

# Industry Flash Report: The Power of Self-Service and System Integration



LIVEVOX

LiveVox surveyed contact center professionals at the C-suite, VP, Director, and Manager levels to understand what their strategic priorities are right now, where they're headed in the future, and what role self-service and system integration plays in their ability to deliver an exceptional customer experience. We gathered responses from individuals in fourteen different industries, including Banking, Finance, Retail, Insurance, and Debt Collection, across job functions ranging from Operations to IT to Customer Experience.

Based on their inputs, we've crafted this report that highlights the challenges, priorities, and opportunities for contact center professionals today.



## Survey Snapshot:

### How do you increase customer satisfaction while decreasing costs?

When you're an inbound contact center, customer experience is your business. That's what you do. So how do you elevate the customer experience in a highly competitive environment? Even more importantly, how do you continue to improve the customer experience without significantly increasing your costs?

**More than 34% of survey respondents said that the volume of work their agents handle is the biggest problem in their contact centers.** Typically, the way you would reduce that volume is by adding more agents. But as you add agents, you also add more costs, and since the industry is highly competitive, your competitors could be spending less than you are.

The challenge, then, becomes clear: how do you deliver an exceptional customer experience without adding costs to your P&L? The way you do it is with self-service tools that give customers the power to handle their needs on their own.

However, many contact centers have existing, on-premise phone systems that can neither provide the self-service tools customers expect, nor be replaced right now. For 92% of survey respondents, it's crucial that their next communications platform have the ability to integrate with their existing systems. Especially when it comes to integrating with their existing CRMs, account databases, or systems of record, because data is the backbone of their business.

Moreover, a surprising number of respondents do not fully understand how to use Artificial Intelligence as a tool to elevate the customer experience while also decreasing costs. Many contact center leaders see AI's role as merely increasing efficiency. **But in reality, there exists an opportunity for AI not only to increase efficiency but also to improve the experience of inbound callers.**

34%

of respondents cited **volume of work for agents to handle** as the biggest problem in their contact center.

54%

of business operations respondents said contact center software should **allow them to build and develop what they need.**

60%

of IT/technology respondents said contact center software should be **built and enhanced by the provider.**

33%

of respondents said Artificial Intelligence is key to **improving efficiency in their contact centers.**

92%

of respondents want their next contact center platform to be able to **integrate with other systems.**

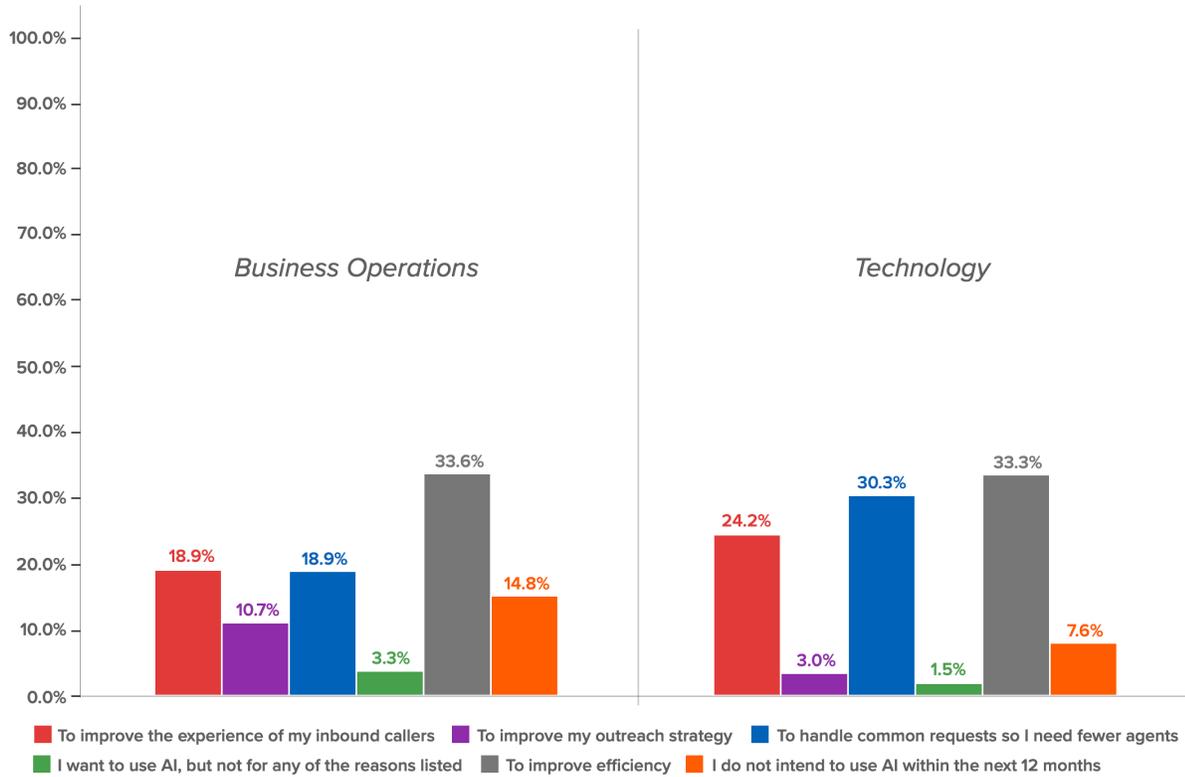
42%

of respondents cited the **ability to integrate into an existing CRM or account database** as most important.

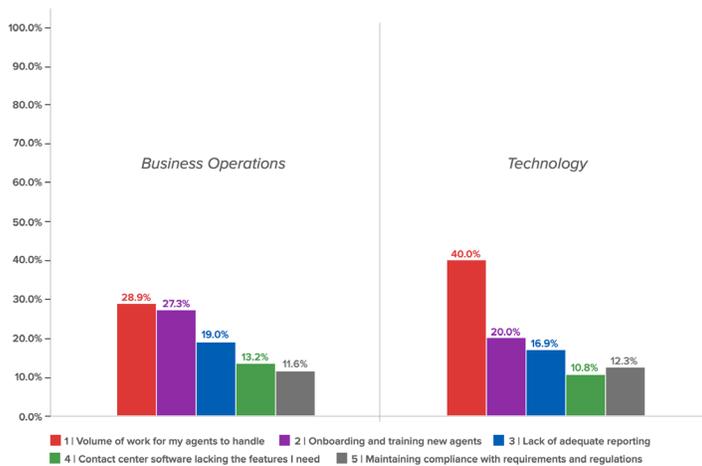
Survey ran in August 2020.

## When thinking about how to use Artificial Intelligence in your contact center, which use case is most important to you?

There is currently a lack of understanding around how best to use AI in the contact center, because “improving efficiency” is the non-specific, catch-all answer when you’re not sure how to apply AI effectively in your operations. The real opportunity for AI is two-fold: to handle common requests which means needing fewer agents, and improving the experience for inbound callers.

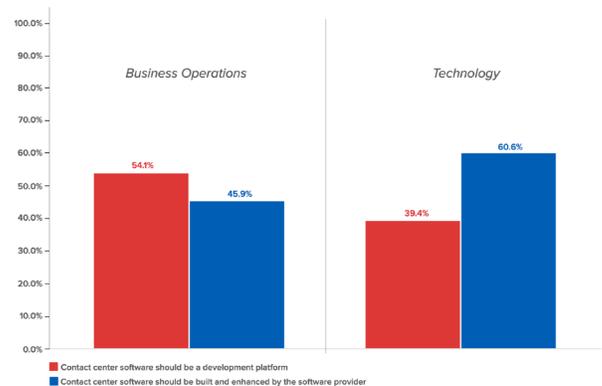


## What are the biggest problems in your contact center? (Rank the following)



**Agent workload is the #1 problem for many contact centers.** So the next question logically becomes: How do you deal with this volume without adding agents and more costs? By giving customers the power to self-service, which decreases workload while also elevating the customer experience.

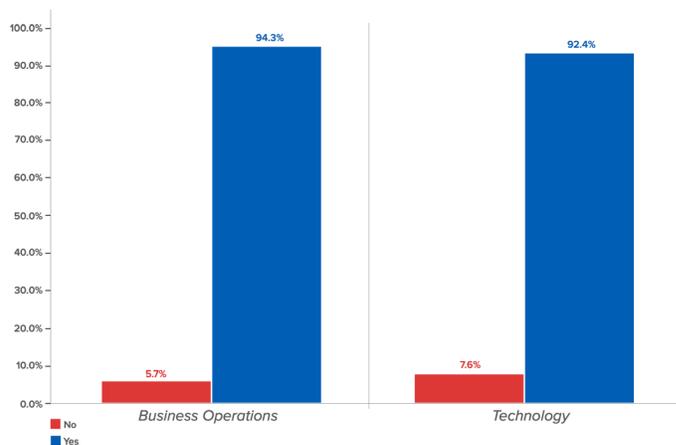
## Should contact center software be a development platform to build what I need? Or should it be built and enhanced by the software provider?



The traditional business evaluation is the build versus buy decision. We thought business users would be on the buy side, and IT folks would be on the build side. But it was exactly the opposite. **IT wants to buy a solution**—they don’t have the time or resources to build something from scratch. **Business users don’t fully understand those challenges so they want to go build something.**

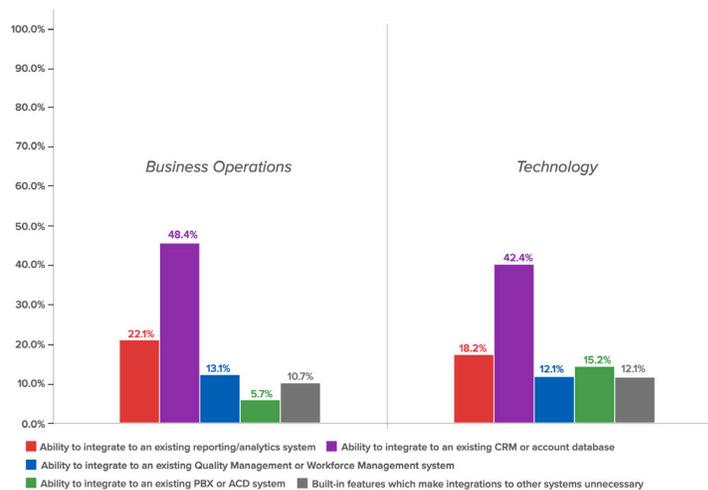
## Will the ability to integrate to other systems be a major factor when considering your next contact center communications platform?

Many contact centers operating today have many systems that they've accumulated. Some of those should be replaced because they're out of date or no longer provide the value they need to. **But some of them also shouldn't — or can't — be replaced for one or many reasons.** This means any platform contact center leaders add must be able to work with those existing systems.



## When thinking about types of integrations, which of the below choices would be most important to you?

A CRM, account database, or system of record is the backbone of any business. That's where all of your most important data exists. These days, **you need to be able to communicate and sync data back and forth** with that system as a baseline requirement. It is table stakes.



## Wrap Up:

Make customers happier by making your system work for them and meet their expectations.

The opportunity for contact centers is to identify why customers are calling. What are your customers actually trying to do? Once you understand that, then you bring the tools, features, and functionality to bear to solve as many of those customer needs as you can.

By figuring out the intents of your inbound callers, then you can devise systems and processes that address those intents. We have found that most contact centers are not working aggressively enough on integrating omnichannel communications into their inbound call flows and processes. Doing that is easier than most contact center leaders think with massive upside if done successfully.

First, though, you need to map it out. And you need to be working with a partner that understands how contact centers work, how IVRs work, how customers think, and what the constraints are of a modern contact center.

If you can't move your contact center to the cloud in the next 12 months, but you still need to improve the customer experience, the way you do that is with a fully-featured IVR and self-service options. The ability to add digital engagement features, without needing to replace your existing phone system, is a huge opportunity for contact centers today.

## About LiveVox

LiveVox is a next generation contact center platform that powers more than 14 Billion interactions a year. We seamlessly integrate omnichannel communications, CRM and WFO capabilities to deliver an exceptional agent and customer experience, while reducing compliance risk. Our more than 450 global employees are headquartered in San Francisco; with offices in Atlanta; Denver; New York City; St. Louis; Medellin, Columbia; and Bangalore, India.