

Modernise Your Contact Centre



HOW TO MOVE TO THE CLOUD WITH CONFIDENCE

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Introduction

A well executed and flexible cloud adoption strategy plays a pivotal role in maintaining a competitive advantage. Cloud solutions facilitate agile environments capable of meeting the demands of the evolving customer landscape. The nature of cloud solutions promotes flexibility, speed and enables additional solutions to be deployed rapidly, with ease, when required.

The cloud solutions we refer to here are known as Contact Centre as a Service (CCaaS) or Virtual Contact Centre often confused with UCaaS (Unified Communications as a Service), they offer the following advantages:

- Only add new functionality when you need it.
- Efficiently support multiple, global contact centres and at-home agents.
- No need to buy, maintain or upgrade hardware.
- Only pay for the services used.
- Seamless, automatic software updates.
- Security, scalability and reliability that matches or surpasses on-premises systems.

Contact Centre as a Service (CCaaS) solutions provide the same capabilities as those of on-premises vendors but offer increased functionality and flexibility. The foundation of these benefits is that all of the separate parts that comprise a conventional contact centre – including PBX, advanced interactive voice response (IVR), automatic call distribution (ACD), computer telephony integration (CTI), email, text, chat, social media channels and quality management – are delivered via the cloud from a single supplier.

The supplier owns and operates the systems making them available on a subscription basis. Thus, the upkeep, support and maintenance of the platform is the responsibility of the supplier.



“Software as a service (SaaS) remains the largest segment of the cloud market, with revenue expected to grow 22.2 per cent to reach \$73.6 billion in 2018. Gartner expects SaaS to reach 45 per cent of total application software spending by 2021.”

According to Gartner

Evaluate your need for contact centre modernisation

Today's consumers expect to be able to access information and services from any device, at any time and from anywhere. Consumers are now sharing their experiences as never before across an ever-growing volume of social media platforms, rating websites and other digital platforms.

Key factors that have empowered consumers are:

- The rise of cloud technologies and apps have facilitated the growth of available communications mediums and communities. These social sharing platforms enable consumers to access the tools required to share their experiences with a global audience easily. The growth of available platforms encourages customer fragmentation (segmentation?). Brands now have to monitor, analyse and communicate over more channels than ever before.
- Advancements in Robotic Process Automation and machine learning/Artificial Intelligence has made it easier for consumers to focus their engagements to their preferred audiences.
- Customers expect better interactions across multiple channels accessible at their convenience.

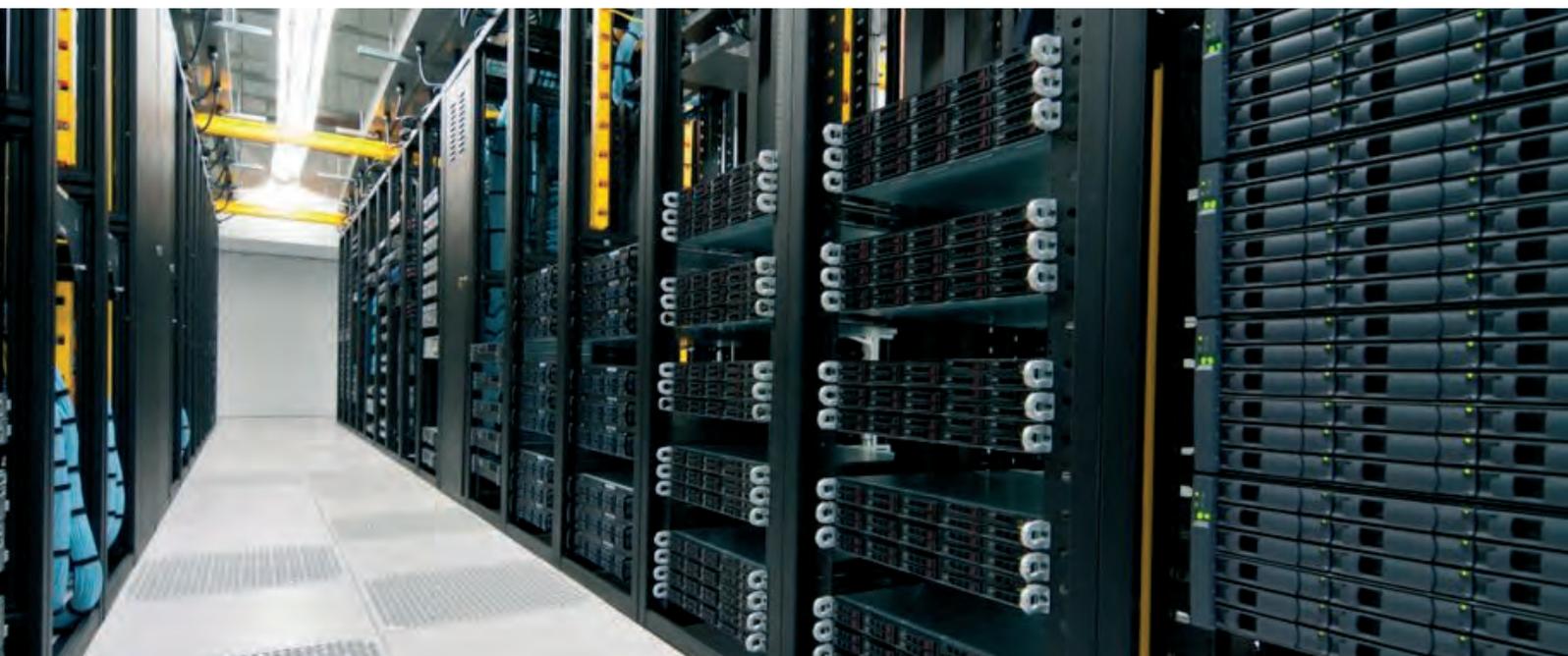
In Verizon's "2016 State of the Market: Enterprise Cloud" study, companies reported that moving mission-critical workloads to the cloud improved their overall business operations. 88% said the move improved responsiveness to business needs, 65% stated that it improved global operations, and 69% of respondents said switching to the cloud enabled them to re-engineer their business processes.

The benefits of moving to the cloud far outweigh the inertia to stay on-premises for most organisations. However, before moving core contact centre infrastructure and applications to a new cloud platform, customer service and IT leaders need to develop and execute a holistic plan.

Organisations that ensure cross-departmental buy-in and follow-through across all steps in their cloud migration plan are much more likely to successfully achieve their business goals, such as greater profitability of their contact centres and improved customer experience.

The capabilities of a modern contact centre:

- Manage customer journeys and optimise their experiences to improve satisfaction.
- Build efficiencies within your contact centre to lower costs.
- Reduce employee churn and improve upselling opportunities and customer acquisition metrics to fuel growth.
- Give managers the ability to adjust and empower agents with relevant information and integrated processes to engage employees.
- Engage customers in more straightforward and more effective dialling campaigns.





Requirements Definition

Migration to the cloud can be a smooth process if planned correctly. It's important for enterprises to gain cross-departmental understanding and buy-in of the elements needed to build and operate their cloud infrastructure. Such foresight will enable the successful migration to the cloud and will serve as the foundation of their IT operations for years to come.

Getting it right starts with conducting a benchmark and risk analysis study before shifting to the cloud to understand the technical and resource requirements, the benefits, and the drawbacks. This knowledge will help make the decision less stressful and provide sound recommendations for the requirements, thus helping gain buy-in for the move. To justify the migration to a new technology platform, companies need to build a business case with an associated ROI projection. While there are many potential data points to test and benchmark before conducting a cloud migration, companies must first start by benchmarking their operations against industry standards.

For an unbiased point of view, an independent third party is often best suited to conduct such an assessment, develop a gap analysis, and apply a consultative approach to identify the necessary steps and requirements to move with confidence to the cloud.

Customer experience innovation

Innovating customer experience while taking advantage of improved business processes is the ideal approach to contact centre modernisation. It provides a lasting foundation for optimising customer experience with the lowest cost of operations. Breaking down the organisational silos and removing technological constraints of legacy infrastructure enables the delivery of consistent experiences at every touch point, across all channels of the customer journey. It also allows a competitive advantage to be maintained.

Omnichannel interaction management

Omnichannel touchpoints create end-to-end customer journeys that can be difficult to manage. The goal is to deliver consistent customer experiences at every digital touchpoint and channel while preserving context and history across interactions.

Are you able to support multiple digital channels, including web (email, forms, chat, videos, social media) to deliver consistent experiences over a series of interactions, regardless of the channels?

Operational efficiency gains

Effectively optimise your company's contact centre, so sufficient staff are always available and adequately trained to handle a wide range of customer interactions. Delivering a great customer experience is all about ensuring that customers reach the most appropriate agent in the fastest time possible.

Creating a virtualised customer engagement environment to route any interaction across departments, teams and locations are the underpinning of continuous workforce optimisation including planning, scheduling and managing people across your company. Fully utilise your most important asset—your people—and consider the benefits of ongoing workforce optimisation.



Evaluate options and identify dependencies for a successful project

Before signing on the dotted line, organisations must first conduct a cloud vendor evaluation. These evaluations include the functional capabilities of the contact centre software, as well as other resources less common in evaluating on-premises software vendors, such as operations, professional services, and networking/connectivity. For instance, insist on precise information about the availability and reliability of the service (ask how the SLAs are calculated and paid, how they are operationally designed to achieve their goals, and whether they'll be transparent on actual service level attainment). Organisations should also inquire about the types, skills, and incentives of the service and support teams that are critical to ongoing success. Finally, there is no substitute for a cloud provider's record of customer success – both in overall market leadership and success stories that closely match your business environment and goals.

In addition to researching a cloud contact centre provider's functional capabilities and customer track record before making a decision, there are a few additional technical considerations not to overlook:

Does the telephony migration policy meet your needs? Nick Larsen, senior director of professional services at Nice in Contact, cautions companies to review the cloud vendor's telephony migration policy. Some vendors, he explained, don't schedule the replacement of the telephony system to coincide with the migration of other systems like CRM. Cloud vendors that partner with telephony vendors equipped with pre-integrated carrier networks offer the ability to get organisations up and running quickly without a lengthy set-up and back and forth between different vendors.

Will there be a need for middleware? Another consideration includes whether there's a need for middleware to bridge the cloud with existing systems. It's incumbent upon the customer to consider if middleware is necessary and can integrate natively with their critical systems. If not, procure a middleware vendor to be part of the engagement.

Is there a commitment to providing high-speed internet? While the vendor is doing the processing power in the cloud, connectivity to contact centres and distributed agents requires an Internet Service Provider (ISP).

Does the vendor have proven deployment methodologies? Often companies that have been operating in a premises-based model for many years show trepidation when moving their customised workflows and tools. This hesitation slows down the process. Other organisations may view a move to the cloud as removing all hardware, which often isn't the case. A vendor with a proven deployment methodology is a significant ally in aligning expectations and moving the project forward on schedule.

Identify and prioritise which business functions and applications to migrate

A strategic approach is needed to create a successful migration. It should include short-term tactical goals as well as the long-term vision of the business. Start by prioritising the most critical processes, departments and functions to migrate. Some of these decisions may hinge on the demographics of a company's customer base. For example, if millennials comprise the bulk of the customer base, the company may want first to enable text messaging on the cloud before moving over its email capabilities. Design an operating model that not only meets today's requirements but looks out three to five years and then establishes a priority roadmap to get there. The migration should be planned, and implementation is phased to align with the goals of the business as a whole.

Build a change management initiative to meet your company's needs

Focusing on the technology alone and ignoring the social aspects of this change is a recipe for disaster, especially as ownership of specific tasks may move from one team to another and some roles will change or may disappear altogether. Such changes will require retraining existing employees or hire new ones to fill the position. Adopting a new cloud contact centre platform without a focus on people will lead to failure because there are many stakeholders involved in cloud migration. Security, compliance, legal, procurement, human resources, finance, sales, marketing, service desk, operations, disaster recovery and others all have a part to play. New roles are familiar when enterprises shift their contact centre applications and infrastructure to the cloud, however focusing solely on the technology without dedicating a significant amount of time and resources on organisational change, and process re-engineering can produce suboptimal results. The key to keeping the plan aligned to the goals is in ensuring involvement from stakeholders by having a robust and comprehensive communications plan that spans the enterprise. It's not only important to communicate effectively but to also have a project plan with accountability included. The technology is easy. Changing the hearts and minds of people is the challenge.

Execute plans to support customers in their channels of choice

From a workforce perspective, one of the keys in migrating to an omnichannel cloud environment is understanding skill sets and agent profiles. A company's best voice agent might not be its best chat agent.

Effective strategic development hinges on laying out a plan that best suits customers, whether it encompasses social media, chat or text, or multiple channels. A cloud vendor's professional services team should provide clear guidance to ensure its clients make the most educated decisions about how to leverage individual channels and to integrate them to match customers' omnichannel engagements seamlessly. Agent profiles, skill sets, and routing rules from the prior contact centre system may provide a good starting point for configuring the new cloud platform. However, it is important to avoid a pure "lift and place" approach to your existing policies as they may not be the best fit for the new system or your customers' needs. A true 'channel of choice' experience allows customers to swap between channels based on their needs and personal preferences. When properly integrated into the contact centre, this can help to build more significant levels of customer engagement and loyalty. Deploying new capabilities across channels as part of a staged roadmap will often yield a much better customer experience than trying to take advantage of all the new features your new platform has in one "big bang."

The Right Questions for the Right Channel

- Which channels do customers prefer to use most often?
- Do certain channels illicit more honesty?
- Which channels do customer trust the most?
- Which channels do customers perceive as low- effort?



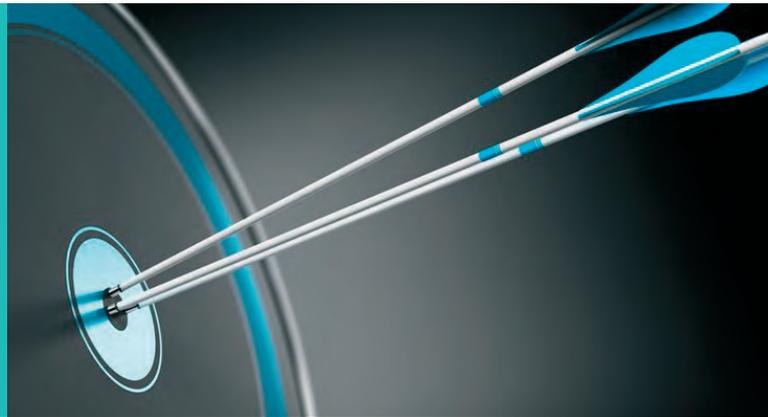
Measure and celebrate early wins

The success of your project won't happen overnight, but publicising and building on early gains will generate the momentum and cross-departmental buy-in that are essential to achieving your overall goals.

To build this momentum and buy-in, project leaders and sponsors must define and identify the company's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) based on current service levels. They should also determine the KPIs that are likely to have the highest impact improvements after the new contact centre platform is fully implemented. For example, an Average Handle Time (AHT) metric may be of top concern today, but as the new contact centre platform enables an omnichannel environment that serves customers where and when they want to be helped in a more personalised manner, First Contact Resolution (FCR) improvements may provide the most significant opportunity for growth. After those quick wins, customer experience metrics like customer effort and Net Promoter Score (NPS) may gauge success and Return on Investment (ROI) more accurately.

High Impact Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- Average Handle Time (AHT).
- First Contact Resolution (FCR).
- Net Promoter Score (NPS).
- Return on Investment (ROI).
- Average Wait Time (AWT).
- Average Abandon Rate.
- Self-Service Usage.
- Call Wrap-up Time.
- Call Service Level (SLA).



Summary

As adoption of cloud contact centre solutions continues to accelerate throughout 2018 and beyond, more and more organisations are making plans to move operations from on-premises technology to contact centre as a service.

Gartner's latest worldwide public cloud services revenue forecast predicts Infrastructure-as-a-Service (IaaS), currently growing at a 23.31% Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR), will outpace the overall market growth of 13.38% through 2020. Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) revenue is predicted to grow from \$58.6B in 2017 to \$99.7B in 2020. Taking into account the entire forecast period of 2016 – 2020, SaaS is on pace to attain 15.65% compound annual growth throughout the forecast period, also outpacing the total cloud market.

While the potential benefits from this move are tremendous, achieving those goals takes careful planning and follow-through to ensure the workforce, business processes and technology are aligned. To get the most out of a move to a cloud contact centre platform, it pays to reevaluate existing business processes and identify new opportunities to improve customer service and efficiency.



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THE CLOUD BASED CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE
SOLUTIONS**

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Marketlinx
Evolved Technology Sourcing

About Marketlinx

Marketlinx is a privately owned independent technology sourcing agency. Established in 2016 our team has been delivering IT & network infrastructure, voice and communications services for over two decades.

We work with you to understand your technology requirements and align your needs with the capabilities of over 130 ICT suppliers. We can manage your quote requests and deliver a shortlist of highly matched suppliers. You will never pay for our sourcing services:

Mission

To help organisations source business technology services more efficiently, adding no cost to the process. We have created a customer-centric business that leverages its knowledge of the Information Communications Technology market and the experience of top-tier technology suppliers to:

- Deliver a high level of knowledge and experience at no cost to the end client.
- Reduce the complexity of sourcing, supplying, implementing and supporting technology solutions.
- Increase the value offered to the market by designing a purchasing procedure that delivers all the benefits of dealing with a large systems integrator but without the costs.
- Improve support levels, the customer experience and ROI through a cost-efficient approach.
- Offer supplier neutral, local, national and international solutions for unrivalled customer choice that is always focused on achieving the individual goals of the end customer.

WE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING:



**FREE, AGNOSTIC,
TECHNOLOGY SOURCING.
REQUIREMENTS CAPTURE
AND SOLUTIONS DESIGN.
DIRECT SUPPLIER
RELATIONSHIPS**



**CLOUD, COMPUTING,
CONNECTIVITY, DATA
CENTRE PRODUCTIVITY,
PERFORMANCE**



**GUARANTEED INCREASE IN
OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY
LOWERING YOUR
PROCUREMENT COST OF
ICT SERVICES**