



IMPROVING  
**CUSTOMER  
LOYALTY**  
THROUGH AN  
**OMNICHANNEL-POWERED  
CONTACT CENTER**



## INTRODUCTION

Customer loyalty is created by giving clients positive experiences with your brand. Get things right and customer loyalty grows. But when you get things wrong, customers take to review sites venting their frustrating negative experiences for the masses to see.

Since your contact center is the often the first point of interaction customers will experience when a problem arises, your agents need to be

equipped with the right tools to assist customers on their terms. That could mean traditional calls and email, while others prefer to engage through web chats, video conferencing, chatbots and social media.

Getting omnichannel right can create a massive success in an increasingly competitive business world- it's the secret ingredient to modern customer loyalty.

## WHAT INSPIRES CUSTOMER LOYALTY?

Understanding the reasons why a customer would choose to conduct repeat business with your brand is essential for continued growth and success. Within the contact center, there are three main factors that strongly influence the loyalty every business seeks from their customers-

- Positive experiences – reaching the desired outcome with great conversations
- Painless resolutions – finding answers & solving problems quickly, without long waits
- Feeling appreciated – being treated with respect & valued as a loyal customer

Each of these three areas have a commonality; they are all dependent on conversations between your call center agent and the customer. It is through these customer interactions that relationships develop. Positive interactions foster growth and loyalty while negative interactions will probably end your relationship with that customer. This is simple human nature. There are rarely second chances considering 74% of consumers consider switching providers after one negative contact experience.\*

Traditional contact centers are falling behind customer demands for higher levels of service, often without even realizing it. What might have sufficed 5 years ago may not be adequate to meet those demands today. Therefore, contact centers must learn to get it right the first time at the first interaction.

## NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES DESTROY CUSTOMER LOYALTY

Creating a positive customer experience can only happen by understanding what types of situations harm the customer journey, then taking proactive steps to avoid these counter-productive circumstances. Here are common factors that contribute to a negative experience within contact centers-

- Long waits, pauses and hold times
- Multiple hand-offs to various agents
- Unresolved issues after the contact
- Dry dialogues with no personalization
- Having to repeatedly share information
- Language barriers that slow progress

Are your customers willing to put up with these experiences? No! These experiences only lead to frustration and are devastating in terms of loyalty.

## WHERE DOES LOYALTY LIE IN THE CONTACT CENTER ECOSYSTEM?

Loyalty itself is not a decision made by your customer, it's earned by the efforts of your managers and agents to deliver a positive experience that makes the customer feel appreciated and valued every time they interact with your business.

In other words, loyalty comes from the customer, but it starts with the way they're treated by your contact center.

Improving loyalty comes down to building positive relationships, whether it's a one-time interaction or several interactions over the course of many years. Due to the rapid advancement of digital communications and the way the average person now communicates, the burden that is placed on contact centers is higher than ever before.

The good news is that it's entirely possible to transform that burden into one of your strongest competitive advantages by embracing technology. You can use omnichannel to deliver loyalty at every interaction within your contact center.

## HOW DOES OMNICHANNEL IMPROVE CUSTOMER LOYALTY?

Omnichannel functionality for contact centers is no longer a nicety, it's a necessity.

Omnichannel is the convergence of various channels of communication in a single contact center platform. The days of traditional voice contact centers are fading away rapidly as businesses recognize the need to be available for consumers on their channel of choice.

Customers are already familiar with using digital methods for conducting business. They schedule and cancel appointments with text messaging, they chat with service reps via a mobile app, they search for sales offers on social media and follow brands online to be notified of new products or services.

Today's omnichannel contact center goes far beyond voice interactions, it's about the relationship. Your contact center should enable customers to start a conversation via a web chat, text, social or any other digital means without sacrificing your quality of service. Contact center agents need the convenience of seamless interaction with customers across all channels unilaterally to better manage and interact efficiently.

When customers know they can communicate with your company when and how they want to get the answers they are looking for, they are far more likely to become a repeat customer.

## OMNICHANNEL IN ACTION IN THE MODERN WORLD

Customers no longer look for toll free numbers as the only means for receiving advice to their problems and questions. You need to have qualified subject matter experts across a variety of interactive channels to satisfy expectations. Interactions should be personalized and highly relevant to the customer's concerns.

It's important that managers of contact center operations understand that a call-first mentality no longer exists. Today's customers are used to receiving answers quickly regardless of which communication channel they choose to use. That means a web chat should be the same experience as a call, email or text inquiry- these experiences need to be unified.

An omnichannel contact center accomplishes this by making communications smarter, faster, and more convenient for both the customer and your agents.

Do your customers prefer to access a web chat bot on your website while they are online in the evening after work? Are they inquiring through social media about a current sale they saw when visiting Facebook or Instagram? Do they prefer to use their mobile chat app to cancel an online order or check shipping delivery dates?

The simple truth is that your customers are making these choices whether you make them available or not. If you fail to meet their expectations, then they are shopping with other brands for a more seamless, hassle-free process.



## CREATING INSTANT LOYALTY WITH INTELLIGENT ROUTING

Regardless of which channel a customer chooses, pairing them with the ideal agent is critical for building loyalty. Is your contact center able to respond to non-phone interactions with the same efficiency, responsiveness and professionalism that would occur if the customer had called to speak with an agent?

Omnichannel platforms can use intelligent routing to ensure that every customer is directed to the ideal service agent that understands the customer's unique challenges, regardless of where the conversation starts.

Keep in mind that 67% of consumer churn is preventable if a customer's issues are resolved during their first interaction. To put that in a different context, only one in three customers will give you a second chance to fix their problems after a bad initial experience.

With intelligent routing as part of your omnichannel platform, the following benefits occur:

- Agents only handle questions within areas of expertise
- Resolutions are found faster and more efficiently
- More calls are handled per agent on any given shift
- Overall wait times decrease and customer loyalty grows

Service is streamlined when knowledgeable agents can efficiently answer and resolve issues without transferring to another agent for assistance.

*Customers who rate a service experience as “very good” are 3.5x more likely to repurchase and 5x more likely to recommend your brand.\**

## VISIBILITY INTO CUSTOMER HISTORY IMPROVES CX

An omnichannel contact center is more than offering multiple channels for your customers, it's the ability for your agents to easily access and have visibility into all communications regardless of the channel used.

Access to a customer's previous interactions is important in building familiarity and understanding the concerns of the customer. For example, if a customer reaches out to your company multiple times throughout a week as they are researching new products or services, how valued will they feel if every time they had to start conversations from the ground up?

Now picture your customer speaking with an agent using web chat, the next day they call in and speak to another agent. Except this time, the agent immediately sees the previous day's interaction and picks up the conversation exactly where it last left off. Since the customer's expectations were initially exceeded, the chances of a positive outcome on that call increases exponentially.

This positive experience fosters the growing relationship. It's a huge win for everyone involved.

Omnichannel contact centers can also integrate with CRMs such as Salesforce, enabling agents to recognize a customer based on account ID or several other identifying measures. As the data is automatically populated upon first contact, agents can personalize their interactions by accessing customer name and contact information without the customer having to repeat it every time.

With all this information at your agent's fingertips, customers experience a far greater level of personalization to continue building great relationships over time.

## MANAGERS ARE LOOKING FOR OMNICHANNEL

Operationally, contact center managers are struggling to deliver the results businesses are looking for with segmented multichannel solutions. That places their marketing and sales teams at a big disadvantage due to a huge gap at the very center of the customer journey.

Instead of investing even more marketing dollars towards an imperfect sales funnel, it makes a lot more sense to focus on enhancing the customer experience when they're ready to buy or have additional questions. This is no longer possible with traditional voice contact centers since the experience isn't unified.

Multichannel contact centers may offer the ability to communicate via multiple channels, but it's simply not designed for today's consumer in mind and how they expect their buying experience to take place. So if you want to encourage customer loyalty, you must first be loyal to your customers and give them the tools they expect during every interaction.

The advantage to a true omnichannel-based contact center can be measured in many different forms. If we're talking financial comparisons to your existing technology, omnichannel wins due to the highly increased productivity and efficiency of your call center reps. Yet the true benefit comes from building more engaged customers who are more receptive to your marketing and quicker to take action- that's the definition of modern call center customer loyalty.



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*This whitepaper was written by Converged Technology Professionals, a RingCentral Preferred partner that specializes in helping businesses successfully migrate their communications and contact center operations to the cloud. Their in-depth expertise and experience in the industry enables them to provide strategic advisement and consulting from pre-planning to deployment and ongoing support.*

67% of customer churn related to product or account issues is preventable if the issue is resolved during the first engagement<sup>[ix]</sup>

90% of consumers said they are likely to stay loyal after a positive call center experience, while nearly 74% will switch after a negative experience<sup>[xi]</sup>

Customers who rate a service experience as “very good” are 3.5x more likely to repurchase and 5x more likely to recommend your brand<sup>[vi]</sup>