

E-BOOK

4 Essential Ingredients for a Modern Contact Center

Customize a better contact center experience to meet the changing needs of both your customers and agents.



Improve your customer experience by modernizing your contact center.





4 ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS FOR A MODERN CONTACT CENTER

IMPROVE YOUR CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE BY MODERNIZING YOUR CONTACT CENTER

If exceptional customer experiences aren't the holy grail for your business, they should be. Innovative businesses are making that goal a reality by modernizing their contact center operations to the delight of their customers and the agents who serve them.

Given our mobile-driven society, today's consumers have high expectations. They want problems and questions resolved quickly and efficiently — whenever, wherever, and however they choose to connect with the business. Instead of opting to talk to an agent on the phone, they may prefer a quick answer to an email, a simple text response, an informed interactive voice response (IVR) resolution, or an engaging social post.

Unfortunately, most contact centers are hard-pressed to keep pace with growing customer demands in an ever-evolving digital landscape. The road to modernization, for them, hasn't been an easy one: straddled with legacy systems or attempting to patch together an array of software apps to solve a problem is neither sufficient nor scalable. And, irrespective of the channels used, customers continue to be burdened with long wait times, slow responses, and way too many steps to reach a human or find a resolution.

To remain competitive and ensure customer loyalty, most businesses should rethink their communication strategies, the software they use, and the tools required to engage customers on a more personal level.

Nearly 7 out of 10 businesses think they're communicating with their customers effectively, while only 2 out of 10 customers agree.

Bridging The Divide: Twilio Customer Communication Report 2017

Businesses must also embrace omnichannel communications: the ability to create consistent, dynamic customer experiences across all communication channels. With an omnichannel communication strategy in place, you can build a customer engagement center that has the ability to monitor, understand, and quickly respond to numerous interactions during a customer's lifecycle — while simplifying the way you communicate with your customers.



In doing so, your customer service team isn't the only group who benefits from this dynamic way of connecting with customers: it's also marketers interacting on social media and injecting their brand messages when and wherever they can; telemarketing arms deploying virtual agents to lure prospects; sales reps closing deals as they are funneled the hottest leads first; and IT departments eliminating tickets, faster than before.

The quickest and simplest way to reliably improve your customer communication efforts is to optimize your contact center with a scalable cloud communication platform.

COST-EFFECTIVELY DELIVER ON CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS

Best-in-class contact centers are modernizing today with tomorrow's customer experience in mind. These businesses have made a clear choice not to repeat the mistakes of the past. No more getting locked into expensive contact center infrastructure that won't scale. No more struggling to adapt to evolving customer expectations. No more missing the next wave of digital innovation.

Modern businesses are putting the needs of the customer in the forefront as they transform their call centers into intuitive, omnichannel contact centers. And to do so, they have adopted cloud communications as part of their CX strategies.

Cloud platforms are enabling companies to build applications at unprecedented speed and flexibility. They're global, scalable, and cost-effective — they don't require massive budgets and lengthy installations. They also empower businesses to create contact centers uniquely designed for their customer and business requirements.

US businesses lose \$62 billion to poor customer experiences every year.

Forbes

YOUR RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Businesses operating modern contact centers have many things in common — starting with the cloud — but the most the important is this: they customize their communications to use the right channel to deliver the right information at the right time. How do they do this? The process begins with these four ingredients.

- 1. PROGRAMMABILITY:** Easily customizing every step of the customer journey
- 2. OMNICHANNEL:** Connecting in ways the customer prefers
- 3. CONTEXTUAL INTELLIGENCE:** Creating proactive conversations through automation
- 4. SCALABILITY:** Relying on a robust and secure cloud communications platform



1 PROGRAMMABILITY

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR CUSTOMER'S JOURNEY

Programmability is paramount for a contact center's success, and unlimited customization is the key to creating an elevated customer experience. It gives you complete control to develop, manage, and optimize a communication experience that your customers and agents deserve.

Every aspect of your contact center should be easy to program and design, starting with intuitive, out-of-the-box cloud communication APIs that can be used by common web languages. By using this as your foundation, you'll have the freedom to customize without being locked into a vendor's limited blueprint, or restricted by the abilities of legacy telecommunications hardware.

To move rapidly, empower non-developers and others in the organization with flexible, enterprise-grade tools like visual builders and wizards. They should be simple to use so that CX supervisors, marketers, or any designated employee can easily master them to modify workflows, adapt routing logic, change messaging, and optimize user interface design. Quick adaptations on the front end will help your contact center be more responsive to customer needs and expectations.

70% of large businesses have already moved at least one application or a portion of their infrastructure to the cloud.

Computer World

The ideal contact center is never finished. You should be able to continually iterate within your platform to adjust to the ever-changing needs and desires of your customers. It should also be able to quickly add new channels and other technology, which isn't possible with a legacy platform without a costly (and often risky) upgrade project.

To build the ultimate contact center, your communications platform must be seamlessly integrated into your existing customer relationship management (CRM) or workforce optimization (WFO) solution. In this data-driven age, collecting and storing all customer data in one place is critical, as is making data accessible to multiple departments and agent groups. Your solution should also capture dynamic conversations as they happen to ensure that everyone has a single view of the customer.



PROGRAMMABILITY
IN ACTION

NATIONAL DEBT RELIEF

REDESIGNED CONTACT CENTER INTEGRATED INTO CRM IN JUST 90 DAYS

National Debt Relief (NDR) was founded on a simple, powerful idea: people should be able to live their lives without the stress and anxiety of overwhelming debt. Since 2009, National Debt Relief has helped more than 100,000 individuals and small businesses do just that by resolving debts and providing hope for a brighter future.

With a workforce of over 1300 employees focused on helping customers improve their financial situation, NDR needed as much information as possible about their customers. Armed with that insight, they could have better-informed conversations, help customers resolve their financial issues more easily, and engage on whatever channel customers prefer: text, phone, and web. However, their legacy contact center system simply couldn't do the job.

"We found ourselves unable to serve our customers the way we needed to serve them using our legacy contact center infrastructure," said NDR's CTO, Daniel Tilipman.

The challenge Tilipman faced, as do many that have invested in large legacy systems, was how to migrate to a better system without disrupting the business. They also wanted to ensure that these communications apps integrated easily with Salesforce, the CRM their company already used.

NDR was looking to avoid investing in expensive hardware, hiring a large team of IT consultants, or building a costly contact center infrastructure. Instead, Tilipman's team of six developers used Twilio's Cloud APIs, with guidance from a UI/UX partner, to quickly create a contact center that they would be able to enhance as needed over time.

"With Twilio's platform, we were able to build the exact experience our customers needed and had it up and running in 90 days, for a fraction of the cost."

*Daniel Tilipman, President, Co-founder,
and CTO, National Debt Relief*

Best of all, since Twilio's APIs easily integrate with any CRM solution, NDR agents can easily access customer journey data points in the CRM platform they were already familiar with.



2 OMNICHANNEL

FACILITATE A SEAMLESS CUSTOMER JOURNEY AT EVERY TOUCHPOINT

Forward-thinking enterprise organizations are transitioning from a “call center” mentality to an omnichannel one. In doing so, these businesses can deliver consistent and personalized customer messages across multiple channels — not just via inbound or outbound phone calls. They know that to effectively engage with their customers, they must be able to quickly pivot among popular and universal communication channels including voice, SMS, email, chat, social media messaging, video, and home assistant. Connecting with customers on the channel they prefer has proven to push satisfaction to all-time highs.

In fact, Aberdeen research has shown that companies who have implemented an omnichannel engagement solution achieve a 91% higher year-over-year increase in customer retention, compared to organizations who don't provide omnichannel options. With compelling statistics like this, providing an omnichannel experience is taking its place as a top strategy for businesses in 2017, according to Aberdeen. The main obstacle, for many businesses, is they are still burdened with legacy systems which require lengthy configuration processes and restrict integration with other platforms.

Savvy businesses know that cloud APIs offer new approaches to building contact centers that do not require expensive systems integration or a ‘rip and replace’ rebuild. Instead, these APIs provide the flexibility to augment iteratively and to create a better customer experience, feature by feature.

By leveraging the liberating flexibility of API technology, you can give your team the power to create better customer experiences. Today you may only need text messaging, but based on customer's demands, you may need to enable web chat, an IVR, or Facebook messenger. A recommended contact center solution is

9 out of 10 consumers globally want to talk to businesses using messaging; but only 48% of businesses are equipped to do so.

Twilio Global Communications Report

one that is feature-rich with communication apps, can be customized to your brand or business requirements, and anticipates more innovative communication apps to be added over time.

Having multiple communications channels for your customers is powerful, but giving them the ability to seamlessly switch between those channels brings your customer experience to a whole new level. With an omnichannel contact center, for example, a customer may begin on your website, initiate a chat session, then switch to a co-browse session with an agent while connecting via video or voice. This kind of seamless interaction across technologies creates the customer journey that companies should aim for today.



OMNICHANNEL
IN ACTION

CARFINANCE 247

WITH SMS AND CHAT ADDED TO CONTACT CENTER, INITIAL CONTACT TIME DROPS 85%

CarFinance 247 is the number one car finance website in the UK for a reason — they're continually improving their customer experience to make it straightforward and fuss-free. Since buying a car is a particularly complex online transaction, it requires a higher-touch customer service approach than on-the-lot or showroom purchases. With that in mind, and to ensure a smooth customer experience from beginning to end, the contact center technologies they use needed to keep pace with their customer's expectations.

This wasn't always the case: CarFinance 247 discovered their legacy, on-premise telephony system was missing over a hundred calls a day. CarFinance 247's call system was also not integrated within their CRM, so agents didn't have the customer insight they needed to have meaningful conversations.

"Pre-Twilio days were a painful period in my life," said Jon Wilson, CarFinance 247's Technology Director. "It was a very frustrating time not only for our customers, but for our agents, and our developers."

Rather than purchase a new, on-premise solution, CarFinance 247 chose to build their own contact center using Twilio APIs. This allowed the company the flexibility to create exactly what they wanted and the ability to constantly iterate and improve the system.

CarFinance 247's new contact center utilizes Twilio Voice, SMS, and Chat (to communicate inside their app) and relies on TaskRouter to connect customers to the most appropriate agent. Twilio Sync then allows CarFinance 247's agents to see precisely what customers are doing in real-time, such as what car they're looking for on the website.

"Within a week, we had a proof-of-concept Twilio softphone in a browser able to place and take calls," Wilson said. "Ultimately, we were able to answer over a hundred or more calls a day and increase our conversion rate by 12%."

Best of all, customers can now communicate on whatever channel they choose. In fact, almost half of their customers are opting for SMS or Chat. CarFinance 247's new contact center reduced their initial contact time by 85% and led to a 20% reduction in payout time from initial contact to receipt of financing.

"Ultimately, we were able to answer over a hundred or more calls a day and increase our conversion rate by 12%."

*Jon Wilson,
Technology Director, CarFinance247*



3 CONTEXTUAL INTELLIGENCE

MAKING CUSTOMER COMMUNICATIONS MORE HUMAN BY LEVERAGING AI

The need to focus on the entire customer journey has caused innovative businesses to look to advanced artificial intelligence (AI) applications for real-time analysis and an interpreted understanding of customer intent. Contextual intelligence is being used to not only inform live agents so they can have more productive conversations while handling customer issues, it's also empowering a company's self-help tools, like IVRs, to better respond to customer needs in a more human fashion.

With context-driven experiences, businesses can provide customer service and sales agents with personal data, interaction history, and other aspects of the customer journey. The more an agent knows about who the customer is, what they're looking for, and what conversations they've already had, the easier it is to provide better, faster service. Context saves your customers from having to repeat themselves and ultimately contributes to superior experiences.

By 2020, the customer will manage 85% of an enterprise relationship without interacting with a human.

Gartner

Proactive companies are leveraging natural language processing and sentiment analytics to create "conversational assistants" which automatically help customers get the real-time information they are seeking. By using these AI technologies to glean the context and actual intent of a customer's text or message, the "assistant" can take immediate action. Using a more natural, human-like response, it can either generate a ticket, appropriately reply via text, propose a callback from a live agent, or automatically route the user to a chat window for quick resolution.

With this contextual insight shared across all departments, the conversations your agents are having with your customers will be more personalized and consistent. Providing context to your contact center agents, however, isn't always as easy as it sounds. Transferring context from one communication channel to the next doesn't work with just any contact center technology: legacy and siloed software systems can't handle such hand-offs. An innovative cloud provider offering advanced artificial intelligence solutions can help you accelerate your transformation.



CONTEXTUAL
INTELLIGENCE IN ACTION

SIMPLY BUSINESS

MULTICHANNEL CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IMPROVEMENTS RESULT IN 12% CONVERSION GROWTH

Recently acquired by Travelers Insurance, Simply Business is the UK's leading business insurance broker — protecting more than 300,000 small businesses nationwide. With over 40% of Simply Business purchases taking place over the phone, they needed a reliable contact center to manage and effectively route callers.

To ensure that their customers have the best experience possible, Simply Business knew they had to eliminate time spent on hold or the need for customers to repeat themselves issues multiple times.

Simply Business also wanted to make their contact center employees more efficient by automating as much as possible. To accomplish this, Simply Business designed and built an intelligent contact center from scratch leveraging Twilio APIs that use real-time data to track every step of the customer journey and keeps agents up-to-date on customer needs.

“The customer center had to be core to the customer experience. That was one of the things that drove our investment in Twilio.”

Lukas Oberhuber, CTO, Simply Business

Working with Twilio enabled Simply Business to utilize their in-house data science model, designed to target the right customer with the right products and right conversations. Since Simply Business began integrating their machine learning capabilities with Twilio, they've seen a significant impact on customer outcomes. “We believe that these [AI] approaches will transform the way that businesses operate, and specifically to our market, how insurance is sold,” said Lukas Oberhuber, CTO of Simply Business.

With approximately 200 agents, Simply Business uses Twilio TaskRouter to route customers to the right agent at the right time. Plus, by tracking the customer's entire digital lifecycle, Simply Business can run A/B tests and iterate and adapt based on real-time interaction. A recent test on an IVR channel, which took only 15 minutes to set up, drove a 3% increase in conversion.

With their new contact center in place, call handling at Simply Business rose 15%, inbound sales conversion increased by 9%, and offline Net Promoter Scores increased by 5 points. They've also been able to build a lead scoring model that has an 80% predictive result.

“Customer understanding and data analytics would not be possible if we didn't have intelligent information available,” claimed Oberhuber. “No other platform (aside from Twilio) provides that kind of data.”



4 SCALE & RELIABILITY

FOCUS ON CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE RATHER THAN COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE

Gartner predicts that by 2020, 30% of enterprises will embed communications into digital processes using APIs and modules from CPaaS (Communications Platform as a Service) vendors. That's a jump from less than 5% in 2017. Already ahead of the curve, today's more innovative contact centers have discovered how to create the ultimate customer engagement center by depending on a modern communications platform: one that is reliable, securely connected, and scalable.

Enterprises who may have previously opted for mature off-the-shelf solutions, bought from established vendors, now see software development — and CPaaS — as key to their digital differentiation. Since contact center APIs are cloud-based, they connect calls using geographically-distributed data centers around the world. Calls are optimally routed to reduce latency and to provide the highest quality throughput.

When you expand your reach to multiple countries and regions, cloud-based communications provide a deep local inventory of numbers and unrivaled reliability through global carrier connectivity. This level of reliability is difficult to find in premise-based contact center systems. Choosing a CPaaS provider also allows businesses to skip contract negotiations with carriers in each country and focus on refining the customer experience based on languages and regional preferences. Likewise, development teams are empowered to create applications that improve customer experience and agent efficiency rather than spending cycles on managing complex communications infrastructure.

In choosing a reputable, established provider, you also benefit from their understanding of what it takes to build a successful cloud-based contact center, one that offers greater reliability than most businesses can afford to implement independently. By moving communications away from legacy premise systems and into the realm of cloud-based APIs, you should look for a provider who can handle billions of interactions with a 99.99% service-level agreement (SLA).

By 2020, 30% of enterprises will embed communications into digital processes using APIs and modules from CPaaS vendors.

Gartner, Market Trends, 2018

Simply put, without the right platform, a modern contact center cannot thrive. Cloud adoption is not only shifting how enterprises develop products and services; it's empowering developers to add real-time communications features into applications without having to build backend infrastructure and interfaces. It's allowing business lines — from marketing and sales to operations and technology — to reimagine a better way to communicate with and service customers: on their terms.



SCALABILITY IN
ACTION

ING

GLOBAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTION CONSOLIDATES 17 CONTACT CENTERS INTO ONE IN THE CLOUD

ING, one of the world's largest banks, knew that as the financial needs of their global banking customers evolved, they needed to grow with them. Since ING's customers use mobile apps as a primary means to communicate, ING understood that to remain relevant in today's market, they had to completely change the way they communicate with customers. They decided to focus on speed and agility in every aspect of their business, not despite their size, but because of it.

This shift meant restructuring ING's entire organization to become more agile, which wasn't easy to do with more than 40,000 employees in 40 countries, and 17 disparate legacy contact centers created by different vendors at different times. So how does a multinational organization make a change this big, do it quickly, and not disrupt business? For ING, the answer was in the cloud.

ING knew they needed to completely redesign and rebuild their legacy contact center for better customer service. Hank Kolk, ING Chief Architect, knew there's only one way to do that, "using building blocks."

To get the job done, Kolk turned to Twilio to power their next-generation contact center with Twilio's building blocks: Programmable Voice, IP Messaging, Programmable Video, and TaskRouter. And since finance is a highly regulated industry, it was imperative that ING choose a reliable, secure cloud communications provider that ensured industry and regulatory compliance, 24/7 service, and had a far-reaching, global carrier network so they could scale as needed.

Underpinning the Twilio platform is Twilio's Super Network, which powers more than 50,000 businesses and billions of interactions with a 99.99% SLA. The Super Network is a highly reliable network of thousands of carrier connections worldwide with built-in redundancy. This gives businesses like ING the scale and reliability they need to run mission-critical contact centers without having to manage any infrastructure or carrier relationships.

The results? ING was able to consolidate its 17 legacy contact centers into one. Today, a global network of 450 ING developers can interact and use flexible cloud-based APIs to quickly customize applications to deliver the agility, speed, and scale required to stay competitive.

*"The only way to speed up
in a world of software is to
empower your developers."*

*Hank Kolk, Chief Architect,
ING Bank*



EVERY BUSINESS IS DIFFERENT, AND SO ARE THEIR CUSTOMER'S NEEDS

There is no “one size fits all” when it comes to the ideal contact center. To create an ongoing superior customer experience, you must be able to constantly adapt. When you're choosing the right contact center solution for your business, look for the four essential ingredients for a modern contact center:

1. **PROGRAMMABILITY:** Easily customize every step of the customer journey, making changes as your needs evolve.
2. **OMNICHANNEL:** Connect with your customer on their preferred communication channel.
3. **CONTEXTUAL INTELLIGENCE:** Enable proactive and intuitive conversations using the latest in artificial intelligence.
4. **SCALABILITY:** Trust your platform infrastructure to scale with you reliably.

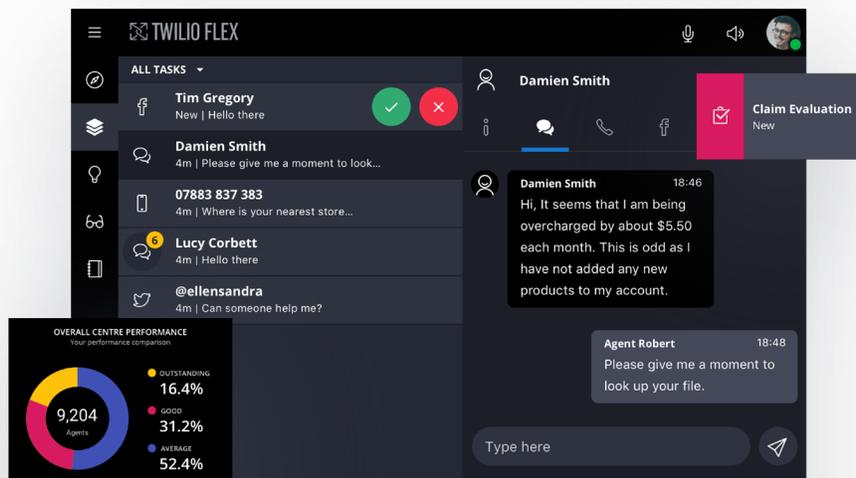
First, your contact center should offer unlimited programmability so you can customize and change it as often as you like. Next, you must be accessible to your customers on all the channels they use, with integrated context for a seamless experience. Third, look for the latest in AI technology and natural language understanding so you can communicate intelligently with your customers and provide faster resolutions. And last, with your communications based in the cloud on a secure and elastic platform, you'll be able to focus on building unique communication experiences with your customers instead of dealing with the messiness of traditional telecommunication.



INTRODUCING TWILIO FLEX

For decades, businesses have been boxed in by this classic contact center challenge: a choice between customizability and ease-of-deployment. But today, technology has evolved to offer businesses the best of both worlds.

To respond to the evolving needs of today's businesses, Twilio has created a new contact center application platform. The first of its kind, Twilio Flex is an entirely programmable cloud contact center. It's a platform for contact center development, not a rigid packaged contact center SaaS solution. The Twilio Flex platform allows you to develop, customize, and manage your own contact center applications on top of Twilio's infrastructure in a more intuitive and best practices-focused way. However, Twilio Flex is still an open platform meant for custom software development rather than a standard out-of-the-box solution. With Twilio Flex, you can:



- ✓ Quickly and easily customize every part of your contact center
- ✓ Instantly add new channels and access all of your cross-channel data on a single platform
- ✓ Integrate with any CRM, workforce management, reporting system, or existing call center infrastructure
- ✓ Add contextual intelligence to every part of the agent/customer interaction lifecycle
- ✓ Empower non-developers and others in the organization with flexible, enterprise-grade tools
- ✓ Rely on the Twilio communications platform — proven to scale across geographies and channels, serving contact centers as small as ten agents and as large as 50,000+

Simply put, Twilio Flex offers all of the ingredients you need to build a modern contact center.

For a more details, visit www.twilio.com/flex



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