



Contact Center Trends & Customer Expectations (Backed by Data— ~~Not Assumptions!~~)

2025 CONVERSATIONAL INTELLIGENCE REPORT | NA





The State of Contact Centers Today

It starts the same way every time. A frustrated customer stuck on hold, waiting for an agent to solve a problem that shouldn't exist in the first place.

Your contact center is flooded with calls like these—repeat complaints, preventable issues, and friction points that could have been resolved long before a customer ever picked up the phone. And the worst part? These calls aren't just frustrating for customers; they're expensive. Every unnecessary conversation chips away at margins, burns out agents, and creates a customer experience (CX) death spiral where reactivity takes priority over real improvement.

And yet, the insights you need to fix this cycle and cut costs are already there—hidden in the very conversations clogging your queues. In this report, we explore the latest consumer trends affecting contact center interactions and the biggest opportunities to meet customers where they are while maximising contact center efficiencies and reducing costs at the same time.

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We Asked Your Customers Their **Conversation Preferences**, So You Don't Have To

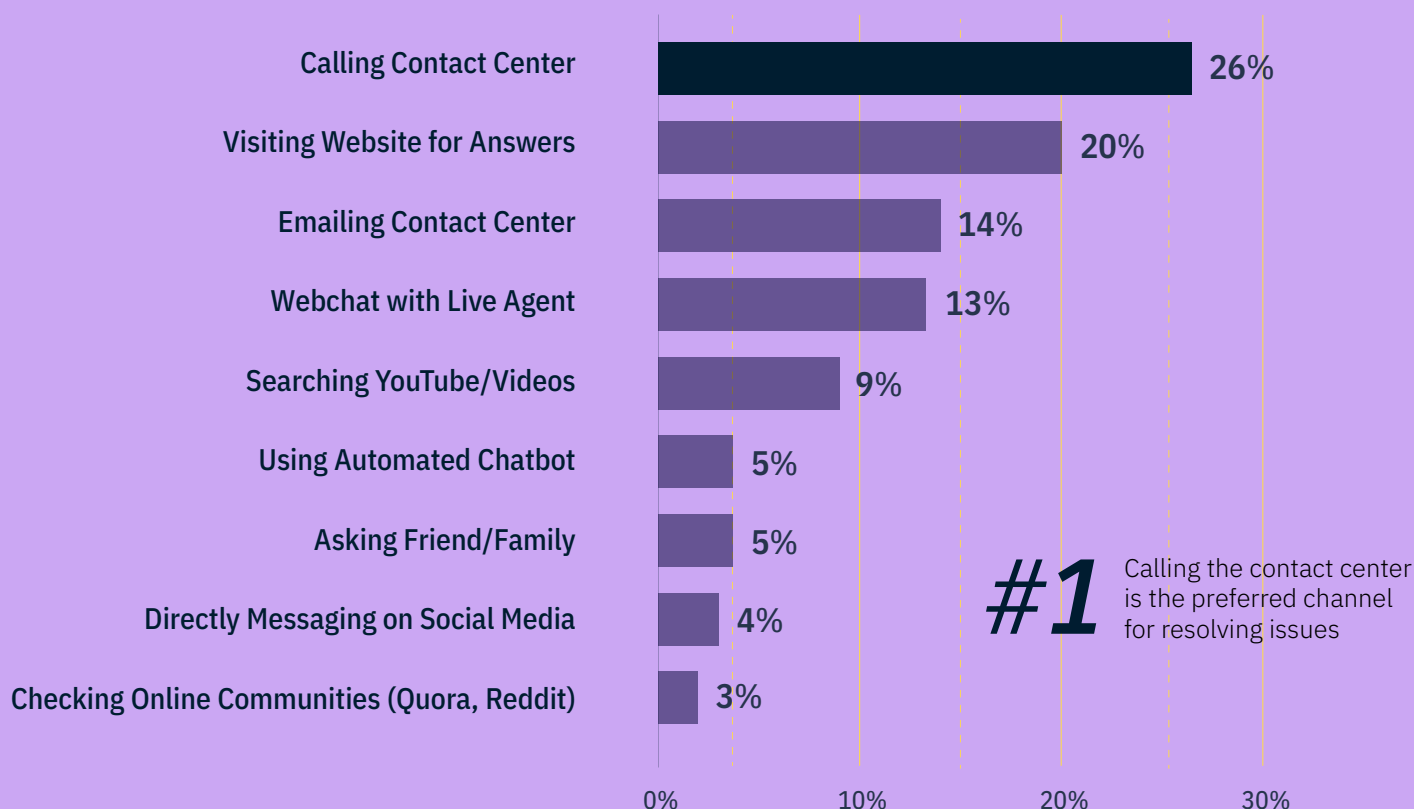
Consumer Expectations, Business Response and The Urgent Need for Transformation

This report is based on a comprehensive survey conducted with 1,215 census-representative consumers, gathering insights on their customer service expectations, preferred support channels, and attitudes toward

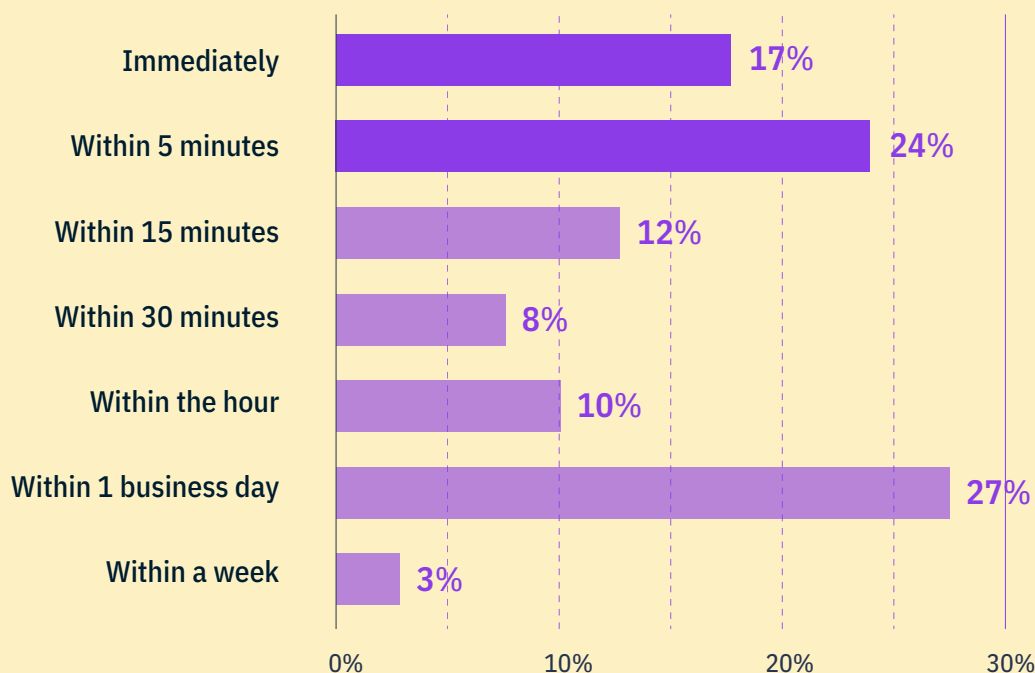
AI-driven interactions. The survey sample reflects a balanced gender distribution (51% female, 49% male) and includes a wide age range, with the largest groups being 45-54 (18%) and 55-64 (17%). The research focused

on identifying key friction points in customer interactions, the role of AI in service delivery, and the evolving expectations of modern consumers.

What's your preferred channel for resolving product or service issues with a brand you've purchase from?



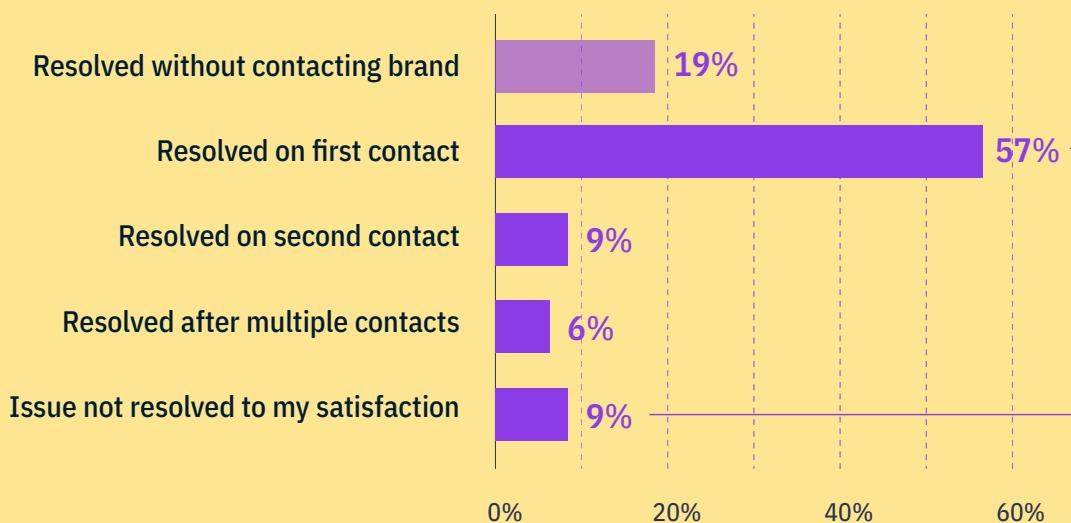
After you contact a brand with an issue, how quickly do you expect them to respond?



41%

of customers expect to be contacted within 5 minutes after reporting an issue

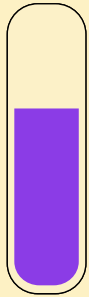
Thinking about the last time you had an issue with a product or service you purchased, which of the following statements is true:



81%

of customers still require a brand interaction to resolve issues (over self-serve channels)

Which statement best describes how customer service affects your brand loyalty?



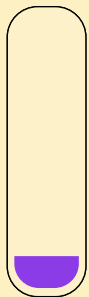
61%

I expect brands to resolve the issue the first time I contact support, or I'll start considering competitive brands



18%

I expect brands to resolve my issue using self-service resources on the website (without needing to contact support), or I'll start considering competitive brands



11%

If a brand doesn't resolve my issue but still makes me feel valued, I won't consider switching to competitive brands



9%

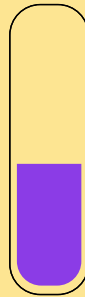
I expect brands to resolve the issue the second time I contact support, or I'll start considering competitive brands

How comfortable are you with chatbots or AI support when engaging with brands?



20%

Very Comfortable



42%

Comfortable



24%

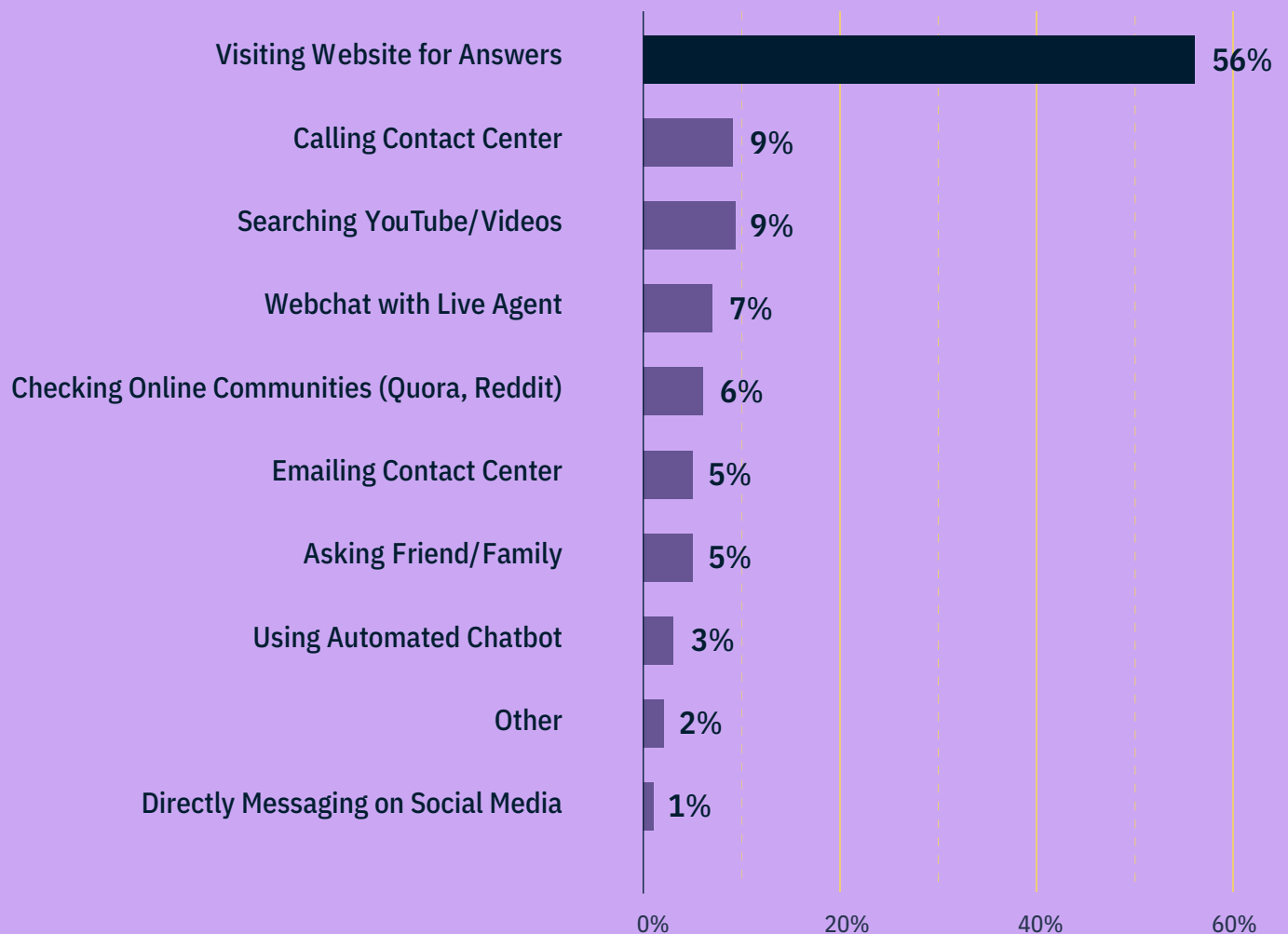
Uncomfortable



14%

Very Uncomfortable

When researching a new product or service, what is your preferred channel for finding information about a brand's offering?

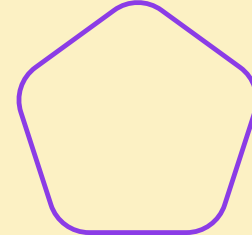


6x

More customers would prefer to visit your website to research your products than call you



Now Let's Turn Insights Into **Actions**



Contact centers are at an inflection point—balancing operational efficiency with customer expectations has never been more challenging.

The main challenge for service organizations is balancing two conflicting demands. On one hand, they must do more with less—**cutting costs and improving operational efficiency**. On the other hand, **consumers demand a seamless and immediate resolution**.

Adding to the complexities contact center leaders face is a third dimension. Contact center operations are often disjointed from the rest of the organization and serve primarily as a mechanism to capture and resolve inbound **failure demand**—customer inquiries driven by a failure somewhere else in the business (e.g., unclear billing, broken self-service options, or product issues). Rather than adding value, these contacts exist only because something has gone wrong.

Whilst opportunities exist to prevent failure demand at its source, contact center leaders often lack the necessary insights to influence decision-making across departments. This disconnect creates the perfect storm—soaring and unpredictable consumer demand for immediate support, combined with unrealistic performance expectations placed on contact centers by the wider organization.

CONSUMERS' EXPECTATIONS AND CHANNEL PREFERENCES

HOW SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS ARE CURRENTLY RESPONDING

Rapid and seamless resolutions:

61%

of consumers expect their issue to be resolved on the first contact—or they'll switch to another brand.

41%

expect a response within an hour or less. Amongst Gen Z consumers, **48% expect responses within minutes**, whereas older generations (55+) are more willing to **wait up to a day** before frustration sets in.

Channel preferences are widespread and changing:

54%

still prefer calling the contact center for issue resolution, despite the rise of digital channels.

53%

use email, and 51% visit the website for support, but automated chatbots (23%) and social media DMs (16%) rank lowest in preference.

However, **Gen Z is 2x as likely (32%)** to use chatbots compared to Boomers (15%), indicating shifting channel preferences among younger consumers.

Customers don't think in channels. They expect a smooth, connected experience across touchpoints—and brands that fail here will lose trust (and revenue).

Investing in Conversation Intelligence:



Service organizations are experimenting with new technology and spending additional time and resources on understanding when and why issues are not being resolved in interactions, and using those insights for agent training and driving cross functional projects to prevent future calls.

Deploying more and more digital channels to deflect expensive interactions:

80%

of service organizations expected to use some form of AI by 2026—Brands are racing to implement AI-driven solutions—chatbots, virtual agents, automated workflows—without thinking through the experience.

External factors drive inbound call volume, which remains steady or grows despite agent performance.

The result is that contact centers are still flooded with preventable calls, customers are stuck in frustrating loops, and AI investments aren't delivering real value.

CONTINUED →

CONSUMERS' EXPECTATIONS AND CHANNEL PREFERENCES

HOW SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS ARE CURRENTLY RESPONDING

Consumers vote with their feet after one poor interaction:

61%

of consumers will abandon a brand after just one negative experience.

Consumer tolerance for poor experiences is getting lower. If brands are not providing satisfactory interactions and experiences, consumers will switch to other providers—especially in industries that are higher commoditized, or have a lower barrier to switch.

Agent Training and Enablement

Relying solely on agent training to improve contact center performance is ineffective because:

Training is typically reactive to demand shifts and often costly without clear priorities.

Expanding the knowledge base is expensive and time-consuming without understanding which areas to prioritize.

High agent attrition leads to wasted training investment.

Customers are not yet ready for AI powered interactions for customer service:

40%

of customers are uncomfortable with AI-driven support.

38%

say AI makes interactions more frustrating, not better.

1 in 5

consumers don't trust AI in customer service.

Brands are investing in agentic AI to improve the quality of interactions, but...

they aren't focusing on grounding the agents in the right data.

AI is supposed to be the silver bullet for service organizations—scaling operations, cutting costs, and boosting efficiency.

The expectations are set, and brands can't afford to overlook them. This is what it means for brands today and in the coming years:



➔ **VALUE-DRIVEN DECISIONS TAKE OVER**

Sustained inflation means customers are scrutinising every dollar. Price matters, but so does experience—frustration will send them straight to competitors.

➔ **GEN Z'S EXPERIENCE EXPECTATIONS WILL DOMINATE**

As they become the largest consumer segment, Gen Z demands **immediacy, personalization, and frictionless self-service**. Our data shows younger consumers (18–34) are far more comfortable using AI-driven tools and chat-based support than older generations, but only if these solutions work seamlessly. They are also the least patient, with a higher percentage expecting resolutions within minutes—not hours. If they hit friction, they won't call; they'll abandon and switch.

➔ **THE GAP BETWEEN EXPECTATIONS AND REALITY IS GROWING**

Customers tell brands precisely what they want—prompt, human-centered service prioritising first-contact resolution. Yet, contact centers are still structured for reactive firefighting rather than proactive problem-solving. The result of this is rising operational costs, declining customer satisfaction, and agent burnout.

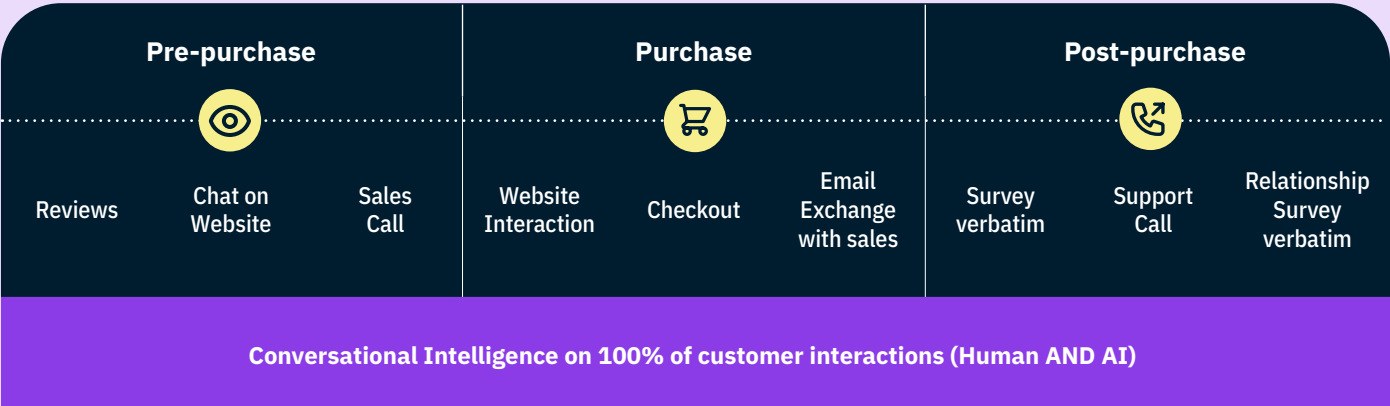
HIDDEN IN CONVERSATIONS ACROSS THE
ENTIRE CUSTOMER JOURNEY:

A Pathway to Improving Service Efficiencies & CX

Traditional contact center management has historically relied on AI-driven automation (think chatbots, workflows, knowledge management) and ad-hoc agent training to handle the ever-increasing demand. But, this siloed approach ignores the broader one key aspect—customer experience doesn’t begin or end with a service call, and the drivers of contact center performance can often be found outside of the contact center or hidden in thousands

of service calls. Deploying Agentic AI, performing QA spot checks, and analysing post-support surveys are no longer enough to optimize performance. To truly improve efficiency and service quality, service leaders need to look beyond the boundaries of the contact center to the entirety of the customer journey. [InMoment’s Conversational Intelligence](#) is a purpose-built, outcome-oriented solution, providing a

complete view, combining feedback from call transcripts, chats, support threads, emails, ratings and review platforms, social media, and more to give contact center leaders the resources to influence inbound demand for service requests upstream. By taking this approach, brands can extract real insights, automate quality assurance, and take proactive steps to reduce friction before it escalates into unnecessary calls.



Here is How Conversational Intelligence Can Bring Positive Change To Your Contact Center and The Entire Organization



Conversational Intelligence is the foundational layer for capturing, analysing and improving all customer interactions, enabling service organizations to safely and efficiently implement new support models—AI, human or hybrid. By applying Conversational Intelligence to 100% of customer interactions, contact center leaders can identify friction points that result in contact center calls and how agents (both human and AI) are responding to implement targeted actions and improve efficiency.

Identify and eliminate frictions in the customer journey before they become support calls

Conversational Intelligence helps you get the most value from customer data by continuously analysing interactions to identify friction points across their journey. By detecting issues early, organizations can proactively resolve concerns before they escalate into contact center calls. This not only reduces operational costs but also enhances the customer experience by providing faster, more seamless resolutions. As a result, customers receive immediate value at every stage of their

journey—from pre-purchase inquiries to post-purchase support—reinforcing trust, satisfaction, and long-term brand loyalty.

Identify and Resolve Systemic Customer Issues

Conversational Intelligence helps address systemic customer issues and significantly reduce average handle time (AHT) by analysing large-scale customer interactions. By understanding what customers are consistently telling agents, organizations can identify recurring pain points, inefficiencies, and gaps in service delivery.

This insight allows them to optimize internal processes, refine agent training programs, and enhance knowledge base content to ensure agents—whether human or AI—are equipped with the right information at the right time. Beyond the contact center, these insights can drive meaningful change across other business functions, such as product development, marketing, and operations, by pinpointing areas that need improvement. This holistic approach ensures that systemic issues are resolved at their root, reducing the need for repeat calls and escalations.

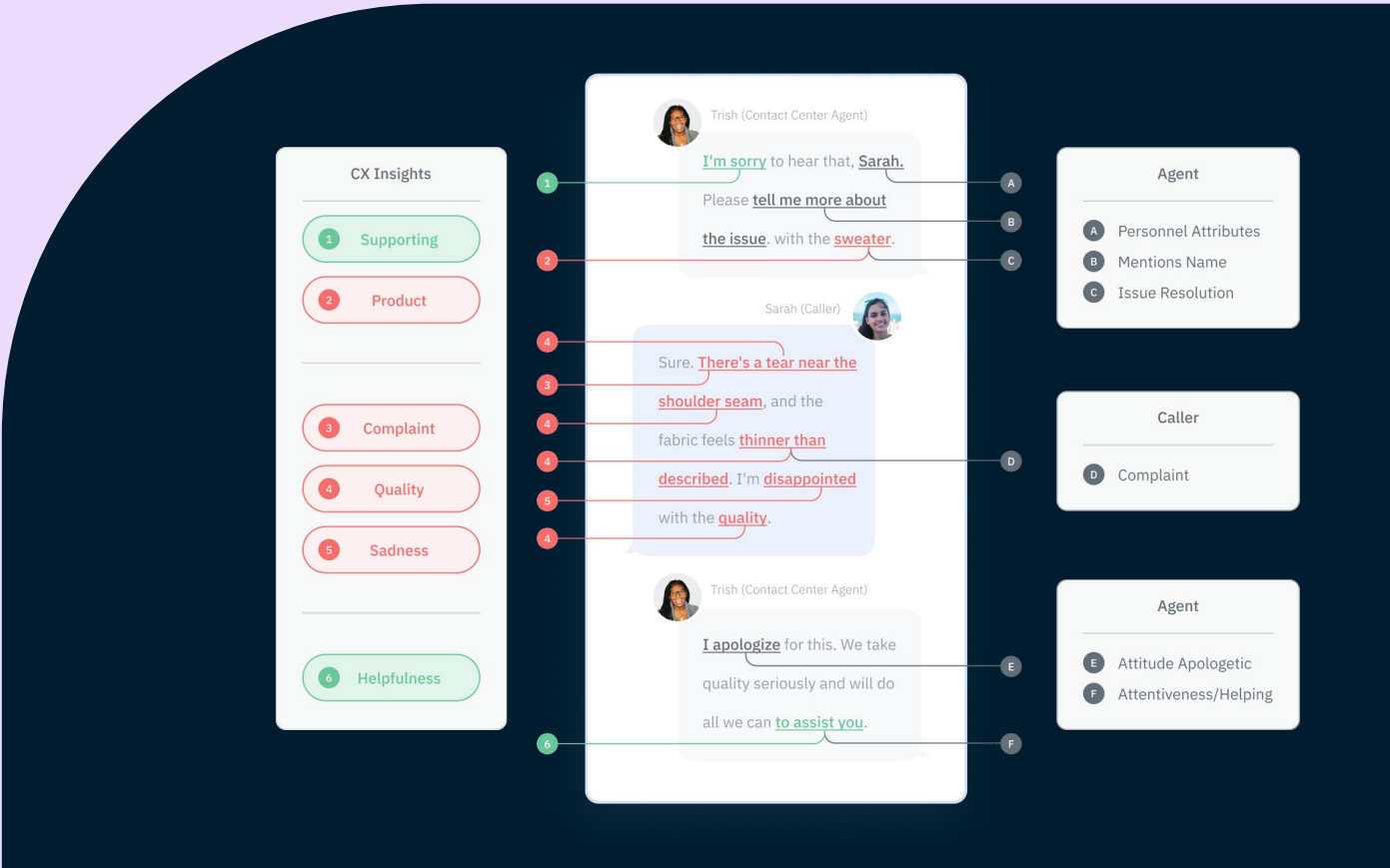
Automate Quality Assurance (QA) on Every Single Conversation

Conversational Intelligence enables full automation of quality assurance (QA) across 100% of customer interactions, whether handled by human agents or AI, and whether conducted over the phone or through digital channels such as chat, email, or social media. By leveraging advanced speech-to-text technology, it automatically transcribes voice conversations with high accuracy, converting them into structured data for analysis. With natural language processing (NLP) and natural language understanding (NLU), Conversational Intelligence goes

beyond basic transcription to extract deeper insights. It categorizes conversations, detects key entities, and analyses sentiment, intent, effort, and emotion. This allows organizations to assess not just what was said but also how it was communicated and how the customer perceived the interaction.

By continuously monitoring conversations, organizations can ensure that both human and AI agents adhere to compliance guidelines, follow approved scripts, and use appropriate language when addressing customers.

Automated QA helps detect inconsistencies, human errors, AI hallucinations, and deviations from best practices, minimising the risk of regulatory violations and reputational damage. Additionally, this proactive approach to QA reduces the burden on manually auditing teams, enabling real-time issue identification and swift corrective action. The result is improved service quality, enhanced customer satisfaction, and a contact center with greater efficiency and reduced risk exposure.



Build More Confident Agents — and Keep Them Longer

Great customer experiences rely on well-supported, empowered agents. But too often, agents are left to manage issues that stem from problems elsewhere in the business — issues they can't control, yet are expected to solve.

Conversational Intelligence helps contact centre leaders identify those friction points and address them before they reach the front line. By proactively fixing the source of unnecessary calls and providing clear, targeted resources, brands can make agents' jobs easier and more rewarding.

With automated, side-by-side transcripts of both the agent and customer dialogue, leaders gain a full picture of each interaction. This makes coaching more precise, helping agents improve in areas like communication style, empathy, and problem-solving.

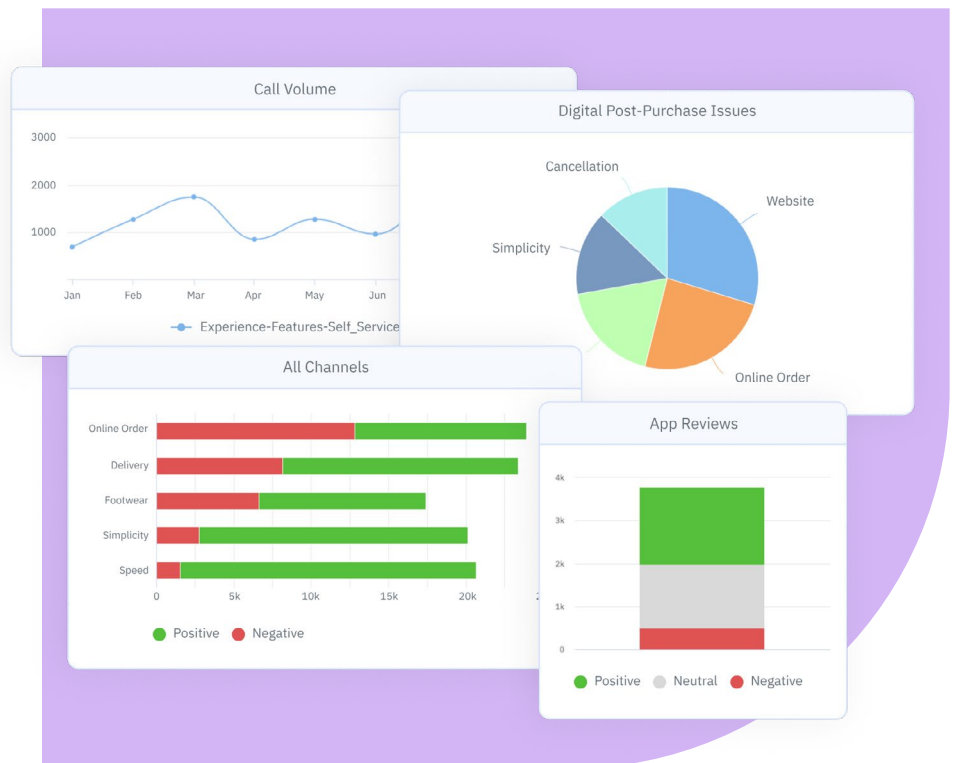
It's not just about fixing mistakes — it's about giving agents the tools to create better outcomes. Regularly tracking agent performance alongside customer sentiment also helps leaders catch burnout early, strengthen engagement, and reduce costly turnover. When agents feel supported and have what they need to succeed, they stay longer and deliver better results for the business.

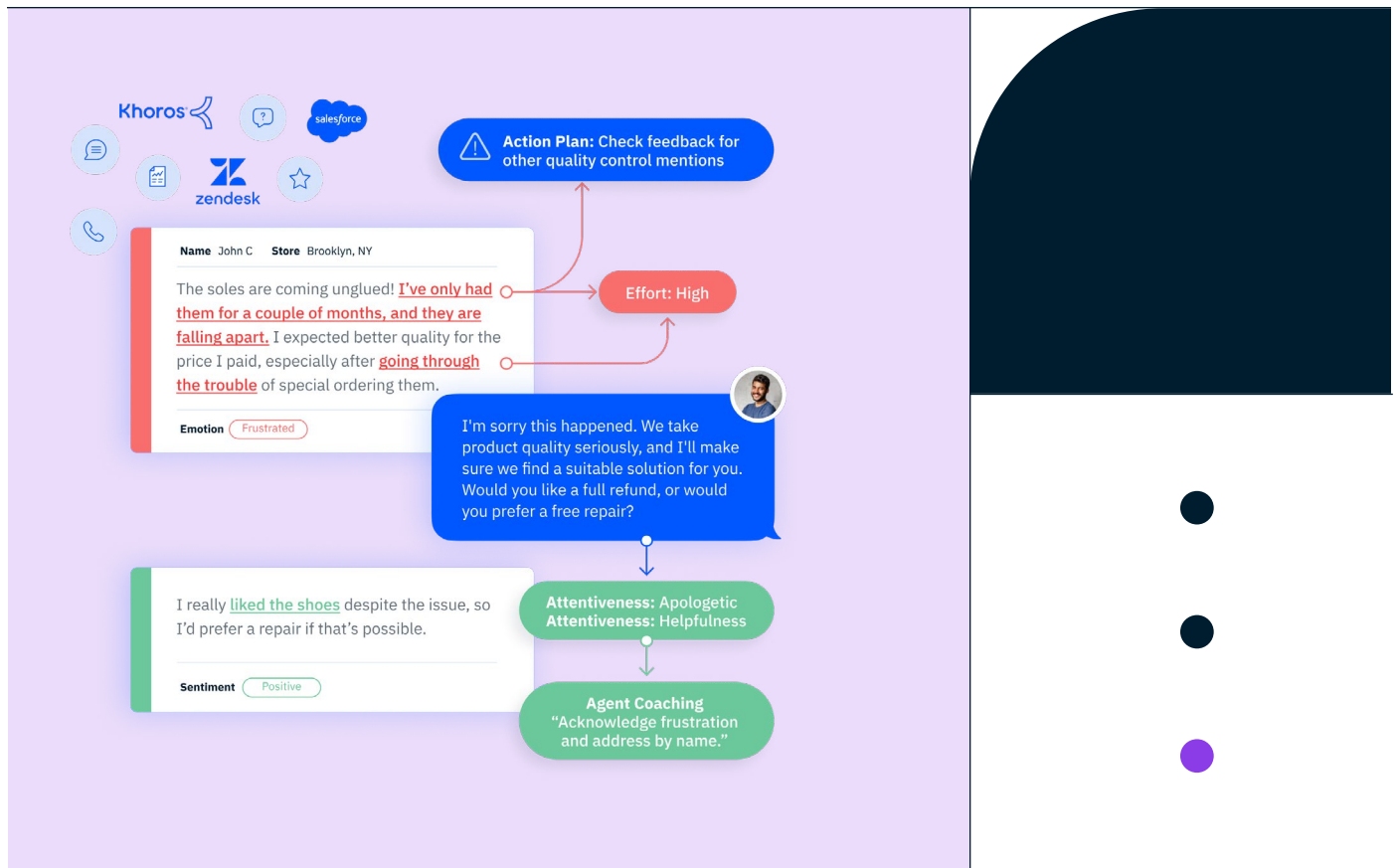
Be the Insights Engine for Your Entire Business

These conversations highlight what's working, where customers are getting stuck, and what's driving unnecessary demand. Armed with this knowledge,

leaders can help inform smarter decisions across product development, digital experience, operations, marketing, and finance.

When contact centre insights are shared across the business, teams can fix root causes, not just symptoms. Whether that's refining a confusing digital process, streamlining operational workflows, or addressing common product complaints, these improvements make a real impact — both for the customer and the bottom line.





It's Not Just About AI — It's About Insights You Can Act On

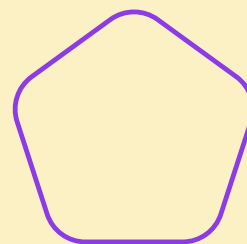
Most AI tools stop at analysing conversations in isolation. Conversational Intelligence goes further, connecting 100% of customer interactions — across chat, calls, emails, and more — into one clear picture.

This gives businesses early visibility into emerging issues, so problems can be fixed before they escalate. It also helps contact center leaders keep quality and compliance on track with automated monitoring of every interaction.

And it doesn't stop at reporting. Conversational Intelligence uses predictive analytics to show where to focus next, helping CX leaders prioritize changes that will make the biggest difference. Instead of guessing, you get a clear action plan — all driven by what customers are really saying.

DEMONSTRATING ROI:

Making the Business Case for Conversational Intelligence



The value of Conversational Intelligence extends far beyond improving day-to-day interactions—it directly impacts the bottom line. Many contact centers are still viewed as cost centers rather than strategic growth drivers. But what if interactions across the entire customer journey could be connected and transformed into proactive cost savings and revenue-generating insights? Here is how we see InMoment's Conversational Intelligence customers benefit from the solution:



Lower Inbound Call Volume by Resolving Customer Journey Issues

Collaborating with various departments within your organisation to identify and fix common pain points in the customer journey helps eliminate recurring issues. By proactively addressing these challenges, customers require less support, leading to a significant reduction in inbound call volume.



Implement Strategic Actions to Enable Zero-Call Resolutions

Deploying targeted initiatives—such as deflection strategies, improved self-service options, enhanced agent training, and readily available support resources—ensures that repetitive inquiries can be resolved without the need for a customer to call. This enhances efficiency while improving customer satisfaction.



Enhance Agent Availability and Minimize Wait Times

By reducing failure demand—calls that result from unresolved issues or lack of proper support—agents can focus on meaningful customer interactions, leading to improved availability and reduced wait times for callers.



Accelerate Issue Resolution and Improve Call Handling Efficiency

Identifying systemic issues allows for the prioritisation of essential training materials and knowledge resources, which helps agents resolve customer issues more effectively. This leads to a reduction in resolution time, lower Average Handle Time (AHT), and an increase in the first-call resolution rate.



Lower Cost Per Call Through Better Training and Support

Equipping agents with comprehensive training and easily accessible support materials ensures they can handle calls more efficiently, reducing the average cost per call while improving overall service quality.



Enhance Agent Performance, Engagement, and Retention

A higher first-call resolution rate empowers agents to deliver better customer service, increasing their confidence and job satisfaction. Engaged agents are more likely to stay with the company, reducing turnover rates and associated recruitment costs.



Boost Customer Satisfaction by Eliminating Friction Points

Addressing pain points in the customer journey and ensuring swift, effective support leads to higher customer satisfaction scores (CSAT, OSAT). Customers receive the assistance they need without unnecessary delays or frustration.



Reduce Manual Effort in Call Transcription and Review

Automating the transcription and review of calls leads to direct cost savings by minimising the time spent on manual processes. This allows agents and managers to focus on more valuable tasks.



Streamline Call Notes and Reporting for Greater Efficiency

Automating call notes and disposition reporting ensures consistency in tracking call outcomes, reducing administrative workload and optimising agent productivity.



Improve Quality Assurance (QA) & Service Consistency

Over time, enhanced training and automated insights contribute to improved QA scores, ensuring agents consistently deliver customer support that aligns with brand guidelines and service expectations.

The value of customer feedback shouldn't stop at the contact center. When you use Conversational Intelligence to summarize conversations and surface clear insights, you can reduce unnecessary inbound requests, cut costs, boost efficiency, and improve customer satisfaction — all of which lead to stronger business performance.

This is how the contact center shifts from being seen as a cost center to becoming a driver of business transformation. The insights gathered help shape better customer experiences, inform strategies across departments, and deliver measurable value throughout the organization.

But to secure buy-in, leaders need to show the financial impact. That means quantifying what reducing call volumes, increasing first-contact resolution, and improving operational efficiency can do for the bottom line.

To make this simple, we've developed a [Conversational Intelligence ROI calculator](#). It's built on real improvement data from InMoment customers and lets you quickly estimate the potential impact for your business. Just plug in your numbers and see how much you could save — and how much more you could achieve.

The screenshot shows the InMoment website's ROI calculator for conversational intelligence. The interface is dark blue with white text. At the top, the InMoment logo is on the left, and 'ROI OF INTEGRATED CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE PROGRAMS' and 'CALCULATE ROI NOW' are on the right. Below the header, there are three tabs: 'VoC Surveys', 'Reputation Management', and 'Conversational Intelligence', with the last one being active. The main content area has a heading 'Calculate your business's ROI using InMoment's conversational intelligence tools.' followed by several input fields: 'Industry' (set to 'Entertainment'), 'Number of calls per year' (500,000), 'Number of agents' (80), 'Average call duration in minutes' (15), and 'Percent of calls where issue is not resolved (%)' (19). To the right of these inputs, a large box displays the 'Estimated Revenue Growth' as '\$2,235,000'. Below this, a 'BREAKDOWN' section lists five items with their respective values: '\$1,750,000 Time Saved on Post Call Work', '\$137,500 Time Saved on QA Automation', '\$112,500 First Call Resolution', '\$187,500 Call Deflection to Other Channels', and '\$47,500 Reduced Employee Turnover'. At the bottom right, a 'Total ICX ROI' section states 'Submit two or more calculators to show an overview of what your integrated CX program could return.'

When leaders can tie Conversational Intelligence directly to cost reduction and efficiency gains, the path to adoption becomes clearer. But more importantly, it allows contact center leaders to shift their roles from reactive problem-solvers to proactive business strategists. With data-driven insights guiding every decision, brands can move beyond reducing call volumes and create experiences that drive customer loyalty, revenue growth, and long-term competitive advantage. The future of contact centers isn't just about answering questions—it's about using every interaction as an opportunity to create measurable business value.

THE BOTTOM LINE:

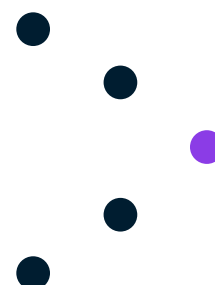
A Smarter, More Profitable Contact Center

Conversational Intelligence isn't just a better way to handle customer conversations—it's the key to turning them into business results. It helps organizations improve every stage of the customer experience while driving sustainable ROI in the contact center. Brands that embrace this shift will see lower costs, improved customer satisfaction, and a more empowered workforce that can focus on delivering real value instead of repeatedly addressing preventable issues.

It's Time to Play Offense

If your contact center is still drowning in repeat calls, it's time to stop playing defence. Conversational Intelligence **transforms insights into proactive action—reducing costs while improving the customer experience**. Let's talk about how this approach can redefine your strategy today.

Visit InMoment.com today to get started!



If you'd like to discuss your unique requirements and our experience in your industry, we'd be delighted to assist.

Contact us →

About InMoment

InMoment is the leader in improving experiences and is the highest recommended CX platform and services company in the world. It is renowned for helping clients collect and connect customer experience data from everywhere—from surveys and social reviews, to conversational chat logs and transcripts. As the pace setters in AI and text analytics, its over 3,000 clients activate and understand every byte of structured and unstructured data, breaking down data and team silos to take the smartest actions. This award-winning technology combined with in-house industry experts empower brands to gain ROI from their CX programs in half the time as its competitors. Unlock the true potential of every piece of customer data with InMoment.

To request a demo please visit [this link](#)

