

2016 global contact centre benchmarking report

Digital needs a human touch



Netherlands

Digital technology is transforming the Netherlands contact centre industry. Organisations now recognise customer experience (CX) as a key differentiator. It's emerged as the top indicator of strategic performance in the boardroom and the demand for seamless 'omnichannel' customer journeys is the top industry trend. Yet the **2016 Global Contact Centre Benchmarking Report** highlights that digital channels could be more powerful, making for more effective CXs, if shown more of a 'human touch'.

CX dominates the digital revolution

CX is dominating a technology based service revolution as organisations mature their contact management strategies, and develop better quality migration paths towards digital channel choice. Organisations now better appreciate the intelligence provided by customer analytics. It's helping them validate business benefits and justify investment in technology that will elevate service capabilities.

By focusing on CX, organisations are using analytics to better link the impact of CX back to revenue growth, customer loyalty, and cost reduction through greater efficiency. It also leads to happy employees, as three-quarters (78.0%) of the Netherlands contact centres acknowledge the impact of good CX delivery on employee engagement.

As customer journeys span combinations of the nine different contact channels now offered, organisations are intent on connecting their systems and improving consumer experiences. Full channel integration – that is, omnichannel capability – is set to treble within the next two years. Customer journey mapping has emerged as a top trend alongside analytics that will reshape the industry over the next five years. But, for now, capability is lacking, and 61.9% can't track interactions that span multiple channels, and just 13.1% of respondents can locate problem hotspots that affect CX.

While ease-of-contact and a variety of touchpoints give a newfound convenience for consumers engaging with service providers, it's also driving additional contacts. Interaction levels are on the rise for 67.0% of Dutch contact centres, and most of it's going digital as almost every digital channel experiences volume increases. Yet the transition towards digital isn't reaching its full potential, and, for now, a missing human touch is causing the gap between service delivery and customer expectations to widen.

Organisations now recognise customer experience (CX) as a key differentiator.



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We're on the cusp of a service revolution. Positive, proactive, and personal CX will soon be a reality.

The missing human touch

Digital volumes handled by contact centres remain on track to exceed agent-led phone interactions by the end of 2016. As service consumers embrace digital it's led to a further 17.1% shrinkage of phone in the split of interactions handled by contact centres. Globally, CX is now the top reason for offering self- and assisted-service channels, ahead of cost. However, just 22.4% of respondents say their digital technology will meet future needs.

Organisations are frequently being unclear about who owns, oversees, and manages the digital channels in their contact centres. It's this lack of accountability and focus that impacts the design, and resulting effectiveness, of the digital solutions, and by consequence, how customers engage with their businesses.

Businesses tend to design new contact channels in isolation, often without any involvement from the contact centre. Research reveals that nearly half (47.3%) are excluded from, or are only partially involved in, the design phase of new technology

solutions in contact centres, while 52.7% have little, or no, involvement in solution approvals. It's impacting the effectiveness of the technology. In fact, four in ten (42.9%) organisations said that their digital channel systems don't meet existing business needs. Contact centres clearly need to be more involved in the design of digital CX solutions.

Performance management disciplines perfected on phone need to be applied across the entire CX spectrum. Measurement of cost and time per interaction is currently lacking on most digital service channels, which suggests an absence of consistency in management approach. Just under two thirds (63.3%) of respondents said they track quality on digital, compared with 88.3% on phone. Some 66.7% reported that they have processes to identify sales opportunities on phone, compared with 56.7% on digital.

As technology dependency levels are growing, the pressure to get it right is deepening. Digital demands are broadening, but organisations are struggling to connect disparate systems. Legacy infrastructure, placed alongside a growing stretch on resources, are the main inhibitors to success. It's causing many organisations to look at hybrid technology models, to increase the power of their digital channel systems, and provide a more agile backbone for new service options.

Cloud making a powerful impact

Putting it simply, traditional technology approaches can't keep pace with innovation. Solution focus has now shifted from contact centre infrastructure to delivery models that connect customer journeys and enhance end-user experiences. For many, hosted cloud is seen as a solution that drives powerful results.

In fact, moving to the cloud, in one form or another, is becoming an industry standard. Of current cloud users, 87.5% recognise its value in enabling speed to market. Some 88.9% said this approach gives them access to new functionality in their contact centres, while 94.4% agree it has reduced costs.

The results are compelling and are driving rapid adoption of cloud-based models. The Report shows that usage levels are set to more than double to 63.6%. Most are leaning towards a hybrid cloud solution that fuses legacy systems to the cloud. This blended model is fast becoming the 'go-to' enabler for many in the industry.

A transformational approach towards more flexible, alternative procurement solutions is evident.

Looking ahead, technology enabled service strategies, supported by analytics as the number one trend to reshape the industry in the coming five years, will drive a new personalisation of services. It will help identify opportunity for proactive automatic solutions, which when applied will transform the entire industry...and for everyone's benefit. We're on the cusp of a service revolution. Positive, proactive, and personal CX will soon be a reality.

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