

ORACLE

Essential Strategies for Contact Center Management

 **Ignite Guide**



AN ELEVEN-MINUTE READ



Set your agents and your customers up for success

Delivering exceptional customer service isn't easy. You need happy agents, meaningful customer insights, and innovative technology. All of which require agile contact center management that evolves with your business.

In the last few years, we've seen big shifts in customer service. Swift technology innovations have businesses scrambling to keep up. And customer expectations are changing just as fast: Gen Z prefers text to talk; consumers value authenticity over pre-written scripts, and just one bad service experience could put you at risk of losing customers.

The potential financial implications are substantial.

Bottom line: if you can set up your contact center for success, you can protect and even boost your revenue.



Effective contact center management can result in 40% higher employee and customer satisfaction scores.¹

This guide will help you develop a contact center management plan that delivers a more satisfying experience for both your customers and your agents—while transforming it from a cost center to a revenue engine.



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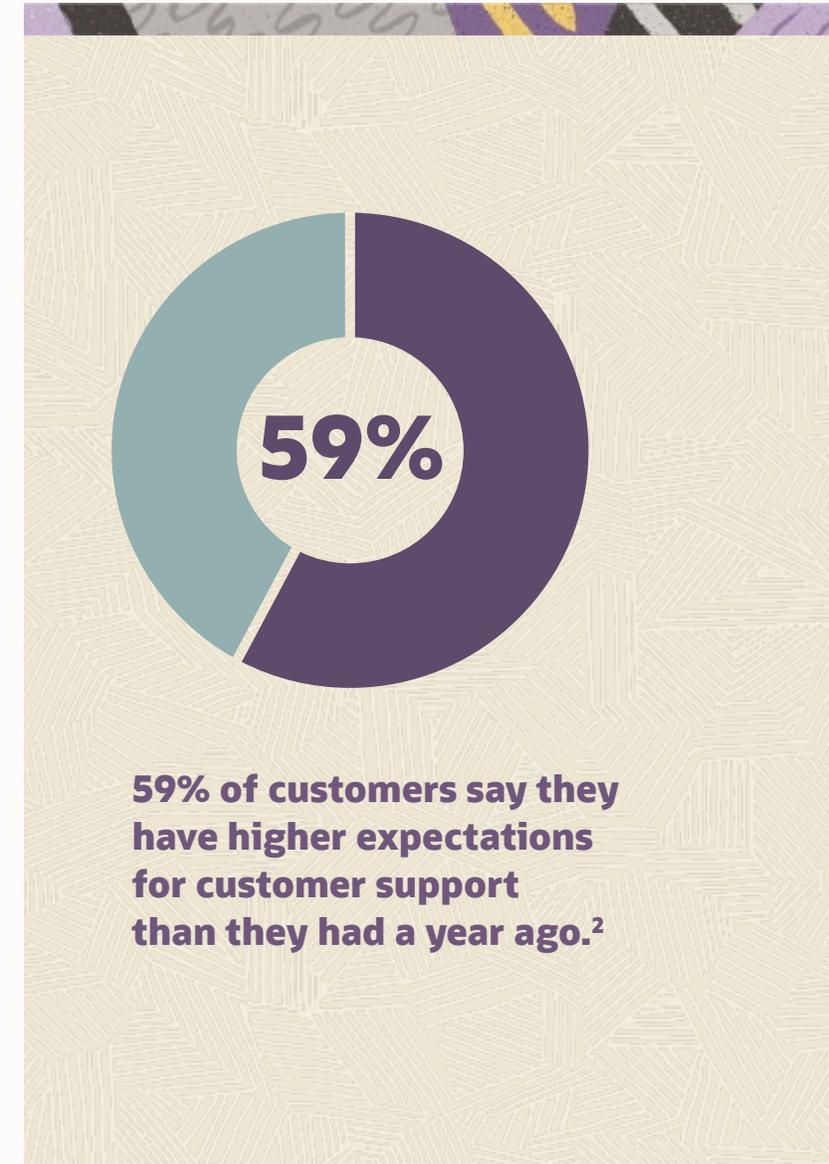


Contact center management

How do businesses manage their daily contact center operations, including technical support, customer service, and sales assistance? And what are their strategies for helping customers across multiple channels such as voice, email, chat, video, and social media? That's what contact center management is all about.

Whether you primarily serve consumers or businesses, effective call center management can help you:

- **Deliver personalized service** on any channel, across the entire customer journey
- **Automate time-consuming processes** to free up agents so they can focus on high-value engagements
- **Boost agent productivity** and retention with tools that empower them to build trusted customer relationships
- **Reduce new hire training** and onboarding costs
- **Improve first-time resolution rates,** resolution consistency, and customer satisfaction
- **Lower service costs** with increased agent productivity and retention
- **Collaborate effectively** between front- and back-office teams for higher quality customer service and more upsell and cross-sell opportunities
- **Generate more revenue** and differentiate your brand from competitors



Contact center management

Without effective call center management, you're more likely to experience:



Frustrated customers who have difficulty getting help, need to repeat their information to different agents, and receive incorrect information



Elevated costs due to new hiring and training



High agent turnover due to outdated and disconnected systems, unrealistic satisfaction scores, and inconsistent institutional knowledge



Disparate data and systems that provide different customer views and hinder internal collaboration



Build your foundation

Developing strategies to improve your contact center can seem like a daunting task. But if you focus on these five areas, you'll be on your way to providing better customer experiences.

1. Customer preferences

Do your customers prefer to engage digitally or on the phone? Are they comfortable with text messaging or video? Can they easily access these different channels and devices? Questions like these will help you better understand your customers and think about what changes you may need to make.

If you sell to businesses that must comply with data privacy regulations, your contact center will also need to be built around these requirements.

2. Business goals (short-term and long-term)

Every service organization has different goals. For some, they've been asked to turn customer service into a revenue generator by selling additional products. Others need to improve operational efficiency so that fewer agents are needed. Or maybe there's a focus on automating more aspects of customer service to

reduce staffing costs and fund innovation. As you set out to develop your plan, consider your initiatives and whether they are likely to stay the same or change over time.

3. Company's growth strategy

If you plan to expand globally, your contact center employees and systems might need changes. For example, you may need to hire agents who speak specific languages or change processes to comply with regional data capture and privacy laws. If you're launching new products and services, your agents will need training on them. And if mergers or acquisitions are on the horizon, it's essential to think through the technological, operational, and human resources challenges of combining contact center operations.

4. Hiring and talent management

Your agents are the public face of your company, but good help is hard to find—and expensive. Every time

you lose an agent, it costs your contact center \$35,000 to \$105,000.³ What is your company's hiring and talent management philosophy? Is a remote workforce effective, or do you need a physical location for contact center employees? Whether your employees are remote, onsite, or a combination of the two, consider how you can improve onboarding, training, and management of your employees.

5. Innovation

There are many opportunities to optimize contact center operations through automation—from simple service requests to complex workflows. Consider how you might use innovation to improve your customer and agent experience. Will those innovations work with your IT roadmap and is there support for investment and experimentation with emerging technologies? Your agents will need to be prepared to adopt these kinds of changes and receive any necessary training.



Five steps to get started with contact center management

01 Determine points of friction

Work with your agents and escalation department to discover the top points of customer and agent frustration. Are your agents spending valuable time on repetitive tasks that could be automated? Are customers offered self-help content that doesn't solve their issues? Analyze both your agent and customer journey to identify opportunities for automation, streamlining, and improvements.

02 Identify the channels your customers prefer

Contact center success is all about customer satisfaction. How do your customers prefer to engage? Look at metrics to see which channels are used most and review customer feedback to discover the biggest areas of friction and frustration. Once you grasp your customers' preferences, do you have a plan in place to engage on those channels? For example, if most of your customers prefer mobile chat, do you offer that option? Find out if your customers are using new channels you may want to add. Consider meeting with IT, service leaders, and top-performing agents to identify technology gaps, potential solutions, and ways to measure success.

03 Evaluate and invest in your technology stack

Find out if your service team has the applications and communications tools they need. Once you identify the gaps, include some of your top-performing agents in the process of evaluating and selecting new apps. The more involved they are in the process, the more they'll feel valued and invested in the success of the team.

And keep in mind that new agents joining right out of school will expect to use the latest apps. In fact, 16% of Gen Z and Millennial employees have quit because their employer failed to provide the proper technology for them to do their job.⁴



Five steps to get started with contact center management

04 Create your innovation plan

How can you take your contact center from good to great? Your IT group can help you explore the latest innovations in automation and data analytics. Implement features like screen sharing, video chat, internal collaboration tools (such as Slack), and guided assistance for recommended agent actions, etc.

But don't limit your innovation to technology alone. A fresh approach to your people and processes can also enhance your contact center. Work with your HR team to get recommendations for agent hiring and training. Think about new ways to use your current CRM. Create bonus programs that motivate your agents with rewards that are meaningful to them.

05 Set measurable goals for now and the future

Determine short- and long-term goals that address your current contact center challenges, as well as service technology trends that will emerge over the next five years. These can include:

- Improving customer satisfaction (CSAT) scores
- Speeding resolution times
- Improving first call resolution rates
- Reducing contact center call volume
- Decreasing number of escalations
- Shortening agent onboarding times
- Improving agent productivity
- Improving employee experiences ratings



Benefits of effective contact center management

Great contact center management is critical to both agent and customer satisfaction. It also supports the growth of your business, as well as your overall brand.



1. Help your agents get more done

Leave the days of navigating multiple screens and systems behind. A single-interface platform requires less training and helps agents resolve issues quickly, without getting overloaded by customers waiting in the queue.



2. Show your agents you value them

The average contact center has a turnover rate of 30 to 45%.⁵ Beat those odds by recognizing high performance, providing career development opportunities, and outlining a clear growth path. Put in place measures and training for your agents to work more flexibly—when and where that works for them.



3. Get a complete view of your customer

When your customer service system is integrated with customer-facing marketing and sales systems, as well as financial and supply chain systems on the back end (including billing, order management, inventory, and shipping), your agents have the data they need to provide the most accurate service.



4. Fulfill customer expectations

Your contact center must provide the platform for an exceptional customer experience. A majority of consumers— 61%— say they've stopped transacting with a business after a poor service experience.² That's why it's critical your customers receive consistent, accurate, seamless service across all channels.



5. Expand your definition of customer service

Contact centers don't have to just be cost centers. Through integration with other systems and collaboration with other business units, your agents can help upsell and cross-sell. Want to improve your products and services? Have agents ask for feedback. When customers feel heard, they feel more loyal and are more likely to recommend your company to others.



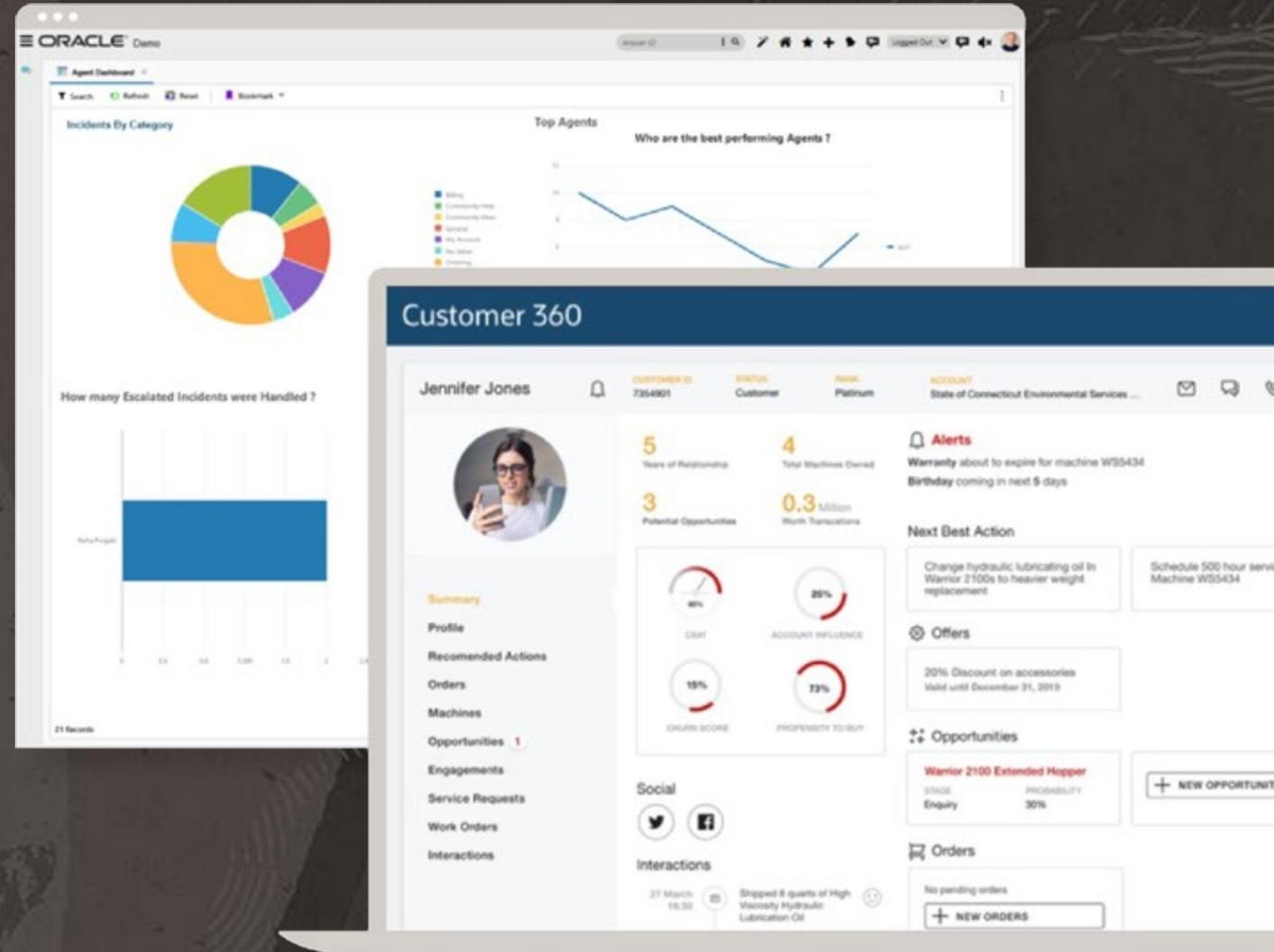
90% of customers more favorably view brands that give them the opportunity to provide feedback.²



Optimize contact center management with Oracle

Drive productivity and exceptional service. With Oracle Service Center, your agents need just one interface to access critical information and manage interactions across channels.

Find out how your team can resolve issues faster and make customers happier.



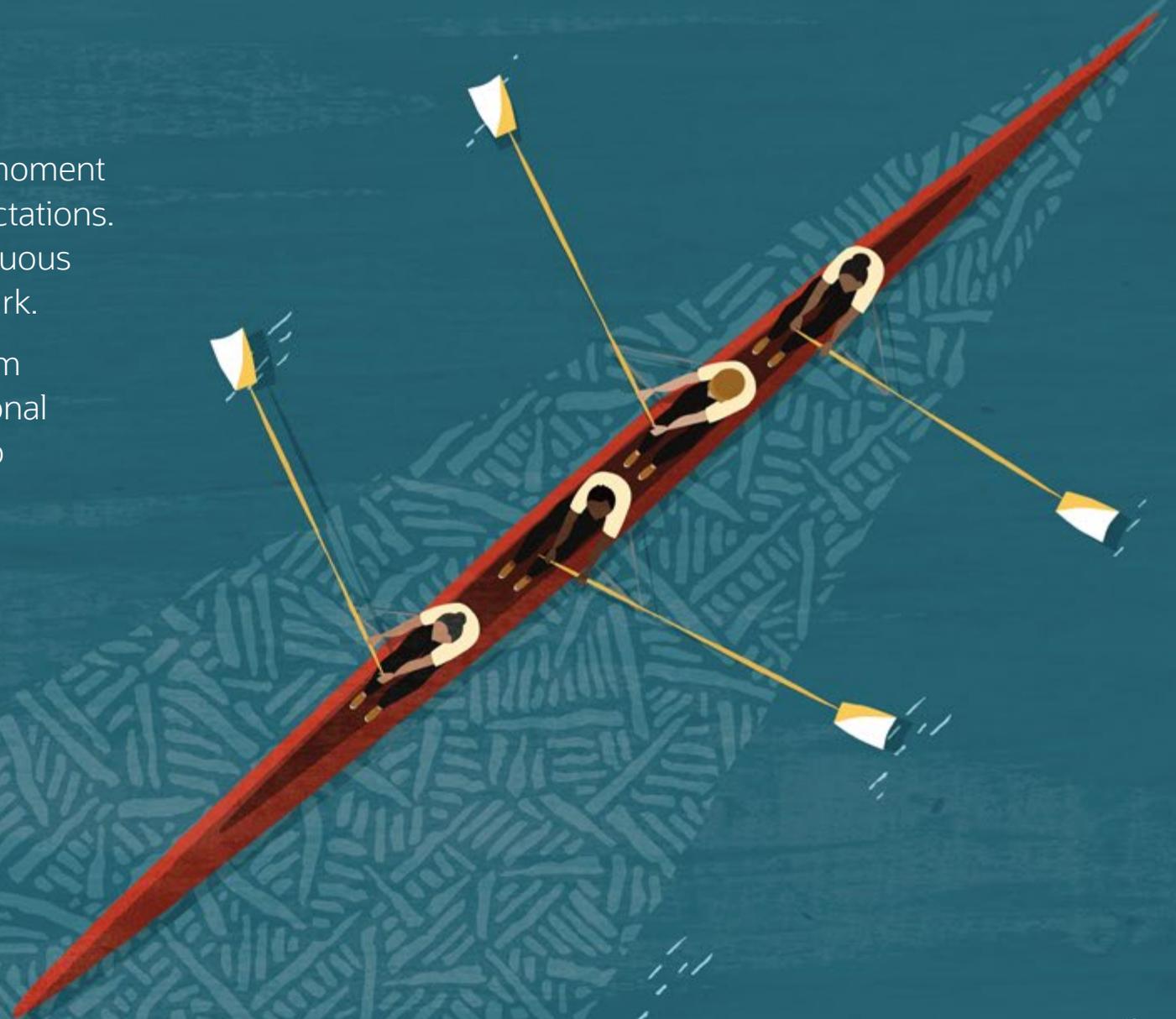
To the experience-maker who's always moving forward

As modern customers seem to shape-shift from one moment to the next, it's critical to maintain pace with their expectations. To help, we created the Ignite series to fuel your continuous pursuit of customer experiences that always hit the mark.

Guides like this one on contact center management aim to advance your expertise and help you craft foundational strategies in less time. So you can get back out there to captivate customers and drive revenue.

What will you discover next?

- [eBook: Essential Strategies for Digital Customer Service](#)
- [Product info: Simplifying the Agent Experience](#)
- [eBook: Making Sense of Visual Engagement](#)



About Oracle Advertising and CX

Make every customer interaction matter by connecting all your business data across advertising, marketing, sales, commerce, and service. Oracle Advertising and Customer Experience (CX) is a connected suite of applications that goes beyond traditional CRM to help you create and nurture lasting customer relationships. Build a complete view of every interaction and every customer, no matter how and when they engage. Empower your entire business to deliver exceptional customer experiences—from acquisition to retention—and everything in between.

Sources

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5. [“Exploring Call Center Turnover Numbers,” Society of Workforce Planning Professionals, summer 2019](#)



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