twilio

5 questions you should ask when choosing a contact center vendor

QUICK FACTS ABOUT TWILIO FLEX

- Instantly omnichannel

- Integrates with any CRM

- Fully programmable, open platform

- Scales to 50k+ agent positions

- Available in 100+ countries

- Flexible pricing models

Contact centers have entered a new reality: one in which customers are embracing new digital technologies faster than organizations can accommodate. This is particularly true for those straddled with legacy systems. Today's consumers have access to information anytime, anywhere, and have largely gone digital in all facets of their lives. More importantly, they expect the companies they do business with to do the same.

To thrive in today's economy, businesses need a contact center solution that allows them to engage with customers in ways they prefer, whether it be texting, Facebook Messenger, phone calls, email, chat, or through a constantly expanding offering of new apps and self-help tools. Even more critical is the ability to provide a seamless, personalized, and intuitive experience across all customer interactions, allowing conversations to fluidly continue between channels without starting from scratch each time.

Enterprises who may have previously opted for premise-based solutions are now choosing to implement cloud-based contact centers to keep up with these rapidly evolving technologies. Benefits include the freedom to innovate and add new channels, free from technology limitations, improved security leading to a reduction in fraud and its related costs, and higher customer satisfaction.

To successfully modernize your contact center, and ensure it can keep up with your changing needs, consider the following five questions you should ask when choosing a contact center vendor.

1 How difficult is it to customize your contact center solution?

For the longest time, you'd be hard-pressed to see "ease of customization" and "contact center software" in the same sentence. That's because building and maintaining a contact center typically required a myriad of consultants and experts in the chosen vendor's software. But the cloud has changed all of this. Modern contact centers should be straightforward, flexible, and so customizable that even your non-developers can easily adapt to meet both standard—and edge case—communication flows.

Think about what role each layer of the stack plays in the communication process. Each component should give you the ability to use analytics to track, test, and tailor your contact center for maximum performance—just as you optimize a web page or mobile app. So dig deeper and ask your contact center provider exactly how customizable their software is.

Twilio Flex is the first programmable, cloud-based, contact center application platform that allows you to customize every layer of the stack, including:

- **A user interface** that enables complete modification of customer, agent, and supervisor views. You can rely on our pre-built templates or change the UI entirely based on your specific needs and usage patterns.

- **A visual application builder** that allows non-developers to create and modify interaction flows, IVRs, and bots for every step of the journey.

- **Attribute-based routing** that can assign tasks to the right agent on the right channel using the context of the interaction or intent of the user.

- **Developer-friendly APIs** that support complete customization so you can quickly adapt to evolving customer requirements.

2 How quickly can I add new channels?

In this day and age, being omnichannel is not just a nice-to-have, it's a business imperative. To succeed, you have to be more like your customers, who are chatting, texting, sharing ideas, and connecting on social media. When evaluating contact center providers, make sure they can work with all the channels your customers are using today, and assess how difficult it may be to add new digital channels as they emerge.

With Twilio Flex, your customers can seamlessly move between channels—such as switching from a live web chat to a voice call—while your agents maintain context for the entire interaction. Twilio APIs enable you to add widely-used channels like SMS, and popular social messaging apps, and then swiftly integrate new customer favorites as you see fit. Choose any channel:

- **Video** to enable face-to-face conversations for identity verification, screen sharing, co-browsing, or visual problem resolution—all within your app.

- **Chat** to complete transactions, follow up conversations, and transfer rich, context-aware data over secure web and mobile-based apps.

- **SMS** to provide direct messaging between customers and agents for quick resolutions.

- **Voice** to let customers in 100+ countries reach you by phone, or schedule call-backs from website or mobile apps, including in-app voice calling.

- **In-app messaging** like Facebook, LINE, and many more.

3 How easily will your solution integrate with my existing systems?

Things move fast. The rapid pace of technology, together with the pressure to satisfy digitally-driven customer demands, probably has you stitching together a Frankenstein of diverse applications. Instead, you need to proactively design a single solution that can interact seamlessly with your existing systems, including your CRM(s), workforce optimization (WFO) solution, and other systems of record.

Twilio Flex was built with that very notion in mind. We know that to be successful, you need a single and holistic view of every customer. And to get that view, your contact center must function flawlessly with your CRM and other WFO solutions. Because it's entirely customizable, you can easily integrate Twilio Flex with SaaS CRMs like Salesforce or Microsoft Dynamics, premise CRMs, or even homegrown solutions to ensure a seamless interaction and provide agents with all of the information they need in one place. The Twilio Flex platform, augmented by third-party integrations, allows you to send and receive data from custom channels and databases to manage any customer interaction using a single interface. Here are just some of the add-ons available:

- **Customizable Dashboards.** Provide one common dashboard that can be tailored based on role and channel. Add, remove, extend, and replace any component at any time. Plus, agents and supervisors get real-time statistics.

- **Customer journey information.** The Flex interface lets your customers switch channels, without switching agents. And you can combine data from customer interactions with your own historical business data to give your agents context-rich information.

- **Knowledge base.** Use advanced analytics to better understand the context of each conversation and to improve agent performance.

- **Feedback.** Make feedback actionable by providing coaching to agents on their interactions in real-time. Aggregate feedback to adapt your contact center flows accordingly.

- **Reporting.** Run reports to track customers across channels, and respond to queries in real time. Export dashboard and reports as Excel, CSV, image, or PDF files, or as an email.

4 Is your pricing model flexible enough to accommodate the needs of my business?

Depending on the nature of your business, there may be times when your contact center encounters peaks and valleys of activity. This could be triggered by just about anything: a BOGO offer, a significant weather event or crisis, or an anticipated seasonal uptick like tax-time or back-to-school. As you include more channels beyond just the phone, you need a cloud communications provider who can accommodate those evolving demands with a pricing model that doesn't fleece you when you're operating at maximum capacity. Check the fine print for hidden overage fees and penalties for exceeding monthly limits.

Twilio's flexible pricing models were developed to drive cost containment and to adapt to your evolving business demands. Flexible pricing enables you to scale your agents up or down, as needed: scale up to better support holiday spikes or hugely successful marketing campaigns, or scale down during slower periods. With Twilio, you only pay for what you use. Don't get stalled by contracts, capacity planning, and price modeling. Highlights include:

- **Flexible pricing models** to accommodate the needs of your business.

- **Volume discounts** as your usage increases, so you'll always get a fair price.

- **Deeper discounts** if you commit to usage.

- **Elastically scaling usage** without preemptively engineering for spikes in traffic.

5 Will you be able to support us as our business and customer needs evolve?

Providing great customer experience is paramount to the success of your business. So it's essential that the contact center providers you're evaluating can articulate why you should entrust them with your customer communications. Narrow your list to only those who are regarded as a leader in cloud communications and, more importantly, are a proven innovator. Underpinning this is the need to select a vendor with a superior cloud communications platform fueling thousands of contact centers worldwide.

Twilio's Cloud Communication platform is trusted by nearly 54,000 companies, and employed by over 2 million developers worldwide. Contact center providers such as Zendesk, Serenova, and Talkdesk and leading organizations like ING, Salesforce, Netflix, and others rely on Twilio's global infrastructure to ensure millions of high-quality customer interactions every day. And we've been recognized by Gartner, Forrester, and Ovum as an industry leader. Our platform is recognized for:

- **Global reach:** We rely on an extensive global carrier network to power 40+ billion interactions annually across tens of thousands of customers and instantly provision numbers in 100+ countries.

- **Scalability:** Ability to support 50,000+ agents at the same time within the same workspace.

- **Innovation:** In 2017 alone, we shipped a new customer-facing feature every three business days without any customer impact or downtime.

- **Operational Excellence:** Our Operational Maturity Model (OMM) includes continuous maintenance of infrastructure, underlying technologies, performance and support activities, documentation, and security.

- **Reliability:** Twilio has no maintenance windows or planned downtime. Our always-on platform provides resiliency through our Super Network and an uptime SLA of 99.99%.

- **Security:** Twilio builds all of its services with security, privacy, and scalability in mind. Twilio is ISO27001 certified and GDPR compliant.

5 Questions. One Answer.

Exceptional experiences are crucial to generating customer loyalty, improving employee productivity, and increasing your organization's bottom line. It all starts with partnering with a contact center provider who helps you meet your customers ever-changing expectations by being agile, innovative, and proactive.

As you evaluate contact center vendors, consider Twilio Flex, the completely customizable, next-generation contact center that makes it easy to focus on having great conversations while adapting to wherever the customer journey takes you.

Are you ready to transform your contact center?

Talk to us　　**Learn more**