foundever® | CCW CUSTOMER CONTACT WEEK DIGITAL

Beyond the contact center

Reimagining 5 CX principles in 2025 and beyond

Create connection.
Value conversation.

Introduction

All major businesses know they have an obligation to provide customer service. The best ones embrace that obligation as an opportunity to improve customer relationships, energize employees and elevate brand value.

To support those customer-centric organizations— and convince doubters to rally behind this admirable mindset—CCW and Foundever spent 2024 collaborating on the Contact Center Elevation Series.

Featuring research, analyst commentary and practical recommendations, the series uncovered steps for revising contact center metrics, rethinking employee engagement initiatives and unlocking actionable customer intelligence. Upon implementing the recommendations, brands will meaningfully elevate their operations and achieve long-elusive contact center excellence.

Savvy organizations will not, however, treat the steps as insular objectives. They will instead look beyond the contact center, leveraging the recommendations for overarching customer experience and greater business success.

As the final phase of our Elevation Series, the following briefing further empowers that bigger picture approach. It reframes five common "contact center goals" against the backdrop of true business transformation.

01 Treat the contact center as a value center, not a cost center

THE NEW VISION

The ability to increase customer lifetime value is important, but it greatly understates the contact center's potential to elevate the business.

One of the biggest opportunities? Customer intelligence. As the gateway to understanding who customers are, why they are engaging and what they are experiencing, the contact center stands to uncover critical business intelligence. This data can drive everything from hiring strategies, to branding and marketing efforts, to sales strategies, to product development.

Contact center leaders are readily aware of this opportunity, with 90% hoping the data they capture will drive business decisions in 2025. Unfortunately, only 18% are presently excelling at customer intelligence initiatives, underscoring the need to invest in better tools and partner with data-driven organizations.

Another key opportunity concerns leveraging the customer service experience as a selling point.

The overwhelming majority of contact centers are failing to deliver fast, frictionless and personalized experiences, and 55% of consumers say brand interactions regressed in 2024. A contact center that bucks this trend will not only enjoy higher customer satisfaction scores but distance itself from the competition and gain considerable brand cachet.

THE BACKSTORY

Contact center leaders have long argued that their department is a "value center" rather than a "cost center."

To demonstrate this value, they have often focused on the contact center's ability to generate revenue through upsell and cross-sell opportunities. They have also stressed that a compelling customer support experience rebuilds customer trust, turning would-be detractors into continued buyers and advocates.

Knowing the premium today's customers place on great experiences, the organization's marketing team can trumpet stellar service quality as a powerful brand differentiator. It can use the assurance of customer centricity as a way to build recognition and trust in an ever-crowded, hypercompetitive market.

Positive word-of-mouth will amplify this messaging, resulting in a powerful reputational benefit. Beyond attracting new customers, this favorable status will help the organization recruit high-caliber employees and cultivate meaningful industry partnerships.

02 Deliver a proactive support experience

THE NEW VISION

Unfortunately, the typical organization is struggling to make proactive support a reality.

For starters, many organizations struggle to even anticipate customer needs and intentions, with 71% citing an urgent need to improve predictive intelligence. This not only prevents them from proactively solving problems but ultimately results in them routing inbound callers to unsuitable agents who ask repetitive questions and provide impersonal responses.

Those that do commit to preemptive outreach, meanwhile, are rarely delivering tailored, highly valuable messages. Many simply send generic alerts and spammy marketing messages under the guise of "proactivity," leading to customer frustration while eliminating future sales and relationship-building opportunities.

Rethinking proactive engagement is a two-fold endeavor. First, successful contact centers will use predictive analytics solutions to assess where customers are in their journeys—and what support, information and recommendations they will likely require. This data will empower everything from meaningful outbound communication, to contextually relevant bot experiences, to intelligent routing, to highly personalized conversations with agents, to long-term sales and retention strategies.

As they improve individual customer experiences, successful contact centers will also leverage this predictive intelligence to uncover and remedy root causes, while continuously reevaluating journeys—and recalibrating performance standards—to always provide the best products and most efficient, customer-centric support possible.

THE BACKSTORY

Warmly addressing customer inquiries is admirable, but it is nowhere near as valuable as preventing customers from ever interacting in the first place.

Contact center leaders have long touted proactivity as an objective, and 95% believe it will be essential for delighting customers in 2025. Two-thirds, moreover, identify proactive engagement as a key motivator behind their artificial intelligence (AI) investments.

They will also consider the impact of proactive engagement on the overall operation.

A cable provider that alerts customers to an emergency outage, for example, will obviously prevent a surge of calls from customers wondering what happened to their Internet. It may, however, prompt an influx of complaint calls from customers who want to rant about the situation and demand credit toward their monthly bills. Anticipating this type of call—and preparing agents and policies accordingly—will go a long way in helping the business mitigate customer frustration.

In a similar vein, when a business can arm its teams with predictive insight about a customer's future needs, it opens the door to significant revenue generation. A successful contact center will thus focus on training its employees to deliver timely upsell pitches—while paying careful attention to the impact these efforts have on customer sentiment.

03 Create happy agents to create happy customers

An appealing goal, employee happiness is far from a reality in today's contact centers. Agent engagement remains a major challenge, with 61% of leaders citing a lack of buy-in and 93% urgently hoping to improve employee retention. And the risks—and stakes—of employee happiness are only growing.

As AI dominates business conversation, 70% of contact center leaders say their agents fear potential job loss. While trying to quell that fear through promises to use "AI for simple issues so that agents can focus on complex ones," they are only creating a new concern: harder work involving more hostile customers.

Given that only 16% of agents presently have the capability to handle these more complex inquiries from more demanding customers, agents are naturally going to be worried about next-generation work. The fact that agent workflows are notoriously effort-intensive—a product of disconnected systems, insufficient data and outdated knowledge entries—only exacerbates this skepticism.

On top of everything, if interactions indeed become more complex, conversational and personalized, agent demeanor will only become more impactful. Whereas an agent realistically could address a password reset request without being in the best of moods, agent warmth will be essential for navigating customers through challenging financial or medical situations.

Amid this reality, successful contact center leaders will reconsider numerous facets of their employee engagement strategy.

THE BACKSTORY

As ubiquitous as "the customer is always right," the professed connection between agent and customer happiness has become gospel for customer contact leaders.

First and foremost, they will hold themselves quantifiably accountable for creating employee happiness. Rather than simply emphasizing a positive culture or "good vibe" within the walls of their contact center, they will rigorously analyze employee feedback and measure employee sentiment to ensure they are creating an empowering, agent-centric environment.

To achieve such an environment, they will reconsider what drives employee happiness. Small culture and team-building gestures are always welcome, but real satisfaction comes from reducing employee effort, providing a sense of purpose, committing to skill development, introducing compelling career paths and implementing robust mental and physical wellness initiatives.

They will also give employees a meaningful seat at the table, empowering them to contribute to technology sourcing, oversee automated customer experiences and support strategic decision-making. Beyond making employees feel more appreciated and engaged, such an endeavor will encourage agents to constantly think about how to improve the business—and constantly gather and share frontline customer feedback.

The business will benefit immeasurably, uncovering vital improvement opportunities as it retains top performers, democratizes their experience and reduces recruiting costs.

04 Leverage outsourcing to scale your support operation

As businesses engage with more customers, in new global markets, across emerging channels, the scalability challenge is only growing. They do, however, have a new, even more cost-effective solution at their disposal: artificial intelligence.

By leveraging AI-powered chatbots and intelligent IVRs to elevate self-service, brands will dramatically reduce inbound contact volume—and dramatically decrease their reliance on agents (whether internal or external) for basic support issues.

This trend makes the traditional outsourcing model less compelling. It does not, however, render outsourcing less valuable. If anything, it raises the stakes of finding high-value partners, and savvy contact center leaders recognize this reality.

Assuming AI does absorb the lion's share of simple issues, human agents will become responsible for higher-value, more nuanced interactions. Unfortunately, the majority of internal agents lack the requisite skills for this next-generation work. By cultivating teams of highly skilled employees who have access to high-caliber systems, agent assist technology and personalized coaching, leading outsourcing providers provide a solution to this challenge. They provide contact centers with instant access to consultative agents capable of handling the complex tasks bots cannot.

Leading outsourcing partners are also building specialized teams that can elevate all phases of the customer journey. This may, for example, include financial and tax experts who can guide customers through nuanced rules, recommendations and regulations (allowing the brand's internal agents

THE BACKSTORY

Resources are fundamentally limited. Customer demands are not.

Mindful of this reality, contact centers have historically leveraged outsourcing partners to cost- effectively scale their resources. By tapping into teams of contact center agents from around the globe, organizations were able to address a greater number of inbound inquiries—across a wider scope of channels and business hours.

to focus on traditional "customer support"). It may include healthcare experts who not only understand policy but are uniquely suited to demonstrate empathy during periods of crisis. It may include B2B experts who can help a manufacturing company proactively sell its complex product in new markets.

The point is that outsourcing is not just an option for managing an excess of contact center volume; it is a way to improve overall customer journeys and add value that was previously unattainable.

To that end, it can involve far more than simply hiring agents to interact with customers. Other compelling use cases include guiding brands through their digital and AI transformations, analyzing customer feedback, improving security and compliance in a changing communication landscape, and streamlining cumbersome back-office processes.

Indeed, outsourcing is no longer merely about finding a provider to cheaply fill contact center seats; it is about selecting a partner to elevate the overall business.

05 Build lasting customer trust

The illusion of being a trusted business goes out the window when customers encounter an inconvenient, impersonal experience that reflects limited appreciation for their time, preferences, or unique needs. Unfortunately, these transactional interactions are all too common—only 16% of consumers feel experiences are sufficiently personalized and a mere 19% feel today's agents seriously care about solving their problems.

Not simply unconfident in the service experience, today's consumers are wary of how brands will use and manage their data. Just 18%, in fact, consistently trust brands to handle their personal information safely and respectfully.

To overcome these reservations and become a trusted partner rather than a mere product provider, successful businesses will embrace three critical facets of trust.

1. **Experience quality:** Providing assurance that the customer will receive a convenient, effective experience no matter where and when they connect.

2. **Experience relevance:** Tailoring experiences to consistently demonstrate recognition of—and appreciation for—individual customers, their preferences and the specific context of their issues.

3. **Experience security:** Committing to a safe environment, whereby customer data and privacy is vigorously respected and protected.

THE BACKSTORY

Craving lasting relationships over one-time transactions, contact center leaders universally recognize the importance of customer trust. They want to be a brand that customers believe in and rely upon—not simply one that happens to sell a particular product at a particular price.

Meeting the quality standard requires recalibrating metrics to ensure brands are properly defining and measuring their experiences. If contact centers focus exclusively on average handle time or call out without considering the impact on customer satisfaction, they risk cultivating a culture that tolerates poor experiences in the name of efficiency.

Once the appropriate goals are in place, contact center leaders are responsible for democratizing these standards across all channels and touch points. This hinges on intelligently designing and testing automated experiences, while also leveraging new training tactics and outsourcing partners to ensure successful experience design and resourcing in all contact channels.

After establishing a suitable baseline for care, contact centers can focus on tailoring individual experiences to customer needs. This obviously requires real-time access to robust data about customer needs,

intentions and sentiments, but it also hinges on a cultural willingness to personalize. Brands have to be willing to "ditch the script" in favor of customized resolutions and responses—and they have to empower bots and agents with the confidence to make those real-time decisions.

The growing emphasis on personalization will, of course, only exacerbate concerns about privacy and security—especially if that personalization is taking place in digital, AI-powered environments. Making data protection a priority in the technology sourcing process, while also transparently sharing data

governance policies and partnering with outsourcing providers well-versed in security and compliance, will go a long way in building this sort of trust.

A commitment to value-driven communication will further eliminate any concerns. When customers see brands using their data to simplify experiences and surface meaningful offers—not simply as an excuse to bombard them with unwanted updates and advertisements—they will trust the brand as one that puts customer needs and concerns above all.

Begin your elevation journey in 2025

As the Contact Center Elevation Series reaches its conclusion, the time to take action officially begins. Let 2025 be the year in which you establish customer-centric objectives, empower employees for next-generation work, harness the power of robust customer intelligence and design your contact center to create big picture business value.

Foundever is uniquely suited to guide you on this journey to transformation. For more on how this innovative BPO has helped brands from numerous industries—and how it can help you in 2025 and beyond—click here.

Why partner with Foundever®?

Managing CX can be a challenging undertaking for companies of any size. Foundever offers a strategic solution to high operational costs, scalability and complex technology integration. Thanks to +40 years of industry expertise, over 800 brands across 45 countries trust us to deliver our services in over 60 languages. Our global teams handle 9 million customer interactions daily, blending innovation with operational excellence to tackle your CX challenges effectively.

Our services and delivery models

Foundever provides CX outsourcing services tailored to every stage of the customer journey. Our services include customer care, technical support, back-office support, collections, trust & safety and sales & retention. Our CX delivery solutions include in-center, work-at-home and hybrid work models utilizing onshore, offshore and nearshore support, ensuring scalability and flexibility to serve your customers wherever they need us.

Ensuring operational excellence

Our global operating standards, PeakOS, ensure consistent performance, efficient processes and high-quality outcomes. PeakOS streamlines operations, enhances security and complies with PCI DSS, ISO 27001 and SOC Type 1 and Type 2 certifications. It supports globally consistent hiring, training and performance management practices, promoting continuous improvement, professional development and employee engagement.

Leveraging advanced CX solutions

Foundever leverages advanced CX solutions to streamline and improve the quality of customer interactions with technologies like conversational AI, generative AI, intelligent automation and interaction analytics. Our CRM and CCaaS platforms ensure seamless integration and flexibility, complemented by effective CX strategy and design.

Our knowledge management delivers the right information to agents and customers faster, while our learning and development uphold high-performance standards. We offer omnichannel CX strategies with self-service options that allow customers to engage through their preferred channels. Our social media CX strategies transform platforms into powerful support channels and our unified agent desktop equips agents for exceptional service delivery.

Delivering Industry-specific expertise

Foundever understands how to meet each client's unique needs, offering tailored solutions across various industries, including banking and financial services, insurance, healthcare, retail, technology, telecommunications, media, utilities and logistics. We scale our services to meet the needs of disruptor brands preparing for or experiencing rapid growth. By partnering with Foundever, brands across diverse sectors and growth stages can enhance customer experiences, improve operational efficiencies and achieve measurable success.

Cultivating a culture of care

With over 150,000 associates worldwide, united by an award-winning performance culture, we ensure every customer interaction builds long-term loyalty. Our forward-thinking approach to customer experience outsourcing delivers competitive advantages when they matter most. Our mission is clear: to be the solutions and the teams behind the best experiences for the world's leading brands, transforming customer service into a powerful tool for business growth and customer satisfaction.

Our promise to you

Foundever is more than just a service provider – we're your strategic partner in navigating the future of CX. By blending human expertise with AI-driven capabilities, we empower your brand to deliver exceptional customer experiences. Our global reach, advanced technological solutions and industry-specific expertise make us the trusted choice for brands looking to stay competitive and customer-focused in today's rapidly changing marketplace.

Truly global

Connect your CX to a world of experience

Americas
Brazil
Canada
Colombia
Costa Rica
El Salvador
Mexico
Nicaragua
Panama
Peru*
United States

Europe
Belgium
Bulgaria
Cyprus
Denmark
Finland
France
Germany
Greece
Hungary
Ireland
Italy
Luxembourg
Netherlands
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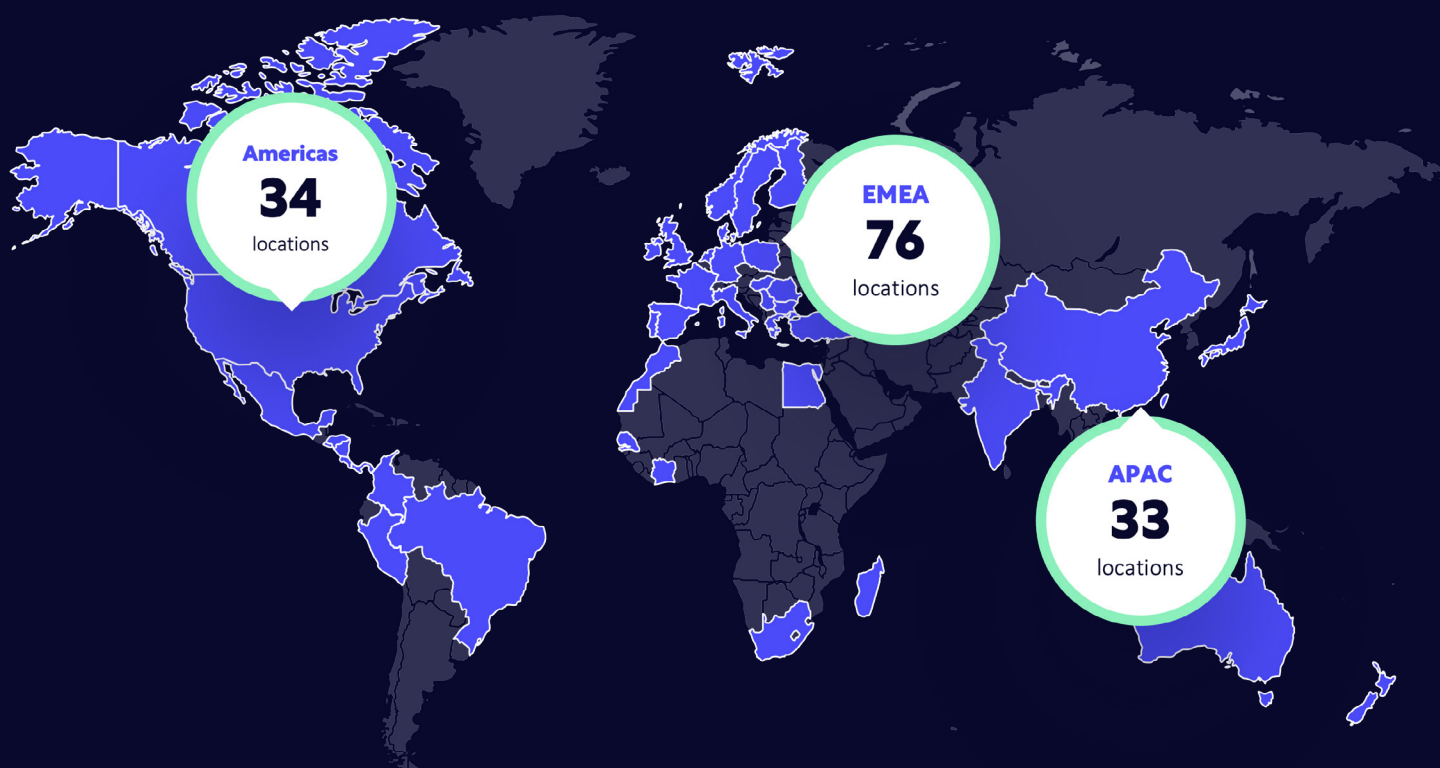Poland
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Romania
Serbia
Spain
Sweden
Turkey*
UK

Middle East & Africa
Egypt
Ivory Coast
Madagascar*
Morocco
Senegal
South Africa*

Asia Pacific
Australia
China
India
Japan
Malaysia*
New Zealand
Philippines

* Countries are new locations in 2023 and 2024

Americas
34
locations

EMEA
76
locations

APAC
33
locations

Diverse domestic and near/offshore locations

In-center, at home and hybrid delivery models

Multilingual hubs to support complex CX language needs

Digital centers of excellence and innovation hubs in every region