

RingCentral[®]
CONTACT CENTRE

CONTACT CENTRE 2.0

Tomorrow's solutions
for today's customers

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It's difficult to find consumers who thoroughly enjoy today's contact centre experience. No one is thrilled with the automated attendant greeting, an unintelligent voice system, or the incredibly cumbersome means required to talk to another human being.

The growth of digital technologies has triggered a change in human behavior and communication habits—within both interpersonal relationships and in the way we interact with businesses.

Yet, while businesses are continually trying to improve their customer service capabilities so customers can interact with them seamlessly on their touch point of choice, contact centres as a

philosophy and practice haven't changed much in decades. For the most part, customers are still subjected to legacy-based engagement models, scaled through both old and newer technologies, and measured through formulas that struggle to keep up with evolving customer behaviours, expectations, and preferences.

It's time to close the chapter on Contact Centre 1.0. Companies must make customer engagement experiential, intuitive, and collaborative for a modern customer in modern times. Read on to discover how adopting Contact Centre 2.0 can help you achieve those gains with minimal risk to operations, budgets, and customers.

What did the last contact centre experience you enjoyed feel like?

CONTACT CENTRE 1.0: LIMITATIONS OF AN OUTDATED MODEL

The contact centre that each of us has experienced was designed and deployed at scale in the 1960s. It uses a broad set of hardware installed at each location and allows agents to serve a couple of clients at a time, generally needing to put them on hold to access outside information or when help is needed from a supervisor.

Management, governance, control, and standards were defined during this expansion and remain relatively unchanged for most practitioners. Data, when available, tends to be siloed, and each agent has access to information and support based on their position in the hierarchy, elevating customers to other agents or supervisors as necessary. Phone agents take phone calls and may respond to emails. Meanwhile, live chat agents are elsewhere digitally responding to a new wave of customers, if and when this service is available.

A woman with dark hair, wearing a white shirt and a brown leather headset, is shown in profile, looking down at a desk. Her right hand is near her ear, adjusting the headset. In the background, a patch panel with various colored cables (red, green, blue) is visible. The scene is lit with a warm, orange glow.

This is Contact Centre 1.0 as it exists in the digital world, where information and communication channels remain separate.

This is Contact Centre 1.0 as it exists in the digital world, where information and communication channels remain separate. Every tweak or addition, whether a new agent or a communication channel, requires significant infrastructure installed at your centre, with no remote options. And each update, upgrade, or technical problem you solve requires your own team or bandwidth to manage third-party contractors.

This model may have worked for growing businesses that needed a centralised location to serve a small or regional set of customers. However, its limitations are clear once we start considering the new ways people communicate, which increases customer service demands, and the geographic spread of the traditional customer base requiring support during a growing number of hours and in an increasing number of languages.

If you were to operate or launch a Contact Centre 1.0 today, you would face:

—
A wholly on-premise solution that is inflexible, difficult to scale, and requires a physical installation and upgrades as you grow.

—
Custom hardware and software deployments to manage each system, based on your building as well as the contact centre.

—
Significant hardware expenses that are slow to install and deploy, especially if your building is not specifically designed to be a contact centre.

—
Major training requirements or expensive hiring to acquire specialists trained in specific on-premise deployments.

—
Workforce hiring challenges or the need for multiple centres across your footprint because CC 1.0 cannot support remote agents.

—
Reliance on outdated technology and infrastructure that can impact reliability, performance, security, and your ability to meet customers on the channels they demand.

THE SILO IS THE LARGEST CONTACT CENTRE 1.0 RISK

If you look at a standard Contact Centre 1.0 operation, you'll see a broad set of actions, people, and information that are separated by significant hurdles. These silos occur in some of the most critical areas for delivering quality service, making an agent's job more difficult and the customer's experience more frustrating.

The silo is the true defining feature of Contact Centre 1.0. It's important to note the many different areas where silos are present so that you can overcome them and provide the service your customers demand.



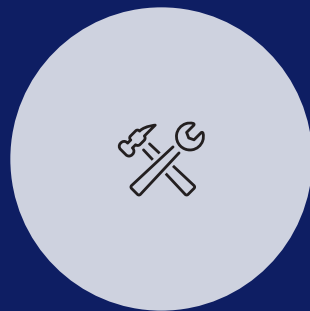
Agent Silos

With an on-premise solution, agents operate separately from the rest of the organisation. This can be a physical separation due to infrastructure requirements, meaning engineers and product knowledge experts are on a different site. It can also be a system-based separation where they are unable to request help from other team members without putting a customer on hold.



Tool Silos

Agents often cannot solve a customer's issue with a single tool. [A RingCentral survey](#) found that 74% of agents report toggling between apps every day in order to address customer needs, with many information gaps between such systems. When tools are siloed and agents must move between them to solve issues, they become less efficient and take longer to resolve each concern, reducing the support they can provide and increasing customer wait times (or increasing your agent count to keep wait times low).



Customer and Data Silos

On-premise technologies, by design, are siloed. They prioritise a specific function or channel to service it but can often lack the ability to share information or support capabilities. A customer who calls with a concern will have significant hurdles if they require further follow-up via email, web, or other channels. Their data is tied to how they enter the support system, keeping them locked into that channel if they want the smoothest service delivery.

A majority of companies lack historical customer interaction data, and [62% still depend on premise-based technology](#) for their customer engagement.



WHY IT'S TIME TO MOVE TO THE CLOUD

Growing beyond Contact Centre 1.0 requires an ability to scale your business as demands change. Customers move at lightning-fast speeds and you need to respond as quickly, without doing harm to service or quality. Your operations have to change with demand but also with the tools requested for a modern customer experience. Exceeding expectations can't happen when you're out of touch with customer needs.

Cloud platforms, offering software-as-a-service tools, have already revolutionised the way businesses share files, communicate within teams, manage supply chains, submit payroll, manage marketing, and much more. Cloud-based contact centre solutions offer the same revolutionary approach that make it easier to manage daily operations so you can focus on the experience you're delivering and keep pace with the changing business landscape.

Customers, both B2B and B2C, are turning to digital technologies for all of their support needs. We're now speaking into our phones not just for your call center but also to have voice assistants discover things for us. Service has moved from calling at the first sign of trouble, to adopting a "Google it" mantra, to finally now asking questions directly to Siri or Alexa, powered by cloud engines that understand us and the answers we seek.

The digital transformation of customer service has already happened, and Contact Centre 1.0 solutions have lost their place. CC 1.0 is disruptive to the ways we communicate today. It appears disconnected to other common interactions, and because it integrates with fewer services and technologies, it will lead fewer customers directly to you. Companies who rely on outdated systems are at an ever-increasing risk of alienating customers simply by making their service too hard to find and use.

Many organisations, and perhaps competitors, have already discovered that cloud solutions not only offer the affordability, simplicity, and reliability they want but also feature the agility and multichannel capabilities needed to keep up with the shifting behaviors of today's consumers. In a [recent RingCentral survey](#), 61% of companies have already transitioned to a cloud solution or plan to do so within roughly three years.

In a 2.0-world, there is little chance for a 1.0 solution to maintain customer support and satisfaction levels required for long-term growth and sustainability.

Core Benefits of the Cloud



AFFORDABLE



SCALABLE



AGILE



MULTICHANNEL



ALWAYS UP TO DATE




SIMPLE AND FAMILIAR

BENEFITS OF CLOUD TECHNOLOGY: REMOVING THE SILOS

There are a multitude of benefits when adopting cloud technologies. Not only do you reduce hardware and infrastructure installation costs, but you're also able to depend on a partner to develop and maintain the system. When something goes wrong, a team with intimate knowledge of the platform is available to you.

You reduce the complexity of IT, make it easier to scale immediately whenever you add a new agent, and you reduce the number of software and screens agents must use to address customer concerns. Contact Centre 2.0 depends on the cloud because it makes running a business more efficient by making it easier to solve customer issues.

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Eliminating Agent Silos

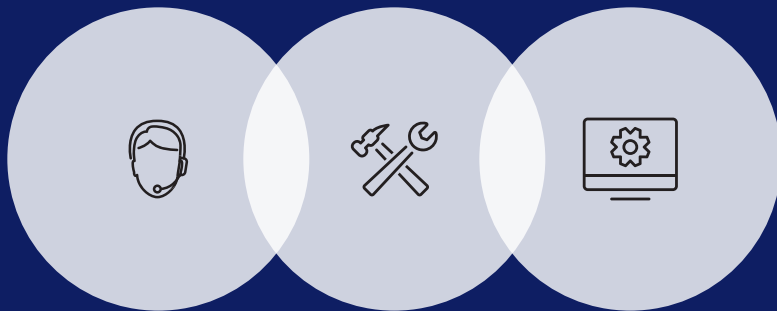
Collaboration is a core cloud technology benefit for your agents because it supports their ability to communicate with experts and leaders as needed. They can speak with experts or have a supervisor join a call or chat to answer questions without any disruption in service. As an added benefit, none of these people need to be in the same room for that support. Remote teams around the world can collaborate on any customer service request in real time.

Eliminating Tool Silos

One of the most significant Contact Centre 1.0 burdens on agents is the need to jump between systems and re-enter data repeatedly as they gain a better understanding of the customer needs. By transitioning to the cloud, tools can share data and even screens so the agent can pull all of the information they need more effectively, ask fewer questions of the caller, and resolve issues without putting the customer on hold. An added benefit of the cloud is that these tools often feel more familiar to agents because the majority of tools they use in their daily lives are already cloud-based.

Eliminating Customer and Data Silos

By moving systems and data to the cloud, your customers are better served each time they contact you. Agents can pull information from all systems and channels, so customers have a single experience whether they initiate contact via chat, call, or even text message. Customers who have already provided information, such as emailing before a call, have an omnichannel experience without knowing it. No matter how your service or offering changes, cloud can scale and integrate every new item, so your customers always feel like they're speaking with your brand, enhancing loyalty.



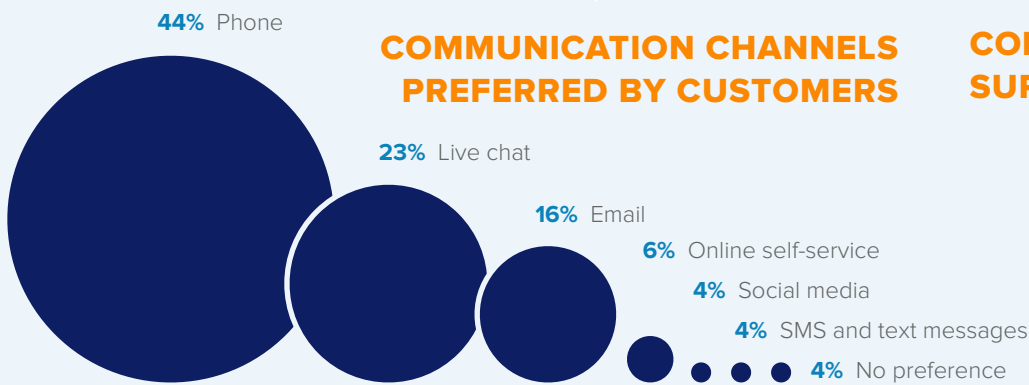
DEFINING CONTACT CENTRE 2.0

The concept of Contact Centre 2.0 is a direct contrast to past models. It is agile and lean, supporting flexibility for the changing nature of business. As [IBM's Global C-Suite Study](#) says, [business trends and products are changing faster](#) than many executives can prepare and plan.

Each month comes with new product launches and industry convergence, where your customers ask you to address a growing number of problems and pain points. On-premise systems require significant replacement and updates to address each new challenge. However, a cloud solution can respond dynamically with only software updates, which are delivered to every agent and chair at the same time.

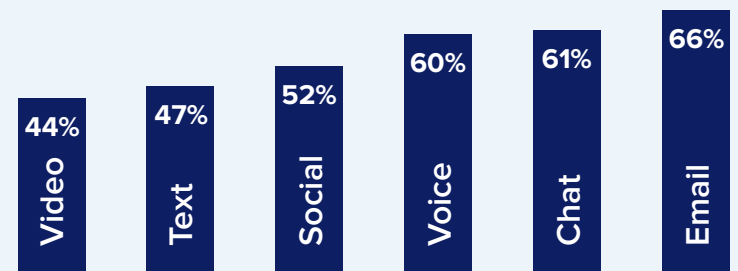
Each communication platform can be integrated to allow your customers and employees to communicate as they need, across phone, team messaging, online meetings, file sharing platforms, video, and dashboards. Cloud technologies also support your customers across all their devices. Their preferences can become your pathway to quality service.

Businesses are moving beyond any traditional limits of the Contact Centre 1.0. Teams can collaborate in real time as enterprises adapt and grow, easily integrating microservices while ensuring uptime and reliability. The cloud contact centre is ready for your business, with a proven foundation to help you deliver the best service to your customers.



CONTACT CENTRE 2.0 SERVICE SUPPORT DURING THE NEXT YEAR

[*Statista.com](#)





DIRECTLY COMPARING 2.0 AND 1.0

CONTACT CENTRE 1.0: 20TH CENTURY ON-PREMISE

Work silos persist, slowing down the ability of each agent to find the knowledge or solution that a customer needs.

Limited customer channels are available, and expansion is slow, cumbersome, and resource-intensive. Each addition can require a physical installation or hands-on improvement for the station of every single agent.

An agent's personal knowledge is one of the most significant limiting factors in determining the speed and success of customer concern resolution. Slow and siloed tools mean a customer must be lucky to find the right agent for their question or suffer long waits while being placed on hold for resolution.

CONTACT CENTRE 2.0: 21ST CENTURY CLOUD

➤ Contact centres are integrated with business communications tools and datasets, supporting faster problem resolution and less wait times.

➤ Cloud-based omnichannel solutions helps companies meet customers on the channel of their choice including calls, chat, email, SMS and MMS, and social. Adding new channels requires software updates and then becomes immediately available to all agents.

➤ Collaboration is central to the cloud that connects knowledge bases as well as company experts who can provide support without disrupting the customer experience. Shared knowledge is possible and seamless, making your entire company's resources available to all agents.



1.0

Contact centre costs are significant during the installation and expansion. Companies are required to fund all installation as well as expansion of IT systems and physical infrastructure, such as PBX units.

Any company that runs a Contact Centre 1.0 knows of the maintenance of IT systems. Every change in the customer platform or other software introduces new complexities that your maintenance and IT teams must learn, train, and manage.

Growth is limited by on-premise systems and physical connections. You require the space in a given building for each expansion, which may ultimately require space refurbishment, new construction, or moving.

Siloed data and platforms make reporting difficult. Your IT must engineer tools to monitor KPIs and then analysts must work many hours to bring the data together and generate reports for individuals, teams, the company, and other initiatives.

2.0

➤ Contact centre costs are an investment in resources that create significant returns. Upfront costs can be high during a transition, but the long-term price of adding new agents, scaling support, and other changes are significantly decreased.

➤ Reduced IT costs are common with cloud centers because partners are able to make changes as needed. As one of many customers, you pay only a small portion of the expense to upgrade or maintain a platform. Plus, you can choose the most cost-effective hardware solution because cloud systems are built to work across a wide range of equipment and operating systems.

➤ Scale up or down at a moment's notice with cloud solutions that do not require you to have significant infrastructure beyond what your business will already have to support other internet technologies. Remove geographic restrictions by allowing teams to work remotely from any number of locations on the planet.

➤ Eleven percent of organisations say better reporting and analytics are already a reason they've invested in Contact Centre 2.0. Connected systems can track and use all available data, making report generation as simple as editing filters and giving dashboards the proper permissions.



1.0

Limited integration capabilities exist based on your team and their knowledge. Companies typically pay for the entire software development as well as integration and installation troubleshooting.

Traditional contact centres feature limited disaster recovery options. Many do not have the capability for off-site data backup, especially with voice recordings, so a single natural or other disaster can destroy a company's entire customer service understanding.

When one team discovers a new problem resolution technique or even a sales tactic, traditional layouts have this move up a slow on-site food chain before any information is shared to other groups. Formal reporting and management happen at each location and then all changes are brought together at one time for resolution. A new, better technique can take months to implement.

2.0

➤ Integrating with other business applications is a native feature of cloud systems. They're designed with data infrastructure built to share. Many service providers view integration and other software support to be a competitive sales advantage, making it easier to get support for other existing software starting on day one.

➤ The always-on, always-connected nature of cloud systems enables your platform to constantly back up information to multiple sites. You can set locations and data sharing to ensure you have no single point of failure. Plus, diverse locations make it easier for global teams to have the fastest access to the latest company data.

➤ The cloud allows you to unify disparate offices on a single system with integrated business communications. As soon as a new solution is verified, it can be added to a knowledge base and instantaneously shared with every agent in every location. Information is immediate, ensuring all customers benefit as soon as supports are discovered.



GROWING CONTACT CENTRE 2.0: BE READY AS CUSTOMER NEEDS EVOLVE

Technology evolves. Customer needs change. Progress marches forward without any regard to a single company. So, leaders adapt as laggards fade.

That is the path of every digital transformation as different programs, industries, and capabilities make their shift from 1.0 to 2.0 approaches. The contact centre is no different, except that we have already seen this route generate significant gains for early adopters in enterprise resource planning, external communications, marketing, and dozens of other sectors.

Today, the contact center is one of the most customer-focused operations any business can run. We believe that

successful centres not only adhere to this notion but actively embrace it. Their companies see customers working with dozens of digital cloud platforms at work and home every day. They see how the cloud has already shaped the way customers interact and their preference for engaging with companies that support these new interactions.

Embracing the digital transformation enables agents to provide the service in ways and at speeds customers demand. Your contact centre is the front line of quality customer experiences, and it can put the rest of your sales and business operations at risk when it falls behind.

The Existing Benefits of Cloud Contact Centres

- Cost savings
- Time savings
- Improved customer service levels
- Increased agent productivity
- Better communication between agents and the rest of the company

No one knows exactly what tomorrow holds, but we do know that today's customers are seeking more human interactions with companies, even as they occur on digital channels. Chatbots, text messages, email support, and call centres are all providing real, human interactions, using the cloud to scale these significantly and to meet growing customers bases.

Organisations that invest in modern technologies, models, and processes are primed to earn significant competitive advantages in the near term and avoid major losses that outdated service can cause down the line.

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