

THE PHONE IS *NOT* DEAD

How to turn conversations into insights.



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HOW TO TURN CONVERSATIONS INTO INSIGHTS.

When a customer picks up the phone, it is rarely a casual act. They may be:

- Trying to resolve a billing question before a payment deadline.
- Evaluating a purchase.
- Or they may simply need clarity from a human voice after using a confusing website or automated system.

These calls are often moments of urgency, trust, or annoyance. They are also some of the most consequential interactions a customer will have with a brand.

Yet for many organizations, the phone remains one of the *least* understood channels in the customer journey. While they have invested heavily in digital analytics, marketing attribution, and self-service technologies, the insights buried in customer conversations are often underutilized.

For contact center leaders, this represents both a problem *and* an opportunity. Calls contain rich signals about customer intent, operational performance, and gaps in customer experience (CX).

Those organizations that learn to analyze and act on these signals can transform the contact center from a cost center into a strategic driver of customer acquisition, loyalty, and revenue.

A CHANGING CUSTOMER LANDSCAPE

Serving customers requires balancing service, quality, and operational efficiency. That balance requires economic trends to reshape consumer behavior:

- Higher-income households increasingly account for a disproportionate share of discretionary spending. These customers often expect personalized, responsive service that reflects the value of their relationship with a brand.



WHEN CONTACT CENTERS LACK VISIBILITY INTO CONVERSATIONS, SMALL INEFFICIENCIES MAY QUIETLY ACCUMULATE...

- Cost-conscious customers are essential to growth for many organizations, and they expect fast, respectful service when problems arise.

This divide creates a difficult challenge for contact centers:

- High-value customers may expect knowledgeable agents who understand their histories and can provide tailored guidance.
- Lower-margin interactions may need to be handled efficiently to keep service costs sustainable.

Over-automate service for cost-conscious customers, and frustration grows. Under-automate routine interactions, and operating expenses escalate. *The key is not choosing between automation and human interaction but understanding when and how to deploy each.*

THE VISIBILITY GAP IN VOICE INTERACTIONS

One reason this parity is difficult to achieve is that many organizations lack visibility into what actually happens during customer calls.

Traditional contact center metrics such as call volume, average handle time (AHT), and abandonment rates provide useful operational data. However, they reveal little about what customers are asking, how agents respond, or why certain interactions lead to successful outcomes while others do not.

This gap regularly allows performance issues to persist unnoticed:

- A marketing campaign may generate large volumes of inbound calls, yet many of those calls may fail to convert into appointments or sales opportunities.

- Customers may repeatedly call with the same questions because online information is unclear, yet agents may have difficulties with common objections or policy questions that could be addressed through improved training or scripts.

Without deeper insight into the content and the context of conversations, these problems can take months to surface in traditional reporting. By the time leaders recognize them, the organization may have already lost revenue, damaged customer confidence, or misallocated marketing spend.

WHERE REVENUE LEAKS HAPPEN

When contact centers lack visibility into conversations, small inefficiencies may quietly accumulate into significant business impacts.

Think of a scenario where a marketing campaign drives hundreds or thousands of inbound calls. Standard attribution tools may show the campaign successfully generating leads. But they often cannot reveal whether those calls resulted in qualified opportunities.

In one example, one of our clients that was analyzing call conversations discovered that more than 1,000 inbound calls generated by several affiliate marketing sources yielded only a small number of viable leads.

But once leaders understood what was happening in those conversations, they were able to redirect marketing investment toward higher-performing channels.

Operational issues can surface through conversation analysis. Customers frequently express annoyance during calls about appointment availability and scheduling delays. While traditional reports show normal call volumes, analysis of conversation content reveals growing service issues that risk customer satisfaction.

By identifying the problem early, leaders are able to adjust scheduling practices and address customer concerns before they intensify further. *These kinds of insights rarely emerge from conventional reporting alone.*

USING CONVERSATION INTELLIGENCE TO UNDERSTAND CUSTOMER NEEDS

Advances in speech analytics and conversation intelligence are helping organizations close this visibility gap.

Analytics tools can analyze large volumes of calls to discover patterns in customer intent, sentiment, and outcomes. Instead of manually reviewing individual calls, leaders can detect recurring themes across thousands of conversations.



These insights can reveal when customers express purchase intent but fail to convert because questions remain unanswered, showing when callers abandon interactions because of long hold times or confusing routing systems. They also highlight recurring questions that agents are not entirely prepared to address.

By surfacing these patterns, conversation analytics allows contact center leaders to focus their improvement efforts where they matter most. *The goal is to translate conversation insights into operational changes that improve outcomes for both customers and the business.*

CONNECTING MARKETING, OPERATIONS, AND CX

One of the most powerful aspects of conversation intelligence is its ability to connect teams that have traditionally operated in silos.

In many organizations, Marketing, Operations, and CX teams are measured against different KPIs, often with limited visibility into how their decisions affect one another:

- Marketing may focus on lead volume and campaign performance.
- Operations prioritizes staffing efficiency and customer handling times.
- CX teams, meanwhile, are measured on satisfaction and service outcomes.

The challenge is that all of these functions influence the same customer journey, yet they often work from separate data sets and disconnected goals. This can create friction, defensiveness around performance metrics, and difficulty identifying where customer engagement is succeeding or breaking down.

Conversation intelligence helps bridge those gaps by creating a shared source of truth rooted in actual customer interactions:

- Marketing teams gain visibility into which campaigns generate high-quality inquiries versus low-intent calls.
- Operations leaders can identify staffing gaps, workflow bottlenecks, or service issues that affect customer outcomes.
- CX training teams can use real conversation examples to coach agents on handling objections, clarifying complex topics, or improving conversion performance.

This shared visibility creates a continuous feedback loop across the organization:

- Marketing messaging can be refined based on the questions customers ask most frequently.
- Operations leaders can better align staffing with call demand patterns and service expectations.
- CX agent training can focus on real-world scenarios tied directly to customer satisfaction and conversion outcomes.

The result is a more coordinated approach to customer engagement where teams are aligned around shared customer outcomes rather than isolated departmental metrics.



SUPPORTING AGENTS WITH BETTER INSIGHT

Conversation insights also play an important role in supporting frontline agents. Agents are often the first to recognize emerging customer concerns, but without structured data, their observations can be difficult to scale across the organization.

Analyzing conversations helps leaders identify where agents excel and where additional guidance may be needed. Teams can review successful interactions to highlight best practices. They can also examine calls that result in customer displeasure or missed opportunities.

In some organizations, providing these insights regularly to agents has improved both productivity and involvement. When agents understand how their interactions affect customer outcomes, they are better equipped to adjust their approach and build stronger relationships with callers.

Rather than focusing solely on efficiency metrics, such as AHT, conversation insights offer a broader view of service quality and effectiveness.

DESIGNING SERVICE FOR DIFFERENT CUSTOMER SEGMENTS

Conversation data can also help contact centers design service models that meet the needs of different customer segments.

Routine interactions such as appointment scheduling, account updates, or status inquiries are often well-suited for automation or self-service tools. When implemented effectively, these options allow customers to resolve issues quickly without waiting for an agent.

More complicated interactions, chiefly those involving major purchases or sensitive concerns, may require skilled agents who are able to offer guidance and reassurance. Understanding the intent behind customer calls allows organizations to route interactions more intelligently and assign resources where they create the most value.

This balance between efficiency and empathy is essential for serving both high-value customers and those in lower-margin segments.

PRACTICAL STEPS FOR CONTACT CENTER LEADERS

Contact center leaders seeking to unlock the value of conversation insights can begin with several practical steps:

- **First**, evaluate call outcomes and operational metrics. Knowing which interactions lead to successful resolutions, sales, or follow-up actions gives a clearer view of performance.

CONVERSATION INTELLIGENCE HELPS BRIDGE THOSE GAPS BY CREATING A SHARED SOURCE OF TRUTH ROOTED IN ACTUAL CUSTOMER INTERACTIONS...

- **Second**, analyze recurring customer questions and concerns. These patterns typically highlight opportunities to improve agent training, update scripts, or elucidate information across digital channels.
- **Third**, review call abandonment and AHT trends alongside conversation content to determine whether bottlenecks are affecting customer satisfaction.

**FINALLY,
TREAT VOICE
INTERAC-
TIONS AS A
STRATEGIC
SOURCE OF
INSIGHT...**

- **Fourth**, share insights across teams. Marketing, Operations, and CX leaders all benefit from understanding what customers are saying directly.

Finally, treat voice interactions as a strategic source of insight rather than simply a service channel.

THE STRATEGIC VALUE OF CUSTOMER CONVERSATIONS

As organizations continue to invest in digital channels and automation, the role of voice interactions is still vital.

Customers still turn to the phone when they need clarity, reassurance, or quick problem resolution. These conversations capture authentic customer sentiment and intent in ways few other channels can.

For contact center leaders, the ability to analyze and act on conversation data delivers a powerful advantage. It reveals hidden performance gaps, highlights opportunities for improvement, and connects CX directly to operational decisions.



Organizations that employ these insights are going to be better positioned to deliver efficient service, strengthen customer relationships, and generate measurable business results.

In an increasingly automated world, understanding the human conversations at the center of the CX may be one of the most valuable capabilities a contact center can develop.



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