaller organization needs at a fraction of the cost—while increasing productivity and driving revenue. And a cloud-based solution eliminates the headaches and unknowns of managing a contact system by providing easy-to-use management tools as well as visibility into contact center activities.

8x8: An All-Inclusive Solution

Are you ready to boost your customer service team's productivity without burdening IT? 8x8 ContactNow™ contact center is built on a scalable cloud platform that provides all of the features we've explored—and more—so your contact center will meet the specific needs of your business. This solution enables a variety of easy-to-use and fully customizable tools to launch a contact center right from your browser, exactly the way you want it.

Getting started is easy. Add agents, set up queues, and import customer data and you're ready to go. Pay-as-you-go pricing and monthly renewals allow you to add resources during busy times and scale down during lulls.

With 8x8 ContactNow, you get an easy-to-use, web-based, drag and drop IVR system and advanced skills-based routing that enable quick and powerful customer engagement. You also get an intuitive, easy-to-use web interface that increases agent productivity and improves key performance indicators, and a robust dashboard and reporting engine that provides critical insights into employee and contact center activity.

Best of all, 8x8 ContactNow combines both inbound calling for customer service and outbound calling for sales in one solution, allowing you to optimize your contact center resources.

Ready to get started?
8x8.com/contactnow

8x8 Communications Cloud

SOURCE:

[1] "Cloud-Based Contact Center Market by Solution (Dialers, Reporting, and analytics), Service (Professional and Managed), Application, Deployment Model, Organization size, Industry vertical, and Region - Global Forecast to 2021," *MarketsandMarkets*, November 2016.
http://www.marketsandmarkets.com/Market-Reports/cloud-based-contact-center-market-160166082.html