

What Contact Centres Are Doing Right Now

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How Do You Compare?

A Call Centre Helper Research Paper

(2022 Edition)

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What We Did

We surveyed Call Centre Helper readers throughout July and August 2022, to uncover the latest and exciting contact centre insights from our annual survey.

2022 has seen the world attempt to return to the new normal and continue to adapt to the ongoing impact of the past two years.

Contact centres across the industry are continuing to develop their working models in the era of the 'Great Resignation', as well as managing new people, processes, and technology challenges, not to mention those old issues that stubbornly persist.

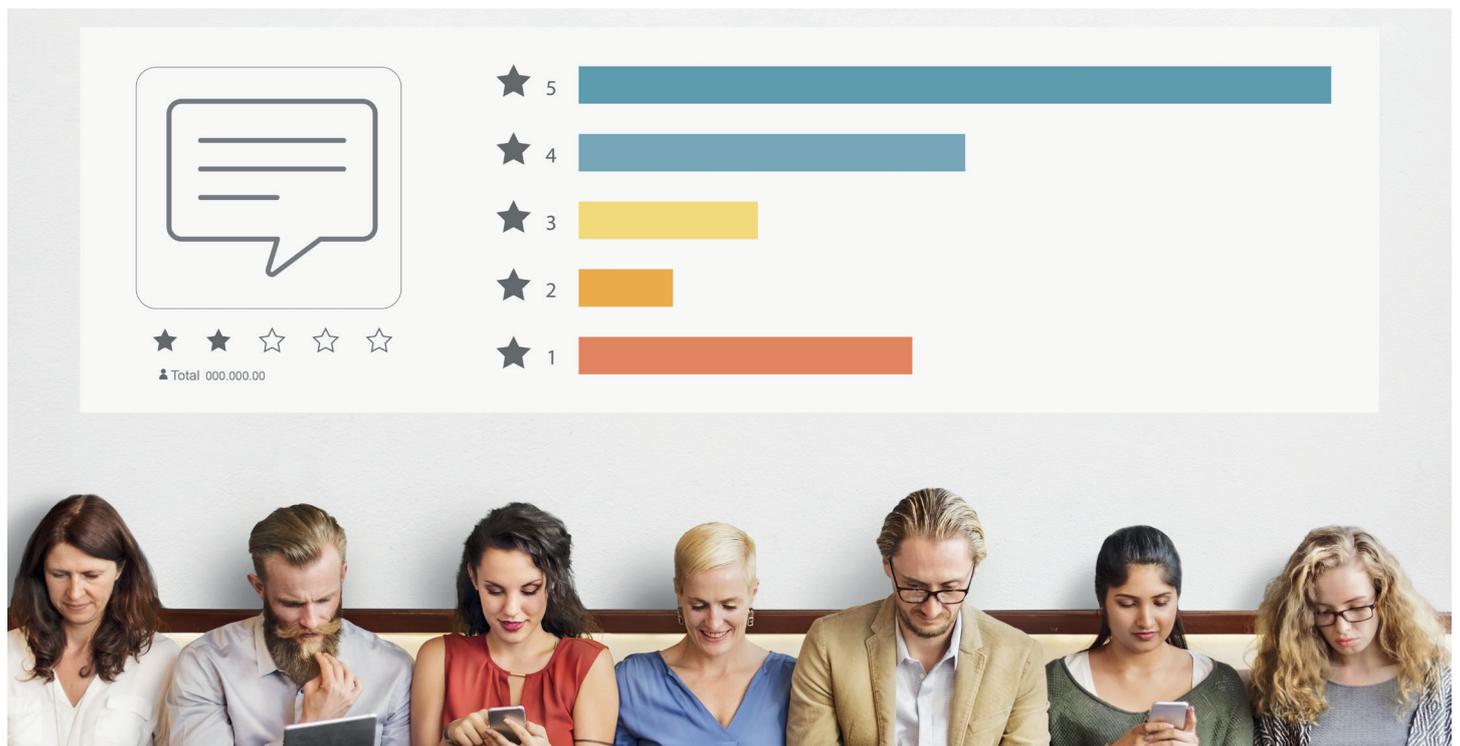
Looking to improve customer service, employee experience and business results, contact centre leaders have continued to rise to the test.

With this in mind, we wanted to find out what contact centres are doing right now.

With 294 contact centre professionals taking part, we are delighted to share the results with you.

We have collected and compared their answers to previous years, as well as introduced a few new, on-trend questions, to enable us to highlight what contact centres across the globe are focusing on.

Run in partnership with NICE, this survey focuses on critical contact centre areas such as technology, metrics, planning and customer feedback.



Executive Summary

Homeworking Arrangements Continue to be Popular

One of the biggest shake-ups to the industry back in 2020 was the sudden shift to working from home. It's interesting to see that this continues to be a popular choice for contact centre workers – highlighted by just 18.4% saying they don't have any home workers. The report findings also captured the breakdown of hybrid working arrangements – with intriguing results across the board. Alongside this, shift patterns are changing, with part-time shifts proving increasingly popular with both agents and employers.

Somewhat unsurprisingly, these changes have had a knock-on effect on other operational decisions in the contact centre. For example, buddying advisors is at its lowest point. Why? It's possible that demand is lower due to lessons being learnt – through necessity – in the height of the pandemic, which helped to improve employee training and support processes (without the need to be sitting next to a 'buddy').

Social Events and Spot Prizes Are Back in the Office

Yet, as the findings showed, a significant number of customer service professionals have now also returned to the contact centre, which has had an impact on the incentives in play. There has been a notable increase in social events, alongside a rise in the use of spot prizes and motivational games – which are far easier to manage in an office setting.

Managers Are Changing Their Approach to Metrics and Efficiency Gains

Beyond this, contact centre managers have clearly been taking a long hard look at their mix of metrics in play and subsequently changing their priorities, as demonstrated in the shifting views on the use of customer effort, Average Handling Time (AHT), First Contact Resolution (FCR) and customer complaint volumes.

Alongside this, there have been notable changes in technology adoption and efficiency drivers – with a slight trend emerging for contact centres to improve and reduce call queues, as well as provide more avenues for customers to find answers to common queries.

This, coupled with a rise in the popularity of social media engagement, supports the theory that contact centres were prioritizing other methods of customer interaction over the last two years but have now started to rebuild their social media operating model.

Self-Service is on the Rise – But Customers Still Prefer Voice

The findings also highlighted the continued rise of self-service, which allows contact centres to simultaneously improve customer experience by giving customers what they want, when they want it – through increases in the use of interactive voice responses (IVRs) and chatbots.

Yet customers largely still want to talk to customer service professionals when they have a problem – with voice remaining the most popular channel of choice. Although this trend could simply demonstrate that customers can't find their answers or resolve their queries in other ways, and this may change over time.

What's happening in your contact centre?

Are these trends emerging across your teams, or are you feeling behind the times? Take a look at the full report to find out how you compare.

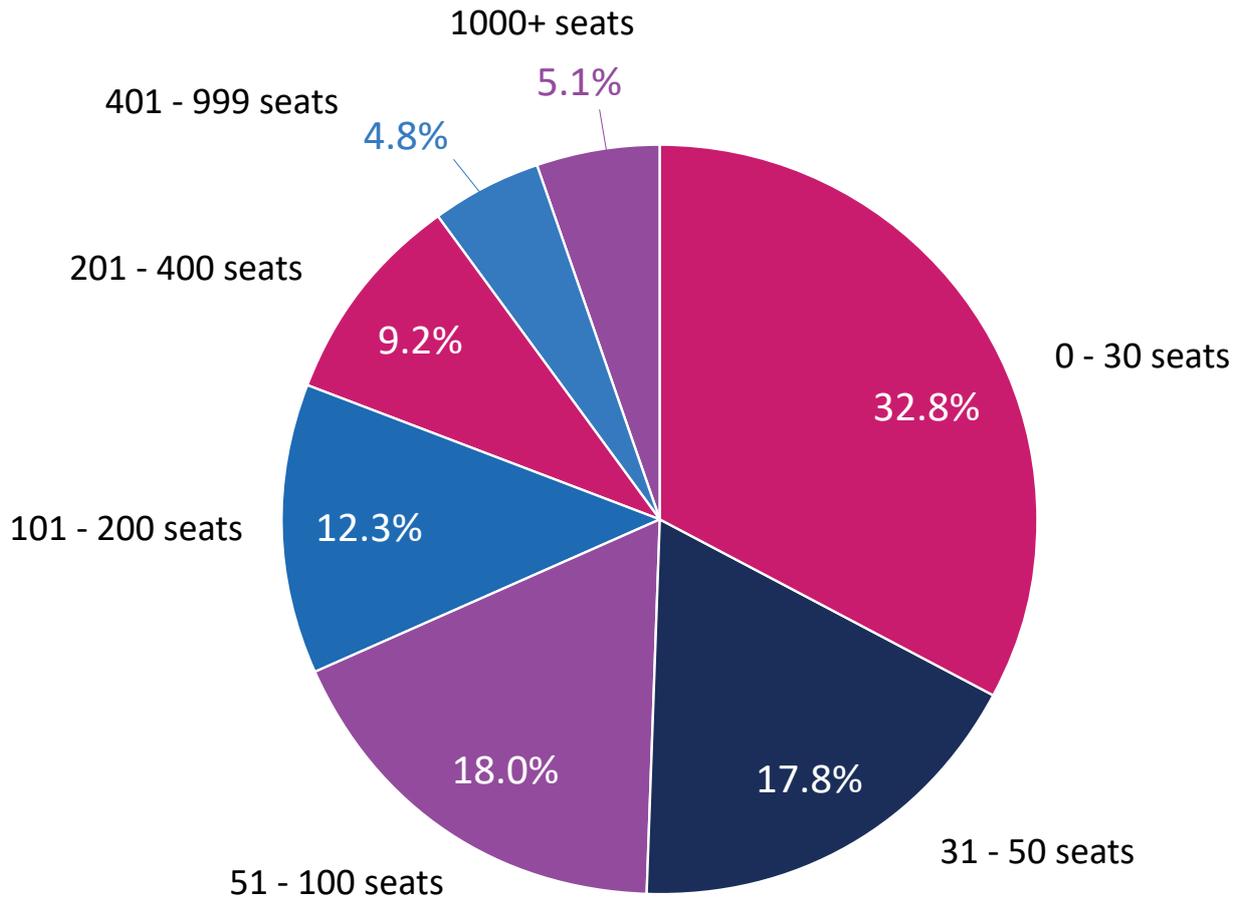


How Does Your Contact Centre Compare?

1. What Is the Size of Your Contact Centre?

Participants in this year's survey came from 294 contact centres, of all different shapes and sizes, ranging from 0-30 seats to 1,000+.

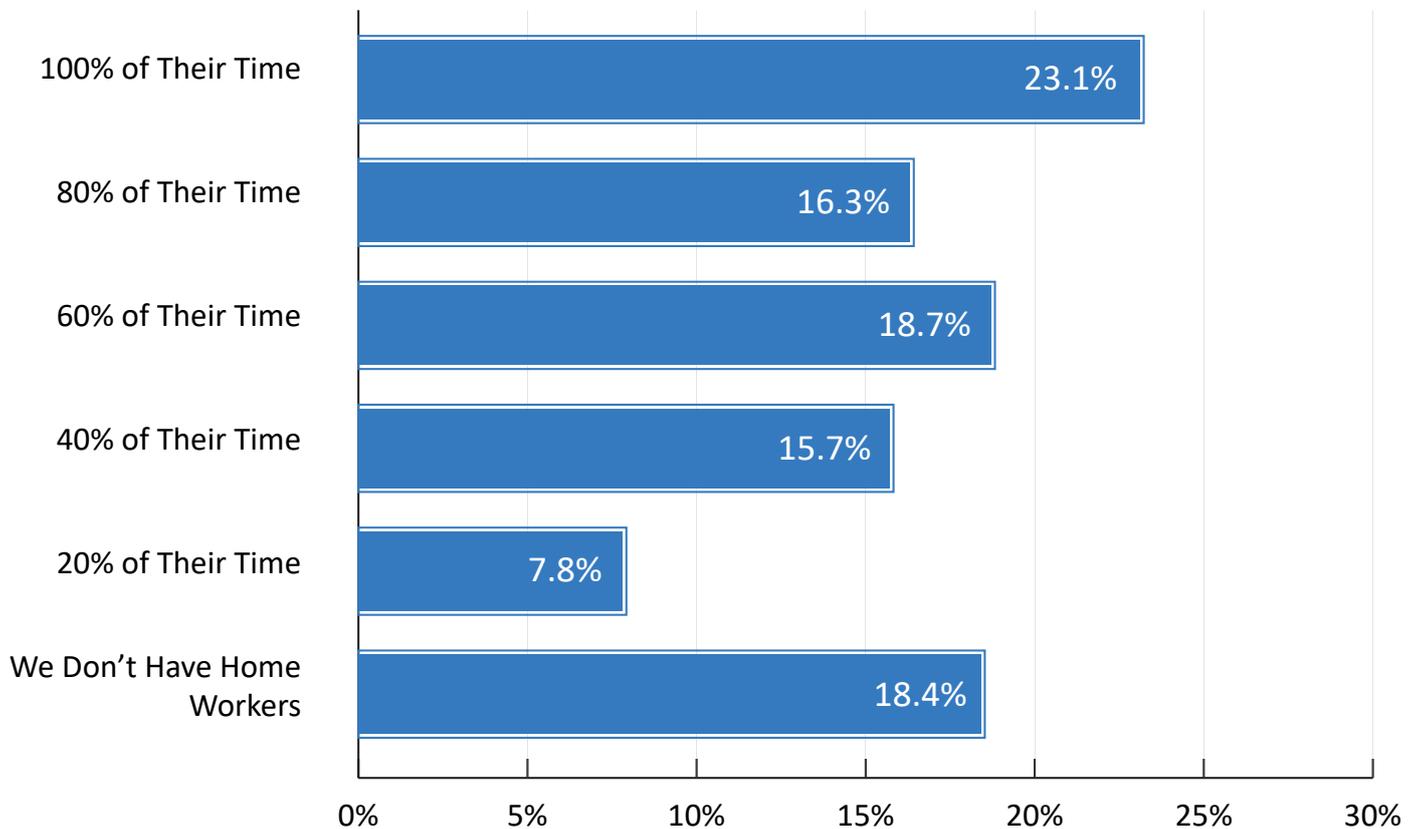
What Is the Size of Your Contact Centre?



To better inform the results shared in this report, the chart above highlights the different sizes of the contact centres that contributed to our survey.

2. On Average, How Often Do Your Home Workers Work From Home?

On Average, How Often Do Your Home Workers Work From Home?



Working From Home Remains Popular

With the push for remote working in 2020, which continued for much of 2021, both employees and contact centre management have seen the benefits and challenges of remote working.

Our results show home working remains a popular choice, with 81.6% of contact centres continuing to allow employees to work from home at least some of the time.

58.1% of contact centres have people working from home for over 60% of the week, and 23.1% allow their home workers to work from home 100% of the time.

When compared to just 18.4% of contact centres who said they don't have home workers, remote working may be here to stay.

3. What Initiatives Do You Currently Have in the Contact Centre?

Multiskilling, Advisor Empowerment and Self-Help Customer Videos

With the return to the office, there is a notable decrease in contact centres running initiatives focused on advisor empowerment. In the last 12 months this has reduced by 14.2%, from 51.4% in 2021 to 44.1%, closer to the pre-pandemic figures of 48.8% in 2018 and 47.9% in 2019.

There is also a slight reduction in the number of contact centres offering self-help customer videos and multiskilling agents. The use of self-help customer videos has reduced by 3.4% to 31.0% and contact centres multiskilling agents has decreased by 1% to 86.7%.

This could be due to a multitude of factors. However, most likely is because the frantic time for contact centres is coming to an end, and they are re-evaluating their priorities, with employees returning to the office and developing new strategic plans from the lessons learned in the past two years.

What Initiatives Do You Currently Have in the Contact Centre?

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Multiskilling Agents	80.4%	84.5%	83.9%	81.7%	87.6%	86.7%
Unpaid Leave	70.8%	70.7%	65.5%	68.4%	71.8%	70.9%
Knowledge Empowerment	66.8%	56.6%	63.1%	63.6%	63.3%	64.3%
Social Events	74.0%	66.6%	64.0%	50.8%	47.0%	56.9%
Buddying Advisors	70.9%	60.0%	58.1%	60.6%	62.9%	54.9%
Flexible Shifts	62.5%	51.8%	58.2%	53.6%	56.3%	49.3%
Spot Prizes	45.4%	44.6%	38.9%	37.4%	32.1%	44.5%
Advisor Empowerment	61.0%	48.8%	47.9%	53.0%	51.4%	44.1%
Annualised Hours / Banked Hours	37.7%	36.0%	35.1%	39.9%	40.9%	37.8%
Motivational Games	44.7%	38.5%	30.9%	29.0%	23.6%	33.3%
Personalised Call Routing	36.4%	30.4%	30.3%	30.2%	32.8%	33.2%
Self-Help Customer Videos	23.6%	24.3%	30.9%	27.5%	32.1%	31.0%
Sales Commission	30.7%	27.0%	28.9%	27.9%	23.9%	24.1%

A Change in Focus on Work-Life Balance

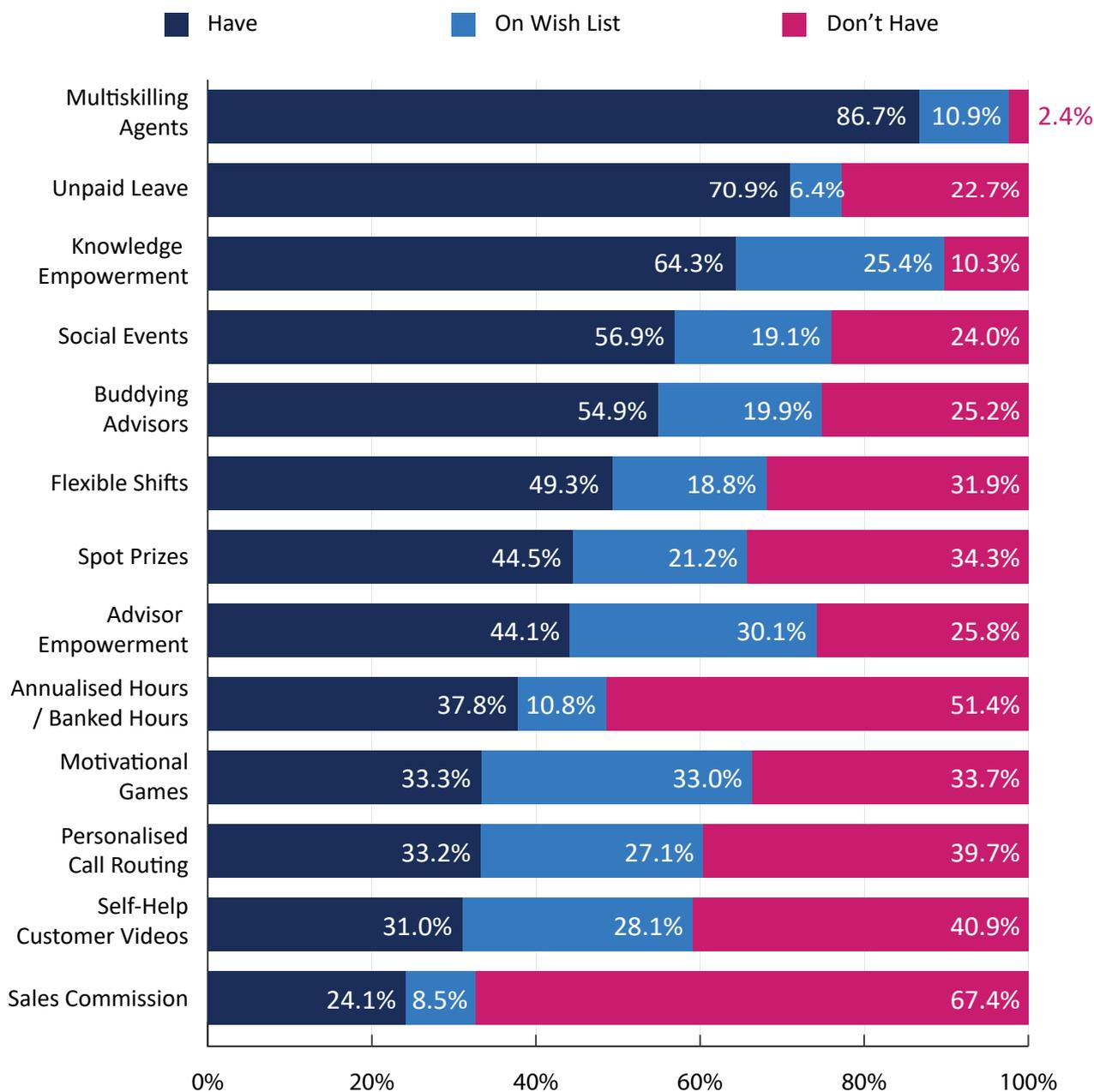
Interestingly, the use of annualized hours decreased by 7.6% to 37.8%, flexible shifts reduced by 12.4% to 49.3%, and unpaid leave also crept down by 1.2% to 70.9%.

Last year, contact centres seemed to be shifting their approach to providing advisors with a better work-life balance.

This year's results suggest that these initiatives are reducing in popularity, potentially due to employees returning to the office. Alternatively, these initiatives aimed at improving work-life balance are increasingly being catered for in their workforce management and shift strategies.

Another equally possible scenario is that contact centres are returning to the basic principles of direct rewards to combat employee resignation and improve engagement. This is supported by the 38.6% and 41.1% jump in the use of spot prizes and motivational games, respectively, as well as the slight increase in the use of sales commission.

What Initiatives Do You Currently Have in the Contact Centre?



Prizes and Games on the Rise

Last year the use of spot prizes and motivational games reached an all-time low, with only 23.6% of contact centres playing motivational games and just 32.1% awarding prizes.

This year these have swiftly come back into popularity, with 44.5% of contact centres now awarding spot prizes and 33.3% playing motivational games.

Although these aren't quite at their 2015 figures of 52.8% and 47.1%, respectively, the significant rise from last year could suggest a shift in how contact centres are inspiring performance improvements and engaging with staff.

Alternatively, the increase in the number of contact centres offering these incentives could be a result of the return to the office, which makes providing spot prizes and playing motivational games far easier than with a remote workforce.

Buddying Down but Social Events Up

Contact centres appear to be taking advantage of the opportunity for social events, which unsurprisingly dropped during 2020 and 2021, with 56.9% of contact centres now offering social events, up 21.0% from 47.0% (its lowest point in the last seven years).

With staff engagement and motivation necessary to retain staff, making the working environment appealing appears to be a focus point for contact centres.

Oddly, buddying advisors is at its lowest point, with just 54.9% of contact centres offering this initiative. With the return to the office, we expected to see this rise again in line with the pre-lockdown numbers, instead it has dropped by 12.7%.

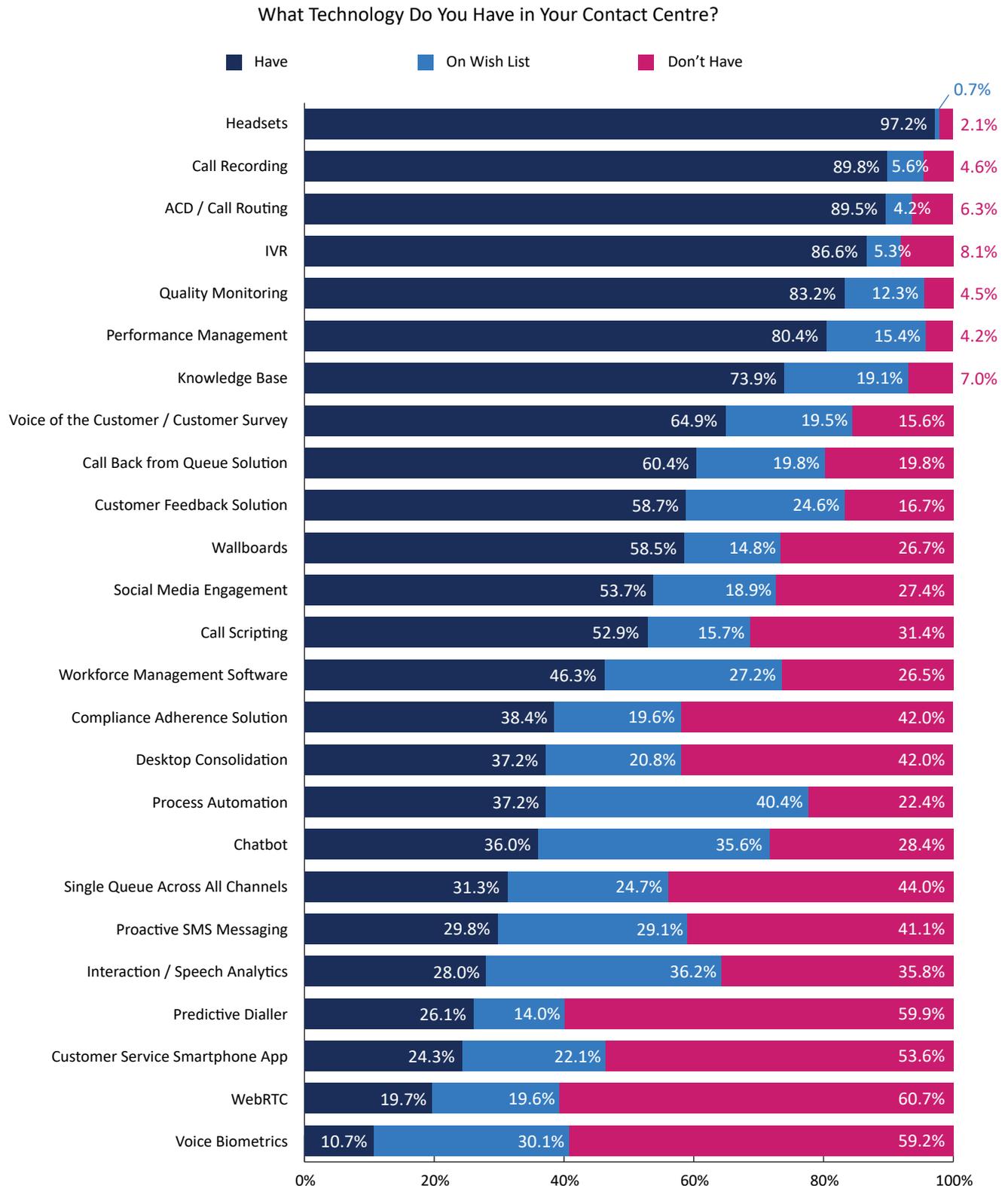
It is possible that contact centres have used the lessons learned from the pandemic to improve employee training and support processes, as well as implement technological solutions to enhance the customer journey, making buddying a less appealing option.



4. What Technology Do You Have in Your Contact Centre?

Steps Being Taken to Improve Call Queues

The results appear to show a slight trend amongst contact centres to improve and reduce call queues, as well as provide more avenues for customers to find answers to common queries.



The results show that contact centres having a single queue across all channels increased by 1.6% to 31.3%.

These results could suggest that the contact centres are testing the viability of single queues, and multiskilled agents, in an attempt to make a positive impact on call wait times and customer experience.

The most significant increase is seen in solutions that allow a call-back from the queue, which has jumped by 26.9% from 47.6% in 2021 to 60.4%, its highest point in six years, and 19.8% of contact centres see this as something they want for the future.

What Technology Do You Have in Your Contact Centre?

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Headsets	97.9%	98.8%	98.4%	96.1%	97.7%	97.2%
ACD / Call Routing	90.1%	90.9%	89.7%	88.5%	92.5%	89.5%
Call Recording	87.5%	91.4%	90.3%	89.0%	90.7%	89.8%
Quality Monitoring	83.9%	80.2%	87.0%	83.7%	84.6%	83.2%
Performance Management						80.4%
IVR	81.6%	86.1%	82.7%	80.2%	81.5%	86.6%
Knowledge Base	75.6%	60.5%	70.5%	71.2%	66.2%	73.9%
VoC / Customer Survey	51.5%	48.4%	59.1%	62.5%	64.1%	64.9%
Wallboards	72.9%	74.7%	63.0%	59.6%	60.0%	58.5%
Customer Feedback Solution	66.6%	58.5%	61.9%	57.3%	59.0%	58.7%
Social Media Engagement	52.9%	52.7%	57.4%	53.2%	50.7%	53.7%
Call Scripting	52.3%	42.5%	51.0%	54.5%	48.1%	52.9%
Call Back from Queue Solution	51.1%	41.1%	40.2%	49.0%	47.6%	60.4%
Workforce Management Software	36.9%	37.2%	49.0%	48.4%	44.8%	46.3%
Process Automation	39.1%	34.6%	31.1%	36.9%	38.5%	37.2%
Desktop Consolidation	33.2%	26.3%	34.7%	40.3%	36.2%	37.2%
Chatbot	9.9%	30.7%	14.0%	30.8%	34.3%	36.0%
Proactive SMS Messaging	35.5%	28.0%	29.3%	32.7%	30.8%	29.8%
Single Queue across All Channels	32.0%	30.7%	26.3%	25.3%	30.8%	31.3%
Customer Service Smartphone App	27.9%	20.1%	30.5%	28.7%	28.4%	24.3%
Interaction / Speech Analytics	13.4%	13.2%	15.9%	21.4%	24.0%	28.0%
Predictive Dialler	22.3%	22.9%	24.6%	23.9%	19.6%	26.1%
WebRTC	13.2%	36.4%	12.8%	16.1%	19.3%	19.7%
Voice Biometrics	5.0%	23.6%	5.0%	7.8%	7.7%	10.7%
Compliance Adherence Solution	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	38.4%

Last year social media engagement fell by 4.7% to 50.7% as contact centres prioritized other critical channels. This year it rose by 5.9% to 53.7%, slightly higher than the 2020 levels of 53.2%, but still 6.4% lower than 2019's 57.4%.

The rise of social media engagement supports the theory that contact centres were prioritizing other methods of customer interaction over the last two years but have now started to once again build their social media operating model.

The Continued Rise of Self-Service

The last few years have highlighted the need for contact centres to allow customers to self-serve where possible. By reducing the volume of customer contacts for simple enquiries by directing customers to self-service options, contact centres can free up agents to handle more complex queries. This allows them to simultaneously improve customer experience by giving customers what they want, when they want it.

Contact centres using interactive voice responses (IVRs) has risen from 81.5% in 2021 to 86.6%, the highest point in the last seven years.

Continuing this trend, the use of chatbots has increased by 5% to 36.0%, and they remain a popular technology on the wish list of contact centres, with 35.6% of respondents saying this is something they would like.

Similarly, the use of knowledge bases has also seen a 10.4% increase from their 2021 levels of 66.2%. With 73.9% of contact centres now having knowledge base technology in place, they have the capabilities to give both customers and agents access to answers at the press of a button, and the ability to reduce contact volumes and average handling time and improve CX.

Customer Analytics on the Rise

64.9% of contact centres have now invested in Voice of the Customer (VoC) software, increasing by 1.24% from 64.1% in 2021. This growth may not be much, but it continues the annual increase we have seen since 2018.

Collecting customer data is a growing trend across the contact centre industry as the use of interaction and speech analytics has risen by 16.7% to 28.0% in the last year. Since 2017 this is a 108.9% increase in the number of contact centres using this technology, and we expect it to remain a popular choice amongst contact centres.

Contact Centres Look to Employees

Technology that supports and manages employees has seen a rise this year, with those using call scripting rising 10% to 52.9%, and the use of predictive diallers now standing at 26.1% jumping 33.2% from 19.6% last year.

This rise in the use of predictive diallers follows the pattern of growth we saw between 2017 and 2019, suggesting the drop in the last two years was probably a result of the pandemic.

Additionally, 46.3% of contact centres are using workforce management software, with a further 27.2% wanting it for the future. This 3.3% increase from last year could reflect contact centres looking to make it easy to manage their staff regardless of their location.

In addition, the use of desktop consolidation has risen 2.5% to 37.2%, and although the number of contact centres using process automation has dropped 3.4% to 37.2%, over 40% of respondents stated it was on their technology wish list.

As people management becomes more complex, it makes sense that contact centres have implemented solutions that improve agent productivity and employee experience and are looking at ones that will develop this further in the future.

5. What Is Your Mix of Contact Channels?

Voice Remains the Channel of Choice

67.5% of contact centre interactions are taking place over the phone, with voice remaining the most popular channel of choice.

Despite this, inbound voice has reduced by 2.4% to 53.5% in the last year, whilst outbound voice has risen to 14% (the same percentage as 2016).

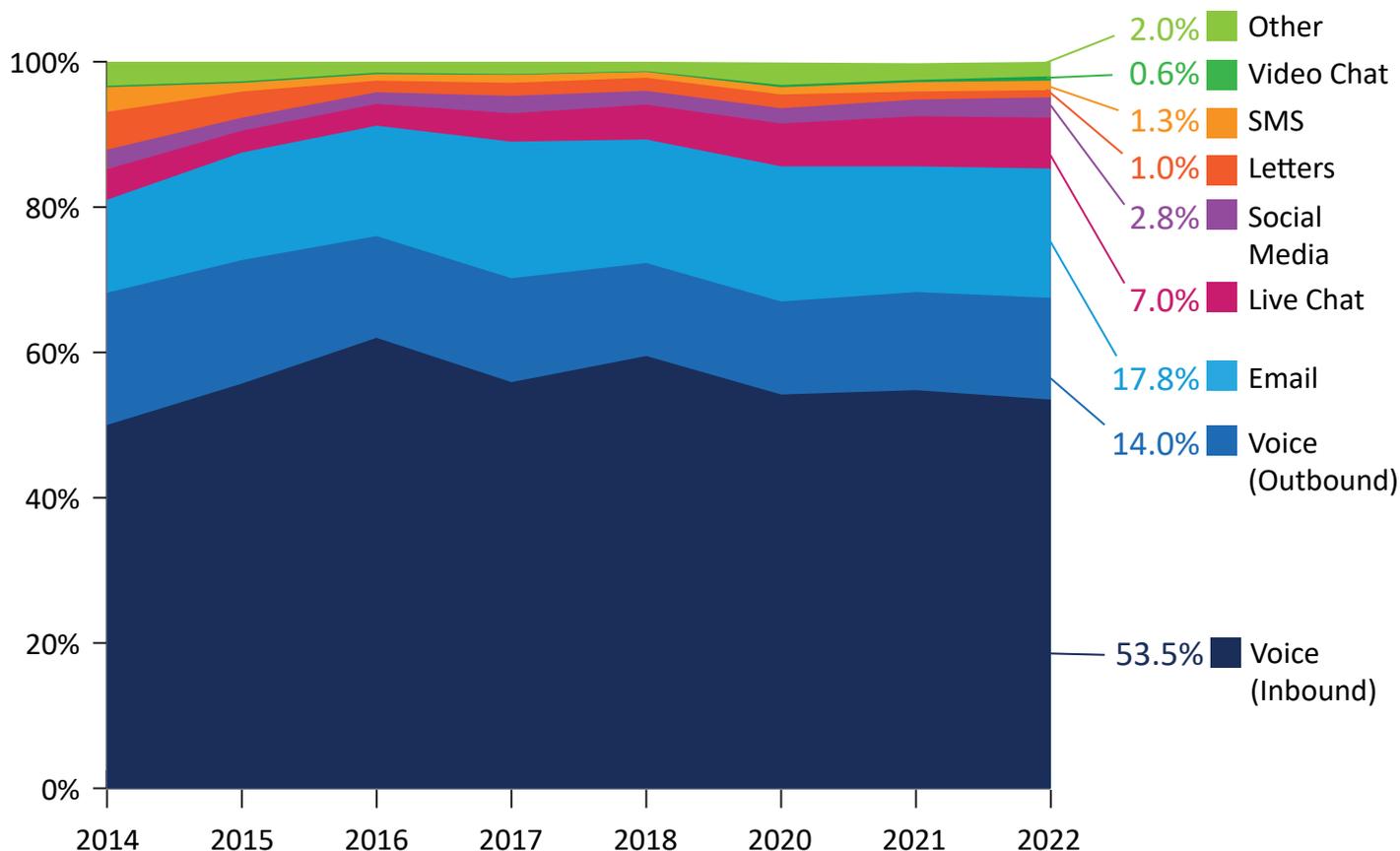
The reduction in inbound interactions could be due to a multitude of factors, such as improved resolution on other channels as well as channel availability.

Meanwhile, the increase in outbound interactions could result from agents calling customers back if they are unable to resolve their enquiries on other channels or arise from call-back processes in the queue.

It is important to note that there is no guarantee that the volume of voice interactions demonstrates a preference for this channel, as if a customer can't find their answers or resolve their queries in other ways, they will pick up the phone.

Over time, we would expect the volume of voice interactions to reduce as other channels become more popular and customers find it easier to get their resolutions, but it is worth keeping an eye on how customers are interacting with businesses.

What Is Your Mix of Contact Channels?



Email Could Be Bouncing Back

Last year email fell by 7%, but this year its use in contact centres has risen by 2.9% to 17.8%.

This suggests that last year may have been a temporary blip as a result of global conditions. However, only time will tell if email continues to grow, as other channels are increasing in use.

What Is Your Mix of Contact Channels?

	2016	2017	2018	2020	2021	2022
Voice (Inbound)	62.0%	55.9%	59.5%	54.2%	54.8%	53.5%
Voice (Outbound)	14.0%	14.3%	12.8%	12.8%	13.5%	14.0%
Email	15.2%	18.8%	17.0%	18.6%	17.3%	17.8%
Live Chat	3.0%	3.9%	4.8%	5.9%	6.9%	7.0%
Social Media	1.6%	2.4%	1.9%	2.1%	2.3%	2.8%
Letters	1.6%	1.8%	1.8%	1.9%	1.1%	1.0%
SMS	0.9%	1.1%	0.8%	1.0%	1.3%	1.3%
Video Chat	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.3%	0.3%	0.6%
Other	1.5%	1.7%	1.3%	3.1%	2.3%	2.0%

Social Media, Video Chat and Live Chat Gradually Grow

As contact centres improve their channel experience, we have seen a change in what customers are using for their interactions.

The use of social media has risen 21.7% to 2.8%, continuing the steady growth we have seen since 2018.

Similarly, live chat has continued to rise steadily in popularity, increasing just 1.4% in the last year, but an incredible 133.3% since 2015.

Video chat has also risen 100% to 0.6% of contact centre interactions this year, which is the most significant growth we have seen in the channel for the last eight years.

The Decline of Letters Continues

Only 1% of contact centre interactions reportedly took place by letter this year. This is a drop of 9.1% from last year, and a continuation of the reduction in letter correspondence, which has fallen 80.8% since 2014.

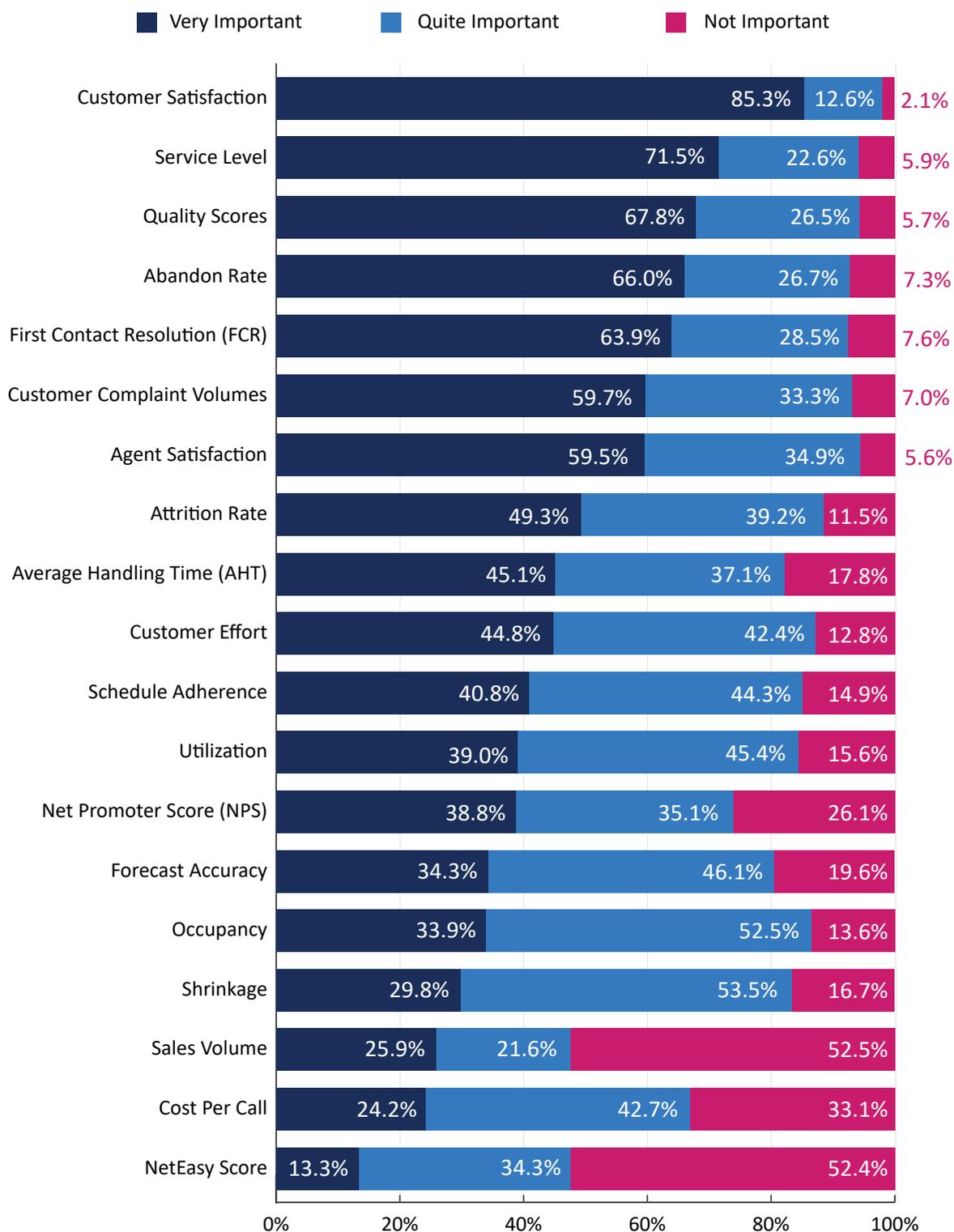
This could be due to new channel options that allow for immediate resolutions, changing customer demographics, or cost-reduction exercises as more correspondence is moved digitally.

6. What Are the Most Important Contact Centre Metrics?

Contact Centres Are Changing Their Priorities

This year our survey results seem to suggest that contact centres are changing which metrics they feel are most important.

What Are the Most Important Contact Centre Metrics?



The popularity of metrics to measure customer effort has dropped by 19.6%, and now only 44.8% of respondents believe it is “very important”.

This is more in line with the results from 2018 to 2020, and a stark difference from last year’s jump to 55.7%. However, despite the drop in opinion that it is “very important”, just 12.8% said it was “not important”.

Similarly, the number of contact centres that consider Average Handling Time (AHT), First Contact Resolution (FCR), and customer complaint volumes “very important” has also decreased by 5.3%, 7.9%, and 7.9% respectively since last year.

If we combine the percentages of contact centres that rated these metrics as “very important” or “quite important”, we can conclude that they remain significant, but reflect a change in priorities.

For example, 82.2% of respondents consider AHT to be “very important” or “quite important”, 92.4% for FCR, and 93.0% for customer complaint volumes.

What Are the Most Important Contact Centre Metrics?

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Customer Satisfaction	95.7%	93.1%	89.2%	84.8%	84.7%	85.3%
Service Level	62.7%	61.4%	65.6%	72.0%	73.2%	71.5%
First Contact Resolution (FCR)	68.0%	69.8%	68.8%	63.8%	69.4%	63.9%
Quality Scores	67.5%	63.9%	65.1%	64.5%	68.1%	67.8%
Customer Complaint Volumes	N/A	N/A	N/A	65.7%	64.8%	59.7%
Abandon Rate	N/A	N/A	62.0%	59.1%	63.9%	66.0%
Agent Satisfaction	62.0%	63.1%	67.1%	66.9%	60.0%	59.5%
Customer Effort	53.6%	48.9%	47.5%	48.2%	55.7%	44.8%
Average Handling Time (AHT)	33.2%	31.9%	44.0%	44.2%	47.6%	45.1%
Attrition Rate	N/A	N/A	49.8%	46.6%	45.7%	49.3%
Schedule Adherence	47.6%	40.2%	48.6%	43.1%	42.4%	40.8%
Net Promoter Score (NPS)	36.6%	32.8%	36.6%	39.8%	41.7%	38.8%
Utilization	N/A	N/A	44.1%	39.5%	40.8%	39.0%
Occupancy	N/A	N/A	N/A	35.6%	36.4%	33.9%
Shrinkage	30.5%	27.3%	35.7%	35.1%	36.2%	29.8%
Forecast Accuracy	36.2%	37.1%	40.3%	33.9%	32.5%	34.3%
Sales Volume	35.1%	27.2%	27.8%	32.2%	27.6%	25.9%
Cost Per Call	N/A	N/A	31.0%	27.3%	24.5%	24.2%
NetEasy Score	21.7%	19.5%	14.8%	14.0%	10.3%	13.3%

(These are the percentages of survey participants that believed each metric to be “very important” year-on-year)

Focus Moves to Attrition Rates

59.5% of contact centre professionals rated agent satisfaction as “very important”, and only 5.6% claimed it was “not important”.

With 94.4% seeing it as important in one form or another, it remains a significant metric. However, with the staffing and recruitment problems facing contact centres, we expected an increase back to at least the 2020 levels of 66.9%.

Interestingly, the percentage who see attrition rate as a “very important” metric has risen 7.9% to 49.3% from 45.7%. This suggests that contact centres are viewing this as a vital metric, despite reducing the significance of agent satisfaction.

Previously Important Metrics Drop in Popularity

This year’s results do appear to show a change in contact centre perspective on previously “very important” metrics, especially those aimed at staffing and predictions.

Although the reduction in the importance of metrics for occupancy, utilization, schedule adherence, shrinkage and forecast accuracy from last year is difficult to explain, a possible reason is that increased attrition and staffing issues are making these metrics less accurate and harder to predict.



7. To Create Your Metric Scores, How Frequently Do You Ask Customers to Complete a Post-Contact Survey?

A Fifth of Contact Centres Don't Use Post-Contact Surveys

Our results show that 20.6% of contact centres don't use post-contact surveys, which is surprising, as knowing what customers feel about the service they receive and identifying areas for improvement is vital to business success.

To Create Your Metric Scores,
How Frequently Do You Ask Customers to Complete a Post-Contact Survey?



There are several possible reasons for this, but it is most likely that these contact centres are using other means to establish quality of service, so although the number is surprising, it doesn't necessarily mean these contact centres are not collecting insights on customer experience and quality of service.

Fingers on the Pulse

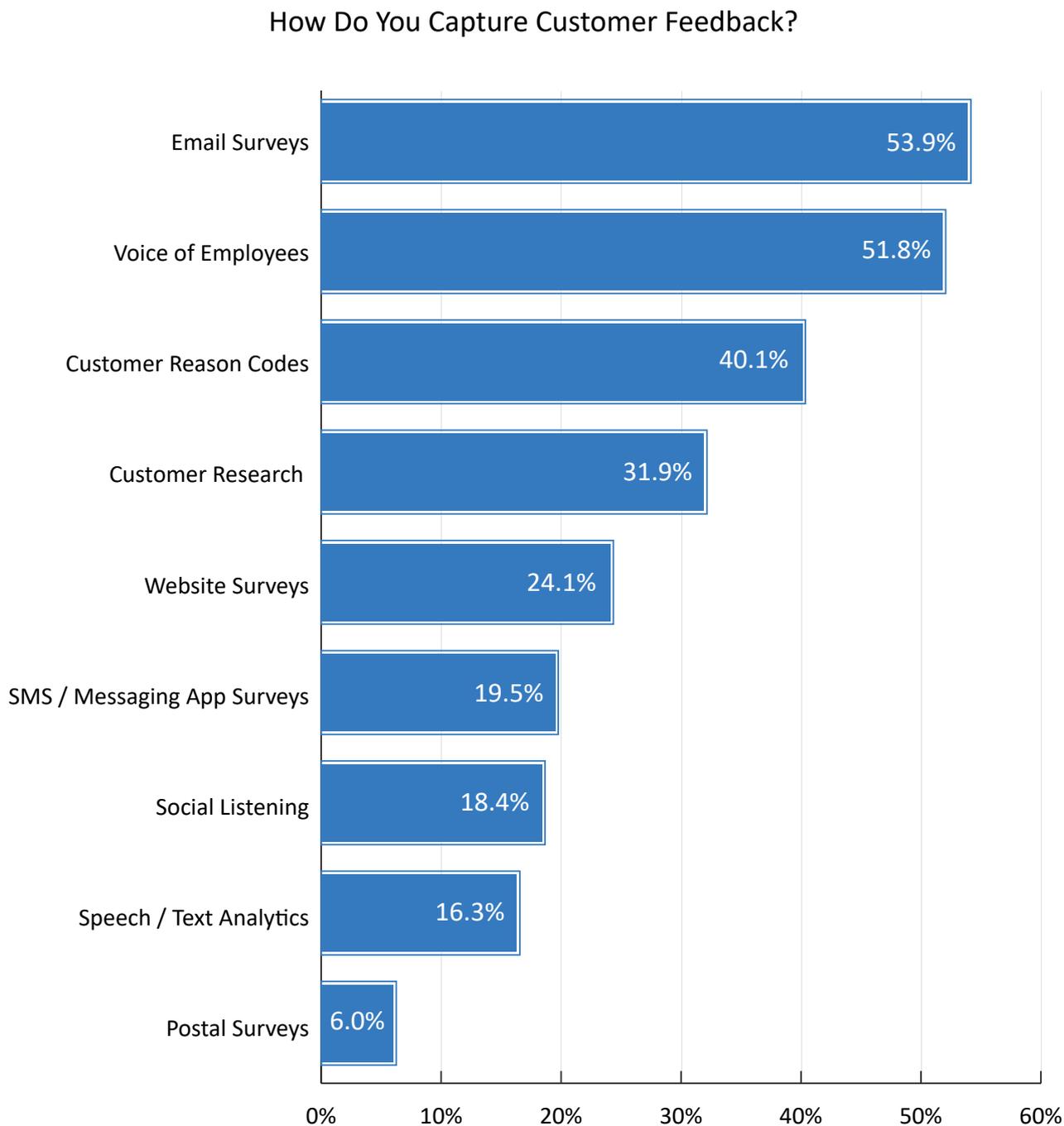
39.4% of contact centres are asking customers to complete a post-contact survey after every interaction.

By doing this these contact centres run the risk of over-surveying their customers, leading to survey fatigue.

8. How Do You Capture Customer Feedback?

Speech and Text Analytics Increase in Popularity

In a shocking turn of events, this year's results saw a reduction in all methods used to capture customer feedback except speech and text analytics.



This year the use of speech and text analytics to capture customer feedback rose 17.3% to 16.3%, just below 2020's figure of 16.6%. It is possible that this rise is a result of contact centres turning to smart solutions to monitor customer sentiment and gather feedback rather than continuing to use other resource-heavy alternatives.

How Do You Capture Customer Feedback?

	2019	2020	2021	2022
Email Surveys	N/A	N/A	54.3%	53.9%
Voice of Employees (VoE)	69.6%	58.8%	59.0%	51.8%
Customer Reason Codes	N/A	N/A	41.0%	40.1%
Customer Research	40.4%	42.2%	41.6%	31.9%
Website Surveys	N/A	N/A	35.3%	24.1%
SMS / Messaging App Surveys	N/A	N/A	20.2%	19.5%
Social Listening	35.7%	31.7%	22.5%	18.4%
Speech / Text Analytics	9.6%	16.6%	13.9%	16.3%
Postal Surveys	N/A	N/A	8.1%	6.0%
Transactional Surveys	73.5%	61.8%	N/A	N/A

Popularity Plummets Across the Board

The most significant decreases are in Voice of Employees (VoE), which dropped 12.2% from 59.0% in 2021 to 51.8% (decreasing 25.6% since 2019), customer research, which plummeted 23.3% to 31.9%, and website surveys, which have fallen 31.7% to 24.1%.

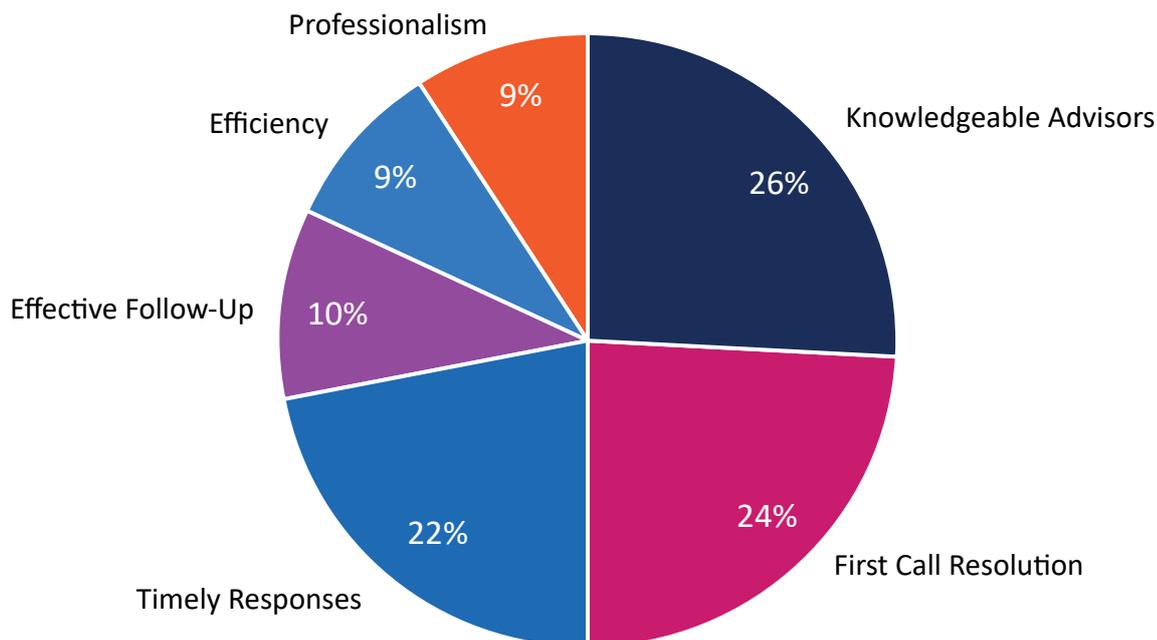
All three of these methods now stand at their lowest point for the last four years; however, there have also been less significant decreases for the other methods of capturing customer feedback.

9. On a Ranking of 1–6 (1 Being the Highest), What Do Your Customers Value Most?

Customers Want to Deal With Knowledgeable Advisors Who Can Solve Their Problems Quickly

Although the number of participants who selected knowledgeable advisors has dropped 17.8% from 31.6% last year to 26%, it remains the top choice among the responses.

What Do Your Customers Value Most?



(These are the percentages of survey participants that ranked these options as 1 for what "customers valued most")

In this year's ranking system it is also the top choice for the second and third rank of what customers want.

Once again, First Contact Resolution (FCR) came in second for what customers want, with 24% of our contact centre professionals selecting this option, down 18.4% from 29.4% last year.

This year has also seen the importance of response time almost double, rising 94.7% to 22% from 11.3%, suggesting that customers are now looking for speed when dealing with contact centres.

Combining the three percentages (Knowledgeable Advisors – 26%, FCR – 24%, Timely Responses – 22%), it can be concluded that 72% of contact centres believe that customers care most about dealing with advisors who have the knowledge to respond quickly with helpful and professional resolutions, ideally on the first contact.

What Do Your Customers Value Most?

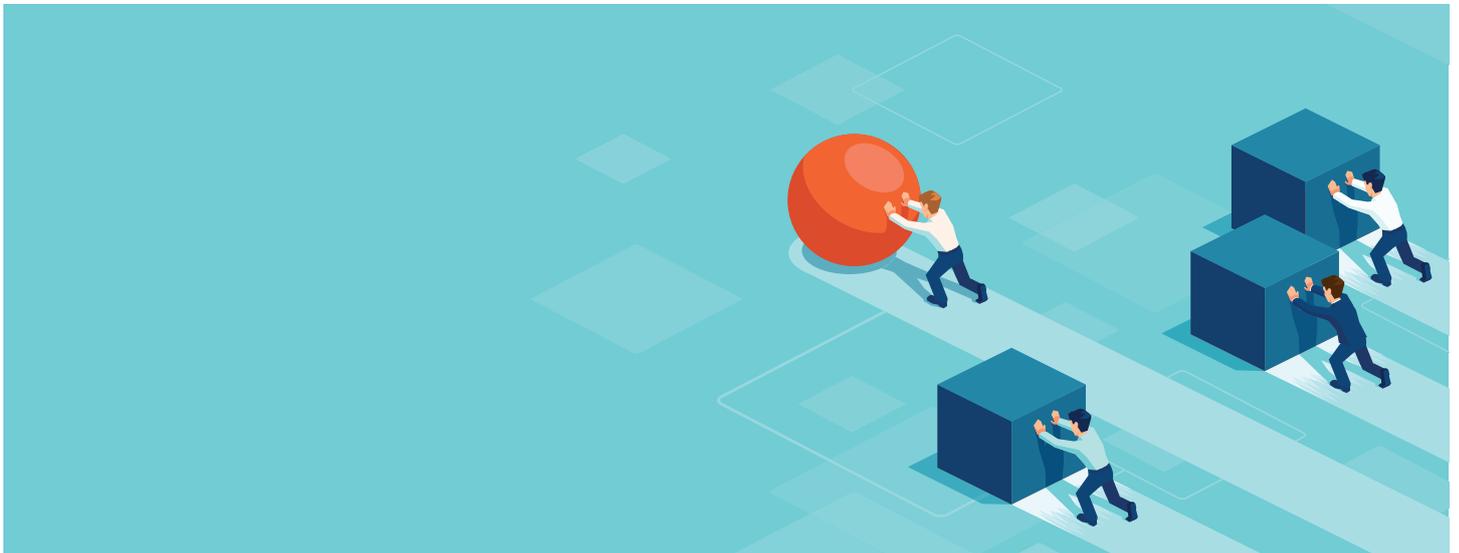
	2021	2022
Knowledgeable Advisors	32%	26%
First Call Resolution (FCR)	29%	24%
Timely Responses	11%	22%
Effective Follow-Up	9%	10%
Efficiency	13%	9%
Professionalism	6%	9%

It's Not All About Efficiency

The responses for professionalism have risen 45.1% to 9%, suggesting that customers want to have faith in the competence of the people they are dealing with.

Interestingly, looking at the responses from our contact centre professionals, efficiency has dropped 30.7% to 9%.

This could suggest that customers are prioritizing getting a resolution in general, rather than the efficiency with which they get one, a great sign that people are shifting their values.

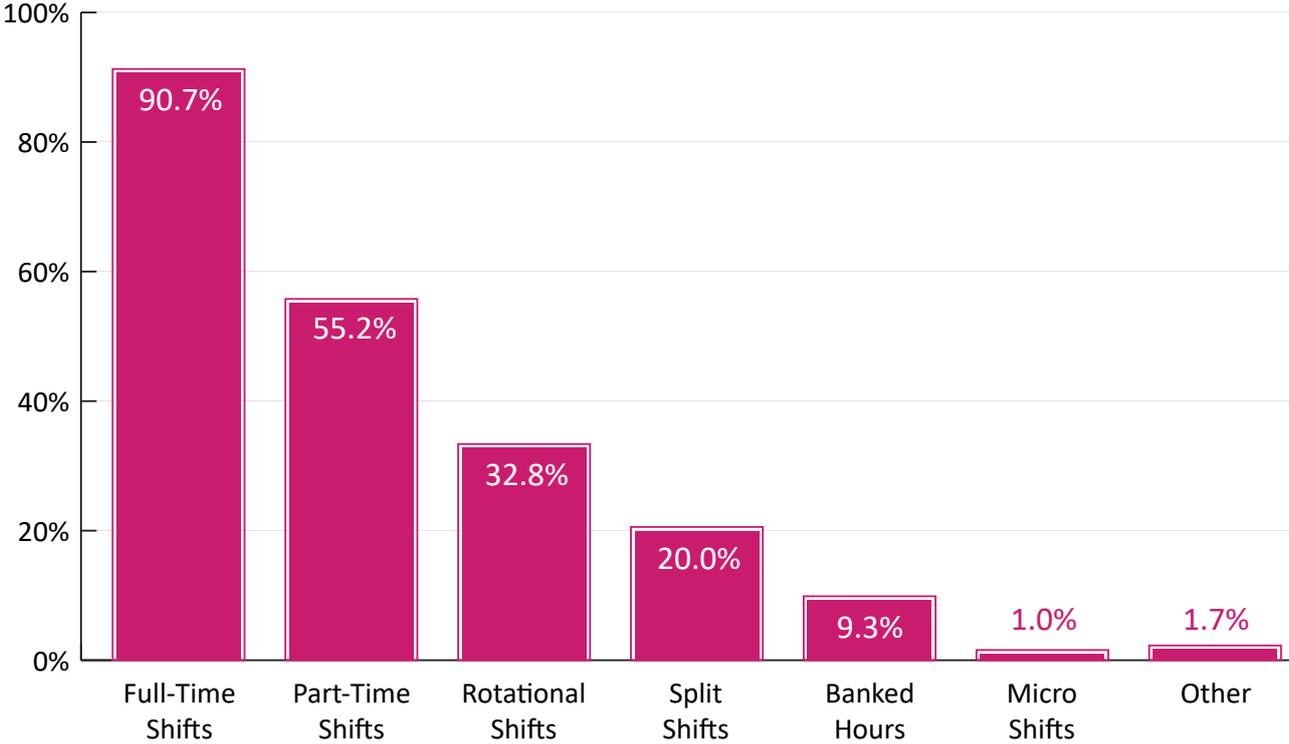


10. Which Shift Patterns Do You Use in Your Contact Centre?

Part-Time Shifts Increasing in Popularity

Since last year the number of contact centres using part-time shifts has increased by 17.5%.

Which Shift Patterns Do You Use in Your Contact Centre?



With 55.2% of contact centres now using these shifts, compared to just 47.0% last year, the rise in popularity suggests that these working patterns are proving popular with both agents and employers.

Which Shift Patterns Do You Use in Your Contact Centre?

	2021	2022
Full-Time Shifts	90.2%	90.7%
Part-Time Shifts	47.0%	55.2%
Rotational Shifts	36.0%	32.8%
Split-Shifts	19.5%	20.0%
Banked Hours	6.7%	9.3%
Micro-Shifts (less than one hour)	1.8%	1.0%
Other	4.3%	1.7%

Balancing Flexibility

Split-shifts have increased by 2.6%, with one in five contact centres offering this; however, the use of rotational shifts has decreased by 8.9% to 32.8%.

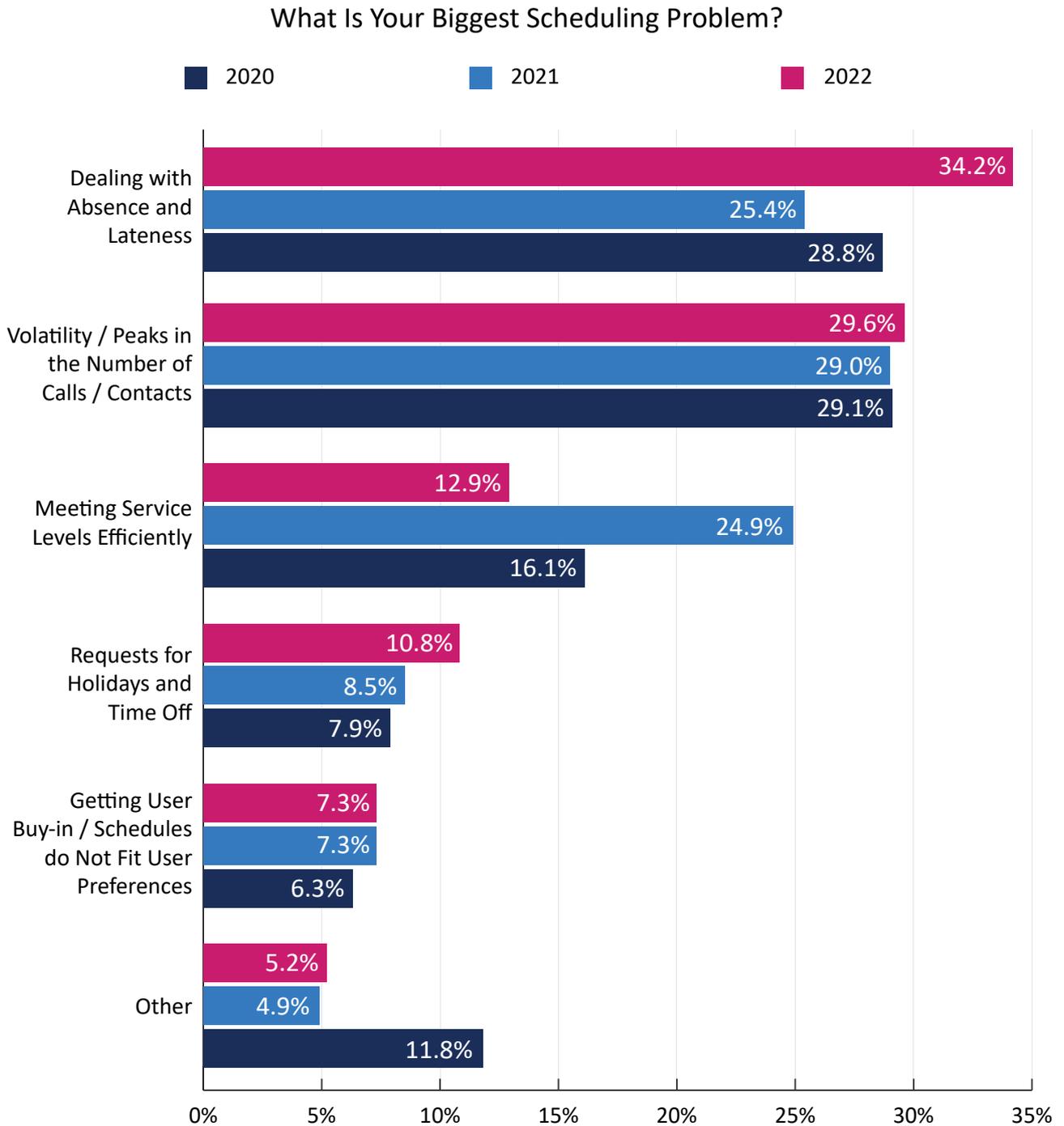
This suggests that contact centres are working to find a balance in the flexibility and security they offer to employees, whilst ensuring they have the correct number of staff in to meet business requirements.

Further supporting this is the 38.8% rise in banked hours and the 44.4% reduction in micro-shifts, coupled with the 60.5% decrease in contact centre professionals who selected "other".

11. What Is Your Biggest Scheduling Problem?

Absence and Lateness Is Causing Scheduling Chaos

Absence and lateness has jumped 34.7% to the number-one problem contact centres face when scheduling staff, pushing forecast volatility from the top spot.



With this now standing at 34.2% from 25.4% last year, over a third of contact centres see this as their biggest scheduling problem.

This jump is due to a number of factors but most likely is the impact of employee dissatisfaction and lack of engagement, and it could even be a warning sign that staff are looking to change jobs if their working environment is not what they are looking for.

On a potentially related note, 10.8% of contact centre professionals also stated that requests for holidays and time off is their top scheduling problem. This 27% increase could be a result of the end of restrictions, which has meant many social events have been rescheduled and people are once again able to go away, so it may not be indicative of a morale problem.

What Is Your Biggest Scheduling Problem?

	2020	2021	2022
Dealing with Absence and Lateness	28.8%	25.4%	34.2%
Volatility / Peaks in the Number of Calls / Contacts	29.1%	29.0%	29.6%
Meeting Service Levels Efficiently	16.1%	24.9%	12.9%
Requests for Holidays and Time Off	7.9%	8.5%	10.8%
Getting User Buy-in / Schedules do Not Fit User Preferences	6.3%	7.3%	7.3%
Other	11.8%	4.9%	5.2%

With 5.2% of contact centre professionals choosing “other”, their responses indicate the most common issues are related to attrition and recruitment challenges which have led to understaffing.

Contact Centres Have Risen to the Challenge

Contact centres appear to have made great strides in the last year, as problems with meeting service levels have dropped by 48.2% to 12.9%, and volatility has only increased by 2% from 29.0% to 29.6% in the last year.

As well as service delivery, contact centres also seem to be effectively getting user buy-in and user preference for schedules, as this has remained steady, with just 7.3% of contact centres citing this as their top scheduling problem.

Although this could be seen as a positive, the results do show that almost 63.8% of contact centres have put absence and lateness or volatility as their top scheduling problem.

With each of these having a knock-on effect on the others, contact centres need to focus on their employees to make sure they have the right staff, in at the right time, and that they treat them well.

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