# Optimizing Your Modern Contact Center

A Self-Assessment Guide

**ALVARIA**®

# Introduction

Optimizing agent performance and customer experience in a modern call center presents a unique set of challenges. The rise of the virtual call center and the demands of omnichannel engagement are two primary reasons.

With the right contact center software solution, these challenges can be turned into strengths.

This self-assessment guide focuses on the four biggest challenges facing today's contact centers. Keep reading to see if you have the right solutions in place to turn these challenges into competitive advantages.

**CHALLENGE #1**

# Increasing Remote Productivity

Tracking, managing, and optimizing the productivity of remote employees can be difficult. Without in-person supervision, many contact center leaders worry the quality of customer connections will deteriorate and/or employee engagement will suffer.

With the right tools at your disposal, having a remote staff as part of your contact center workforce can actually improve customer connections and employee engagement. Here are a few of the reasons why:

• Hire staff from anywhere, expanding your pool of available talent and increasing the number of quality agents you can hire.

• Employees in different time zones enable round-the-clock service.

• Remote work provides the flexibility that many employees today require or strongly prefer, potentially increasing job satisfaction and engagement — both of which are key determinants of agent performance.

Taking advantage of these benefits requires having the right solutions in place to overcome the challenges of the virtual contact center.

**THE ANSWER**

# Recording, Evaluations, Calibration, and Feedback Solutions

With many organizations operating fully remote or in a hybrid model, it's important for contact center leaders to ensure they have the right solutions to deliver consistently positive customer connections and maintain high employee engagement.

Data within quality management solutions that offer recordings, evaluations, calibration and feedback can help you zero in on where improvements can be made and what aspects of your processes have had the biggest impact on your customer experience.

Recording, evaluation, calibration, and feedback solutions enable you to:

- Aggregate interactions from multiple channels to see a unified view of your customer engagement at scale
- View trends to understand customer preferences and pain points
- Deliver targeted coaching based on data-driven evaluations
- Create standardized evaluation criteria and calibration to reduce subjectivity
- Leverage root cause analysis to improve processes

**THE ANSWER**

# Organizational Performance Management

Robust performance management software is another key component of maintaining high productivity in a virtual contact center. Ideally, this software provides direct feedback to employees to help them self-correct, as well as alerting supervisors and coaches when they need to step in and deliver more targeted training to a specific employee.

Clear expectations for agents are also important to ensure alignment with company goals and objectives. Your contact center performance management solution must have the capacity to deliver straightforward, easy to understand guidance that keeps agents focused on what matters most.

Alvaria offers organizational performance management that presents historical and real-time metrics that help employees, supervisors and managers continually improve contact center operations to reach critical goals.

# Higher agent satisfaction is directly linked to checking personal performance metrics at least once daily (48% vs. 27% for less satisfied agents).

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## Keeping Employees Connected and Engaged

Employee engagement is one of the key determining factors in delivering great customer connections. Engagement has always been a challenge in corporate contact center environments, which can often be fast-paced and high-stress and may require interactions that agents find repetitive.

To maximize engagement, contact center leaders can provide constant feedback on performance and areas of potential improvement.

**THE ANSWER**

# Gamification and Motivation

Gamification is a proven method for increasing employee engagement. Gamification is effective, in part, because it combines constant feedback with goal setting, tapping into employees' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to improve and unlock higher achievements.

Many contact centers have used simplified versions of gamification, such as leaderboards that rank agents on specific KPIs. But with a more sophisticated gamification system, the impact and benefits can be greatly amplified. For instance, some employees are more motivated by tangible rewards, while some are more motivated by recognition. Does your gamification program appeal to both groups?

Here are a few key characteristics of a great gamification program:

- It provides different types of rewards that appeal to different personalities.
- It's flexible and configurable, allowing you to adjust rewards to keep agent goals in line with company goals.
- It gives you options for creating parity, ensuring that agents working in different channels or on different campaigns have an equal opportunity to achieve goals and earn rewards.

Additionally, being able to follow your stats from mobile is important (especially for remote employees).

Alvaria offers gamification and motivation solutions that have game mechanics to motivate and engage call center employees, supporting better employee retention and performance, and ultimately improving customer experience.

Churn continues to increase with 25% of agents surveyed saying they're looking for another job in the same sector in 2022, up from 18% in 2021.

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# Limiting Employee Turnover

Holding onto your best employees is key to maintaining peak levels of productivity and great customer connections. Although improving employee engagement is only one piece of the puzzle, it's a big one.

How well do you understand your agents?

At its core, limiting turnover comes down to understanding your employees' wants and needs, and then making sure your contact center delivers in those areas that are most important. Alvaria conducts a yearly survey of contact center agents to keep a pulse on what matters to them.

Here are a few of the things that contact center agents cite as most important:

• Competitive salary

• Work/life balance

• Feeling respected as an individual

• Fair working environment

• Ability to provide feedback to management

• Flexible scheduling

**THE ANSWER**

# Mobile Access to Flexible Forecasting, Scheduling and Adherence Solutions

All employees consider work/life balance and flexible scheduling to be important. But something to note is that according to the Wall Street Journal, <u>95% of workers care about flexible hours over even remote work</u>.

Flexible scheduling is key to meeting the rising expectations of employees. Furthermore, agents and supervisors increasingly expect to be able to perform essential schedule management functions from a mobile device. With virtual and hybrid contact centers here to stay, holding onto your best employees involves helping them balance work with their other responsibilities.

Alvaria offers flexible forecasting, scheduling and adherence solutions that can be accessed from a mobile device. This allows employees to perform schedule trades or request PTO, pick up shifts, receive automatic push notifications and more on the go.

By 2025, nearly $80 billion in purchases of goods and services, or 5% of total US e-commerce, is expected to be made through social-commerce channels, up from $36 billion in 2020.

**CHALLENGE #4**

# Meeting Changing Customer Needs

Multichannel contact center functionality is no longer a nice-to-have but expected. Customers today expect to be able to reach out through their preferred channel at a time that is most convenient for them. Effectively managing a multichannel contact center strategy is complex and presents significant challenges, but it's worth it. There are significant positive outcomes that come from a successful digital strategy in numerous industries.

**THE ANSWER**

# Multichannel Forecasting, Scheduling, and Adherence Solutions

Having the right agents in place with the right channel skills at the right time becomes far more challenging in a multichannel environment. But it's absolutely essential to get this right if you want to consistently deliver outstanding customer connections while keeping contact center costs to a minimum.

Over the past several years, businesses have experienced a sea of change in the way customers communicate with them. In many cases, COVID has accelerated these changes.

In this rapidly changing environment, accurately forecasting call volumes and channel staffing requirements has become more difficult than ever. Legacy solutions that were built for the contact centers of the past are simply insufficient to meet the challenge. Organizations that continue to rely on those legacy systems are at risk of inflating their labor costs or losing customers (or both) due to inability to rightsize their contact centers.

That's why it's essential to have a modern forecasting and scheduling solution that is purpose-built for today's multichannel contact center.

Alvaria offers multichannel forecasting, scheduling and adherence solutions which include precision volume forecasting, mobile schedule management, seat utilization optimization, and more to ensure you have the right agents in place at the right time to deliver a lasting, positive impression on your customers.

**THE ANSWER**

# Multichannel Outbound Route and Inbound Queue Type (Voice, Email, SMS, and Chat) Solutions

Providing seamless interaction across the various channels in a multichannel strategy is paramount. One of the chief complaints that customers have about multichannel contact centers is having to repeat the same information multiple times to multiple agents.

These kinds of experiences create an impression of disorganization and lack of internal communication. In order to combat this, your contact center software must facilitate sharing of key customer information — including the nature of the customer query and essential details from previous interactions — across all channels. This allows your agents to provide the seamless experience your customers expect.

Alvaria offers multichannel outbound routing & inbound queuing to enable a seamless multichannel customer journey, allowing your agents to deliver personalized experiences based on previous transactions and customer preferences.

# The Contact Center of the Future is Already Here

The past few years have seen a rapid evolution in the nature of contact center operations, and more changes are sure to come. But there are a few things we know for sure going forward:

- Virtual contact centers are here to stay.

- Customers demand seamless omnichannel service.

- Employee engagement is an essential ingredient in delivering great customer experiences.

Alvaria's mission is to help emerging and enterprise brands create productive, effective, and engaged experience organizations with two best-of-breed platforms for workforce optimization and proactive, compliant outreach.

# About Alvaria

Powered by innovative technology and a human-forward mission, companies that use Alvaria see greater returns, find efficiencies, and report an increase in employee and customer retention.

Alvaria is paving a new path in customer experience – offering proactive outreach and workforce optimization software, AI, and automation intelligence tools, all with an open interface for any enterprise integration needed.

We're empowering teams and agents to stay in touch with your customer's side of the story.

Visit our website today to learn more about industry leading solutions from Alvaria.

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