

The logo for ZVARO is centered on a black background. The word "ZVARO" is written in a stylized, outlined font. The letters 'Z', 'V', 'A', 'R', and 'O' are in a light grey color, while the final 'O' is a vibrant yellow. The background is decorated with two large, overlapping, wavy patterns of thin yellow lines that create a sense of depth and movement. In the upper left corner, there are small, white, bokeh-like light spots.

ZVARO

... BRILLIANCE ...

# The Case for Cloud-Based Contact Centers



## Executive Summary

Today it's common for organizations to leverage the cloud to save costs, improve business agility and flexibility, and to grow or shrink internal services with ease.

Unified Communications and Collaboration tools are internal services businesses can migrate to the cloud to save dollars, embrace agility, and improve resiliency. Nemertes Research reports that 67% of organizations now have at least part of their Unified Communications and Collaboration applications in the cloud, and nearly one-third of surveyed businesses are operating entirely in the cloud.

And the cloud collaboration market is expected to grow. Mobility trends, Bring Your Own Device policies (BYOD), vendor agnostic endpoints, continuous service support, and a lower total cost of ownership (TCO) and operating expense models, gives a boost to an already healthy cloud collaboration market.



The importance of creating outstanding customer experiences and interactions makes contact centers an increasing focal point of the cloud collaboration marketplace. 86% of customers contact customer service more than once for the same unresolved issue, leaving them frustrated and damaging brand loyalty. Brand loyalty is difficult to build and easy to lose, and in today's competitive marketplace is a business necessity. Historically contact center agents have been fixed to a physical desk using a hand-held or softphone to field customer interactions, limiting the agents' ability to see a case through to resolution and creating the need for multiple agents, possibly in different geographies and time zones to work a case through to completion. Call center agents have also been historically staffed in separated channels (voice, email, chat), causing further fragmentation of the customer case resolution process.

## Background

Cisco addresses the needs and challenges of today's contact centers with Cisco Webex Contact Center; a cloud-based solution focused on the customer journey that provides an "anytime, anywhere" approach to handling customer contacts. Webex Contact Center solves common contact center challenges through robust features and analytics.

There are many advantages to using Cisco Webex Contact Center. Two primary benefits are in the enhanced omnichannel customer experience and the ability to take a vendor-agnostic approach to endpoints, including mobile phones.



Contact centers have to keep up with changing customer expectations. They also have to manage costs and allocate resources. In the past, most customer service interactions occurred via inbound or outbound phone calls. Today's "anytime, anywhere" landscape facilitates the need for businesses to offer additional channels for customers to interact with companies.

Customers today expect immediate attention, expedited problem resolution, and the option to choose how they interact with a business.

Webex Contact Center allows agents to help customers via inbound or outbound phone calls, as well as email or chat, or a combination of the three. And organizations can configure a universal queue that allows customers to interact with contact center agents using their preferred channels.

Webex Contact Center users not only can provide their customers with communication options, but they can also tie each interaction together to create a customer story, regardless of the channel. Organizations can easily monitor customer experiences across channels, and measure the speed to resolution (did a customer have to email or call more than once for the same issue?), and overall customer satisfaction. Businesses can use this data to refine customer service practices and policies and improve agent training.

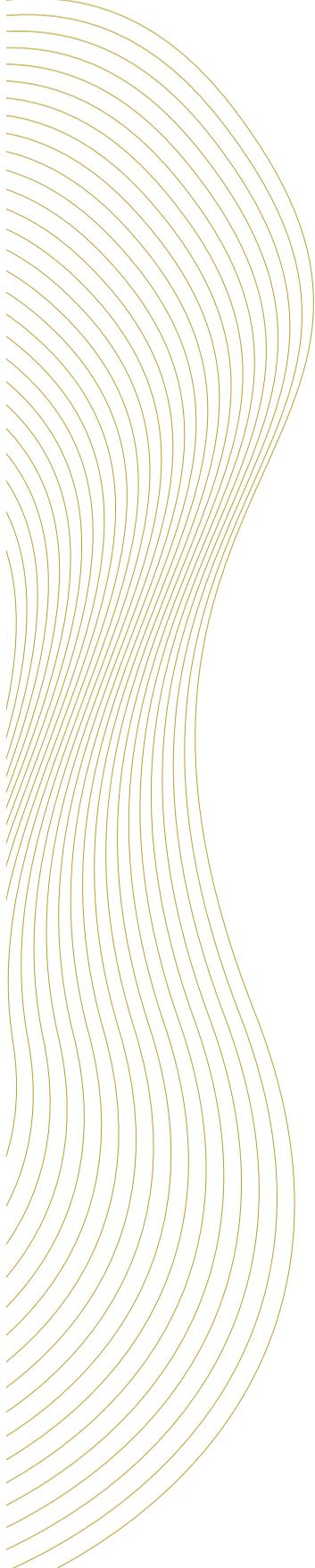
When contact center agents service an omnichannel universal queue, they can improve the management and allocation of resources and lower the costs required to handle customer interactions. Rather than using a diverse group of agents to service multiple communication channels, one group of agents can maintain numerous channels simultaneously.

This empowers customers with the ability to choose how they want to interact with a company. Customers frequently opt to send an email for non-urgent issues, or, for problems that need a quick resolution, they'll call or initiate a chat with customer service via the organization's website. Regardless of the channel, interactions are routed to a universal queue and serviced by an agent with visibility into each of the customer's touchpoints. Agents using Cisco Webex Contact Center can provide an improved customer experience and understand the customer's purpose and issues by viewing their interaction history.

Webex Contact Center facilitates universal queue creation by building omnichannel entry points in the Webex Contact Center portal. Queues are established for each interaction channel (voice, chat, email, etc.) and associated with a fixed entry point. Contact Center administrators can further refine and improve the customer experience by using Webex Contact Center to establish skill profiles that help to identify agents with enhanced proficiencies in specific communication channels. Based on these findings, agents are assigned to teams associated with particular queues, allowing the flexibility to assign groups to one, some, or all communication channels.



Today's workforce is more diverse and dispersed than ever before. Employees aren't tied to a desk phone, or computer. The same is true for contact center agents. Contact Center agents today aren't always in cubicles, logged into computers, wearing headsets, and taking calls. With agents dispersed across locations, modern contact centers have to distribute calls regardless of how or where agents do their work.



Webex Contact Center is endpoint agnostic, with calls distributed to agents through telephone numbers programmed in the cloud. There's no direct integration between a physical phone, desktop application, and the contact center application, opening an array of possibilities for how agents are employed.

Contact centers and their agents can use collaboration applications like Cisco Webex Teams, or even mobile phones, instead of desk phones and headsets. Also, in contrast to on-premises solutions, Webex Contact Center doesn't require physical devices to be registered to phone systems. All that's needed for Webex Contact Center to present calls is a Directory Number (DN) or phone number programmed for agents; the system distributes the call to each configured number.

A device-agnostic approach to contact center management provides significant cost relief for companies with existing phone systems. Phone systems are costly for reasons that are both obvious and hidden. It's easy to account for the expense of hardware, endpoints, and licenses, but less tangible costs, for example, the cost of implementing and maintaining phone systems, as well as hiring and training employees to oversee them, is a challenge to measure.

Upfront and recurring costs are easy to track and measure with a phone-agnostic approach to contact center management. Costs already incurred by a company, such as hiring and training qualified employees to oversee phone systems, are preserved, with the new contact center built on top of existing infrastructures.

The lowered total cost of ownership (TCO) realized through vendor-agnostic systems is an additional Webex Contact Center benefit. It's no secret that contact centers are expensive to operate. Businesses can nearly eliminate the costs of equipment and licensing required to support traditional on-premises agents by embracing BYOD policies that allow agents to work flexibly.

A traditional contact center model still makes sense for some companies, while others may opt to disperse employees across remote environments. Either way, businesses drastically reduce their total cost of ownership when they can distribute calls to agents anywhere, anytime, and on any device.

A vendor-agnostic and BYOD-driven approach to contact center management also lowers TCO through enhanced employee retention and engagement. According to research conducted by the Quality Assurance & Training Connection (QATC), the average annual turnover rate for agents in U.S.-based contact centers is between 30 and 45 percent, more than double the average for all other occupations in the United States. Giving employees the ability to work how and where they choose, and tools to make BYOD and flexible work possible solves the retention issues plaguing today's contact centers.

## Webex Contact Center: A Contemporary Contact Center Solution

Cisco Webex Contact Center gives businesses the power and flexibility of a cloud-based contact center that allows companies to leverage their existing on-premise phone system investments to deliver superior customer service, increase productivity, reduce costs, and enhance employee satisfaction and retention.

### References:

**[Nemertes Research: Unified Communications and Collaboration: 2018 and 2019 Research Study](#)**

**[InfoLink: 5 Shocking Stats on Bad Customer Experience](#)**

**[Quality Assurance and Training Connection \(QATC\): Exploring Call Center Turnover Numbers](#)**