



evaluagent 

Research Report

Optimising Contact Centre Performance Through Employee Engagement





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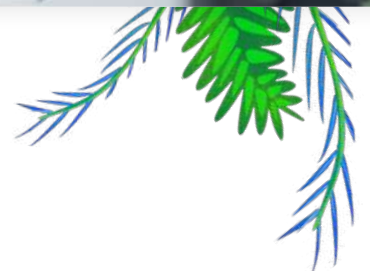


Welcome

What to expect from this report...

Every conversation counts, whether it's with your employee or your customer. But being able to listen to and learn from those conversations has become increasingly difficult for QA and business leaders against a deluge of manual processes, overwhelming tickets and growing customer demands.

To find out how organisations are planning on optimising the performance of their contact centres, we surveyed over 300 agents and managers based in the UK to better understand the behaviours and strategic priorities for the year ahead.





Section 1: Executive Summary

Contact Centres are at a tipping point.

Agent attrition has been a long-standing challenge for contact centres. The pandemic simultaneously transformed the way individuals work and created new pressure points for agents and managers. But as we navigate this post-pandemic landscape, one thing is clear: employee engagement **must** be improved in order for contact centres to flourish.

“88% of respondents agree that customers receive a better service when contact centre agents are engaged.”



Key insights from our study

The results show that contact centres are at a tipping point. Almost half of the workforce plan to leave their role in the next year, and those left behind aren't as engaged as we'd like them to be. This attrition can cause a huge rift in an organisation's operational performance and competitiveness. Leadership teams must invest in more intuitive solutions and development opportunities for agents if they're to create contact centres that flourish.



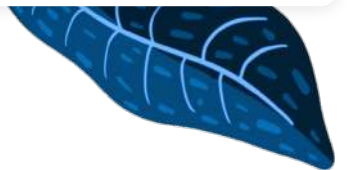


Room to improve employee engagement

- 47% of all employees plan to leave their current role within a year and a half
- Only 55% of employees say they are highly engaged in their role
- Those in management are more engaged than non-managers

Misalignment between managers and agents

- Managers place a greater importance on social media and mobile channels compared to non-managers
- 81% of managers would feel comfortable using AI solutions compared to 55% of non-managers
- 55% of managers would consider their customer service good compared to 62% of non-managers



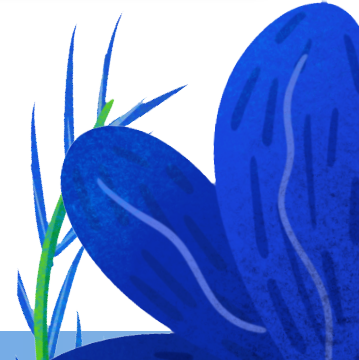
Agents continue to face immense pressure

The three biggest roadblocks to great customer service are:

1. Overwhelming demands (i.e. volume of calls)
2. Pressure to meet performance KPIs
3. Lack of support, motivation and incentives from management

Opportunity to modernise Quality Assurance processes

- 40% of organisations are using spreadsheets, and around a third are using manual audits for their Quality Assurance reporting
- Only 23% of managers say their organisations use AI, while just 28% say AI is a tool they have in the pipeline
- 44% of managers say they use call analytics, but only 24% say they use speech analytics





Section 2: Aligning EX with CX for the future of work



“62% of non-managers believe the customer service their organisation provides could be better.”

We've witnessed first-hand how the pandemic put huge stress on contact centre agents and managers. Roles became more demanding. Remote working strained infrastructures. Expanding channel preferences forced organisations to accelerate innovation.



“15% of employees say their role has changed negatively since the pandemic, due to issues like burnout and stress.”

Even in 2022, agents and managers are feeling stressed.



“24% say their role has become more demanding since the pandemic, and 12% say it now requires skills they have not been given.”

The result, understandably, is an exhausted workforce who are looking to management for more support and resources.



“Only 38% of non-managers are highly engaged.”

Despite managers being more engaged than agents, a worrying 47% of employees plan to leave their current role within a year and a half.



“Older women who are not in management positions are the least likely to be engaged.”

With agent attrition being a key challenge for organisations, creating engaged and empowering employee experiences (EX) is critical for improving performance, strengthening retention and delivering exceptional customer experience (CX).



“88% of staff believe that customers receive better service when agents are engaged.”





Great EX = Great CX

As we can see from our survey results, being able to engage employees and deliver exceptional CX has become challenging against a backdrop of manual processes, overwhelming tickets and growing customer demands.

But with every challenge comes an opportunity. Many leading contact centres are taking a new approach to Quality Assurance (QA) and customer service by aligning their CX and EX strategies and no longer treating them as two separate entities. After all, the experiences, standards and behaviours that we demand outside of work impact our expectations as employees.

A critical part of aligning your CX and EX strategies is understanding which societal shifts and macro trends are reshaping the behaviours and expectations of your customer and employees - particularly as we enter a new era of working. By aligning your approach, you can invest in solutions and refine processes that empower and engage both employees and customers, and proactively meet their needs.

What trends are shaping CX and EX?

EMPATHY AND UNDERSTANDING

48% of customers say the pandemic has raised their customer service standards¹. The speed, sensitivity and efficiency brands demonstrated during the pandemic are expected to stay.

SEAMLESS OMNICHANNEL EXPERIENCES

Customers want to access information in a variety of different ways from content hubs, social media and live chat options through to human conversations over the phone or video.

THE GREAT RESIGNATION

Employees are leaving their roles in search of purpose, flexibility and reduced stress. This sentiment is reflected in the companies consumers choose to spend with.



24/7 SELF-SERVICE

Routines, working hours and office locations continue to shift with hybrid working. Customers want to resolve issues at a time that suits them, and employees need flexible solutions to work with remotely.

SUSTAINABILITY AND INCLUSION

Employees and customers alike are increasingly looking at companies' environmental and Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) credentials as a way to differentiate their brand.

RISING COST OF LIVING

The UK's economic shift has individuals prioritising value, efficiency and expertise from companies with trust being a critical competitive advantage.

INTELLIGENT SOLUTIONS

Customers are happy to share data if they are rewarded with hyper-personalised experiences where processes are automated and issues proactively resolved.



Section 3: How to make Every Conversation Count

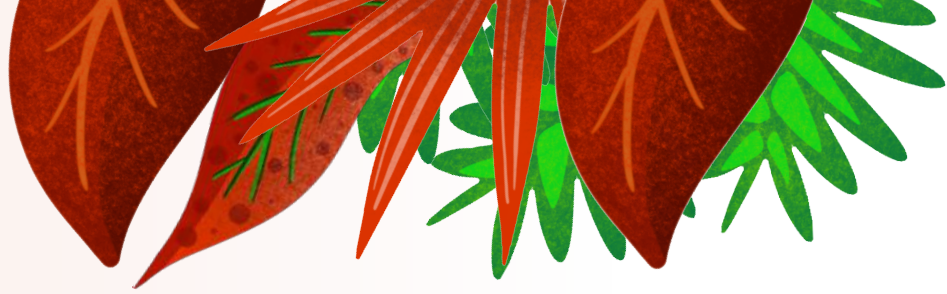
“Less than 30% of respondents feel their organisation has the ability to exceed the expectations of their customers.”

Delivering exceptional customer service is a top priority for most, if not all, contact centres. The quality of CX is becoming an increasingly important differentiator for customers and a vital part of brand loyalty - 89% of consumers have moved to a competitor following a poor customer experience with a brand².

However, our survey revealed that only 41% of managers would call their customer service excellent. This number drops considerably when you ask non-managers the same question (24%).

In this section, we explore which roadblocks are preventing contact centres from delivering exceptional CX and key areas of QA that are primed for optimisation.

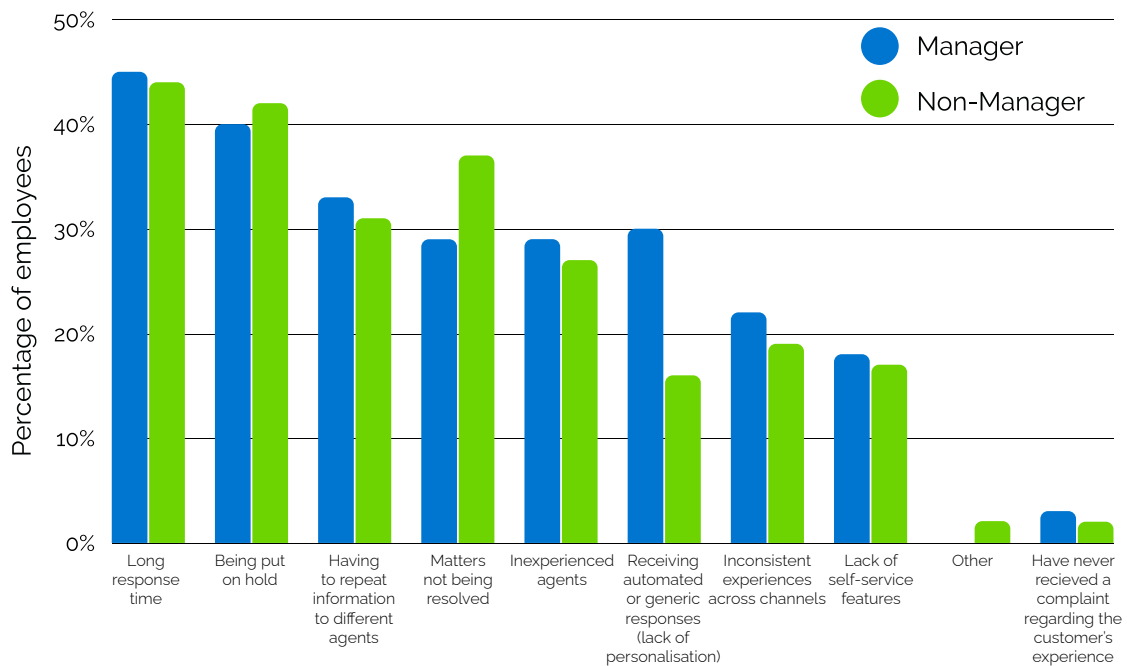




Top customer frustrations

"The two biggest factors that lead to complaints are closely related, being long response times and being put on hold. Customers are also frustrated at having to repeat their issues to multiple customer service agents."

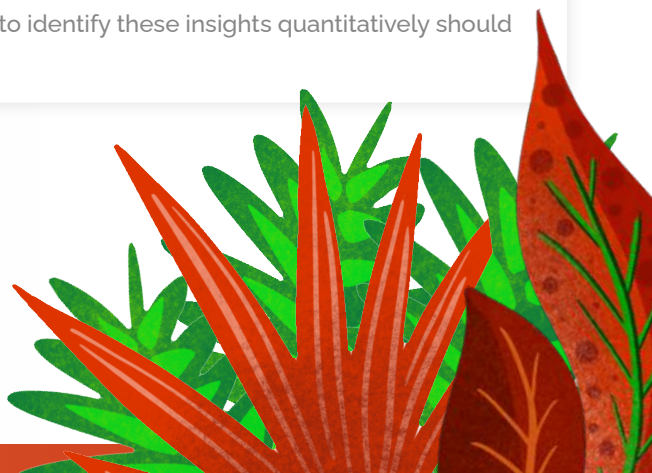
TOP CUSTOMER COMPLAINTS



Interestingly, there is a difference in perception between management and agents on what factors are damaging their customers' experience. Non-managers place greater emphasis on matters not being resolved, while just under a third of managers feel that a lack of personalisation is a key issue.

This misalignment extends to which channels their perceived customers value the most. For example, managers believe customers value mobile text communication, social media and automated chatbots significantly more than non-managers do, while non-managers strongly opted for speaking to an agent over the phone.

In order for agents to improve first contact resolutions and effectively manage complex cases, it's vital that organisations manage each channel effectively to minimise stress on agents. Being able to identify these insights quantitatively should be a top priority for managers.



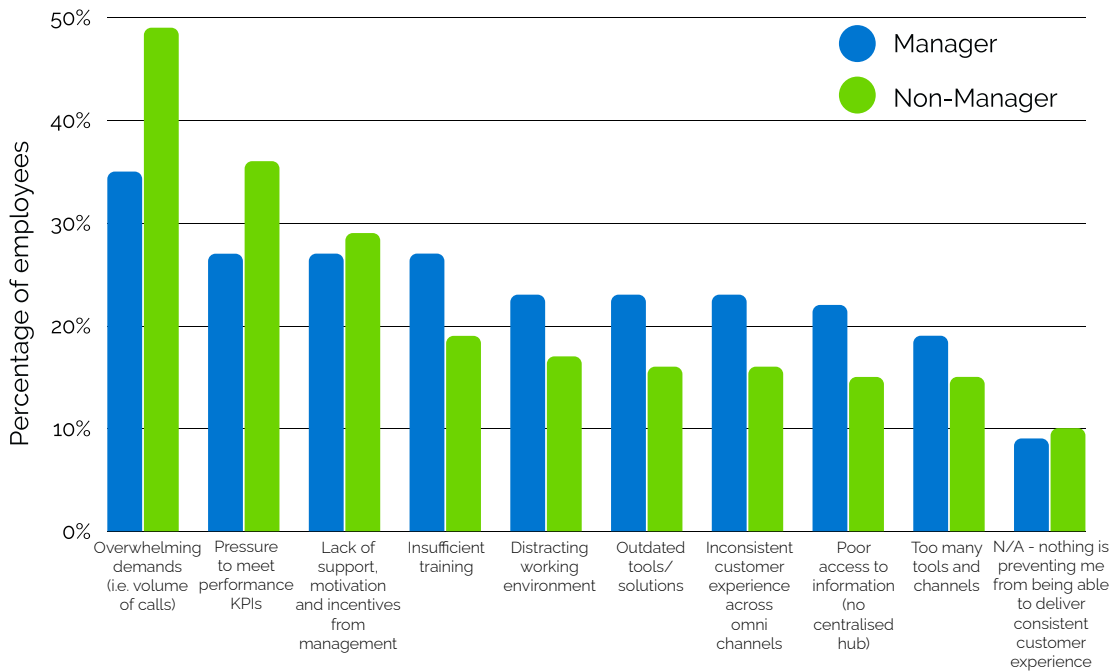


Top CX roadblocks

What factors are preventing agents from being able to deliver exceptional CX?

1. Overwhelming demands (i.e. volume of calls)
2. Pressure to meet performance KPIs
3. Lack of support, motivation and incentives from management

WHAT FACTORS IN PARTICULAR, IF ANY, ARE PREVENTING YOU FROM BEING ABLE TO DELIVER EXCEPTIONAL CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE?



Whilst volume of calls was the main factor that impacted the quality of customer service, over a quarter of both managers and non-managers named lack of support, motivation and incentives from management as significant roadblocks. This insight may also contribute to why only just over a third of non-managers feel highly engaged at work.

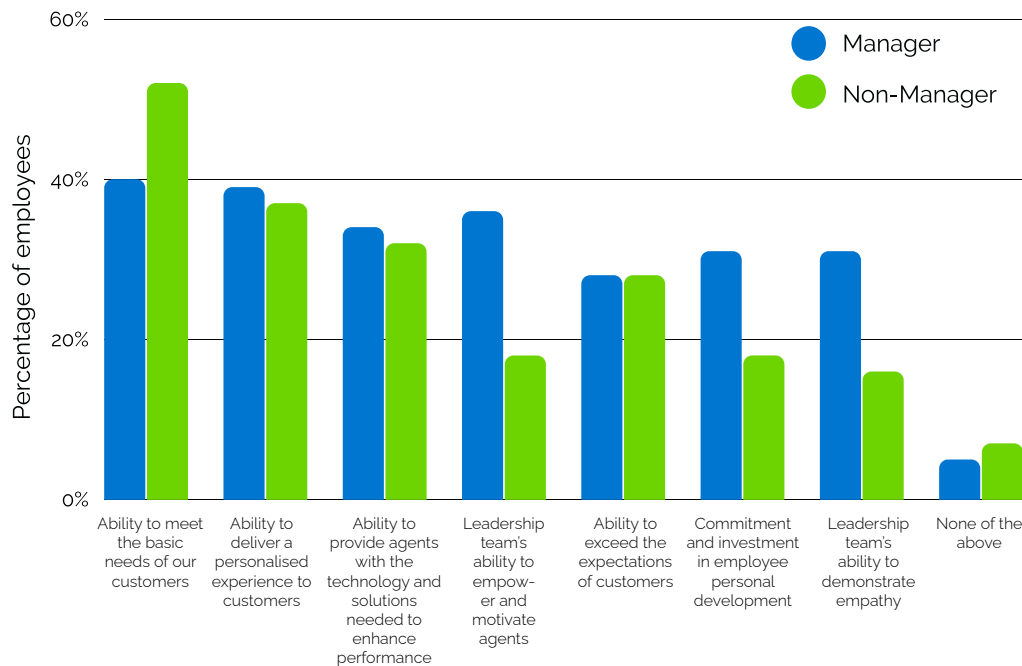
Interestingly, 24% of those surveyed said insufficient training was to blame for inconsistent customer experiences. This represents a huge opportunity for QA and business leaders. By collecting insights on the performance and quality of interactions from individual agents, organisations can create personalised development plans for their employees - strengthening engagement, motivation and purpose. With 88% of respondents agreeing that customers receive a better service when contact centre agents are engaged, this area should be made a top strategic priority for the year ahead.



The need for greater alignment between agent and leadership

Throughout this survey, there are stark differences between managers' and non-managers' responses to questions around areas of excellence and performance. For example, it's telling that non-managers view leadership's ability to empower and motivate agents, as well as demonstrate empathy, as lacking in comparison to their counterparts. These qualities are vital when it comes to nurturing, developing and engaging workforces. Without a strong cultural foundation, agents are more likely to leave and become demotivated - as evidenced in our survey, 28% of those surveyed said they would leave their current role to seek more opportunities for development.

AREAS OF EXCELLENCE WITHIN ORGANISATIONS



Whilst the ability to meet the basic needs of their customers was the most important area of excellence for respondents, it was also viewed differently by our two audiences (39% of managers vs. 52% of non-managers). However, a positive sign is that both groups were closely aligned on their ability to deliver personalised experiences, which was the second-highest area of excellence.

Creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency

In light of these insights, organisations will need to prioritise four key areas if they are to optimise the performance of their contact centre and build an authentic culture that prioritises employee engagement and well-being.

These areas include:

1. The alignment of CX and EX strategies
2. A tangible commitment to agent training and support
3. Creating an open dialogue between managers and non-managers around performance, strategic investments and well-being
4. Investment in QA and CX solutions that reduce friction and resolve issues faster



Section 4: Creating contact centres that flourish with AI

“Less than 40% of respondents rated their organisation’s ability to give agents the tools needed to enhance performance as excellent.”

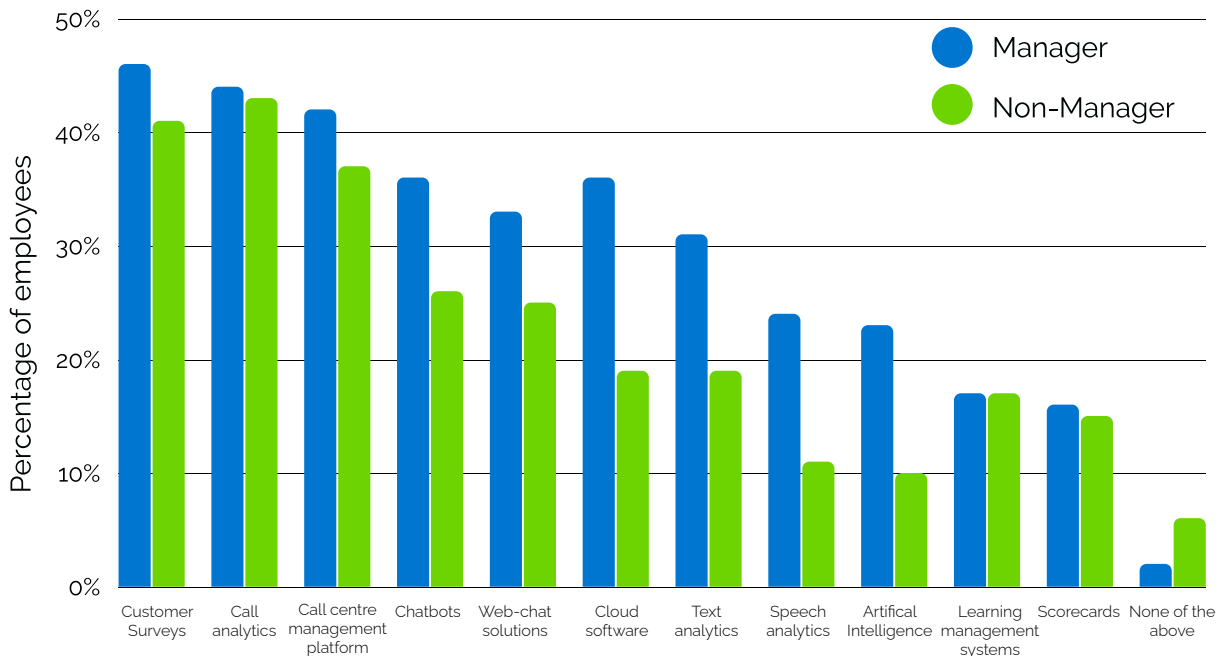
Alongside the need to improve CX and EX, many contact centres are also looking at long-term tactics to significantly lower costs, reduce risk and improve Quality Assurance (QA) processes. A key roadblock in being able to deliver on these goals in their existing technology stack.



What tools are contact centres currently using?

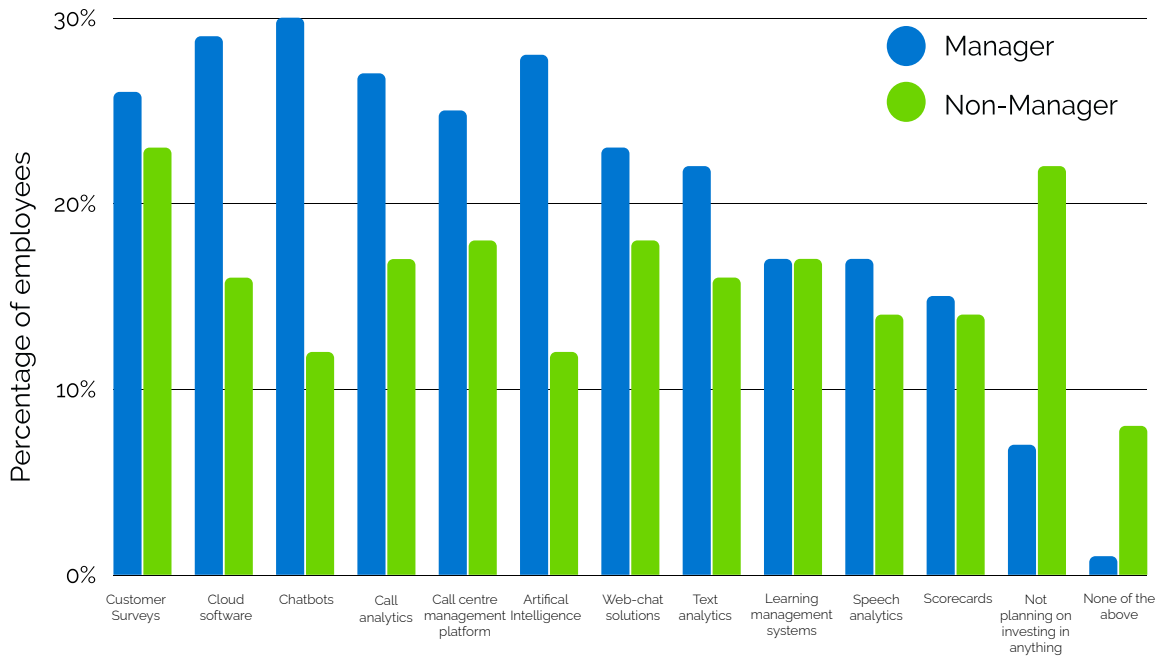
“40% of organisations are using spreadsheets, and around a third are using manual audits for their Quality Assurance reporting”

TOOLS ORGANISATIONS LEVERAGE TO RUN QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAMMES





WHAT TOOLS ARE CONTACT CENTRES PLANNING TO INVEST IN OVER THE NEXT 12 MONTHS



Less than half of employees said their company uses customer surveys, call analytics and call centre management platforms in place of a quality assurance platform. Interestingly, less than a quarter use tools like speech analytics and AI.

However, there are investments being made in advanced solutions. According to managers, chatbots, cloud software, call analytics, AI and customer surveys are the priorities, with each of these tools stated as a future investment by at least a quarter of those asked.

Raising the bar for QA

A critical part of great CX and EX is the balance between technology and human interaction. Call centres need solutions in place that are intuitive - tools that help reduce manual tasks, improve the ability to serve, assess and reduce risk, as well as facilitate remote working. They must empower agents and give them the ability to learn and adapt.

This is why many organisations are turning to AI solutions that eradicate manual QA and extract valuable insight from every conversation. AI digs deeper to reveal a single source of truth that can be used to enhance QA, automate processes and allow agents to focus on creating personalised human experiences with customers.

"It's predicted that AI and machine learning will automate 40% of all customer interactions by 2023."



How should AI be used?

"72% of all employees said they would be comfortable with AI solutions measuring their performance and provide personal development."

Leaders in the field are leveraging solutions like AI-powered Auto-QA to transform the way they manage QA. Insights are collected, analysed and fed back across the business in areas like agent effectiveness, service optimisation and quality and compliance.

At the moment, most contact centres can only quality check 5% of their conversations as a result of manual processes. But this approach leaves critical insight unnoticed. Solutions like evaluagent's Auto-QA uses AI to automatically transcribe and evaluate 100% of calls, emails, live chats and tickets to help QA teams do their job more effectively.

This process is vital as it gives teams the insight needed to support agents - to prioritise interventions, send feedback, conduct training sessions and manage personalised development plans for individuals. As our survey shows, this demonstration of empathy and commitment will be transformative for non-managers (less than 20% of respondents felt their leadership team's ability to motivate and empower agents was excellent).

Benefits of Auto-QA

- 100% conversation coverage across all channels
- Drastically reduce evaluation time
- Move away from randomised evaluations and evaluate the right conversation every time
- Reduce risk with automated compliance
- Improve agent performance with focused & effective feedback, coaching and training
- Reduce business costs through improved productivity

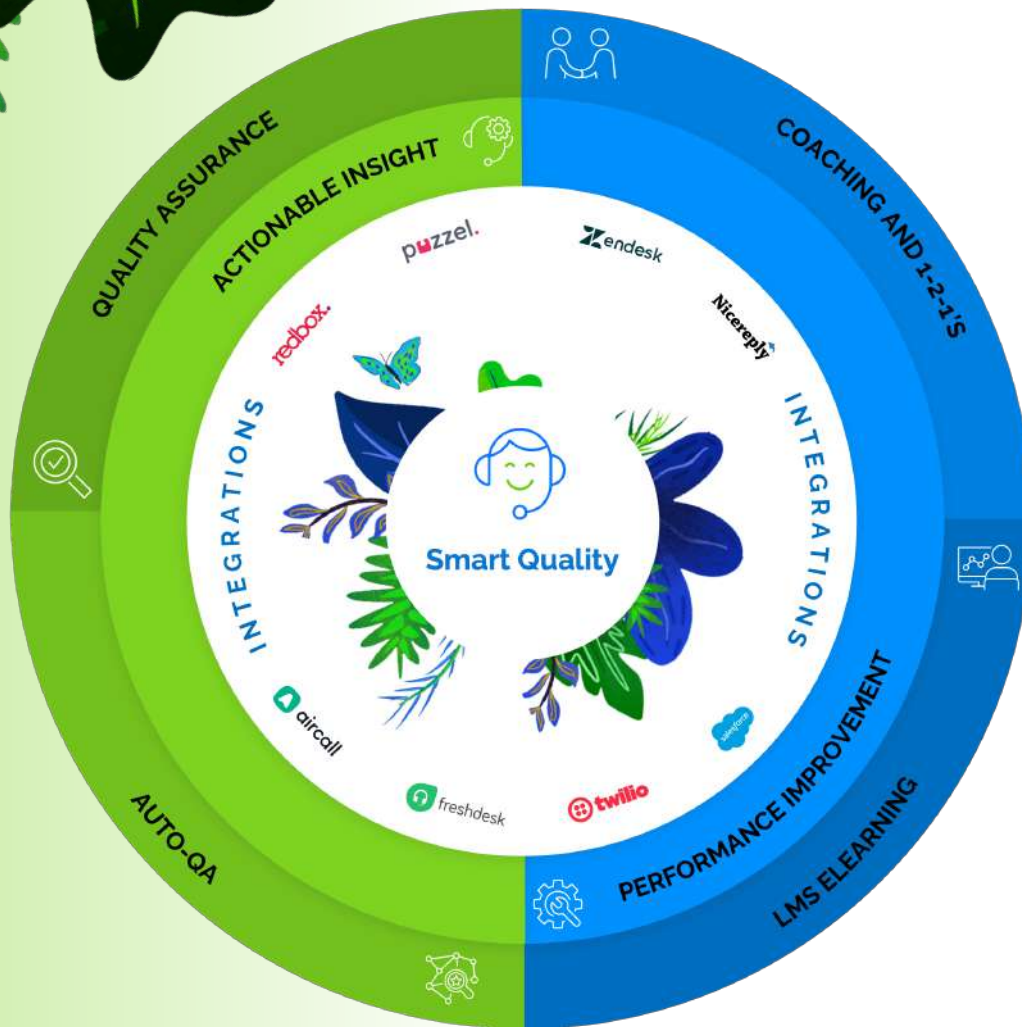


Maximising the potential of Auto-QA

We've seen too many organisations miss out on the benefits of Auto-QA over the years. While speech and text analytics tools are powerful, they don't produce the desired results and conversational insight without effort. That effort must come from the people who understand the business best, rather than the analytics vendor or a third-party consultant.

That's why evaluagent's technology has been designed to work with your existing solutions to enhance, not replace, QA roles. Our Auto-QA and workflow's operationalise your insights to ensure they are actionable, giving QA and business leaders the insight to optimise the performance of their contact centre.





Actionable Insight

Our SmartQuality workflows operationalize your insights to ensure they are actionable and drive performance.

Quality Assurance

- Evaluate the right conversations 4x faster
- Improve productivity by 285% with automated workflows
- Transparent agent appeals & feedback
- Ensure QA scores are fair and consistent with calibration

Auto-QA

- Unlock 100% conversation coverage
- Identify the root cause of repeat contact, complaints and more
- Increase First Contact Resolution
- Uncover the true voice of your customer

Performance Improvement

Close the loop between QA, coaching and one-to-ones with our integrated performance management tool.

Coaching and 1-2-1's

- Trigger, schedule and manage all 1-2-1's, actions and coaching sessions
- Real-time feedback and development opportunities
- Drive consistency with meeting templates and guided workflows

LMS ELEARNING

- Create interactive and engaging learning content
- Onboard agents faster, and build training paths, courses and lessons.
- Motivate agents and gamify learning with points, badges, and leader boards
- Monitor, track and report performance trends



Every Conversation Counts

With nearly half the workforce considering leaving their role in the next 18 months, now is a critical time for senior leaders to unlock actionable insights that will empower agents, streamline QA and deliver outstanding CX.

Contact centres that leverage AI to listen to employees and customers will not only gain a competitive advantage, they'll also lay a strong foundation for future success.

[Speak to an expert today](#)

See how our Auto-QA can help your call centre flourish by booking a demo or starting a free trial.

[Visit the knowledge hub](#)

If you want to find out more about Auto-QA, there are more eBooks, blogs and top tips in our Knowledge Hub.

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