

The CX Strategy



AI Ignites Call Center Performance

By: Etech




THE CX STRATEGY
AI IGNITES CALL CENTER
PERFORMANCE



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Featuring the Insights from:



Jim Iyooob
Chief Customer Officer

Jim is a 33-year veteran of the call center/BPO industry. His responsibilities for Etech include strategy, marketing, business development, IT, program implementation, operational excellence, and product development across all Etech's existing lines of business – Etech, Etech Insights, Etech Technology Solutions (ETS), and Etech Social Media Solutions. He is passionate, driven, and an energetic business leader with a strong desire to remain ahead of the curve in outsourcing solutions and service delivery. Jim has an impeccable track record of innovation and advanced business intelligence. He has been instrumental in setting up services for customers needing quick solutions for their daily customer experience needs. This has helped him develop, implement, and retain some of the most successful, award-winning programs that deliver consistent ROI.



Shawndra Tobias
Vice President,
Customer Experience

Shawndra Tobias is Vice President of Customer Experience. Prior to this role, Shawndra has served in various roles including OSS Reporting Specialist, Project Lead, Account Leader, Sr. Director Customer Experience, and AVP - CX. In her role as Vice President, Shawndra is responsible to develop and lead the Etech Insights division, as well as continuing to develop relationships and support of all Etech's teams. Shawndra also continues to determine call center operational strategies by conducting needs assessments, performance reviews, capacity planning, and cost/benefit analysis; identifying and evaluating state-of-the-art technologies; defining user requirements; establishing technical specifications, and production, productivity, quality, and customer-service standards; contributing information and analysis to organizational strategic plans and reviews.

Executive Summary

Improving customer experiences is one of the important areas of focus for leading brands. While it is the responsibility of the entire organization to ensure quality customer experiences for sales and support services, the frontline team, being contact center agents, are the first line of defense.

In this modern era, pricing or products are no longer key differentiators, but rather, it is the overall experience provided by brands which make a remarkable difference for their customers.

Technology helps organizations improve customer loyalty and customer experiences, without compromising on operational efficiency.

Agents working in call centers collect huge sets of information as they gather critical customer insights, such as voice of customer, understanding their requirements, drivers of customer experience, and so on. While this information is valuable for making strategic decisions, valuable data is often overlooked, unless there is a partnership between experience and technology.

In this whitepaper, we will discuss the impact of AI on different functional areas of contact centers, including:



**CUSTOMER SERVICE
EXPERIENCE**



OPERATIONS



**CUSTOMER
ENGAGEMENT**



**WORKFORCE
MANAGEMENT**



**SALES &
MARKETING**



**SECURITY &
COMPLIANCE**



The global contact center software market size was valued at USD 20.5 billion in 2020 and is expected to expand at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 21.1% from 2021 to 2028.

- Grandview Research, Contact Center Software Market Size, Jan 2021

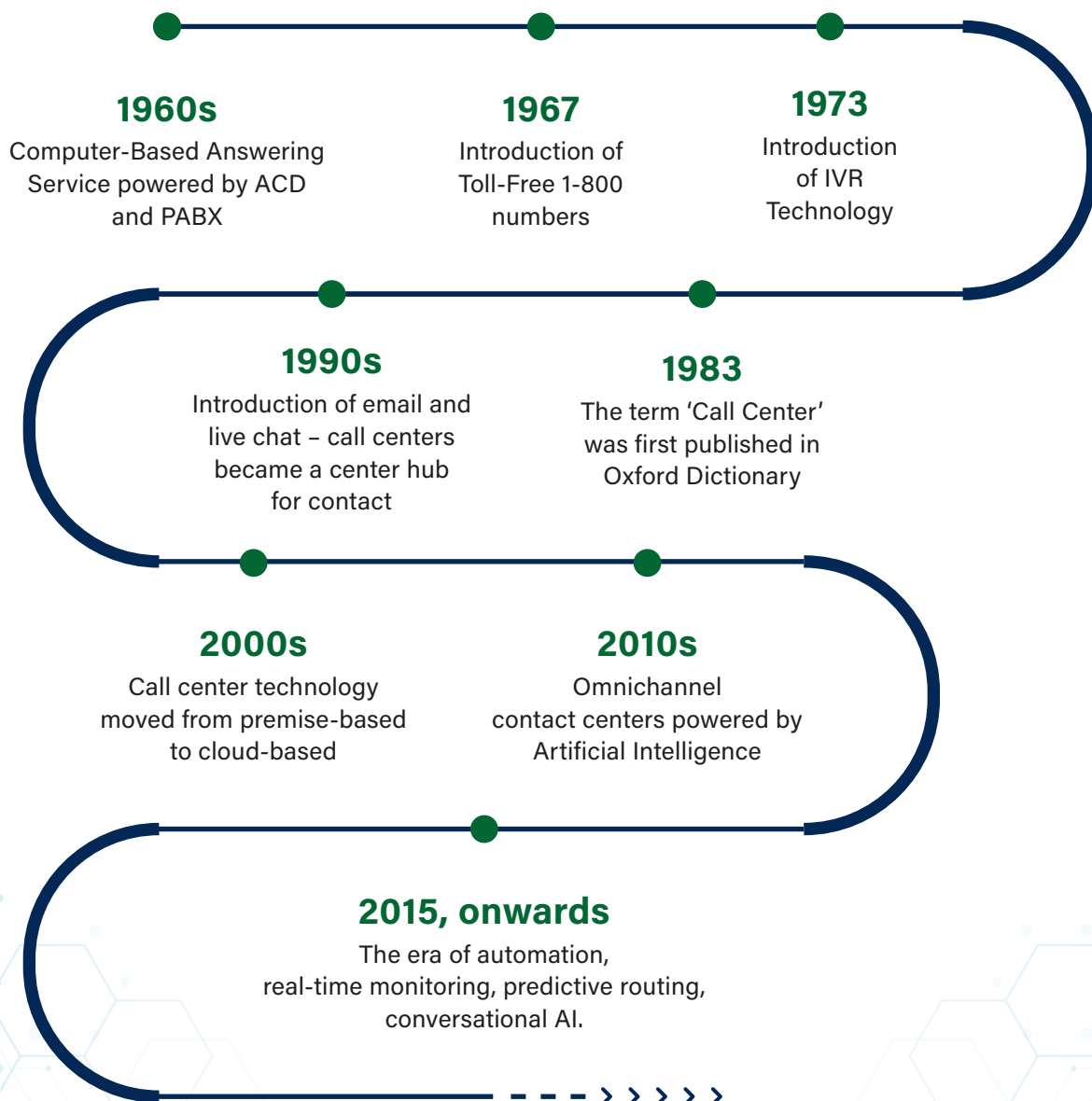
Journey from Call Centers to Contact Centers

What started in the 1960s, as merely having an answering service for attending to phone calls after business hours, has evolved into call centers having strategic business functions for building a strong customer base.

Contact centers are now an essential element for Customer Relationship Management departments to get insights into customer sentiments, behavior, listening to the voice of customers, improving brand loyalty, and making strategic business decisions.

With the advent of Industry 4.0, technologies such as Artificial Intelligence are fueling the growth of contact centers with call center software markets growing at a rapid pace.

How Contact Centers are Evolved Since Inception?



Contact Center Process Optimization powered by AI

Artificial Intelligence is playing a key role in transforming present-day contact centers into experience centers. It not only optimizes existing call center processes to improve productivity, but also widens their scope, by making contact centers a strategic source of information regarding customer expectations.

Let's look at the impact AI will have on different contact center processes.

Impact of AI in Enhancing Customer Service Experience

Generate Data-Driven Actionable Customer Insights

- AI provides in-depth customer insights on brand perception, purchasing behavior, customer journey, etc.
- Brands can provide Omnichannel CX with access to previous conversations.
- With access to customer behavioral patterns, brands can proactively provide custom tailor-made solutions.

Quick 24*7 Support

- Customers prefer receiving quick responses. Brands can automate responses for common concerns using different self-service channels, such as IVR or AI-powered chatbots, ensuring customer concerns are resolved right on-time.
- While a chatbot or IVR resolves common concerns, human agents can focus on conversations requiring a human touch and people skills, improving customer experiences as well as entire team's productivity.

Prevent Issues before they arise

- AI empowers brands to provide proactive customer service.
- Integrated AI technology alerts customers about instances, such as order delivery, bill payment, order tracking or delivery status etc., beforehand, to avoid customer frustration experienced if not communicated well in advance.
- This not only improves customer effort scores and satisfaction rates but also prevents conversations that do not require a customer to call the contact center.

Improving Call Center Efficiency with AI

Demand Forecasting

- By understanding customer behavioral patterns, including purchasing habits, analytics can accurately predict future demands.
- These actionable insights improve operational efficiency of the organization, including supply chain, operations, sales, marketing, etc.
- All departments can utilize these insights for proper planning, distribution, preventing errors, and reducing unnecessary workflows.

Improve Agent Efficiency

- The latest innovative technologies have transformed agent evaluations from a checkbox approach to providing detailed performance insights.
- With real-time quality monitoring through speech analytics, contact center leaders can help agents when they need help the most, i.e., while interacting with customers.
- Speech analytics further identify precise areas of opportunities for target coaching the agents through gamification, self-learning, and other visual/auditory based learning from an integrated knowledgebase, call library, or learning management systems.

Automating Different Processes

- With the help of AI, contact centers can automate many aspects of various processes, such as call center quality monitoring, responding to common customer concerns through self-service, identifying agent opportunities, coaching, etc.
- AI also automates mundane tasks, such as generating actionable insights without human intervention. These insights can be combined with human intelligence for maximum data output.



Effective Customer Engagement with Conversational AI

Integrated Omnichannel CX

- AI-powered applications can be seamlessly integrated for visibility of all customer interactions across different channels.
- Agents will be equipped with detailed information on customer behavioral patterns, ticket history, or previous interactions that can help them devise targeted strategies to effectively serve their customers.
- Reduce customer frustration caused by having them repeat their concerns to multiple contact center agents.

Provide Personalized Customer Experiences

- Based on previous interactions with brands, AI creates customer personas, through which brands can provide personalized customer experiences.
- Tracking customer behavior patterns on websites also empowers brands to provide custom triggers, asking them questions and effectively engaging customers.
- AI Chatbots serve as customer guides when they are on your website.

Improve Self-Service

- With self-service analytics, AI can provide insights in the areas which can be automated through self-service platforms, such as IVR, Chatbot, integrated knowledgebases, or any other virtual assistants.
- AI further identifies common friction points in the self-service journey, to optimize the process, reduce agent routing, and provide quick resolutions to the customers.



Streamline Workforce Management with AI

Scheduling

- With the help of AI, contact center leaders can identify timings when the interaction frequency is less, for scheduling off-phone tasks, such as employee engagement activities, coaching, training etc., or optimizing breaks and lunch hours.
- Integrating communication services with scheduling can further provide alerts and notifications in real-time through emails or texts in case there are any updates in scheduling.

Forecasting

- The AI-powered technology can also look up past trends when the interaction volume was high and predict future demands.
- Forecasting and scheduling can be done more frequently to ensure on-time identification and resolution in case of any staffing fluctuation.

Reporting

- Visual real-time reporting helps contact center leaders stay constantly updated on the current status of their contact center.
- With real-time updates on schedule analytics, adherence monitoring & violation, intraday performance etc., executives can make well-informed data-driven decisions.

Improve the efficiency of Sales & Marketing through AI

Optimizing Sales Efficiency

- Technology can help in identifying critical behaviors responsible for driving sales.
- By focusing on critical behaviors, leaders can add-in their recommendations and training programs can be designed for training agents on those behaviors and driving sales numbers.

Improving Marketing Efficiency

- AI-powered insights empower lead generation by identifying key points that drive sales numbers.
- With the help of these insights, marketers can frame custom offers for encouraging customers to make a purchase.

Promotion Study

- Before rolling out a large promotion campaign, brands can perform a small pilot run to measure the promotion effectiveness, with the help of AI.
- With voice of customer analytics, AI identifies customer responses based on what they say and how they say.
- These insights can help agencies optimize their promotion statement in order to generate interest among their customers.

Combat Compliance Violations in Real-Time

Real-Time Compliance Monitoring

- AI-Powered interaction analytics automates the entire compliance check process and improves the efficiency of your team. Hence, round-the-clock monitoring and continuous compliance checks are not required.
- This not only keeps your organization in control but also prevents those hefty fines and damages due to compliance violations.

Real-Time Alerts for Compliance Violations

- Not only does AI monitor & automate compliance checks, it also provides updates whenever an agent demonstrates non-compliant behaviors.
- These alerts can empower call center leaders to act immediately and hold the person accountable.



Measuring the ROI of AI Implementation

Digitalization is optimizing existing processes in many businesses. Adopting a new technology demands sheer determination, effective change management, and decent user adoption. However, one of the key aspects often overlooked, is measuring the Return on Investment (ROI). AI's core value is to drive business success. Any technology initiative is incomplete without identifying measurable benefits.

Artificial Intelligence benefits the organization in two ways:

1. Reducing the Expense
2. Increasing the Revenue

How does AI reduce for contact center's operational cost?

As contact center leaders look to capitalize on AI initiatives, it is critical to determine the ways to predict the future, identify the areas in which an investment should be targeted, and enable better performances by enhancing capabilities. Here are some key areas where AI makes a major impact to reduce operational costs:

- Reduced Monitoring for Continuous Compliance Checks
- Avoiding Non-Compliance Regulatory Fines and Damages
- Reducing Call Volume
- Eliminating Unnecessary Callbacks
- Increasing Self-Service
- Reducing time spent on each call
- Reducing Training & Turnover Cost

Increasing Contact Center Revenue with Speech Analytics

Artificial Intelligence not only reduces contact center expenses but also empowers revenue generation streams. From improving sales conversions to increasing debt collection ratios, here are some major areas where AI makes a remarkable difference.

- Enhanced contacts
- Increased Sales Conversions
- Higher Debt Collection Ratios
- Improved Customer Service Evaluations
- Competitive Edge by Quick Responses
- Reduced Customer Churn

How to successfully execute any AI initiative?

In the era of Industry 4.0, organizations are looking forward to finding solutions that can resolve their current challenges. While people are reducing their expenses, it is of utmost importance to keep customer satisfaction rates at a high level.

The Black Swan events, such as COVID, depict the significance of digital tools that provide insights on customer behavior and ways to enhance the customer experience. There are companies overhauling their current scenarios. The following is a step-by-step process on how they are doing it:

1. Alignment with Business Goals

The approach for digitization shouldn't be myopic or just getting past an existing crisis. What things are required to digitalize? Is it Operations? or Quality? or Sales? or Marketing? Based on your specific requirements, you must identify where digitization is most needed and align the initiatives with your business goals.

2. Set Objectives & Goals

Chart out your existing and desirable processes with digital tools. Are there any gaps? If so, resolve them. Without aligning your As-Is and To-Be business processes, your digital transformation may fail!

Further, define your objectives and goals for the AI initiative. This will help you effectively frame an appropriate plan of action to achieve certain benchmarks.

3. Prioritize your Initiatives based on ROI

How would you measure the success of your AI initiative? What are the benchmarks and what numbers will define success or failure? Compare the returns with the investment on AI and ensure the process is optimized whenever required.



4. Aligning Cross-Functional Teams and Effective Change Management

Any digital initiative fails without participation from employees. So, bring all your team to the table, demonstrate the benefits of technology to them, offer them help to adopt the technology, and guide them till they become well-versed. This is the key to success of any digital transformation initiative.

5. Emphasize on Data Security

For organizations going digital, the main concern is data security. In this era, a data breach can have a huge impact on a company's reputation, revenue, and customers. Organizations should choose wisely when selecting a solution provider that stores data on a secured cloud, making sure they provide excellent data security.

6. Transforming the initiatives into a Long-Term approach

The approach for digitization shouldn't be just pre-emptive measures. Companies must have a long-term approach for continuous optimization of business processes. A long-term approach will likely result in the automation of repetitive tasks, seamless connectivity, and safeguarding critical data while working remotely.

AI backed technologies, such as IoT, Machine Learning, Big Data Analytics, etc., are continuously growing and fueling these trends. Organizations must effectively plan and prioritize their digital initiatives for business continuity. It will not only provide them substantial growth but also a competitive edge over other brands.



About Etech

Etech Global Services is a servant leader organization committed to making a remarkable difference for each other, our customers, and within our communities. Etech offers a variety of services that includes inbound and outbound customer care, quality monitoring and analytics, email, live chat, technical support, back-office support, and software development. Our current partnerships with more than 70 companies includes managing upwards of 100 million voice interactions, 25 million chat & email interactions, and 24 million quality monitoring evaluations per year.

Etech launched in 2003 with only 400 employees and a single contact center in Nacogdoches, Texas. Over the last 18 years, we have expanded our range of services and have grown to include more than 3,400 employees and nine (9) state-of-the-art contact centers on three countries, with six onshore (U.S.), one nearshore, and two offshore locations. All of this has been accomplished without the need for mergers or acquisitions.

Etech's company partnerships have benefited from our proven track record of creating improved customer experiences, enhanced customer satisfaction and advocacy, increased conversion rates, higher net promoter scores, and stronger customer relationships.

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