



Four Ways CCaaS Delivers A Better Employee and Customer Experience In 2021

WRITTEN BY: MATT WUJCIAK

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Featuring Insights From:



Annette Franz

Founder and CEO, CX Journey Inc.

Forbes Councils Member



Natalie Keightley

Senior Director Global Solutions Marketing

Avaya



Mark Fernandes

Chief Information Officer

Hydro Ottawa



“Employee experience and customer experience are always important, but how brands approach them – how they demonstrate that they are all about people first – during times of uncertainty can really showcase who the people-centric brands are.”

– **Annette Franz - Founder and CEO, CX Journey Inc., Forbes Councils Member**

Now more than ever, business leaders, economists, research analysts, and even behavioral psychologists around the globe are studying the impact of the employee experience, and how it impacts customer experience at scale. Of course, “people-centric brands” have an advantage, putting employee well-being (and in turn, productivity) first. However, the concept extends beyond feel-good pizza parties or virtual happy hours. Empowering employees to deliver memorable and profitable customer experiences and innovative products requires more than a pat on the back - or even a salary raise for that matter.

So what drives engaged, motivated, and productive employees? How does it impact customer experience? What can organizations do to ensure quality internal and external, people-centric experiences - specifically in client-facing departments, with generally low employee satisfaction and high turnover rates - such as the contact center? These are real questions that need real answers. They are also opportunities to drive a more operationally efficient infrastructure, inspirational culture, employee and customer-centric experiences, and to put it bluntly, an *ROI on people*.

This report will reveal those opportunities by providing the information needed to create a multiexperience department, and how CCaaS (contact center as a service) can, and will play an increasingly important role in the business ecosystem. More specifically, this report will give you **Four pillars of essential customer experience**, which as you may have guessed by now, is driven by the employees who are tasked with serving the “everything customer.”

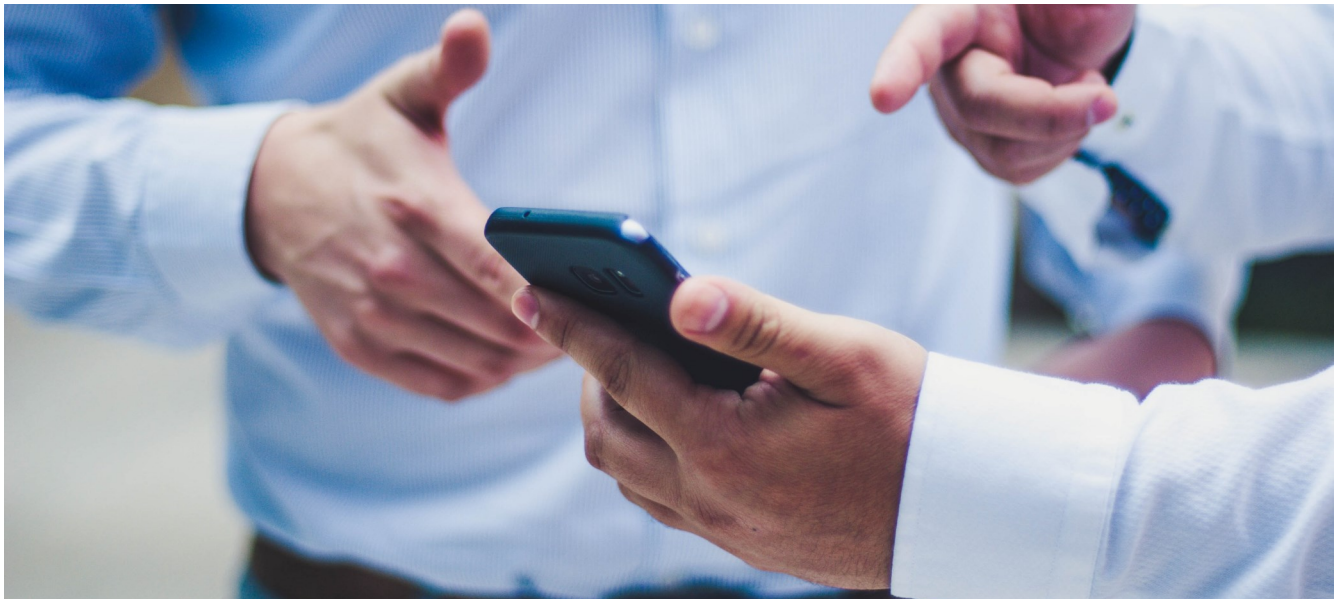
The Everything Customer

Not long ago, “customer service” required little more than a call center. As Gartner describes the [“everything customer,”](#) today’s consumers want options—to serve themselves with the ability for employee assistance when needed, via phone, text, chat, and more. And they want those options to be available 24/7.

Today, meeting these expectations requires a cloud-based contact center (or experience center) that is fully automated, allowing customers to connect effortlessly, across any channel, at any time they choose. It requires powerful, intuitive and natural self-service capabilities, as well as live interactions with efficient, empowered employees. To serve the “everything customer,” (or modern consumer) we need a modern experience center that understands their needs, and how to deliver solutions to them.

We live, we work, we consume in an experience economy, and everyday technology is breaking preconceived ideas on what’s possible. But the real question for many organizations is *what are customers looking for?*

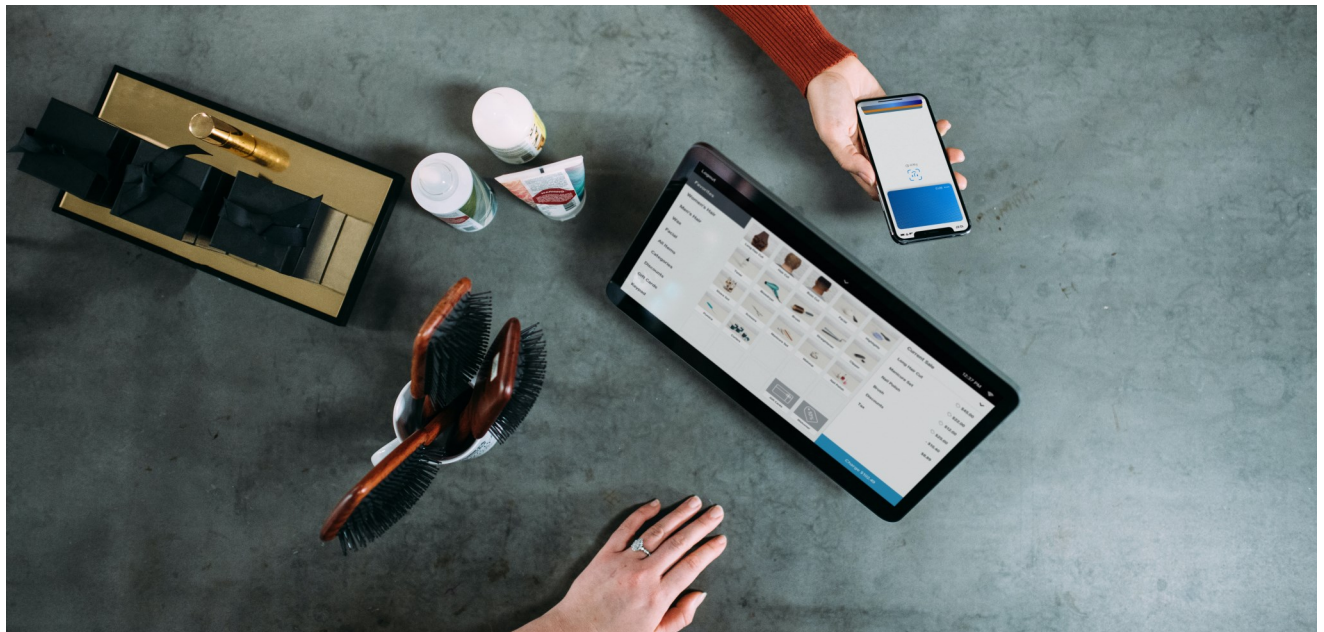
Well, the answer is simple. Customers today want everything. And it’s constantly changing.



The everything customer wants:

- To occasionally serve themselves through a digital assistant, OR occasionally interact with a human employee, depending on their immediate preferences.
- Their information to be used by the business to personalize their service, to proactively send them information and offers relevant to them BUT other times they berate the organisations for not respecting their privacy.
- To interact via chat mediums, such as WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, or even Alexa, BUT sometimes they want to resort to traditional phone calls.
- To be connected BUT left alone.
- To be treated equally BUT served uniquely.
- To be fully featured BUT effortless.
- A consistent and expected service BUT also be pleasantly surprised with the unexpected.

The everything customer is becoming increasingly difficult for your employees to accommodate. But with the right trends, knowledge, and technology, it doesn't have to be.



Pillar 1: Getting Connected - create memorable, effortless experiences to generate brand, customer and employee advocacy

In 2019, top pain points in customer experience included long wait times for customers, the need to repeat information to customer service employees, trouble finding the right ‘channel’ to engage with brands, and multiple transfers between customer experience channels. These pain points are areas to address when considering customer advocacy and retention rates, as well as costly employee frustration and effort.

According to CCW Digital research conducted in 2020, **96%** of businesses understand the importance of serving customers in their preferred ‘touchpoints.’ And **87%** actually have active plans to better honor customer preference. The contact center will become increasingly competitive but many traditional pain points linger, especially as consumer expectations continue to rise.

The most common pain points for contact center employees include: swiveling across multiple systems - **56%** of contact center employees say they must toggle between multiple screens to do their jobs. Others include no contextual assistance and a need to capture notes during and after call, increasing average handle time, in turn, decreasing CSAT scores and customer retention rates.

The research showed the following pain points for businesses: Limited scope for supervisors to focus in on calls that need their immediate attention, inability to connect phone conversations to case records (i.e. the only link between the phone call content and the customer data being the employee’s notes), a need for a more systematized way to onboard and train new employees, a need to retain employees and maintain employee satisfaction (i.e. costly turnover as a result of convoluted systems and employee difficulty levels), and of course, a need to oversee and manage a remote and distributed workforce in real time.

The lesson is to deliver an effortless customer experience tailored for today's "everything customer" in the channel of their choice. The days of customer service agents navigating customer data silos, transferring customers from channel to channel or person to person while painful amounts of time are wasted, are coming to an end. For this reason, we recommend considering the following points:

- Connect every touchpoint throughout the entire customer journey—physical or digital—from voice to social to chat, and more.
- Match the best resources to each interaction, whether human or virtual, with intelligent routing.
- Get ahead of every interaction by predicting needs and proactively engaging customers.
- Incorporate SMS, web chat, social, co-browse, email, conversational intelligence and pre-integrated 3rd party bots.
- Prioritize intelligent self-service IVR and digital applications.
- Skills, business rules, attribute matching, data directed, and AI-powered routing supported by voice biometrics and Natural Language Understanding.
- Predictive, progressive dialing and AI-powered predictive modelling determine best times to reach customers and prospects.





Pillar 2: Process Orchestration - increase responsiveness and personalize customer interactions by synchronizing customer and employee experiences.

According to [MIT Center for Information Systems Research](#), companies in the top quartile of employee experience were twice as innovative as those in the bottom quartile, based on the percentage of revenue from new products and services in the past two years. The companies' ability to develop new solutions and seamless experiences for customers was also reflected in significantly higher customer satisfaction, as shown in the average Net Promoter scores in the two groups. The researchers further saw a 25% increase on the industry-related profitability measure in the survey, indicating that those companies scoring high in employee experience are lowering costs and/or increasing revenue to shift their performance relative to competitors.

Of course, the employee experience largely depends on how difficult it is for employees to do their job. According to CCW Digital's research, employee frustration, or conversely, ease of interaction are some of the greatest factors in determining employee experience in customer service departments, contact centers, and many other customer-facing roles.

In the customer experience realm, ease of interaction can be measured at any of the key moments that matter in the human and digital experience journey. Common questions could include: How much effort was required in purchasing a product, getting in touch with customer service, making a reservation, receiving an accurate and timely answer, and more. Or determining these key moments may look more like: Please rate your agreement with the following statement: “The website made it easy to find the information I was looking for.” In the customer experience arena, according to [Deloitte](#), these scores have not only been found to be an indicator of customer loyalty—more so than satisfaction scores, but they also provide actionable insights into which parts of the customer experience can be improved.

In the workforce (specifically the contact center), a similar, perhaps parallel, measure—work complexity—has gained in popularity. A recent study measured work complexity by looking at such factors as ability and ease of connecting remotely and using and gaining access to technologies needed for work. This has often been found, along with a workplace’s behavioral norms, to influence the employee experience, which in turn, can influence an enterprise’s customer experience interactions, profitability, innovation, and other general measures. With vendor partners, depending on the nature of their relationship, this measure could be adapted to determine the ease of doing business during critical aspects of the customer experience - in customer service, as well as areas such as contract negotiations, up-selling, and collaboration for execution and delivery.

A 2019 study by the [Society of Workforce Planning Professionals](#) showed the average contact center turnover rate to be between 30-45%. Contact center employee churn is common in the industry, and it does merit close examination because of the significant costs to recruit, hire and train new talent, particularly for organizations with lower operating budgets.

Excessive turnover rates, [above the average of 18%](#), can be damaging to your business, let alone 30-45%. In fact, numerous [studies](#) have shown that the cost of replacing an employee is about one-third of that employee's salary.

While it's inevitable that that some voluntary turnover will stem from supervisory issues, compensation or job fit, other instances can often be traced to employee frustrations, such as unclear expectations on role and responsibilities or how performance will be measured; lack of proper tools to support work in a remote environment; improper training to feel confident, capable or growing in their role; or even oppressive targets that don't properly balance an employee's workday.

Taking the above into account, CCW Digital recommends a check-list to consider when revamping process orchestration, synchronizing customer and employee experiences to combat these increasingly pressing problems. Each has one theme in common: journey mapping.

- Personalize employee experiences through a modern workspace that provides all the information employees need in one place to customize customer journeys.
- Orchestrate inquiries, whether through an employee or a digital assistant for the best possible results in each interaction.
- Simplify and streamline complex processes to optimize customer and employee journeys, make better decisions and anticipate next best actions.
- Get better access to, and collaborate with subject matter experts across the entire organization.



- Elevate B2C interactions through digital co-workers - seamlessly from virtual assistants to employees, with accurate contextual information and step-by-step AI-powered guidance.
- Empower team collaboration using converged communications to dissolve front and back office silos.
- Improve employee performance and productivity through the integration of CRM systems within an organization via screen pop of account records, and communication capabilities, while serving as another avenue of insights in the organization ecosystem.



“Journey mapping is the most critical and pivotal component in any customer experience transformation. An in-depth understanding of the experience today—what’s going well and what isn’t—is the only way to really drive change going forward. This is what journey maps provide and, hence, why journey maps and the journey mapping process are often called the backbone of customer experience management.”

– **Annette Franz - Founder and CEO, CX Journey Inc., Forbes Councils Member**



Pillar 3: Managing Resources - empower and enable employees to deliver effortless, memorable customer experiences with the right tools

Employees on average use 6-8 different tools during their workday, which may include a CRM, knowledge base and core industry tools such as an ERP, each having their own branch of disconnected applications and features. These practices will no longer have a place in 2021's customer experience market. As inquiry volume spiked during the COVID-19 pandemic, these problems shed light on customer experience, contributing to the many businesses that filed for bankruptcy or closed doors indefinitely.

The greatest gains are made when data is used to automate workflows and reduce repetitive tasks, for example, automatically logging information from a customer call to a related case in the CRM or pre-populating after call work notes or order forms based on speech to text transcription from the customer call. When automation is combined with AI, there is profitable potential for efficiency gains through a reduction in employee effort.

But as AI has become more established, more innovative use cases are possible, helping organizations to fully realize the promise of AI to fundamentally transform customer service.

This information can be used to supply real-time guidance to employees on how to respond, what to document, or even when to recommend additional information, products, or services that have a high likelihood to be personally relevant to the customer. Yes, the contact center is slowly turning into a marketing and sales hub through predictive customer data.

At the same time, company policies may be rapidly changing as current affairs drive changes in the market, the economy and the business; no matter how tenured or well-trained an agent is, these conditions make productivity challenging. For those agents who are also operating in work-from-home, shared office space, or a hybrid environment, productivity may be further challenged by their surroundings (which can serve as a distraction) and their work station (which may limit their ability to multitask or work optimally). In fact, according to CCW Digital's November Market Study, only 7% of companies anticipate returning to a "traditional" contact center model. Most will rely on remote work or other hybrid, distributed models.



“The remote work-from-home model helps improve employee work/life balance, drives higher employee engagement and ultimately may even lower infrastructure costs. The work from home model also presents key challenges around maximizing performance and fully supporting the remote employee experience. It's important to drive memorable customer and employee experiences – no matter where employees work. It's also important to make the work-from-home experience the same as in-office. Work from home employees need assistance (or more) just like in the office.”

- Natalie Keightley, Senior Director Global Solutions Marketing, Avaya

When empowering and enabling employees to deliver effortless, memorable customer experiences, regardless of location, with the right tools, consider the following points:

- Get the right insights across processes and performance to identify bottlenecks or training gaps, particularly in remote environments.
- Simplify planning, forecasting, and scheduling, to ensure that the right people are doing the right things at the right time, every time.
- Improve in-office and work-from-home employee performance and engagement with real-time performance feedback, mentoring and coaching, metric dashboards, mobile access to scheduling and more.
- Workforce Engagement applications including recruitment and onboarding, evaluation and improvements, assistance and task management, metrics and recognition, voice of the customer and employee.
- Employee desktop delivers work schedules, employee tool sets, e-learning courses, performance metrics, relevant customer information, knowledgebase content and customer journey touchpoints on a single screen.

Pillar 4: Knowledge and Insights - transform customer and employee engagement with timely insights, context and knowledge



“There are many choices in today’s marketplace. Customers should first determine their business objectives before making technology decisions. As a multi-cloud ecosystem, Avaya OneCloud helps to combine the benefits of Avaya, partners and leading Cloud platforms such as Microsoft Azure, Amazon Web Services and Google Cloud. Avaya’s portfolio offers customers flexibility and is available in a variety of deployment options – public, private, hybrid – giving organizations a choice of deployment model based on their transformation strategy and pace to cloud. Our unique hybrid approach of Avaya OneCloud means that Avaya experts will work with each business to define the right mix of these options that works best for them – and to develop a path forward to evolve each business into the future.”

- Natalie Keightley - Senior Director Global Solutions Marketing, Avaya



“Today, one of the biggest challenges to providing a superior customer experience is gaining access to the right data at the right time. Organizations must be able to collect, analyze, and interpret massive amounts of data in real time in order to meet customers where they are and take the next-best action to serve them.”

- Natalie Keightley - Senior Director Global Solutions Marketing, Avaya

Infusing AI, knowledge and insights throughout every customer and employee journey, helps to ensure intelligent, data-driven decisions and informed next best actions that can benefit not just the customers but the employees serving those customers too, to support and augment the work humans do, so they can do it better.

In prioritizing knowledge and insights with the right resources and solution providers, consider the following topics before making a decision:

- Gather, monitor, analyze and manage performance, including internal KPIs, external requirements and feedback.
- Provide employees with real-time suggestions, prompts and dynamically generated guidance—all based on in-the-moment voice and digital customer interactions.
- Let the right data drive informed decisions and next best actions.
- Customer, desktop, process, text and speech analytics.
- AI digital assistants provide transcripts and insights before call connections, and deliver real-time on-screen guidance.
- Real-time and historical reporting monitors performance and identifies improvement opportunities.



“In less than a week, Avaya deployed a fully cloud based Software-as-a-Service solution enabling employees including contact center agents to work from home. Avaya CCaaS allowed Hydro Ottawa to make this seamless transition with no interruption of service, ensuring customers could continue to communicate with the company while also facilitating the safety of employees.”

- Mark Fernandes - Chief Information Officer, Hydro Ottawa

About the Author



Matt Wujciak, Market Research Analyst & Writer, Customer Management Practice

Matt Wujciak is a digital writer, analyst, and marketer for CCW Digital, the #1 global online community and research hub for customer contact and customer experience professionals. Matt's work has been featured by a number of different publications and NYT and WSJ bestselling authors, Forbes coaches and contributors, and C-level executives from fortune 500 companies.



In his role, Matt interviews bestselling business authors and executives from brands such as Nike, Dow Jones (WSJ), Microsoft, Apple, Verizon, Adidas, Under Armour, Lyft, IBM, Salesforce and more. He is known in the CX media world for his industry-leading research and reports, articles and case studies on CX, consumer behavior, UI/UX, digital marketing, performance optimization, customer service, and brand strategy. He also speaks at live events and produces podcasts, webinars, and online events for CCW Digital and associated client brands.

Meet Our Analysts



Brian Cantor

Principal Analyst &
CCW Digital Director



Michael DeJager

Principal Analyst & Divisional Director
Experience Design Series



Max Ribitzky

Principal Analyst,
Go-to-market Research



Nadia Chaity

Senior Analyst, CCO Series



Sandy Ko

Senior Analyst



Amanda Caparelli

Analyst



Matt Wujciak

Analyst

Get Involved



Ben McClymont

Business Development Director

E: Ben.McClymont@customermanagementpractice.com

P: 212 885 2662



Simon Copcutt

Head of Strategic Accounts

E: Simon.Copcutt@customermanagementpractice.com

P: 212 885 2771

Upcoming Events

DECEMBER

The Future of the Contact Center

December 1-3, 2020

[https://www.customercontactweekdigital.com/
events-future-of-the-contact-center-a-forecast](https://www.customercontactweekdigital.com/events-future-of-the-contact-center-a-forecast)

JANUARY

CCW At Home

January 25-28, 2021

[https://www.customercontactweekdigital.com/
events-customercontactweekwinter](https://www.customercontactweekdigital.com/events-customercontactweekwinter)