

# What Contact Centres are Doing Right Now

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**helper**

A Call Centre Helper Research Paper

(2025 Edition)



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# A Word From Our Founder

It's no surprise that AI has stayed front and centre throughout 2025. What has changed, though, is the conversation around it. The fear and excitement is starting to settle into something calmer – a growing acceptance that this technology is here to stay.

Why? Well, for one thing, AI is no longer just a headline topic.

It's finding its way into the everyday fabric of contact centre life, with new tools and features.

And just as importantly, we're starting to hear real stories from early adopters – proof that when it's used well, AI really can make a difference.

Of course, that doesn't mean the journey is easy. Every contact centre is asking itself the same question: how do we get the balance right between human empathy and artificial intelligence? The "right" answer looks different depending on your sector, your customers, and the calls you handle.

And let's be honest – leaders aren't just juggling questions of technology. Budgets are tighter than ever, and teams are still being asked to deliver more with less.

That's why, once again this summer, we reached out to our Call Centre Helper readers around the world. We wanted to know: how are contact centres adapting, innovating, and pushing forward - in spite of the challenges?

With the support of Five9, NiCE, Peopleware, and Scorebuddy, we have dug into the big themes shaping our industry – from Customer Experience (CX) and Quality Assurance (QA) to Workforce Management (WFM), innovation, and beyond.

What came back was a fascinating snapshot of where we are right now – and where we're heading next.

So, let's take a look at what you told us.



**Jonty Pearce**  
*Founder &  
Chairperson*  
**Call Centre Helper**

# Executive Summary

This year's survey reveals a customer contact industry in flux, energized by the rapid rise of AI and compelling need to re-evaluate long-standing priorities. With nearly 90% of our readers either deploying or actively planning for AI integration, the shift is no longer speculative, it's now operational.

Beyond just AI, the research paints a picture of transformation across the board. Increased channel diversification, shifting customer expectations, and rising running costs show just how much pressure CX leaders are under to perform.

Meanwhile, the return-to-office life is reshaping team dynamics, and smarter scheduling tools are helping tackle perennial challenges like absence and lateness. The question you should be asking is: how well is your contact centre keeping up?

We can't wait for you to dive into the details of this report, but in the meantime, here are some key highlights of our latest research:

## **AI Is Forcing Contact Centres to Rethink Their Skill Sets and Priorities**

It's fantastic to see that the vast majority have started thinking about AI – in place in 44.9% of contact centres already, with a further 44.1% having it firmly on their wish list. However, this is forcing many to rethink their internal skill sets and priorities. By sharp contrast, just 11% have no interest at all right now.

## **Chatbot Usage Continues to Grow – Despite Quality Concerns**

Alongside this, it's exciting to see chatbot adoption growing even more this year. Yet there's clearly a long way to go before these are being managed to a consistently high standard and welcomed by the public as a first port of call.

## **Noteworthy Dip in Inbound Voice as Competition Chips Away at Volumes**

It's not all bad news for chatbots, however, as what also stands out in this year's findings is the change in voice volumes. With self-service, chatbots, and voicebots continuing to be in the mix, the volume these autonomous channels are picking up is clearly beginning to chip away at voice.

Of course, we still predict that voice will continue to be the dominant force in channel mixes, but this first dip for our inbound voice statistics shows the potential evolution of voice in the years to come.

## **Face-to-Face Activities on the Increase as Agents Spend More Time in the Office**

We're also seeing changes in day-to-day life on the floor, with many agents now spending more time working face to face – due to the return to the office and rebalancing of hybrid arrangements. So, it's nice to see contact centre leaders making the most of the opportunity – with a concurrent rise in spot prizes, motivational games, and social events.



**Xander Freeman**  
*Director*  
**Call Centre Helper**

## Contact Centres Are Rising to the Challenge of Handling Absence and Lateness

Somewhat unsurprisingly, dealing with absence and lateness is still cited as the biggest scheduling problem in 2025. However, it's promising to see that this figure has dropped this year. And it's highly likely the wider use of scheduling tools – including shift-swap functionality – has helped by empowering agents and giving them the flexibility they need to support their mental health and wellbeing.

### What's Happening in Your Contact Centre?

This year, we've also asked several of our industry experts to lend their voices and years of experience to help leaders better leverage what our research is showing – and provide some key takeaways as well!

So, are these trends emerging across your teams, or are you feeling behind the times?



# General



**The General chapter includes insights from the following people:**

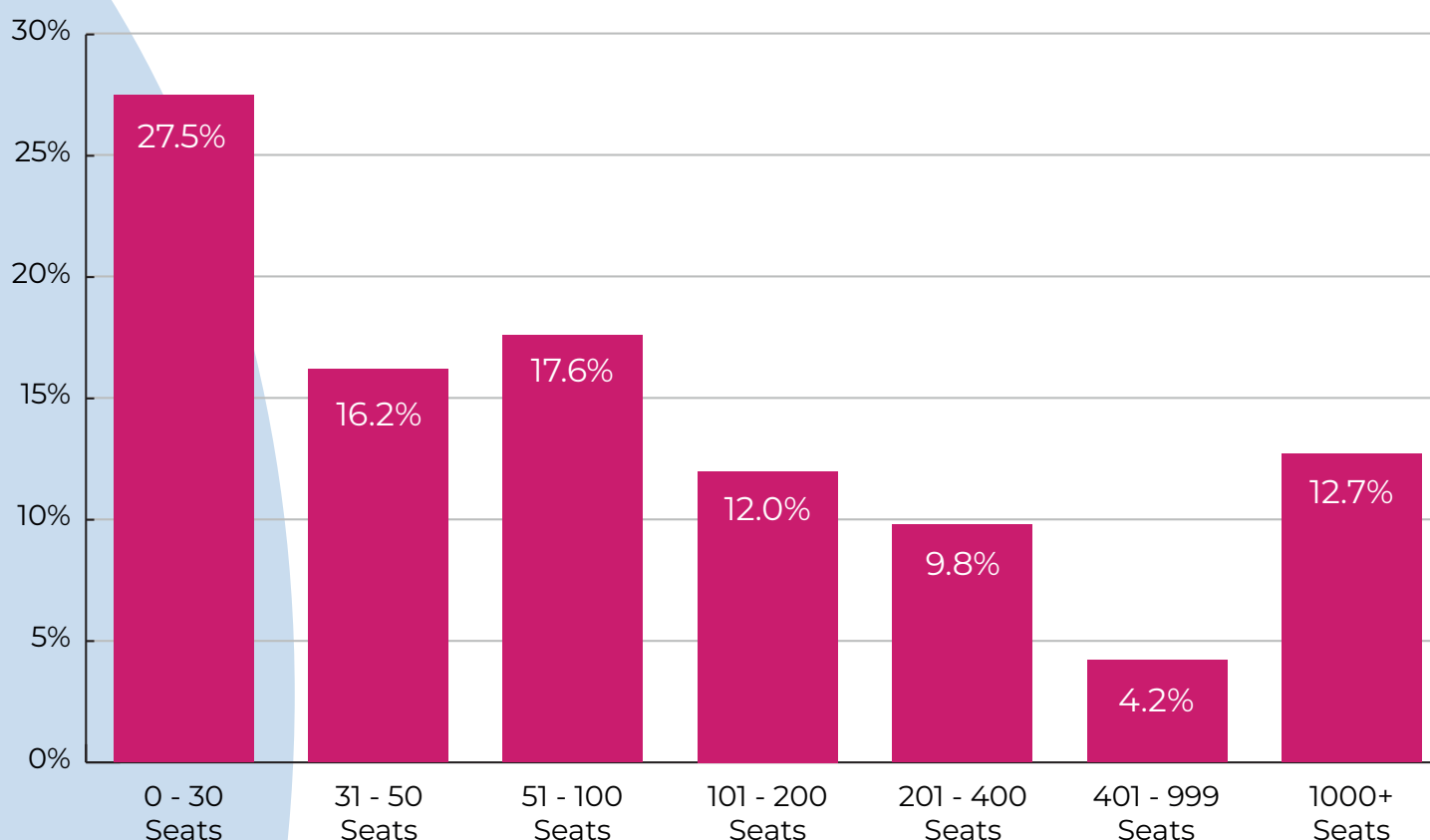
**Paul Weald, Katie Stabler, Maria McCann, Danny Wareham, Rob Clarke, Nate Brown, Dr Zoe Bell, Martin Teasdale, Alex Mead and Martin Hill-Wilson**

# What Is the Size of Your Contact Centre?

This year's participants represent contact centres of all shapes and sizes – from 0–30 seats to 1,000+ seats.

Therefore, to better inform the results shared in this report, the chart below highlights the range of different-sized contact centres involved.

## What is the Size of Your Contact Centre?



# What Technology Do You Have in Your Contact Centre?

## WFM Adoption Continues to Climb Year-on-Year

It's exciting to see the upward trajectory of WFM adoption continue – up again from 55.7% in 2024 to 63.9% in 2025. A considerable leap from the low 30%<sup>s</sup> back in 2016.

This year-on-year growth is being driven by a range of factors – including the necessity of providing better work/life balance for agents, the growing need to manage humans and technology side by side to service customers, and the increasing ease of implementation across all sizes of contact centre, to name just a few.

|                                          | 2016  | 2017  | 2018  | 2019  | 2020  | 2021  | 2022  | 2023  | 2024  | 2025  |
|------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Headsets                                 | 98.5% | 97.9% | 98.8% | 98.4% | 96.1% | 97.7% | 97.2% | 99.1% | 97.0% | 98.6% |
| ACD / Call Routing                       | 90.0% | 90.1% | 90.9% | 89.7% | 88.5% | 92.5% | 89.5% | 94.8% | 93.4% | 94.0% |
| Call Recording                           | 85.8% | 87.5% | 91.4% | 90.3% | 89.0% | 90.7% | 89.8% | 95.3% | 94.6% | 92.8% |
| Quality Monitoring                       | 82.3% | 83.9% | 80.2% | 87.0% | 83.7% | 84.6% | 83.2% | 86.2% | 84.9% | 92.0% |
| Performance Management                   |       |       |       |       |       |       | 80.4% |       | #N/A  |       |
| IVR                                      | 79.5% | 81.6% | 86.1% | 82.7% | 80.2% | 81.5% | 86.6% | 93.3% | 89.9% | 87.5% |
| Knowledge Base                           | 71.6% | 75.6% | 60.5% | 70.5% | 71.2% | 66.2% | 73.9% | 72.3% | 75.5% | 77.2% |
| VoC / Customer Survey                    | N/A   | 51.5% | 48.4% | 59.1% | 62.5% | 64.1% | 64.9% | 71.3% | 62.4% | 68.4% |
| Call Back from Queue Solution            | N/A   | 51.1% | 41.1% | 40.2% | 49.0% | 47.6% | 60.4% | 63.6% | 63.1% | 65.2% |
| Workforce Management Software            | 31.4% | 36.9% | 37.2% | 49.0% | 48.4% | 44.8% | 46.3% | 53.9% | 55.7% | 63.9% |
| Customer Feedback Solution               | 59.8% | 66.6% | 58.5% | 61.9% | 57.3% | 59.0% | 58.7% | 66.7% | 59.7% | 58.9% |
| Wallboards                               | 68.6% | 72.9% | 74.7% | 63.0% | 59.6% | 60.0% | 58.5% | 64.7% | 58.8% | 58.1% |
| Social Media Engagement                  | 48.3% | 52.9% | 52.7% | 57.4% | 53.2% | 50.7% | 53.7% | 52.7% | 51.3% | 51.2% |
| Call Scripting                           | 46.9% | 52.3% | 42.5% | 51.0% | 54.5% | 48.1% | 52.9% | 54.9% | 55.4% | 50.0% |
| Chatbot                                  | N/A   | 9.9%  | 30.7% | 14.0% | 30.8% | 34.3% | 36.0% | 37.5% | 42.6% | 48.5% |
| Process Automation                       | 36.3% | 39.1% | 34.6% | 31.1% | 36.9% | 38.5% | 37.2% | 43.7% | 45.6% | 48.1% |
| Interaction / Speech Analytics           | 9.2%  | 13.4% | 13.2% | 15.9% | 21.4% | 24.0% | 28.0% | 37.5% | 35.7% | 47.0% |
| AI                                       | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | 44.9% |
| Desktop Consolidation                    | 22.3% | 33.2% | 26.3% | 34.7% | 40.3% | 36.2% | 37.2% | 45.4% | 33.1% | 42.9% |
| Single Queue across All Channels         | 24.1% | 32.0% | 30.7% | 26.3% | 25.3% | 30.8% | 31.3% | 33.4% | 26.9% | 37.8% |
| Predictive Dialler                       | 22.0% | 22.3% | 22.9% | 24.6% | 23.9% | 19.6% | 26.1% | 32.2% | 31.0% | 35.2% |
| Proactive SMS Messaging                  | N/A   | 35.5% | 28.0% | 29.3% | 32.7% | 30.8% | 29.8% | 37.8% | 31.8% | 33.3% |
| Customer Service Smartphone App          | N/A   | 27.9% | 20.1% | 30.5% | 28.7% | 28.4% | 24.3% | 26.4% | 24.8% | 30.5% |
| GenAI Copilot for Agents and Supervisors | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | 29.1% |
| Voice Biometrics                         | 5.0%  | 5.0%  | 23.6% | 5.0%  | 7.8%  | 7.7%  | 10.7% | 12.4% | 7.3%  | 16.0% |

## Chatbot Adoption Hits Almost 50% in Contact Centres

There's also been some growth in chatbot adoption – up from 42.6% to 48.5%. Yes, there are still quality issues to address here to improve the all-round ease of use and public perception of this technology, but contact centres are charging forward regardless amidst rising cost pressures.

In a similar vein, process automation has crept up yet again this year from 45.6% to 48.1% – marking the third consecutive year with results in the 40%<sup>s</sup>, after several years (2016–2022) hovering around the mid-30%<sup>s</sup>.

Overall, it's pleasing to see growth in adoption rates across the board and strong signs that many contact centres are embracing the benefits of time-saving technology – with a significant leap in the adoption of analytics (up from 35.7% to 47% this year) and more and more contact centres offering customer service smartphone apps too.

Only 11% of Contact Centres Aren't Thinking About AI Right Now

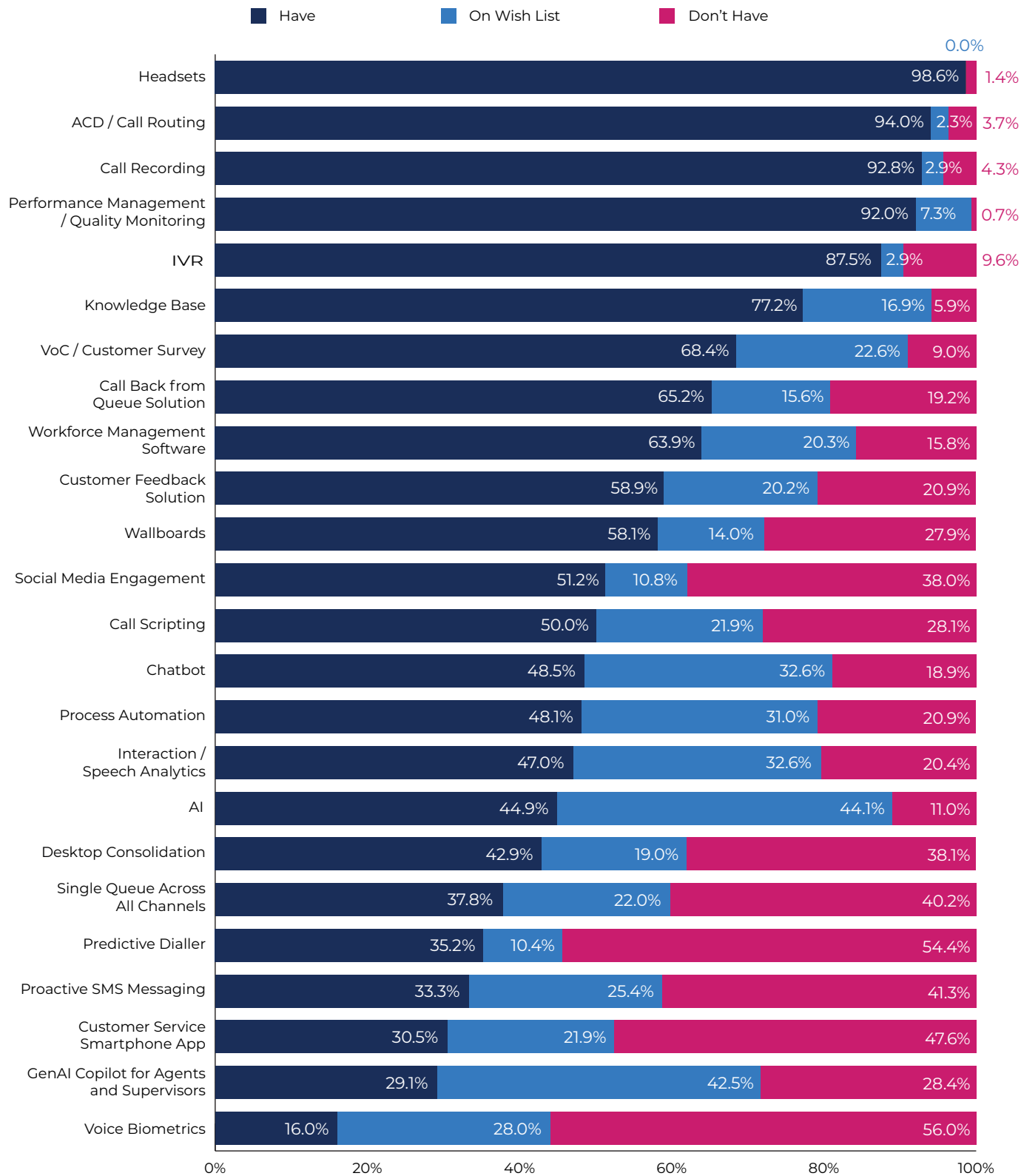
Of course, this trend includes AI!

It's fantastic to see that the vast majority have started thinking about AI – in place in 44.9% of contact centres already, with a further 44.1% having it firmly on their wish list.

In sharp contrast, only 11% have no interest.

Whilst this is most likely due to a realistic outlook on business priorities and budget constraints, we can't rule out that there could also be a fear factor in here. Either way, it's certainly one to keep a close eye on in the years ahead.

What Technology Do You Have in Your Contact Centre?



# What Is Your Mix of Contact Channels?

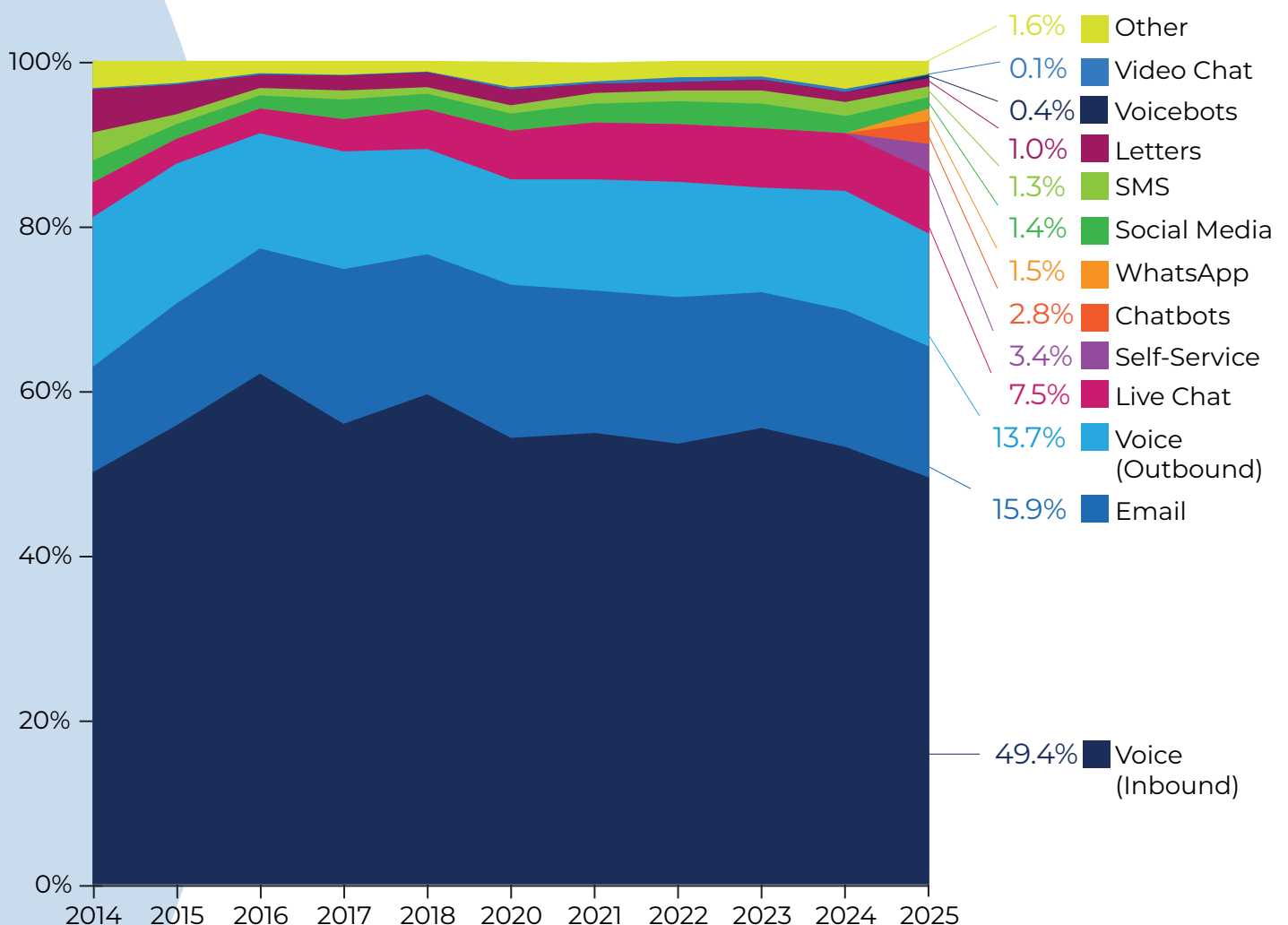
## Noteworthy Dip in Inbound Voice as Competition Chips Away at Volumes

What stands out in this year's findings is the change in voice volumes.

With self-service, chatbots, and voicebots continually in the mix, the volume these autonomous channels are picking up is clearly beginning to chip away at voice, with a noteworthy dip in voice (inbound) this year – down into the 40%s for the first time.

That being said, the picture continues to track as per normal for other core channels – with no notable change across email, live chat, SMS, and letters. Even video chat! Despite the clear use cases and improvements around First Contact Resolution rates and rapport.

## What Is Your Mix of Contact Channels?



|                  | 2014  | 2015  | 2016  | 2017  | 2018  | 2020  | 2021  | 2022  | 2023  | 2024  | 2025  |
|------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Voice (Inbound)  | 50.0% | 55.7% | 62.0% | 55.9% | 59.5% | 54.2% | 54.8% | 53.5% | 55.4% | 53.1% | 49.4% |
| Voice (Outbound) | 18.2% | 17.0% | 14.0% | 14.3% | 12.8% | 12.8% | 13.5% | 14.0% | 12.7% | 14.5% | 13.7% |
| Email            | 12.8% | 14.8% | 15.2% | 18.8% | 17.0% | 18.6% | 17.3% | 17.8% | 16.5% | 16.6% | 15.9% |
| Live Chat        | 4.2%  | 3.0%  | 3.0%  | 3.9%  | 4.8%  | 5.9%  | 6.9%  | 7.0%  | 7.2%  | 7.0%  | 7.5%  |
| Self-Service     | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | 3.4%  |
| Chatbots         | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | 2.8%  |
| WhatsApp         | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | 1.5%  |
| Social Media     | 2.7%  | 1.8%  | 1.6%  | 2.4%  | 1.9%  | 2.1%  | 2.3%  | 2.8%  | 3.0%  | 2.1%  | 1.4%  |
| SMS              | 3.4%  | 1.2%  | 0.9%  | 1.1%  | 0.8%  | 1.0%  | 1.3%  | 1.3%  | 1.6%  | 1.7%  | 1.3%  |
| Letters          | 5.2%  | 3.6%  | 1.6%  | 1.8%  | 1.8%  | 1.9%  | 1.1%  | 1.0%  | 1.3%  | 1.2%  | 1.0%  |
| Voicebots        | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | 0.4%  |
| Video Chat       | 0.2%  | 0.2%  | 0.2%  | 0.1%  | 0.1%  | 0.3%  | 0.3%  | 0.6%  | 0.4%  | 0.4%  | 0.1%  |
| Other            | 3.3%  | 2.7%  | 1.5%  | 1.7%  | 1.3%  | 3.1%  | 2.3%  | 2.0%  | 1.9%  | 3.4%  | 1.6%  |

## “We Are Finally Starting to See the Much-Hyped Reduction in the Live Agent Phone Channel”

*“Whilst I suspect that it’s more of an evolution in channel usage – rather than a revolution – 2025 is the year when we are finally starting to see the much-hyped reduction in the live agent phone channel, with a 4.6% reduction across inbound plus outbound voice compared to 2024.*

*Whilst this still represents by far and away the largest channel share of 63.1%, this could be the start of a trend that I think we will see extended in future years.*

*The reason being that this deflection appears to be caused by different automation use cases with chatbots, voicebots and self-service totalling 6.6% combined. Out of small beginnings, the tide may just be starting to turn as more contact centres test and learn where the potential of AI can best be applied within their operation.*

*Traditional written channels continue to be used at similar rates to last year – email is the largest at 15.9%, then live chat at 7.5%, and finally a small requirement for letters at 1%. All these channels are marginally lower than 2024, but none of the differences are outside a margin of error.*

*Given that written communications remain a valid mechanism for issue resolution, perhaps this is an area of scope to investigate the future role of AI – given the likelihood that handle times with these channels are likely to be higher than the real-time full duplex agent-customer interactions that take place on voice calls.*

*One way to do this is to use your workforce planning system to look into the amount of resource that these written channels consume. If it is significantly higher than 25%, then the business case for efficiency-based initiatives to speed up the processing time of these processes could be compelling.”*



**Paul Weald, The Contact Centre Innovator**

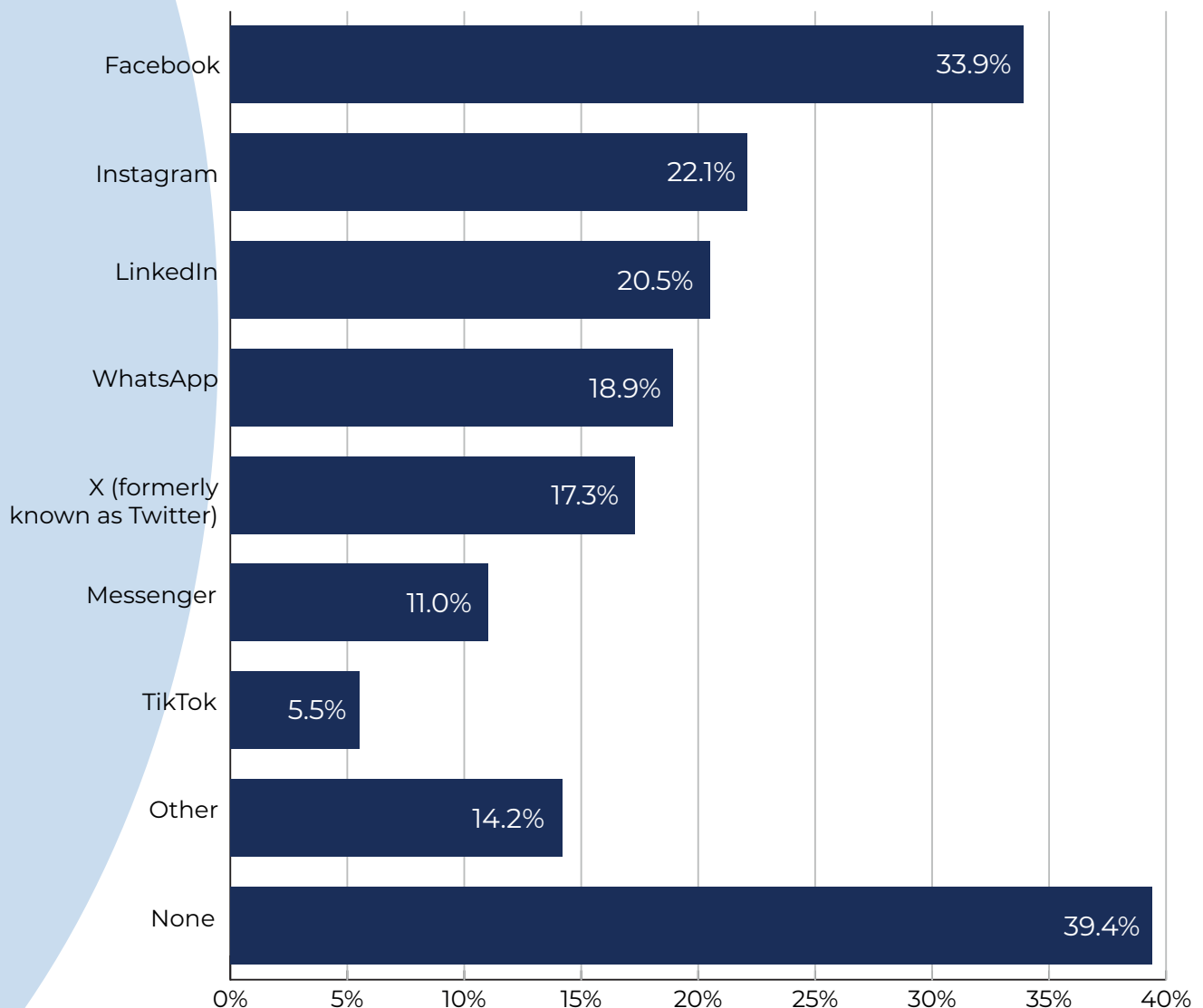
# What Additional Channels Do You Use to Interact With Customers?

## Facebook Still Holding Strong – Despite Controversial Changes at Meta

It's really interesting to see such a spread of additional channels in use, highlighting that many contact centres have an appetite for meeting their customers where they want to be. Even on Facebook! The clear favourite – despite the controversial changes Meta announced back in January 2025.

Whilst there was some initial uproar – particularly from minority groups – around getting rid of fact-checking and loosening its rules around what people can say in its apps, much of the advice at the time was to largely remain where your customers are and avoid a knee-jerk reaction to the news. Evidently, many chose to weather the storm.

### What Additional Channels Do You Use to Interact With Customers?



## **“There’s an Evolving but Seemingly Cautious Approach to Channel Diversification”**

*“The results highlight an evolving but seemingly cautious approach to channel diversification in customer engagement.*

*Interestingly, Facebook continues to dominate (34%) for those utilizing ‘alternative’ channels, likely because of its established user base, ease of use, and built-in business tools like Messenger, reviews, and appointment bookings. There is broader industry talk of Facebook’s decline in younger demographics, and while Facebook use has declined by around 10% since 2024, its utility for community engagement and localized customer interaction remains strong... For now!*

*Instagram (22%) and LinkedIn (20%) feature strongly, possibly reflecting a shift in how brands build customer relationships. Instagram offers a more visual, lifestyle-driven connection, while LinkedIn supports B2B engagement and thought leadership.*

*The relatively low usage of TikTok (7.7%) isn’t surprising. While TikTok is booming as a consumer platform, especially among Gen Z, many businesses are still hesitant to commit. This is possibly due to a lack of in-house content-creation capacity, uncertainty about translating reach into meaningful interaction, and the potentially ‘unprofessional’ connotations.*

*Yet according to [tipsonblogging.com](https://tipsonblogging.com), 91% of people globally say they want brands to be funny, and what better place to tickle your business’s funny bone than inside TikTok. Brands like Hobbycraft lead the way with their playful reels, providing an insider view of employee shenanigans! I’d make a confident bet that in 2026 TikTok features much higher!*

*Meanwhile, WhatsApp (19.4%) and X (17%) suggest that conversational commerce and real-time communication exist only in select industries or customer segments. I’m surprised that WhatsApp doesn’t feature more strongly, as it certainly feels like a dominant channel. However, this goes back to the earlier point, in that perhaps many businesses are using WhatsApp as standard, and it is therefore not considered an ‘alternative’ channel.*

*Overall, we can surmise that many may be taking the ‘if it’s not broken, don’t fix it’ approach. The data suggests an interest in more dynamic channels, but traditional channels still look to dominate. I wonder what percentage of the respondents choose channels based on customer preference? I’ll hazard a guess that those exploring the alternative methods are those listening to customers most closely!”*



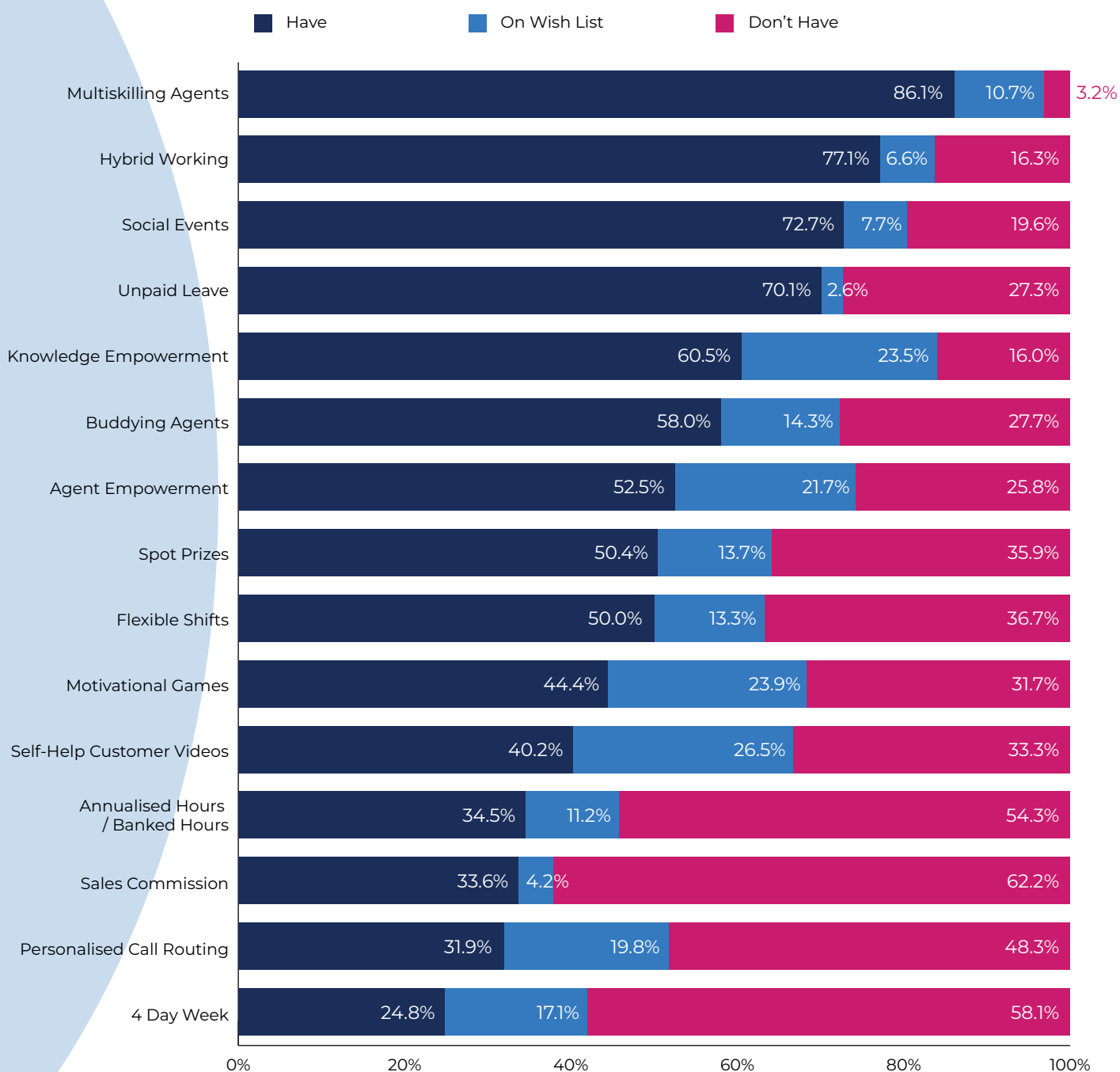
**Katie Stabler, CULTIVATE Customer Experience by Design and author of CX-Ism: Re-Defining Business Success.**

# What Initiatives Do You Currently Have in the Contact Centre?

## The Majority of Contact Centres Have a Variety of Initiatives in Place

It's great to see so many positive initiatives in place across the majority of contact centres, highlighting that leaders are continuing to try their best to engage their agents, create good places to work, and maintain staff retention – most notably through multiskilling agents, hybrid working, social events, and unpaid leave.

### What Initiatives Do You Currently Have in the Contact Centre?



Face-to-Face Activities on the Rise as Agents Spend More Time in the Office

For many, the return to the office and rebalancing of hybrid arrangements has resulted in agents spending more time working face to face, so it’s nice to see contact centre leaders making the most of the opportunity – with a concurrent rise in spot prizes, motivational games, and social events.

|                                 | 2015  | 2016  | 2017  | 2018  | 2019  | 2020  | 2021  | 2022  | 2023  | 2024  | 2025  |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Multiskilling Agents            | 90.5% | 88.2% | 80.4% | 84.5% | 83.9% | 81.7% | 87.6% | 86.7% | 79.8% | 71.0% | 86.1% |
| Social Events                   | 77.3% | 77.1% | 74.0% | 66.6% | 64.0% | 50.8% | 47.0% | 56.9% | 57.9% | 64.0% | 72.7% |
| Unpaid Leave                    | 66.4% | 65.2% | 70.8% | 70.7% | 65.5% | 68.4% | 71.8% | 70.9% | 68.1% | 68.0% | 70.1% |
| Knowledge Empowerment           | 66.2% | 63.3% | 66.8% | 56.6% | 63.1% | 63.6% | 63.3% | 64.3% | 70.0% | 63.2% | 60.5% |
| Buddying Agents                 | 71.5% | 71.0% | 70.9% | 60.0% | 58.1% | 60.6% | 62.9% | 54.9% | 57.8% | 50.7% | 58.0% |
| Agent Empowerment               | 61.6% | 61.0% | 61.0% | 48.8% | 47.9% | 53.0% | 51.4% | 44.1% | 48.0% | 46.7% | 52.5% |
| Spot Prizes                     | 52.8% | 51.5% | 45.4% | 44.6% | 38.9% | 37.4% | 32.1% | 44.5% | 46.3% | 45.7% | 50.4% |
| Flexible Shifts                 | 59.7% | 61.0% | 62.5% | 51.8% | 58.2% | 53.6% | 56.3% | 49.3% | 56.7% | 47.1% | 50.0% |
| Motivational Games              | 47.1% | 50.2% | 44.7% | 38.5% | 30.9% | 29.0% | 23.6% | 33.3% | 36.3% | 39.5% | 44.4% |
| Self-Help Customer Videos       | 23.8% | 23.0% | 23.6% | 24.3% | 30.9% | 27.5% | 32.1% | 31.0% | 29.8% | 29.6% | 40.2% |
| Annualised Hours / Banked Hours | 30.9% | 36.0% | 37.7% | 36.0% | 35.1% | 39.9% | 40.9% | 37.8% | 33.1% | 32.4% | 34.5% |
| Sales Commission                | 36.0% | 26.7% | 30.7% | 27.0% | 28.9% | 27.9% | 23.9% | 24.1% | 27.5% | 23.7% | 33.6% |
| Personalised Call Routing       | 38.2% | 33.2% | 36.4% | 30.4% | 30.3% | 30.2% | 32.8% | 33.2% | 32.8% | 18.6% | 31.9% |
| 4 Day Week                      | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | 24.8% |

“The Contact Centre Is Growing Up and So Is the Relationship Around It”

“For years, businesses have had a parent–child relationship with their contact centres. Strategy happened upstairs; execution downstairs. Different expectations. Different freedoms. That power imbalance shaped everything, including how the frontline served customers.

But the insight from this report shows a shift in that thinking. Investment in buddying, upskilling, flexible shifts, and hybrid working suggest a maturing relationship. A move away from control and towards trust. From rigid oversight to operational partnership.

Still, there are watch-outs. Take agent empowerment. Over 50% of centres say they offer it – but what does that mean in practice? In many cases, empowerment is shorthand for management handing down limited decision-making but still retaining control.

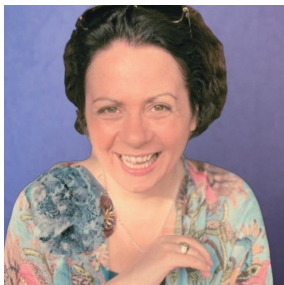
This is where good intent can outpace meaningful change. True empowerment isn’t a message from leadership – it’s a system. It lives in the approach to decisions, knowledge, coaching, and an environment of trust. If agents still need permission to override a broken process, or if customers hear ‘I’d love to help, but I can’t’ – you’re not there yet.

“ Compared to other industries, contact centres aren’t necessarily behind...

Compared to other industries, contact centres aren’t necessarily behind. They’re just growing from a different origin – built on volume, risk, and relentless pressure. But hopefully we’re seeing a shift toward conversational maturity: creating environments where good conversations can actually happen – without exhausting staff or confusing customers.

This isn’t reinvention. It’s rebalancing. A shift from firefighting to confidence. From cost centre to value driver. Quietly, but meaningfully, the contact centre is growing up.”

Maria McCann, Co-Founder of Neos Wave



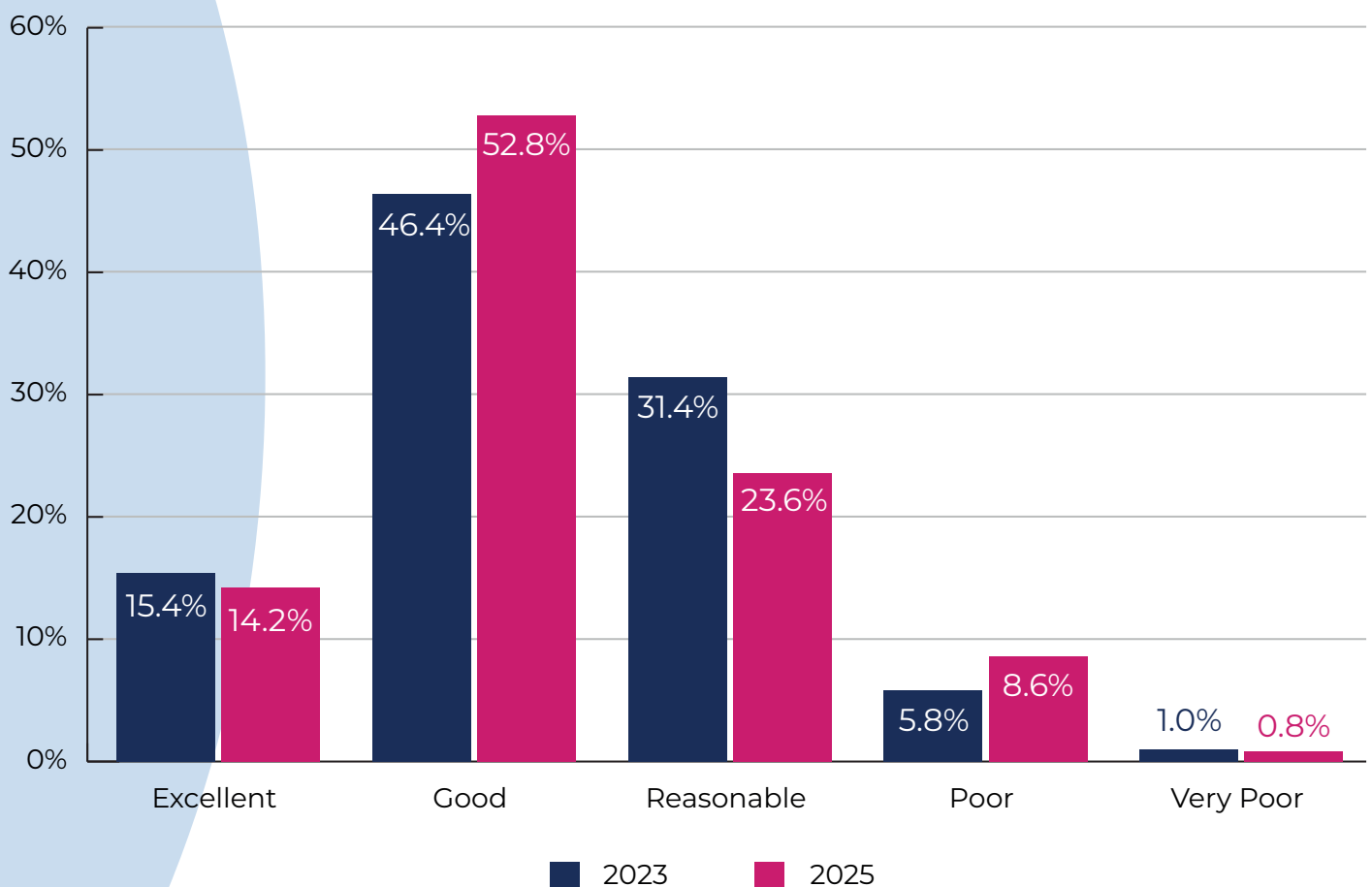
# How Would You Rate the Level of Employee Engagement in Your Organization?

## Levels of Employee Engagement Are Shifting in the Right Direction

Whilst 2023–2024 showed almost identical data year-on-year – with Excellent sitting at 15%, Good at 46%, Reasonable at 32%, Poor at 5%, and Very Poor at 1% – the picture looks different in 2025.

Most notably, there's been an upward lift in Good (up from 46.7% to 52.8%) – pushing the positive results collectively up from 62% to 67%. And even though more people said their engagement was Poor this year, the lower end of the spectrum of lesser-engaged people still fell collectively from 38% to 33%. A positive sign overall that things are shifting in the right direction.

## How Would You Rate the Level of Employee Engagement in Your Organization?



## “Encouragingly, Contact Centres Appear to Buck the Global Trends on Employee Engagement”

*“According to the latest Gallup State of the Global Workplace Report, employee engagement remains a significant challenge at 21%. In the UK, just 10% of workers feel engaged in their jobs, ranking 33rd out of 38 European countries and at half the global average. Encouragingly, contact centres appear to buck this trend.*

*Many factors influence engagement, including leadership approach, management practices, and job design [1]. For contact centre employees, one area with particular potential is autonomy. This is a core psychological need identified by Self-Determination Theory. When people have the freedom to make choices about how they work, their engagement, wellbeing and performance tend to improve.*

“ When people have the freedom to make choices about how they work, their engagement, wellbeing and performance tend to improve.

*Hybrid and remote working arrangements have made autonomy more accessible. Improved technology, flexible scheduling, and reduced commuting mean many employees can now manage their own working environment while enjoying the small comforts of home. After all, who doesn't prefer their own coffee and bathroom?*

*Today, around 66% of contact centre employees work in a hybrid pattern, 10% are fully remote and the remainder work entirely on-site [2][3]. However, with an increase in return-to-office mandates, there is a risk of undermining this progress. Research suggests that when employees lose autonomy they have already experienced, morale and engagement can suffer [4].*

*If contact centres are considering a return-to-office policy, it is worth exploring ways to preserve some level of autonomy for employees. Even small elements of choice (such as flexible start times, self-scheduling, or the option to work remotely part of the week) can help maintain engagement and protect the gains made in recent years.”*



**Danny Wareham, Founder & Director of Firgun**

### References:

[1] CIPD. (2022) Employee engagement & motivation: Factsheets. Available at: <https://www.cipd.org/uk/knowledge/factsheets/engagement-factsheet/>

[2] Gartner. (2022) 9 Future of Work Trends for 2025. Available at: <https://www.gartner.com/en/articles/future-of-work-trends>

[3] MaxContact. (2024) 2024 UK Contact Centre Agent and Team Performance Benchmarking Insights. Available at: <https://www.maxcontact.com/2024-uk-contact-centre-agent-and-team-performance-benchmarking-insights/>

[4] MIT. (2024) Return-to-Office Mandates: How to Lose Your Best Performers. Available at: MIT <https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/return-to-office-mandates-how-to-lose-your-best-performers>

# Do the Managers and Leaders in Your Organization Understand How to Engage Their Teams?

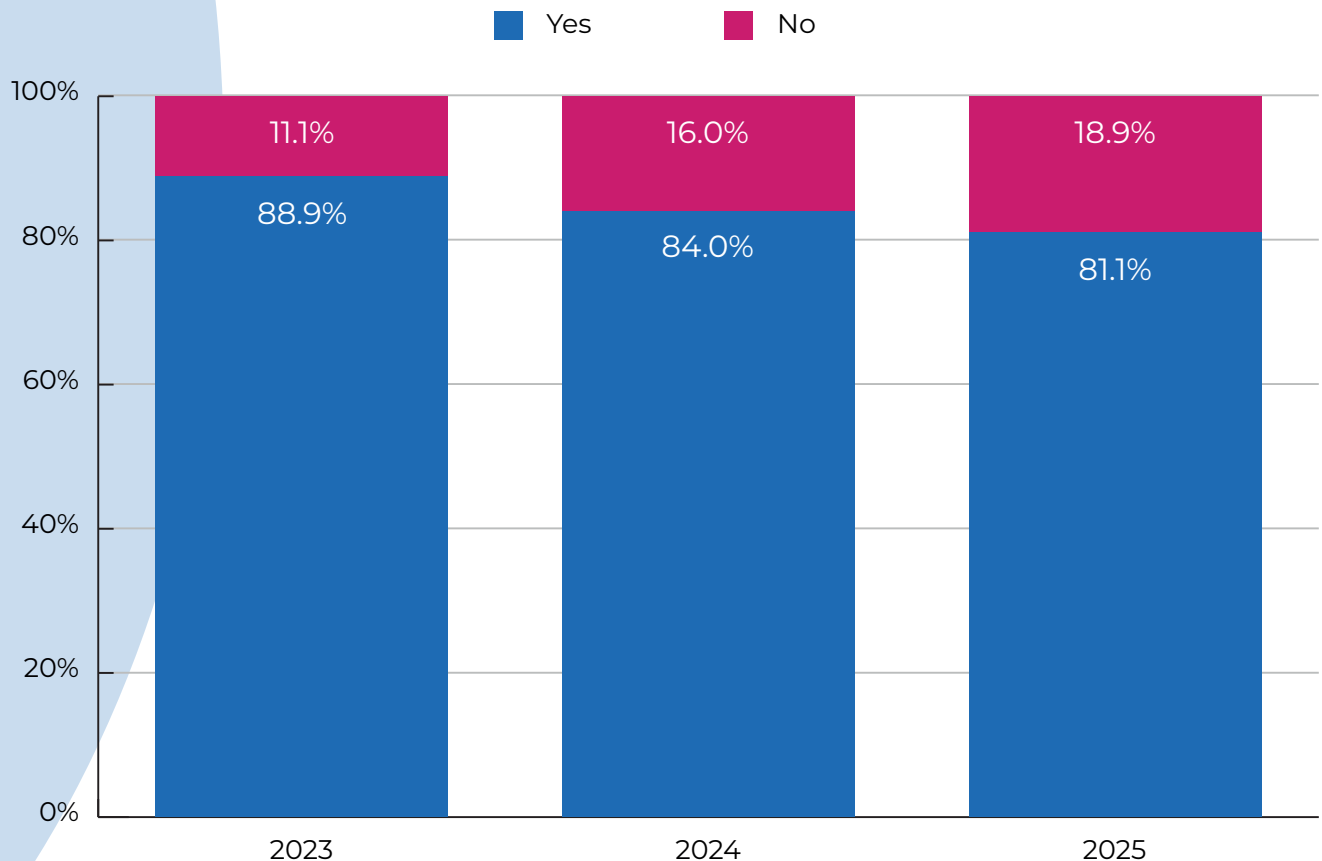
## Tighter Budgets Are Taking Much-Needed Time and Support Away From Leaders

Overall, it's promising to see that the vast majority of contact centre professionals have a lot of confidence in their managers' and leaders' ability to engage their teams. However, things are clearly getting worse – not better.

So, what could be behind this? For one, it's getting harder to be a good leader. As financial pressures get ever tighter, this is sadly having a ripple effect across the contact centre – partly through the restructuring of management layers, where cost-cutting has led to many support-role functions being made redundant.

The end result? Managers and leaders are absorbing ever-more responsibilities to try and support their teams. Some are even managing larger teams as other middle management roles are also cut in an attempt to save money. So, what's left? Quite frankly, little time to do anything well and – as these survey findings show – these failings are felt across the contact centre.

## Do the Managers and Leaders in Your Organization Understand how to Engage Their Teams?



## Over-Reliance on “The Magic Weekend” Creates Long-Term Inconsistencies in Leadership

“The Magic Weekend” also has a lot to answer for here. Synonymous with contact centre life, particularly so in the leap from agent to team leader from Friday to Monday – with nothing other than two days at home to support the jump up in responsibility.

From there, it's often a game of chance and learning on the job – through which some teams will thrive, whilst others merely survive.

So, it's no real surprise to see that a fair proportion of contact centre professionals don't feel confident that the managers and leaders in their organization understand how to engage their teams – as there continues to be a consistency issue in how contact centres bring emerging leaders up through the ranks.



# What Are the Most Important Contact Centre Metrics?

## Is the Pressure to Do More With Less Compromising Good CX?

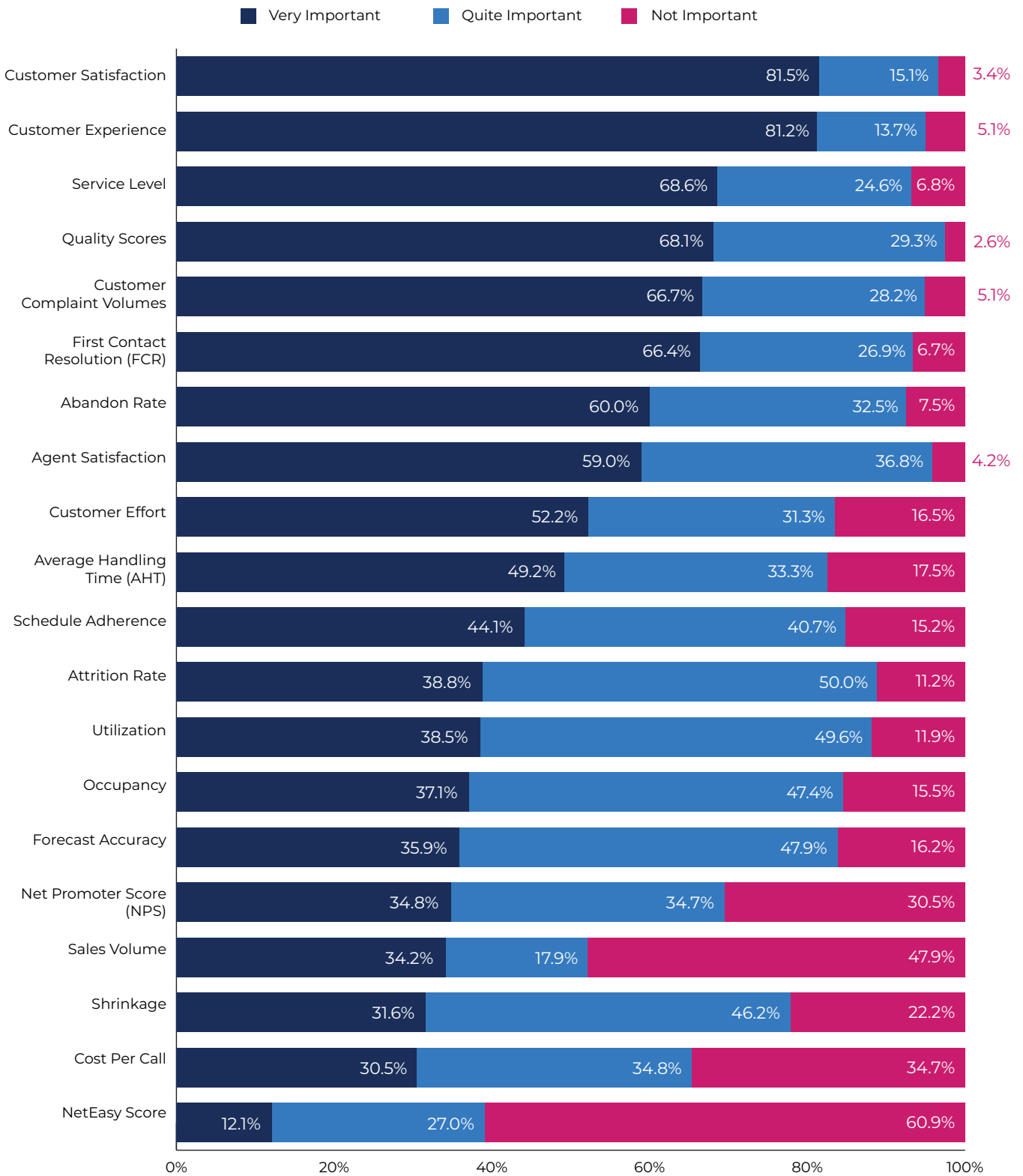
This year's findings continue to show that Customer Satisfaction, Customer Experience, Service Level, and Quality Scores are held in the highest regard and are in widest use. This is very positive to see and overall sets the stage for delivering great CX.

However, it's slightly concerning to see some year-on-year dips in these metrics, alongside a rise in Average Handling Time and Customer Complaint Volumes.

This is certainly one to keep a close eye on in the years ahead – particularly as AHT has hit a 10-year high of almost 50% – to see if this is a one-off or a stress response to firefighting high call volumes under ever-more pressure.

|                                | 2016  | 2017  | 2018  | 2019  | 2020  | 2021  | 2022  | 2023  | 2024  | 2025  |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Customer Satisfaction          | 91.1% | 95.7% | 93.1% | 89.2% | 84.8% | 84.7% | 85.3% | 86.7% | 86.7% | 81.5% |
| Customer Experience            | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | 82.9% | 81.2% |
| Service Level                  | 70.0% | 62.7% | 61.4% | 65.6% | 72.0% | 73.2% | 71.5% | 77.8% | 72.1% | 68.6% |
| Quality Scores                 | 68.4% | 67.5% | 63.9% | 65.1% | 64.5% | 68.1% | 67.8% | 71.2% | 70.9% | 68.1% |
| Customer Complaint Volumes     | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | 65.7% | 64.8% | 59.7% | 62.1% | 62.0% | 66.7% |
| First Contact Resolution (FCR) | 65.4% | 68.0% | 69.8% | 68.8% | 63.8% | 69.4% | 63.9% | 68.7% | 64.4% | 66.4% |
| Abandon Rate                   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | 62.0% | 59.1% | 63.9% | 66.0% | 67.9% | 72.1% | 60.0% |
| Agent Satisfaction             | 48.4% | 62.0% | 63.1% | 67.1% | 66.9% | 60.0% | 59.5% | 66.7% | 57.9% | 59.0% |
| Customer Effort                | 35.8% | 53.6% | 48.9% | 47.5% | 48.2% | 55.7% | 44.8% | 50.5% | 47.0% | 52.2% |
| Average Handling Time (AHT)    | 31.8% | 33.2% | 31.9% | 44.0% | 44.2% | 47.6% | 45.1% | 48.4% | 46.7% | 49.2% |
| Schedule Adherence             | 37.6% | 47.6% | 40.2% | 48.6% | 43.1% | 42.4% | 40.8% | 49.8% | 47.2% | 44.1% |
| Attrition Rate                 | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | 49.8% | 46.6% | 45.7% | 49.3% | 55.5% | 47.5% | 38.8% |
| Utilization                    | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | 44.1% | 39.5% | 40.8% | 39.0% | 48.1% | 40.0% | 38.5% |
| Occupancy                      | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | 35.6% | 36.4% | 33.9% | 40.8% | 30.1% | 37.1% |
| Forecast Accuracy              | 33.4% | 36.2% | 37.1% | 40.3% | 33.9% | 32.5% | 34.3% | 42.0% | 34.6% | 35.9% |
| Net Promoter Score (NPS)       | 29.6% | 36.6% | 32.8% | 36.6% | 39.8% | 41.7% | 38.8% | 44.3% | 40.7% | 34.8% |
| Sales Volume                   | 29.1% | 35.1% | 27.2% | 27.8% | 32.2% | 27.6% | 25.9% | 27.2% | 30.3% | 34.2% |
| Shrinkage                      | 28.5% | 30.5% | 27.3% | 35.7% | 35.1% | 36.2% | 29.8% | 41.3% | 39.3% | 31.6% |
| Cost Per Call                  | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | 31.0% | 27.3% | 24.5% | 24.2% | 28.4% | 38.4% | 30.5% |
| NetEasy Score                  | 11.4% | 21.7% | 19.5% | 14.8% | 14.0% | 10.3% | 13.3% | 19.3% | 14.6% | 12.1% |

## What Are the Most Important Contact Centre Metrics?



## ***“The Most Effective Contact Centres Won’t Just Chase Fast Calls or Cheap Resolutions, They’ll Design for More Meaningful Customer Interactions”***

*“Doubling down on outcome-focused metrics like Customer Satisfaction, Customer Experience, First Contact Resolution, and quality scores is refreshing to see. They’re finally getting the attention they deserve!”*

**“** What really matters: resolution, ease, and trust.

*They reflect what really matters: resolution, ease, and trust.*

*It’s also good to see NetEasy making the list. It might not have hit the top three, but those in the know will recognize it as a strong predictor of actual customer loyalty. The lower effort a customer experiences, the more likely they are to stay, return, and recommend, especially in high-stakes, emotionally charged journeys. After all, ‘Stop trying to delight your customers’ is an oldie, but a goodie!*

*Operational metrics like AHT, Cost per Call, and Utilization may have dropped down the rankings – which is great from a purist customer-centric lens – but they’re not irrelevant... They’re hygiene!*

*Especially as AI becomes more embedded. From knowledge management tools to real-time coaching and workflow automation, AI will continue to drive more efficiencies behind the scenes, freeing humans to do more of the human stuff: being empathetic, creatively problem-solving, and building genuine rapport.*

*That links to one of the most telling of the trends: the shift in Employee Experience (EX) metrics. Agent Satisfaction and Attrition are no longer just HR KPIs, they’re key CX performance levers. You can’t deliver consistent, high-quality service with disengaged teams and high turnover. Fact!*

*I’ve previously discussed the crucial role this plays in an overarching Total Experience (TX).*

*Why?*

*Because the experience you create for your people shows up in the experience your customers receive.*

*The most effective contact centres in 2025 won’t just chase fast calls or cheap resolutions, they’ll design for more meaningful customer interactions.”*

**Rob Clarke, Director and Co-Founder of Elev-8 Performance**



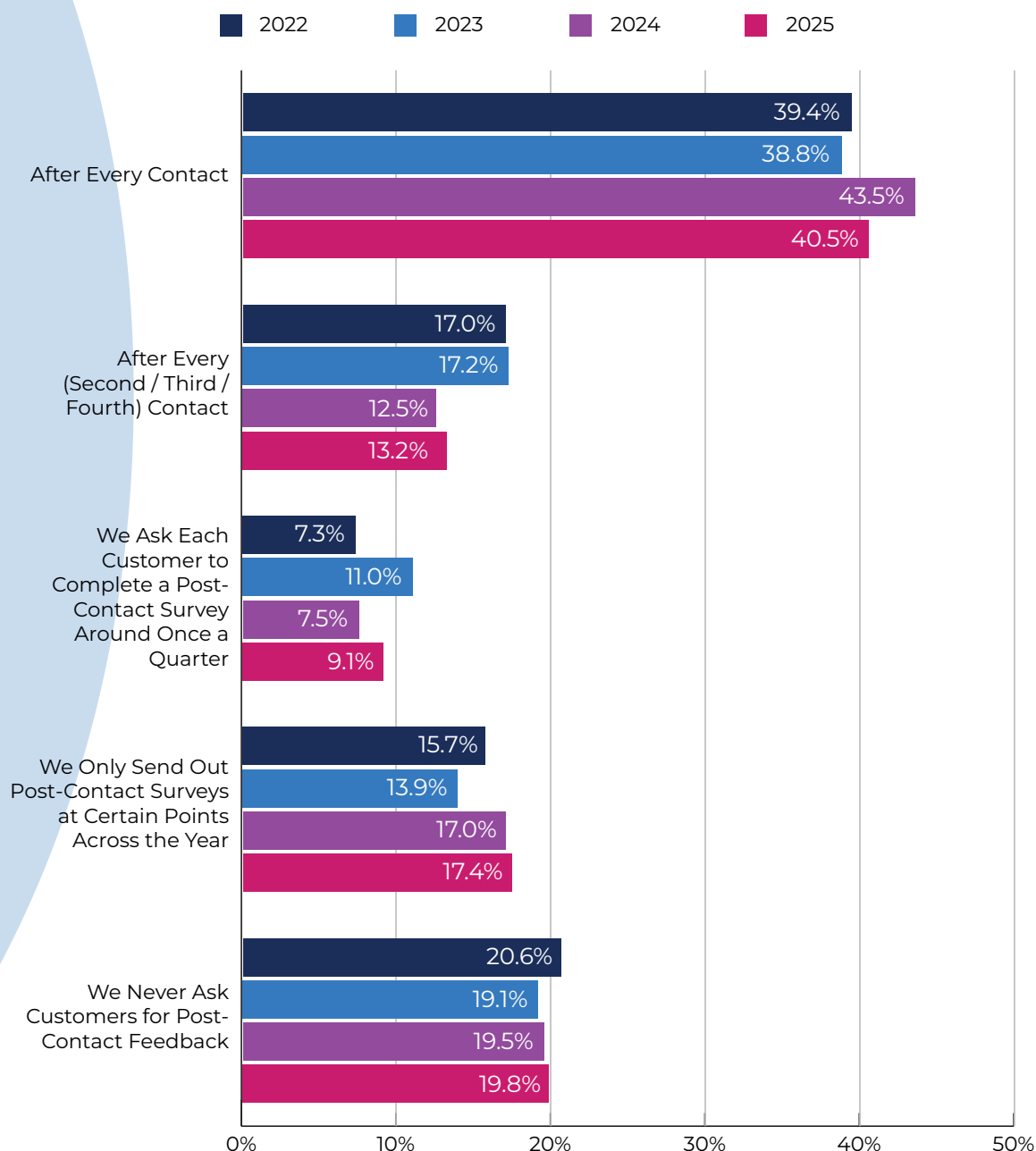
# To Create Your Metric Scores, How Frequently Do You Ask Customers to Complete a Post-Contact Survey?

## The Majority of Contact Centres Still Ask for Feedback After Every Contact

It's interesting to see that the majority continue to ask customers for feedback after every contact – holding steady at around the 40% mark, four years in a row.

This is perhaps due to the simplicity of being able to send a quick SMS survey or ask a feedback question at the end of the call – as opposed to coordinating one-off customer engagement surveys at set points across the year with other departments (e.g. marketing).

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



*At the other end of the spectrum, those who never ask customers for post-contact feedback have also held steady, which suggests other methods are in play – including the use of analytics and internal QA data (for example) – offering a more holistic view, without customers giving up their time.*

*As the use of analytics continues to increase, it will be interesting to see if contact centres ultimately give up their survey approach or continue to run the two activities in parallel.*

### ***“It’s Possible You’re Burning Your Customers Out With Survey Requests”***

*“A surprising result on this question, with a bit of an ‘all or nothing’ result. For the 20% who never conduct post-contact surveys, our hope is that you are collecting voice of the customer information through a more strategic method such as a community forum or automated sentiment.*

*For the 40% who are doing a survey after every customer interaction, ask yourself if this is still the best method for collecting feedback. If your response rate is high and the data is helpful, then great! Keep those surveys coming.*

*If not, it’s possible that you are burning your customers out with survey requests.*

*Think about how you can generate a post-contact survey only for more ‘meaningful’ interactions, or if there might be a better method beyond surveys.*

*Quite simply, keep the focus on showing true service value back to the business – however you are collecting post-contact insights!”*

**Nate Brown, Head of CX Advisory for Metric Sherpa and Co-Founder of CX Accelerator**



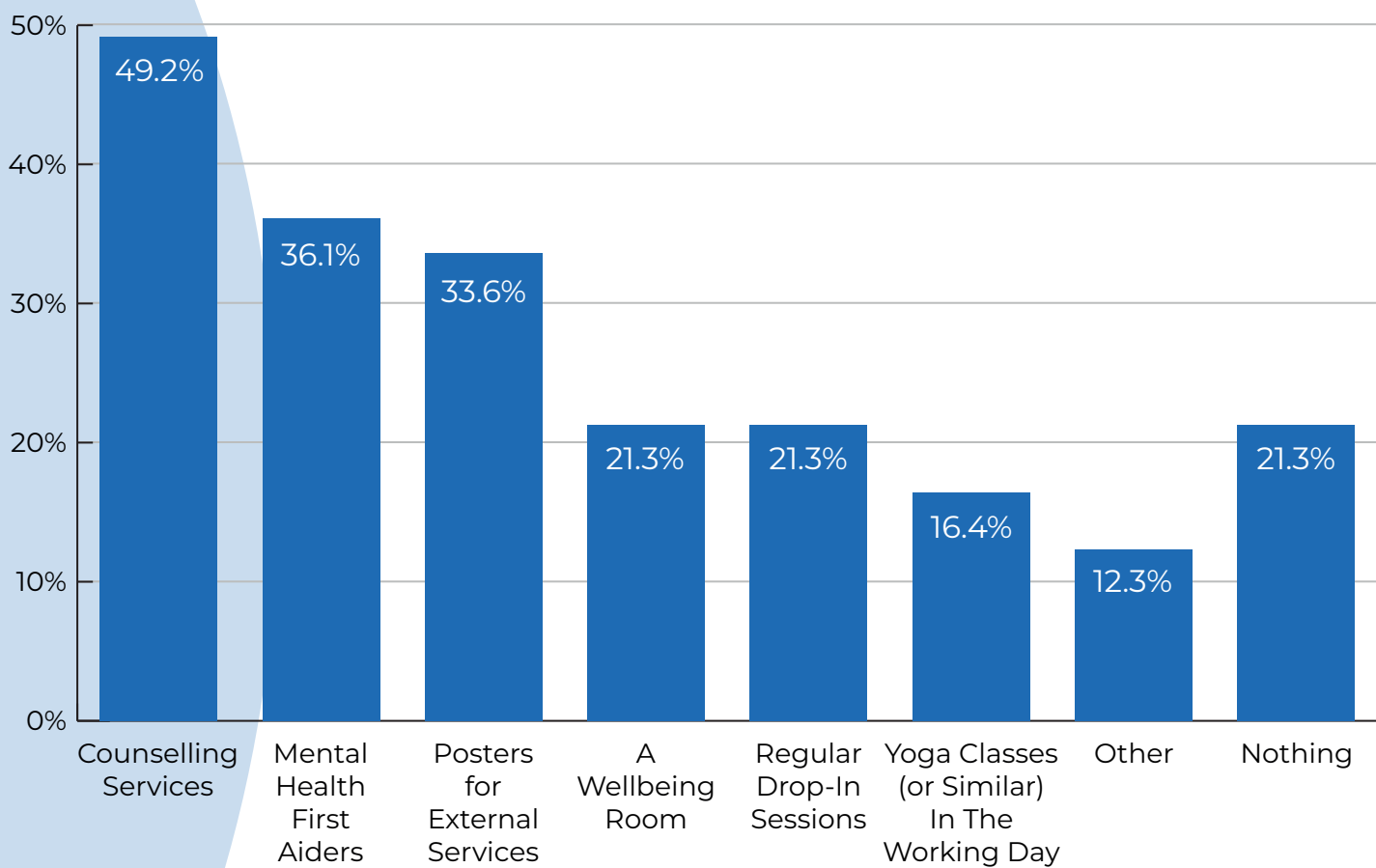
# What Is Your Call Centre Doing to Support Your Mental Health and Wellbeing?

## It Is Still Very Much “The Luck of the Draw” as to How Much Support Agents Get

For the first time, we included counselling services in the mix of our “What Contact Centres Are Doing Right Now” survey and were (pleasantly) surprised to see this initiative in place in almost 50% of contact centres, with around a third also benefiting from mental health first aiders.

However, it still very much seems to be “the luck of the draw” as to how much support agents get from their workplace.

## What is Your Call Centre Doing to Support Your Mental Health and Wellbeing?



## “Relaxation Initiatives Can Be Particularly Effective in Reducing Emotional Strain”

“Recent research from Liverpool John Moores University shows that many contact centres are stepping up, introducing health initiatives driven by both moral responsibility and practical concerns like reducing absenteeism and staff turnover.

Training colleagues and managers to support mental health through MHFA training is an initiative that is supported by evidence and can be a useful tool for contact centres.

However, our research shows that some advisors would prefer to seek help through external professional counselling services due to their confidential nature. Therefore, it is encouraging to see that nearly half of the contact centres are offering counselling services to advisors.

Low-cost external resources, like those from Mind, also provide valuable support without requiring centres to develop everything in-house. This can be a great low-cost way for centres to provide support to their advisors.

Wellbeing rooms are also proving effective, offering quiet spaces for recovery or activities like meditation and yoga – supporting both mental and musculoskeletal health.

A review of evidence conducted by LJMU highlighted how relaxation initiatives in a silent room can be particularly effective, post-lunchtime, in reducing emotional strain.”



**Reference:** Bell et al. (2024) PLoS ONE 19(3): e0298150. DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0298150

**Dr Zoe Bell, Researcher, Liverpool John Moores University**

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### **“There’s a Growing Awareness of Just How Emotionally Demanding Roles Can Be”**

“The data reflects a growing awareness of just how emotionally demanding our contact centre roles can be. Particularly as counselling is seen as a tangible, professional support mechanism, helping organizations meet rising expectations from employees around mental health provision.

Alongside this, the popularity of Mental Health First Aiders is being driven by national training programmes and increasing internal advocacy around peer-led support. Meanwhile, posters and signposting indicate that many organizations are focusing on awareness-raising as a first step, especially where budgets for more structured interventions may be limited.

It’s also significant that nearly 1 in 5 respondents say nothing is being done. This highlights a worrying gap in provision, especially as mental health continues to be a major factor in absenteeism, performance, and retention.

Overall, the trends appear to be driven by a mix of employee expectations, increased awareness of mental health risks, and the growing influence of ESG (environmental, social, governance) and wellbeing agendas.

Yet while many contact centres have taken important steps, there is still a long way to go before mental health support is truly embedded across the industry.”



**Martin Teasdale, Founder of the Team Leader Community**

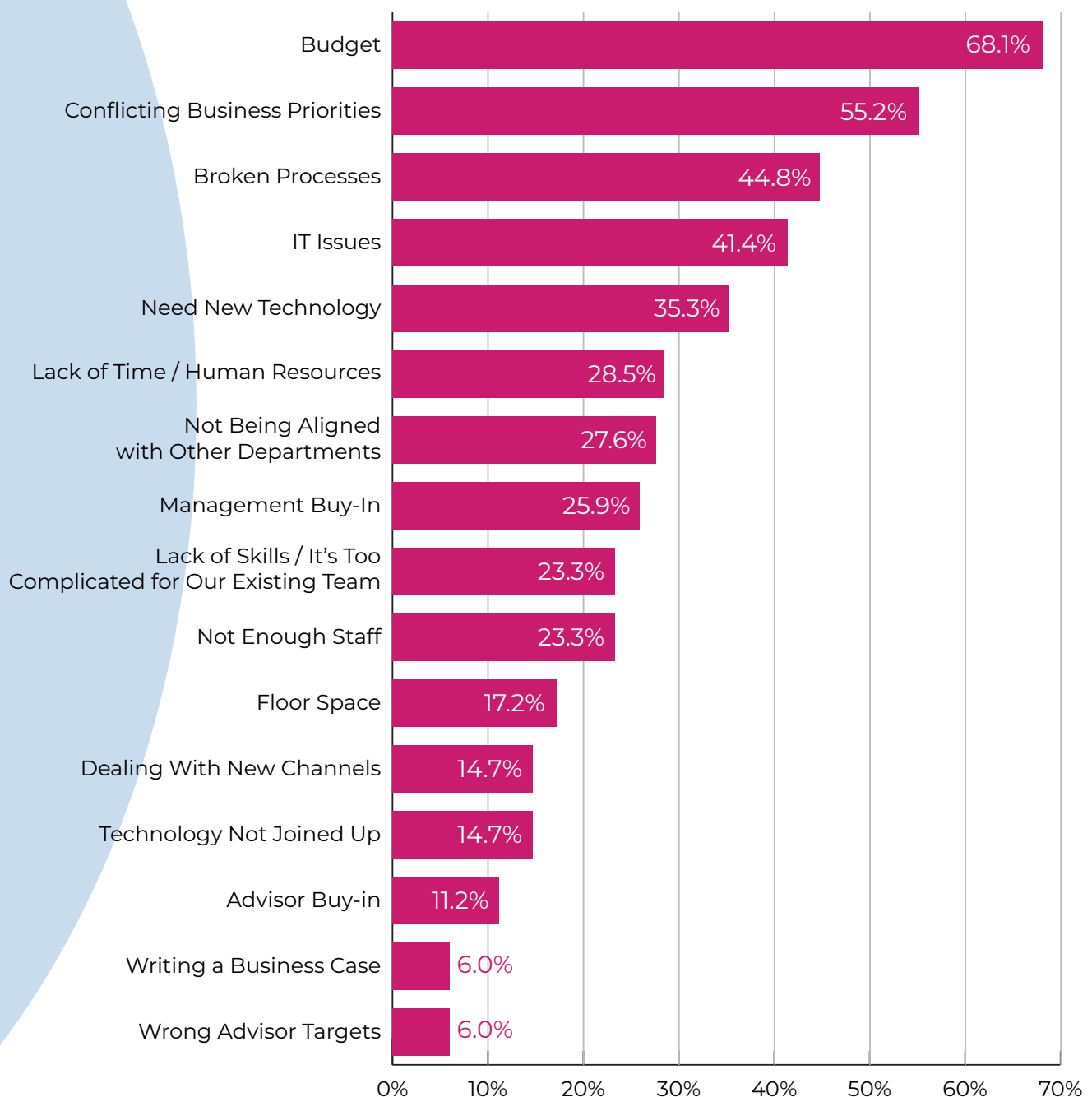
# Which Barriers Stop You From Running Your Ideal Contact Centre?

## AI Is Forcing Contact Centres to Rethink Their Skill Sets and Priorities

As always, it's no surprise to see budget in the top position here – holding strong year-on-year for the past decade – and highlighting just how stretched and under-resourced operations typically are.

What is surprising, however, is to see conflicting business priorities notably higher this year (up from 49% to 55.2%), as well as the jump in lack of skills from 17.6% to 23.3% – both of which could be reflective of how contact centres are struggling to adapt to the ever-changing AI landscape.

## Which Barriers Stop You From Running Your Ideal Contact Centre?



|                                                             | 2015  | 2016  | 2017  | 2018  | 2019  | 2020  | 2021  | 2023  | 2024  | 2025  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Budget                                                      | 67.4% | 80.0% | 76.8% | 80.6% | 72.7% | 60.3% | 58.3% | 66.0% | 67.3% | 68.1% |
| Conflicting Business Priorities                             | 31.3% | 39.7% | 40.7% | 47.9% | 53.0% | 45.0% | 50.9% | 48.1% | 49.0% | 55.2% |
| Broken Processes                                            | 27.9% | 31.5% | 38.0% | 40.9% | 44.3% | 43.3% | 50.0% | 45.2% | 39.2% | 44.8% |
| IT Issues                                                   | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | 59.1% | 49.4% | 40.3% | 46.7% | 41.3% | 43.8% | 41.4% |
| Need New Technology                                         | 39.9% | 42.0% | 46.9% | 53.8% | 45.9% | N/A   | 37.0% | 44.2% | 48.4% | 35.3% |
| Lack of Time / Human Resources                              | 24.5% | 27.8% | 29.9% | 35.3% | 31.2% | 24.7% | 25.9% | 23.3% | 20.3% | 28.5% |
| Not Being Aligned with Other Departments                    | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | 32.1% | 34.4% | 26.3% | 30.1% | 28.2% | 29.4% | 27.6% |
| Management Buy-In                                           | 28.1% | 35.9% | 36.1% | 29.7% | 28.1% | 26.3% | 27.8% | 27.2% | 21.6% | 25.9% |
| Not Enough Staff                                            | N/A   | N/A   | N/A   | 38.8% | 29.6% | 38.0% | 43.5% | 36.4% | 30.1% | 23.3% |
| Lack of Skills / It's Too Complicated for Our Existing Team | 15.0% | 20.3% | 23.2% | 24.1% | 20.2% | 20.7% | 24.5% | 17.5% | 17.6% | 23.3% |
| Floor Space                                                 | N/A   | N/A   | 18.3% | 21.8% | 23.7% | 14.7% | 13.9% | 9.7%  | 10.5% | 17.2% |
| Technology Not Joined Up                                    | 35.4% | 35.9% | 36.4% | 30.6% | 24.9% | 53.0% | 27.3% | 23.8% | 26.1% | 14.7% |
| Dealing with New Channels                                   | 10.7% | 10.5% | 16.4% | 16.5% | 19.4% | 12.3% | 12.5% | 16.5% | 14.4% | 14.7% |
| Advisor Buy-In                                              | 18.6% | 14.2% | 16.5% | 11.2% | 20.2% | 14.3% | 19.4% | 17.5% | 13.7% | 11.2% |
| Writing a Business Case                                     | N/A   | N/A   | 14.3% | 10.0% | 9.5%  | 8.7%  | 8.3%  | 11.2% | 6.5%  | 6.0%  |
| Wrong Advisor Targets                                       | N/A   | N/A   | 10.8% | 8.5%  | 11.9% | 10.3% | 8.3%  | 7.3%  | 4.6%  | 6.0%  |

### ***“Expectations Have Gone Up, While the Budget Has Gone Down”***

*“Nearly 70% of respondents indicate budget is the biggest thing holding them back from creating their ideal contact centre, making it the number-one response.*

*The behind-the-scenes reality is dire!*

*The expectations have only gone up for many of these leaders, while the budget has gone down. Yet many executives are (still) viewing the service centre as a cost centre, many with renewed vigour due to AI promises.*

*Therefore, service leaders should be working to find the strategic balance that results in the greatest value. After all, efficiency is naturally important, but an over-focus on cost reduction will have you missing out on the true differentiator of elevated customer experiences.*

*It is surprising that the number two most common response is conflicting business priorities. This could be in part due to the power shift that has occurred in many organizations. Technology groups often now control the data, any AI-related projects, and also the bulk of the budget. It is therefore critical to ensure these stakeholders are allies of customer-centric change, which may require an ROI-driven approach to CX, along with some creative education.”*



**Nate Brown, Head of CX Advisory for Metric Sherpa and Co-Founder of CX Accelerator**

# What Would Be Your Biggest Driver for Implementing AI?

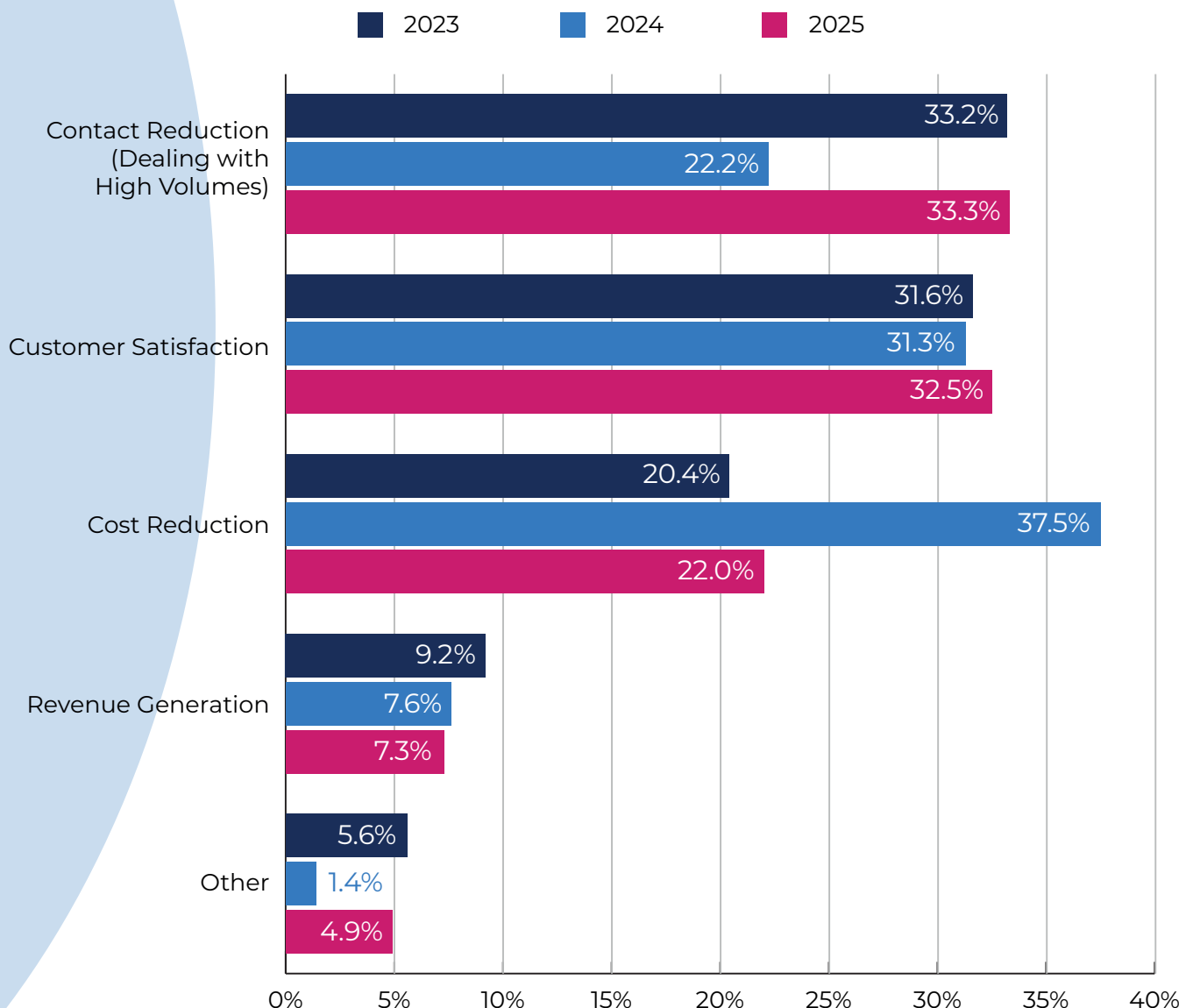
## Contact Reduction, Customer Satisfaction, and Cost Reduction Stand Tall as Top Three Drivers

Contact reduction, customer satisfaction, and cost reduction have been considered the top three drivers for implementing AI – three years running!

However, it's interesting to see the weighting of contact reduction and cost reduction has flipped between 2024 and 2025 – whilst the expectations around customer satisfaction and revenue generation have remained steady.

It's possible that these changes reflect the changing attitudes towards AI now that we have use cases coming out of the early adopters and a clearer view of where AI can have the biggest impact.

## What Would Be Your Biggest Driver for Implementing AI?



## **“Reducing Contacts for the Sake of It Is a Shortcut – Not a Strategy”**

*“The survey asked: What would be your biggest driver for implementing AI?”*

*CX leaders answered contact reduction (33%), customer satisfaction (32%), cost reduction (22%), and revenue generation (7%). This shows where priorities currently lie, but also highlights a gap, because the biggest driver should be very different!*

*Of course, contact reduction reflects the pressure of rising demand. But reducing contacts for the sake of it is a shortcut, not a strategy. If journeys are broken, AI simply frustrates customers faster.*

*The real question is: how do we prevent failure demand by fixing experiences in the first place?*

*Customer satisfaction also placed highly, but we must define it clearly. It isn't about being vaguely 'happy'; it's about experiences that are easy, personalized, intuitive and contextual, what I call [EPIC Sales & Service](#).*

*Customers measure satisfaction by how easy it is to get answers, whether interactions feel personal and intuitive, and whether they are recognized as valued individuals. AI has the power to deliver this when designed around real customer needs, not just business volumes.*

*Operating efficiently will always matter, but it should be the outcome of fixing experiences, not the main goal. When customer service experience (CSX) journeys are seamless, efficiency follows naturally.*

*The real concern is revenue generation being last.*

*In practice, true customer service satisfaction drives revenue through both acquisition and retention: effortless, intuitive sales journeys convert faster, while consistent and contextual service keeps customers longer and increases spend. EPIC Sales & Service doesn't just improve satisfaction, it directly powers growth.*

*So what should be the biggest driver for implementing AI?*

*Not simply cutting contacts or chasing efficiency, but creating EPIC Sales & Service experiences that deliver genuine customer satisfaction, because that is what drives acquisition, retention and ultimately, revenue growth.”*

**Alex Mead, Global Customer Service Experience Leader**



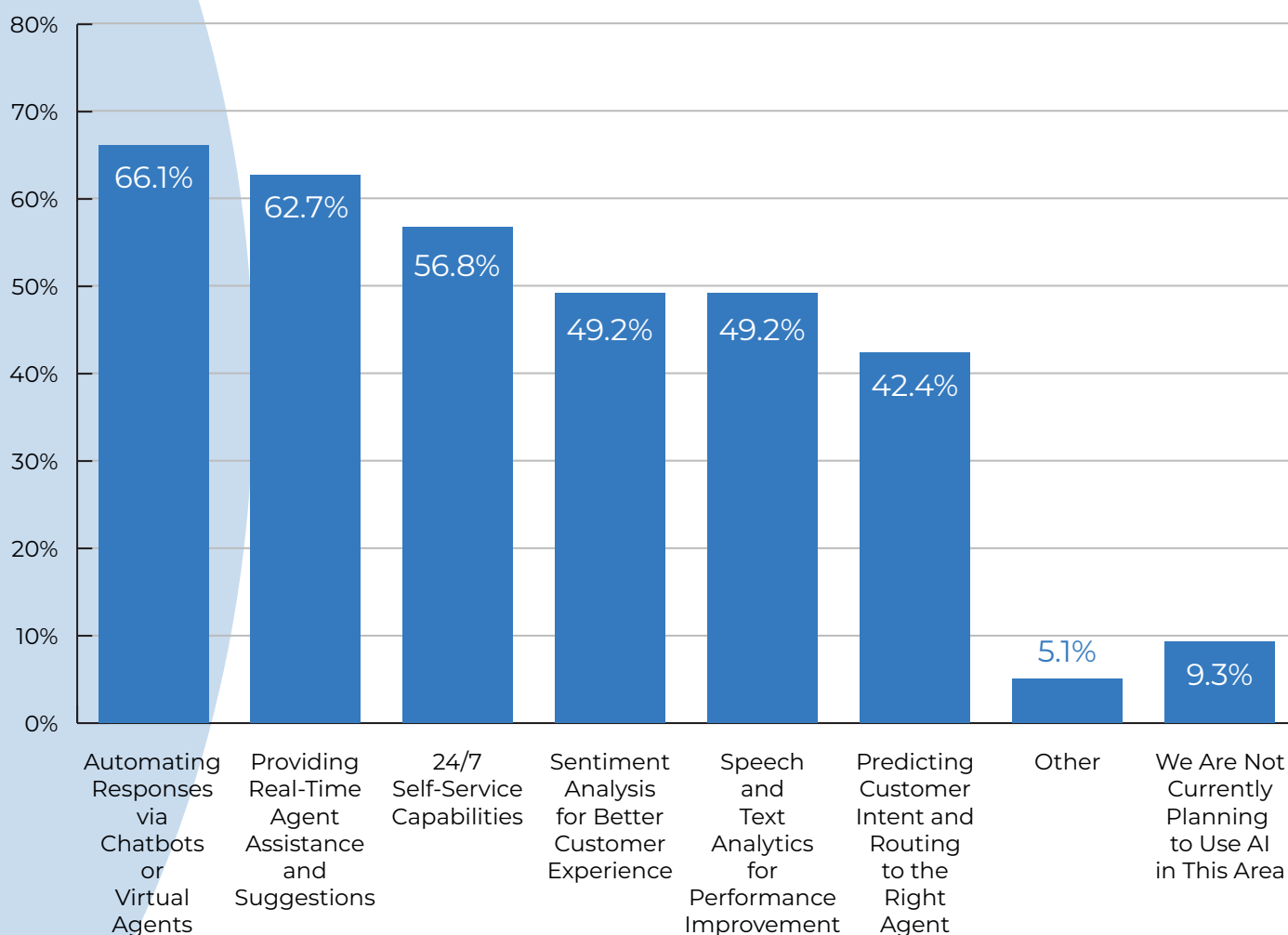
# How Do You See AI Enhancing Your Organization's Omnichannel or CCaaS Capabilities in the Next 12 Months?

## Contact Centre Professionals Have Big Dreams and Even Higher Expectations for AI

As AI becomes ever-present in omnichannel and CCaaS capabilities, it's great to see professionals excited about where it can have an impact – with the highest hopes pinned on automating responses via chatbots, providing real-time agent assistance, and 24/7 self-service.

Yet with such high expectations pinned on the year ahead, it will be interesting to see just how many of these dreams are realized and how far budgets can stretch in such a short space of time.

### How Do You See AI Enhancing Your Organization's Omnichannel or CCaaS Capabilities in the Next 12 Months?



## ***“Digital Lifestyles Have Reset Expectations Around Immediacy and Effortlessness”***

*“Survey participants show widespread adoption of AI-powered capabilities in response to long-standing shortfalls in customer experience. Digital lifestyles have reset expectations around immediacy and effortlessness. Always-on service and instant answers are now the norm. Therefore self-service, whether conversational or not, appeals to the instincts of self-sufficient digital consumers.*

*However, self-service effectiveness requires accuracy and completeness of knowledge combined with well-crafted search/intent recognition for ongoing user adoption. In response, expect techniques such as RAG (Retrieval-Augmented Generation) and knowledge graphs to be increasingly used by service leaders demanding high resolution rates from their self-service investments.*

*Live service delivered by people also appeals to customers. The use cases of emotive, complex, urgent, relationship recovery and sales opportunity spotting are well known. Looking forward, how the distribution of these use cases evolves between people and agentic AI-powered service will only become apparent towards the end of the decade.*

*For now, we revert to people. So, anything to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and experience of those serving customers and therefore the customers themselves is a winning investment.*

*Co-pilots, agent assists, or however branded, fill the gap between customer enquiry and answer and enable rapid completion of post-contact duties. Soon agentic workflows will raise the bar again by being able to fill the gap between customer intent and outcome facilitated by human oversight.*

*This resonates with all contact centre stakeholders.*

*The never-ending onboarding in contact centres defines the industry. Generative AI-powered solutions make instant measurable improvement for the least experienced team members and ensure consistent levels of service quality and productivity.*

*Finally, the survey shows analytics is becoming commonplace, which will improve operational decision-making and experience design.*

*And while AI-enabled triage and routing slightly lags, it is still a positive sign that service leaders recognize every KPI they care about is influenced by the first moments in a customer service journey.*

*In summary, these findings show rapid adoption of AI-powered solutions that measurably improve stakeholder efficiency, effectiveness and experience. A win-win.”*

**Martin Hill-Wilson of Brainfood Consulting**



# Customer Experience

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**Expert insights provided by:**

**Brittany Hodak, Paul Pember, Shep Hyken and Vinay Parmar**

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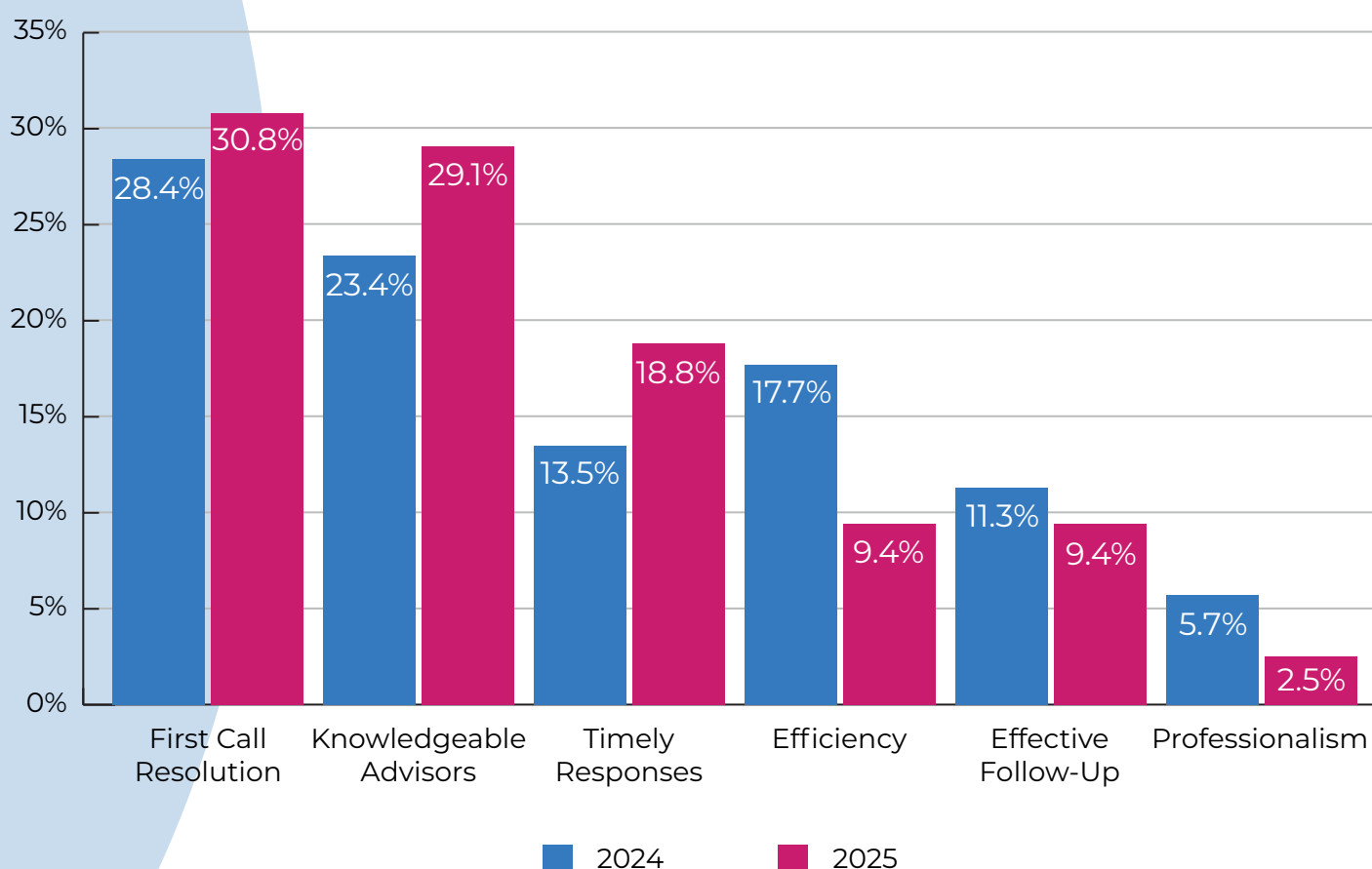
# Above All, What Do Your Customers Value Most?

## It's Promising to See Customer Values Aligning With Areas Where AI Will Have the Biggest Impact

It's great to see First Call Resolution (30%) and Knowledgeable Advisors (29%) coming out on top for "What Do Your Customers Value Most?" – especially as these values align well with the areas where contact centres can supercharge the customer experience with AI. For example, through augmentation and in-call prompts, agents (even new starters!) can deliver knowledge more efficiently and consistently, resulting in higher levels of First Call Resolution (FCR).

This makes the announcements around the proposed "Keep Call Centres in America Act 2025" all the more interesting to follow. After all, if the use of AI is helping contact centres deliver on what customers care most about, should it really be disputed right now? Whatever your views, it's certainly an interesting space to watch – from near or far – as we all continue to adapt to the realities of the new AI world.

## Above All, What Do Your Customers Value Most?



## Do Customers Really Care Where the Answer Comes From?

The lack of emphasis on professionalism also suggests that customers care less about how information is presented to them, as long as it's what they need in the first place – again boding well for the growth of a hybrid workforce where humans and AI work side by side to support customers.

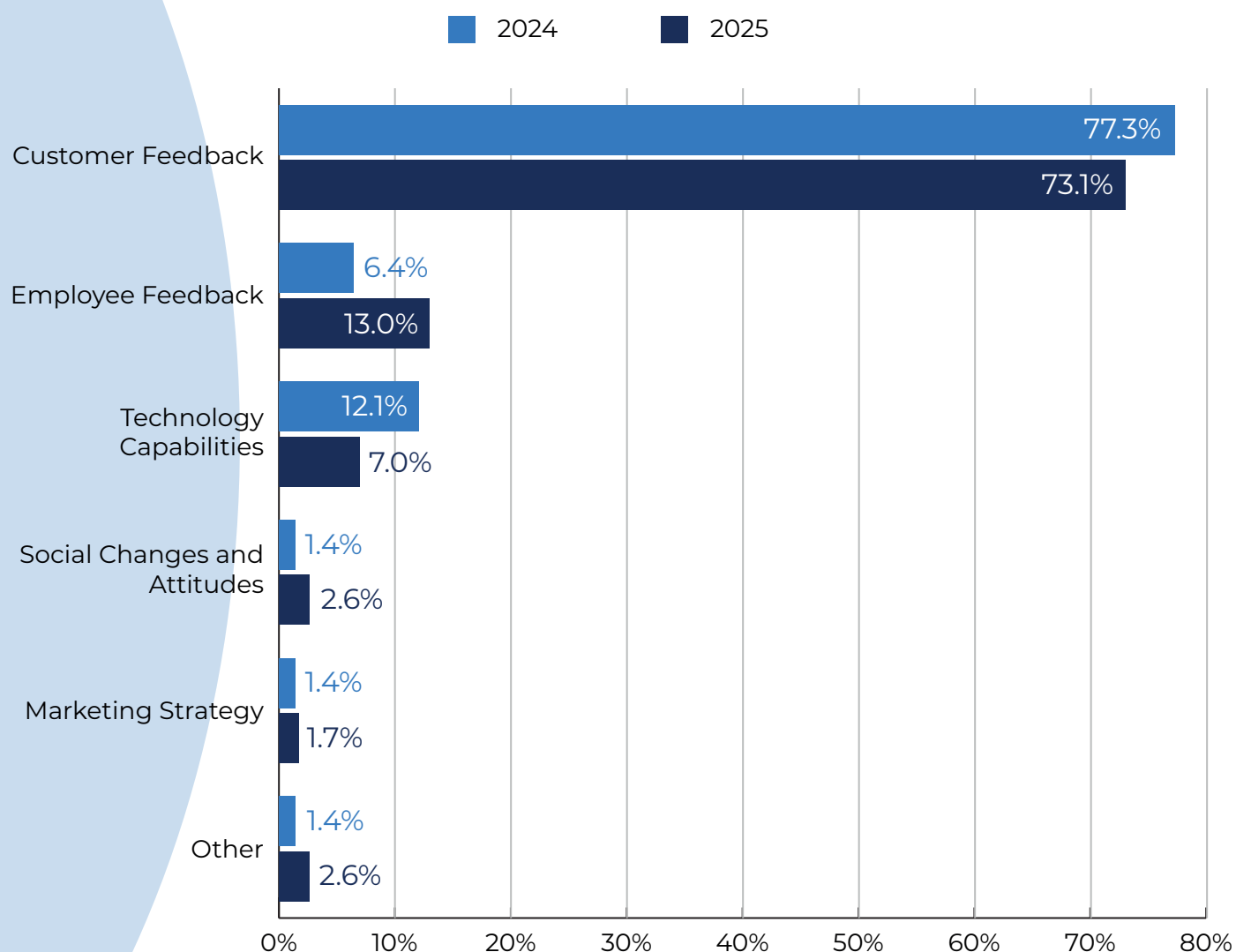
# What Is the Most Important Element in Customer Experience Design?

## Contact Centres Are Tuning Into the Power of Listening to Both Employees and Customers

It's great to see that contact centres are putting customer feedback front and centre of their CX design.

It's also interesting to see the year-on-year shift towards incorporating more employee feedback too. Overall, this highlights that listening is considered key to success and that many are tuning in to create the very best customer experiences right now.

### What is the Most Important Element in Customer Experience Design?



## **“Companies That Embed Feedback Into Their Culture Turn Everyday Customers Into Passionate Superfans”**

*“Your customers are telling you exactly how to win their loyalty – in surveys, reviews, social posts, and conversations you didn’t even ask for.*

*The smartest companies treat that feedback like gold and move quickly to turn it into better experiences.*

*The dominance of customer feedback in this survey reflects a fundamental truth about today’s marketplace: you must know what customers are saying about your brand, your employees, your products, and your competitors.*

*With expectations shifting constantly, the only way to keep pace is to know – in real time – what your customers are thinking, feeling, and needing. That insight can come from a quarterly survey or from a single comment on Instagram. Both matter, because both are windows into your customer’s story.*

*Until recently, analysing feedback was often reactive, time-consuming, and incomplete. Now, AI-powered sentiment analysis, conversational intelligence, and real-time dashboards make it possible to capture and interpret feedback almost instantly. But technology is just the enabler – the real impact comes from acting on what you learn, closing the loop so customers can see their voices influencing decisions.*

*From a strategic standpoint, Voice of the Customer programmes can refine products, improve processes, and smooth out customer journeys.*

*On a human level, listening builds trust, strengthens relationships, and inspires advocacy. Companies that embed feedback into their culture create the kind of loyalty and emotional connection that turns everyday customers into passionate superfans.”*



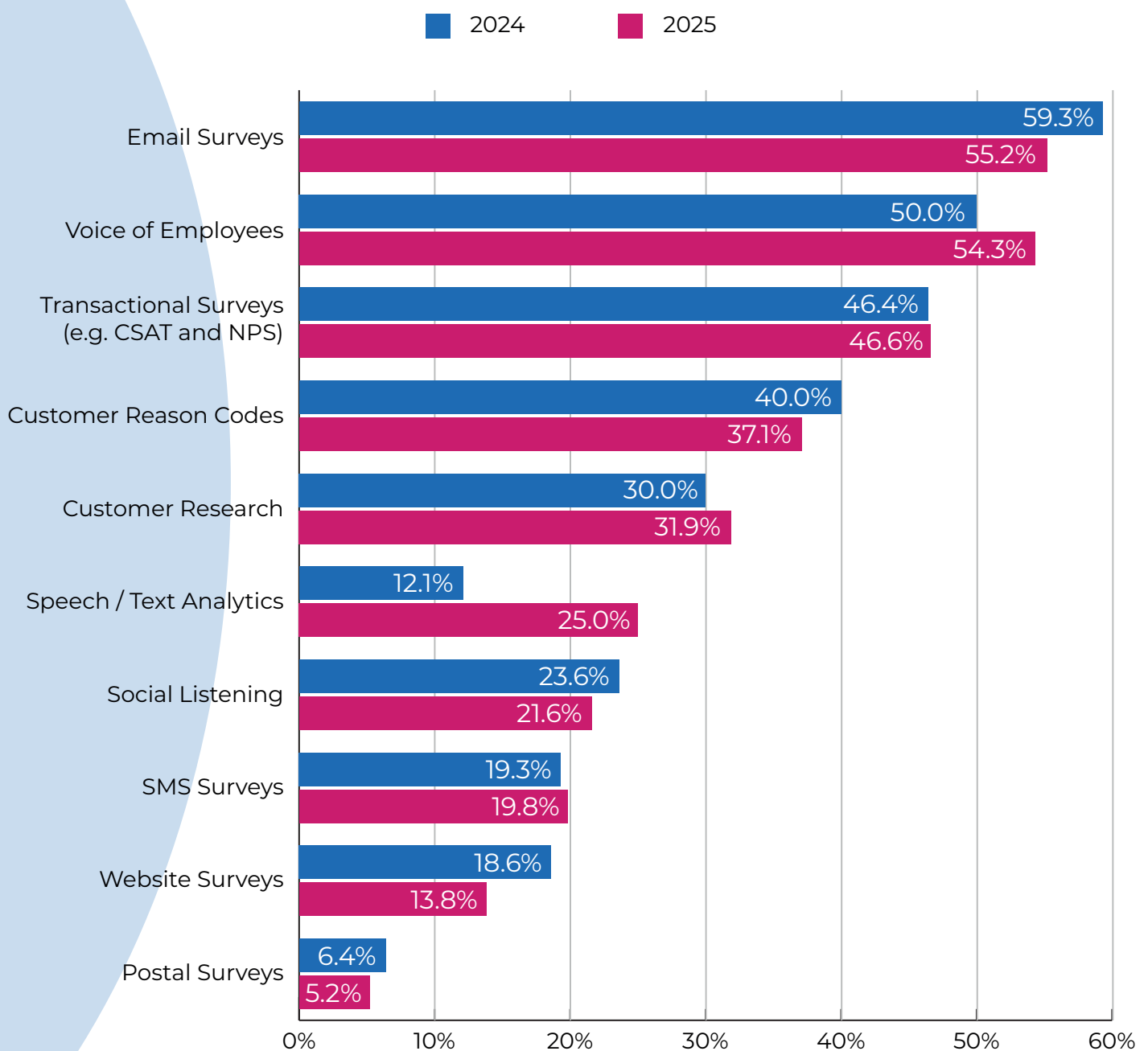
**Brittany Hodak, Keynote Speaker & Author of Creating Superfans**

# How Do You Capture Customer Feedback?

## Reliance on Email, Website, and Paper Surveys Is Beginning to Fade

It's really promising to see early signs of a shift away from email surveys (dipping from 59.3% to 55.2%), website surveys (down from 18.6% to 13.8%), and even paper surveys (down from 6.4% to 5.2%) – countered by a rise in voice of employees (up from 50.0% to 54.3%) and even more growth in speech/text analytics (up from 12.1% to 25%).

## How Do You Capture Customer Feedback?



## **“AI Is Going to Transform How Customer Insights Are Captured and Used”**

*“My overarching reaction to this data is two words: artificial intelligence (AI).*

*AI is going to transform how customer insights are captured and used, with rapid advances in journey analytics, qualitative analysis, and speech/text analytics giving customer experience teams the ability to connect insight sources in real time.*

*Despite being used by only 25% of organizations today, I expect speech/text analytics to overtake email and transactional surveys within the next three years, driven by natural language processing that can extract meaning from vast, unstructured datasets.*

“ Legacy channels are in decline.

*Postal surveys (5.17%) are effectively obsolete, and website surveys (13.79%) have stagnated because of poor user experience and low response rates due to the wrong timing in the journey. Customer reason codes, still used by 37.07% of organizations, are increasingly outdated – often too generic to inform meaningful action – and will likely disappear by 2030 as AI automates customer intent classification with greater speed and accuracy.*

*Encouragingly, voice of the employee (VoE) (54.31%) is emerging as a powerful and often underused source of customer insight, helping to uncover root causes and drive operational change. Email surveys remain the most common method (55.17%), helped by their low-cost, emerging easy-to-deploy tools, and higher response rates.*

*Different methods fit different purposes: transactional surveys capture quick, in-the-moment feedback but lack depth, while research panels and focus groups deliver richer, qualitative understanding, and continuous sources like speech analytics and VoE offer ongoing operational intelligence. SMS surveys (19.83%) may appear underused, but their value lies in targeted, time-critical feedback moments, with some usage hidden within transactional survey reporting.*

*The data shows a clear divide between methods on the rise – AI-powered analytics, VoE, and email surveys – and those that I believe will decline, such as postal, website surveys, and reason codes. Organizations that integrate multiple, complementary channels, underpinned by AI, will be best positioned to capture a complete, actionable picture of their customer experience.”*



**Paul Pember, Founder & Chief Consultant at CX score**

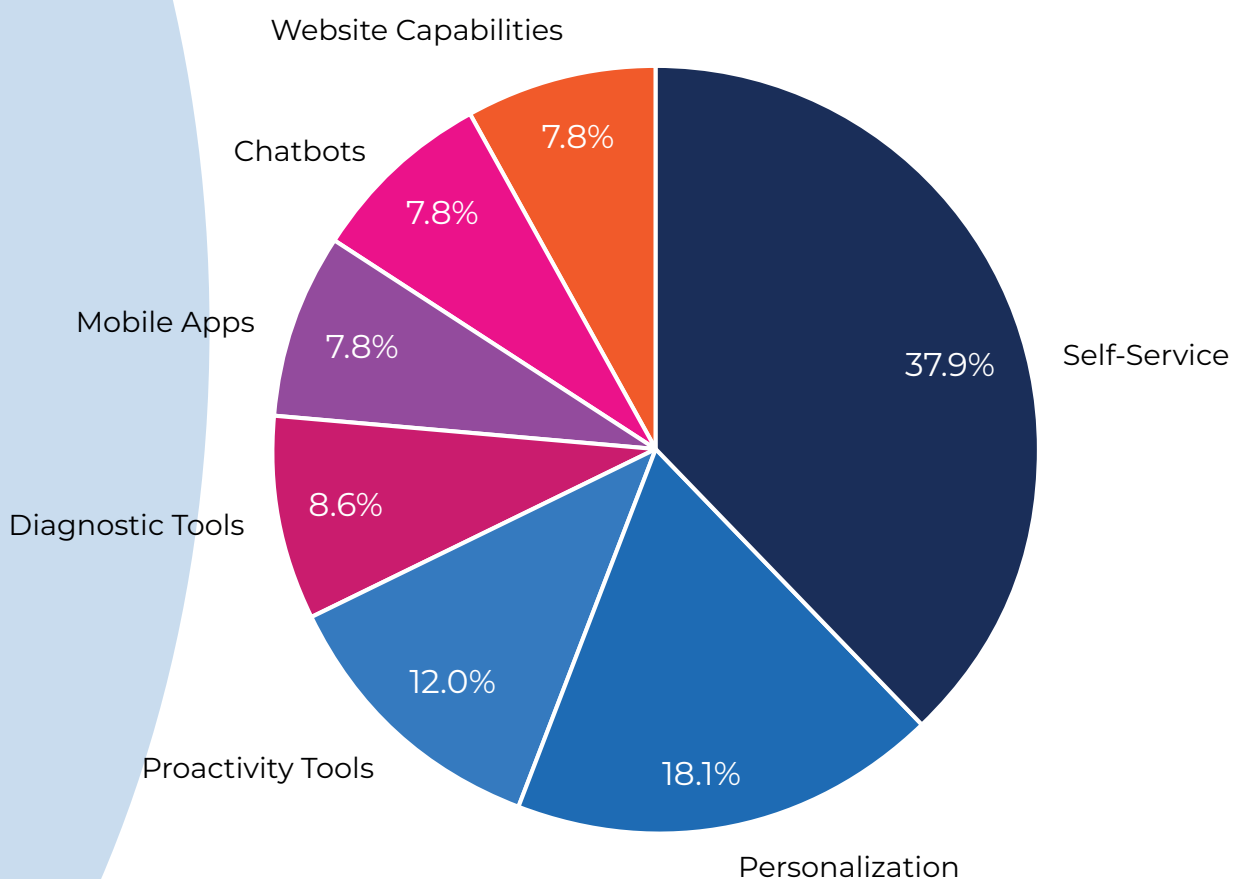
# When Improving Customer Experience, Where Do You Think Organizations Can Get Maximum Value for Money?

## Self-Service Continues to Reign King on Perceived ROI

It's no real surprise to see self-service continue to reign king as the place where contact centre professionals believe they can get the most bang for their buck. After all, if volumes are deflected from the contact centre entirely, there are huge cost savings to be had – but only if this is managed well, of course.

It's perhaps possible that this risk around quality and effectiveness is why some professionals feel that personalization and proactivity tools are safer bets for delivering a good return on Investment. What do you think?

## When Improving Customer Experience, Where Do You Think Organizations Can Get Maximum Value for Money?



## **“Today’s Consumers Are Growing Accustomed to Instant Gratification Through Rockstar Brands Like Amazon”**

*“This overwhelming preference for self-service (37.9%) reflects a shift in customer expectations shaped by digital transformation. Today’s consumers are growing accustomed to instant gratification through rockstar brands like Amazon, which give them answers quickly, efficiently, and intuitively. Customers now expect or hope for similar experiences with all brands they interact with.*

*Looking at this data, several key market forces are clearly driving organizations toward self-service solutions as their top investment priority.*

*Organizations investing in self-service see the benefits of reduced operational costs and (hopefully) improved customer satisfaction by providing customer support that is available 24/7, answers questions, and solves problems.*

*That said, customers still prefer the phone. Even with the advances in AI and LLMs (large language models), my own [CX research](#) found 68% of customers prefer the phone for customer support. I anticipate the numbers will go lower for two reasons.*

*First, the technology is better, and customers are becoming used to self-service technologies. Second, the younger generations (Gen Zs and younger Millennials) are becoming a growing economic force. They are more comfortable with digital experiences and, in some cases, demand them.*

“ Most customers still prefer the human-to-human experience. The best companies strike a balance between in-person and digital interactions.

*However, I caution my clients about going ‘all in’ on self-service solutions. Most customers still prefer the human-to-human experience. The best companies strike a balance between in-person and digital interactions.*

*Personalization comes in second to self-service with 18.1%. Software and AI are more affordable, creating better experiences that are more affordable.*

*The 12.1% investment in proactivity tools reflects a desire to optimize the workforce. The low investment in chatbots (7.8%), even with drastic improvements over the past few years, suggests a concern for the technology, and with good reason. Consumers rate chatbots low on their preferred ways to reach out to a company. They are used to bad experiences with bad information. By the way, consumers can also have a bad experience with human support, which may include receiving bad or incorrect information.”*



**Shep Hyken, Chief Amazement Officer (CAO) at Shepard Presentations LLC**

# What Has Been Your Experience in Dealing With Other Organizations' Chatbots?

## Mediocre Chatbot Experiences Are Sadly “The Norm”

It's somewhat depressing to see that around two-thirds of chatbot experiences are failing to deliver a positive customer experience.

A staggering 56.4% of survey respondents claim to have had mediocre experiences, 8.6% bad – and 5.9% go so far as to say they've had terrible experiences.

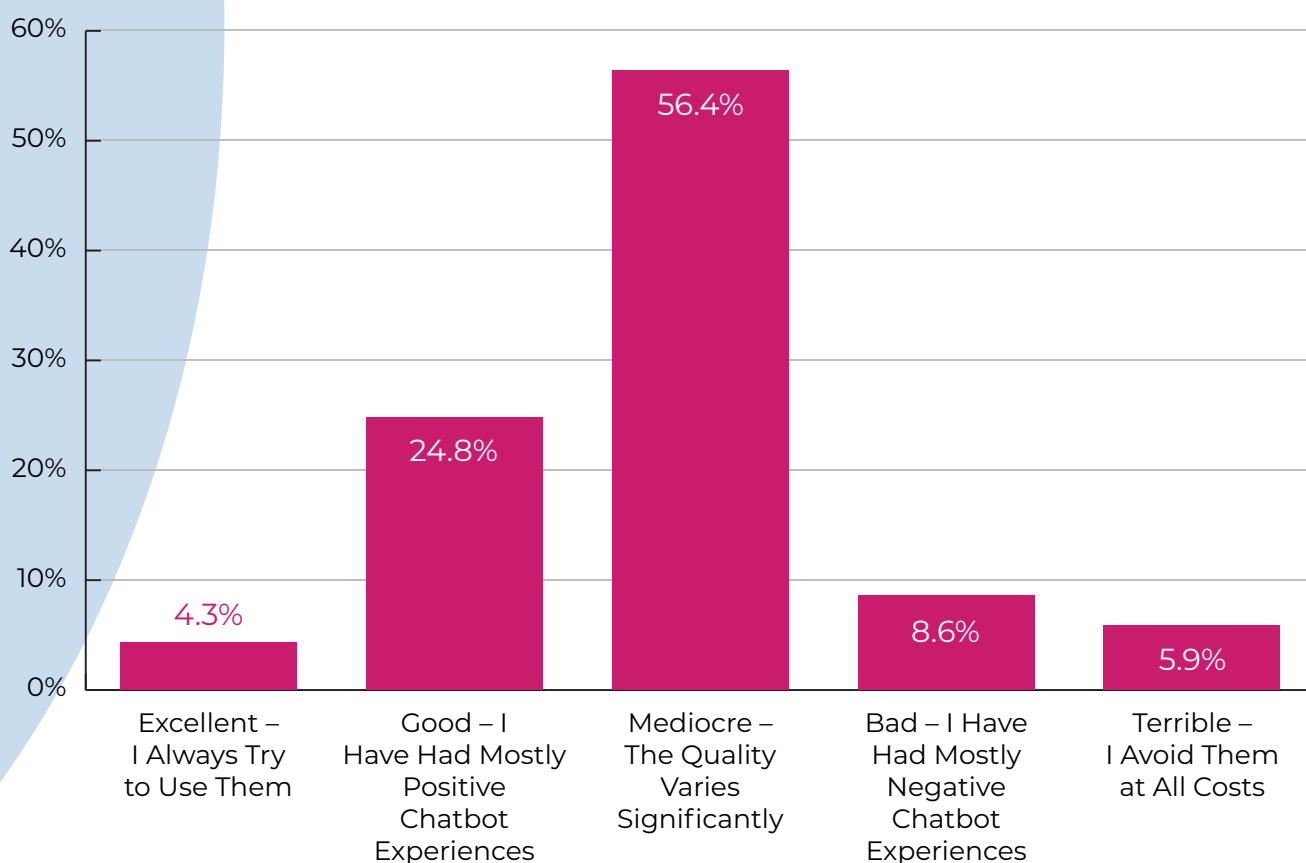
In sharp contrast, 24.8% say they've had good experiences, whilst just 4.3% have had excellent experiences.

So, what's happening here?

Despite rising adoption rates, there's clearly a long way to go before those with chatbots are managing them to a consistently high standard. Perhaps some of this is due to the “plug in and play” mindset – with little time set aside for the long-term training required to make chatbots a truly effective point of contact.

Whatever the reason, with very little movement on this year-on-year, mediocre seems to be the name of the game, and things certainly need to improve!

## What Has Been Your Experience in Dealing with Other Organizations' Chatbots?



## ***“We Have to Design Chatbots That Reflect How Humans Actually Interact”***

*“In looking at these survey results, one key theme emerges: the industry has prioritized efficiency over the richness of the customer experience. About 29% of respondents have good or excellent interactions, indicating that when chatbots work, they deliver that swift, transactional efficiency that some customers appreciate.*

*Yet the overwhelming mediocre rating shows there’s still a disconnect. We’re seeing bots that are built more around speed and pre-programmed steps rather than the way humans naturally converse.*

*Think about it: a chatbot often handles one linear task at a time. But in real conversations, there’s more of a flow. One question might spark another, and customers might not even know exactly what they need until they start talking. Right now, a lot of bots fall apart the moment the conversation stops being a neat, straightforward transaction.*

*What we need is a shift from this efficiency-first mindset to a more experience-driven approach. That means understanding that customers aren’t just looking for a quick fix; they’re looking for a conversation that adapts to their needs. Many current chatbot designs rely on datasets that capture only the top-level reasons for contact, missing the deeper context.*

*The result? A quick but shallow service that doesn’t truly solve the customer’s problem.*

*In conclusion, to move beyond mediocre, we have to design chatbots that reflect how humans actually interact – by being layered, contextual, and adaptive.*

*Just focusing on speed isn’t going to get you there, you have to design a truly conversational experience that understands and responds to the customer’s real needs.”*



**Vinay Parmar, Managing Director at Customer Whisperers Limited**

# Do You Plan to Implement AI Solutions in Your Contact Centre Operations Within the Next 12 Months?

## Just 12% Have No Immediate Plans to Introduce AI

Very few contact centres aren't considering AI right now. In fact, just 12.1% said they have no immediate plans to introduce AI.

This is perhaps due to the challenges of budget constraints and competing business priorities also highlighted in this report. Even so, it's interesting to see, given the overall push in this direction. Some are clearly going to get left behind – and fast!

## Yet the Majority Are Embracing AI and What It Can Offer

In sharp contrast, 47.4% of contact centres are already charging forward, with AI being a key part of their upcoming strategy, whilst a further 36.2% are exploring and currently evaluating their AI options.

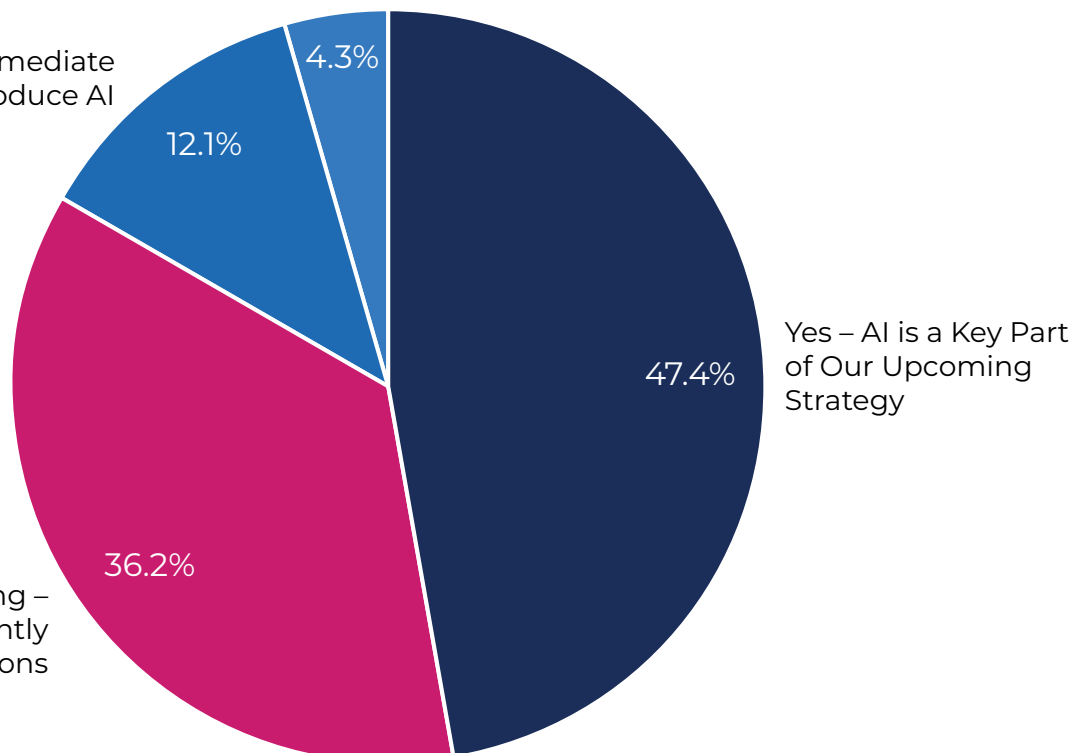
It will certainly be interesting to keep a close eye on how these plans unfold into 2026 and beyond, as AI becomes the new normal.

## Do You Plan to Implement AI Solutions in Your Contact Centre Operations Within the Next 12 Months?

Not Sure – This Decision Hasn't Been Made Yet

No – There are no Immediate Plans to Introduce AI

Exploring – We are Currently Evaluating AI Options



# Future Innovation

The Future Innovation chapter is sponsored by NiCE.

# NiCE

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The Future Innovation chapter has insights from the following people:

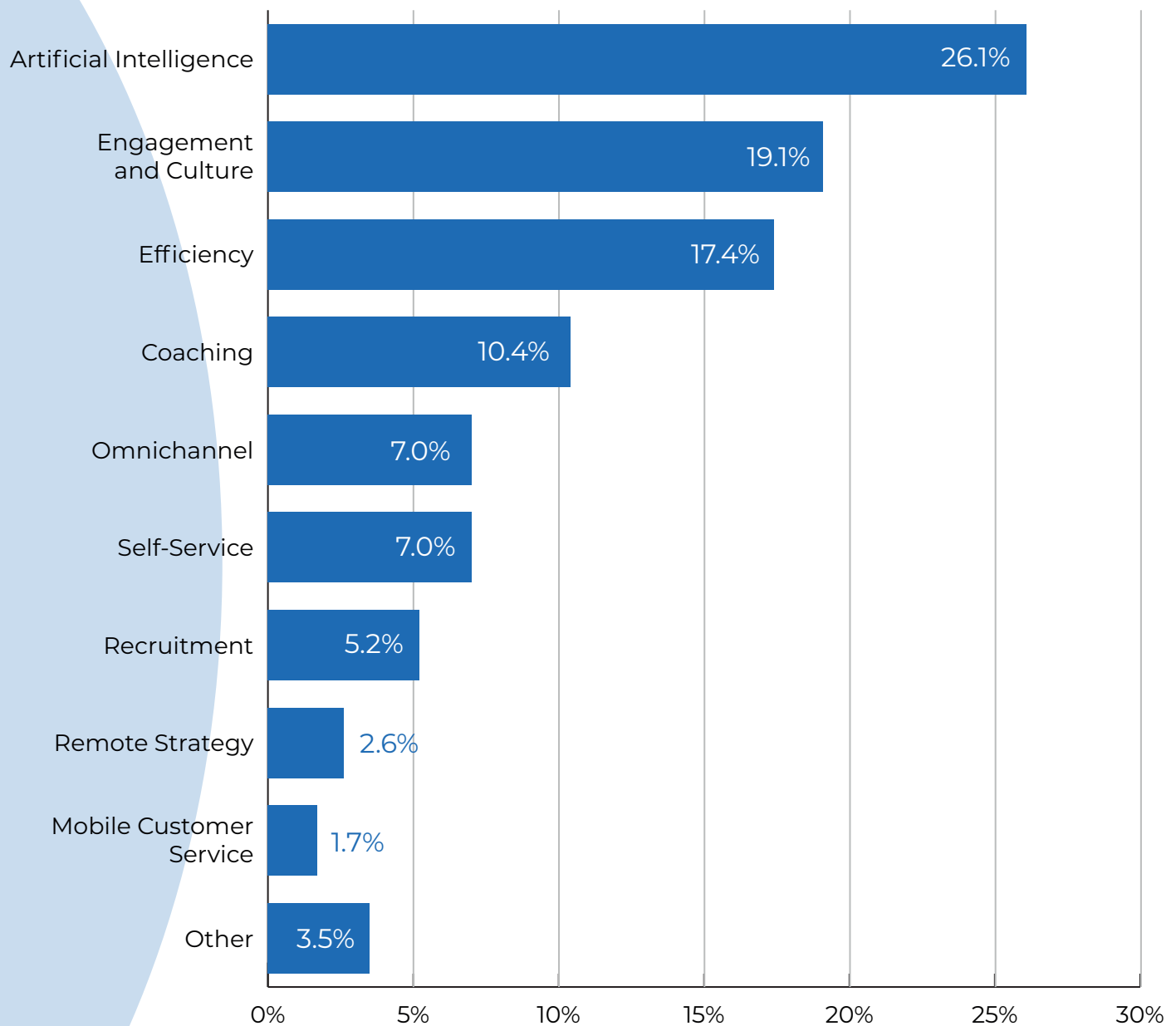
**Martin Jukes, Dr Nicola Millard, Nerys Corfield and Justin Robbins**

# What Is Your Primary Priority for 2026?

## **“AI Is Best Seen as a Solution – Not the Solution – for the Future of Contact Centres”**

“The survey results show that 27% of respondents rank AI as their highest priority for 2026 – a figure that isn’t surprising given AI’s ability to enhance customer experiences, boost operational efficiency, and improve business performance. In an environment where speed, efficiency, and richer outcomes at lower costs are key goals, AI is understandably in the spotlight.

### **What is Your Primary 2026 Priority?**



However, industry opinion is split. Some see AI as a threat to the contact centre workforce, while others recognize it as a supportive tool. Encouragingly, the survey highlights continued investment in people: engagement and culture (19.1%) ranked second, with coaching and recruitment also featuring. For those concerned about AI displacing human roles, this suggests that people remain a priority.

Interestingly, while AI is viewed as a priority, there's little detail on how it will be applied or what specific benefits it will deliver. This is a potential concern as there does need to be a clear understanding for the application of AI. There are many examples where AI has been implemented with disappointing outcomes due to a failure to understand the implications.

Positively, 17% of respondents prioritized efficiency, where AI could certainly help – yet the focus was on the issue rather than preselecting AI as the solution. The same is true for priorities like self-service and recruitment where AI has a role to play.

Organizations must first understand their core challenges before deciding on solutions. AI may well be part of the answer, but it should be implemented with careful planning and expert input. The goal should be to integrate AI alongside human talent, ensuring both technology and people contribute to better outcomes.

In short, AI is best seen as **a** solution – not **the** solution – for the future of contact centres.”



**Martin Jukes, Managing Director, Mpathy Plus**

# Which Customer Service Skill Will Be Most Important in the Contact Centre of the Future?

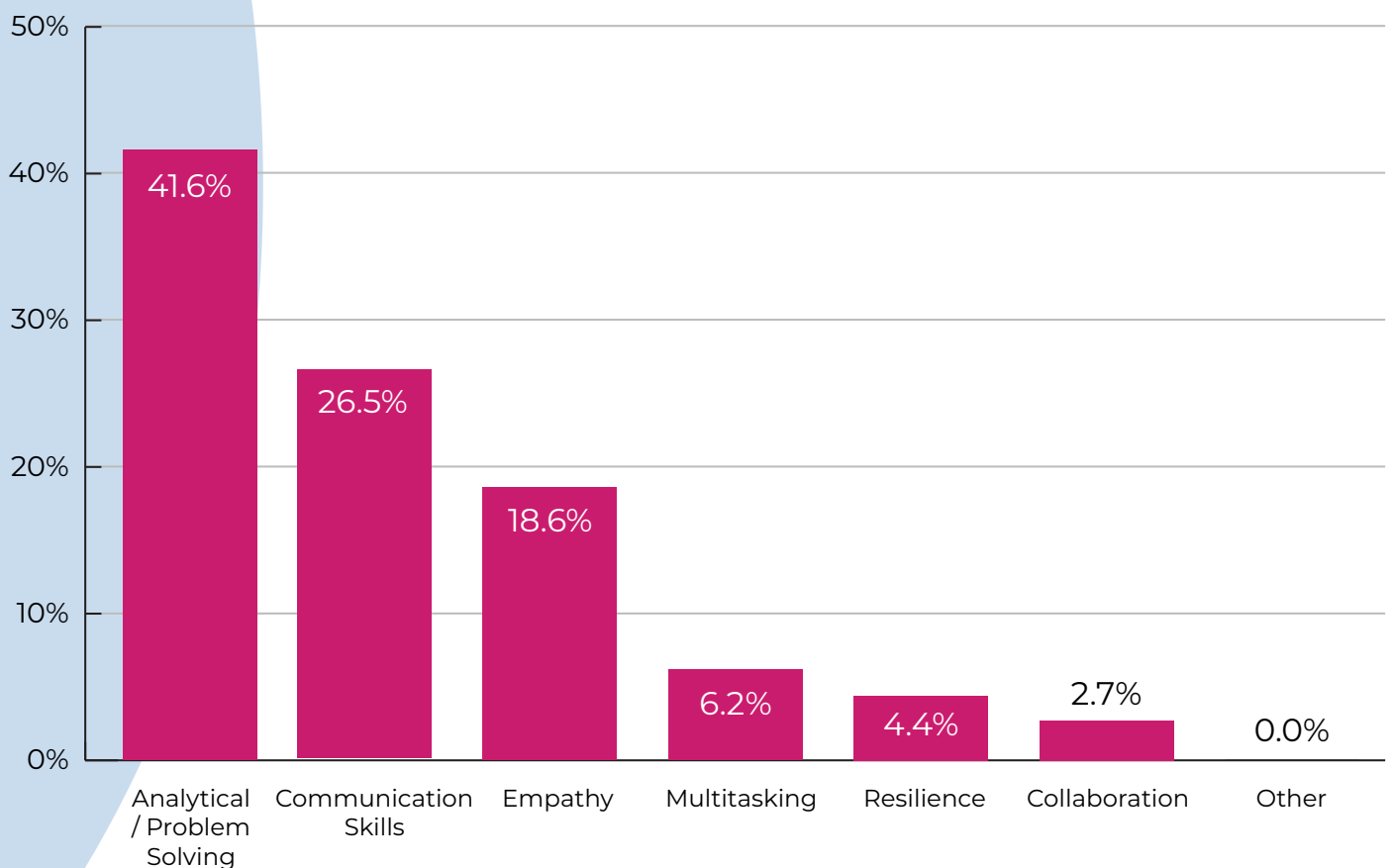
## The Extent to Which Problem-Solving Skills Will Still Be Considered a Skill in the Age of Augmentation Will Remain to Be Seen

What's particularly interesting here is that contact centre professionals think that analytical/problem-solving will be the most important skills in the contact centre of the future.

Yes, calls are becoming increasingly complex as more and more simple interactions are handled via self-service – but the extent to which problem-solving will still be considered a skill in the age of augmentation will remain to be seen. After all, even the newest and least experienced agents will be boosted by ever-smarter technology in the future of customer contact.

However, it's promising to see that communication skills and empathy will still be highly regarded, as even with prompts in place, live agents will still need these skills to build rapport with customers and put them at ease as they convey the necessary information.

## Which Customer Service Skill Will Be Most Important in the Contact Centre of the Future?



## **“Humans Are Now Advisors, Resolving More Complex, Emotionally Charged Issues”**

*“I remember a cartoon I used many years ago in presentations about the future of the contact centre called ‘Anatomy of a Call Centre Agent’.*

*It featured a young person slouched over a computer, with a sedentary belly from excessive sitting, a large brain belching steam from juggling multiple systems whilst simultaneously talking to customers, bulging eyes from staring at a screen all day, and a scowling mouth from the stress of handling a never-ending stream of calls.*

*This was the perception of contact centre work at a time when automation was taking just a few faltering steps into the customer contact space.*

*Much has changed – but many of the anatomical challenges remain. Simple queries are now handled by AI and self-service tools – they are now the agents.*

*Humans are now advisors, resolving more complex, emotionally charged issues often caused by factors beyond their control. This demands strong analytical thinking and the ability to navigate ambiguity – reflected in nearly 42% of respondents identifying it as the most important skill for future contact centre advisors.*

*Communication and empathy are still vital. Advisors must be able to explain complex issues clearly and calm angry and upset customers down. They must interpret data from multiple sources, identify patterns, personalize interactions, and make quick, informed decisions.*

*This also requires resilience, as these contacts now dominate daily workloads. AI tools can help to reduce cognitive load – handling tasks like wrap summarization, real-time coaching, navigating multiple systems, and initiating backend processes. These tools free up precious brainpower for more human-centred tasks.*



*Collaboration skills may well shift from collaborating with other humans to collaborating with fleets of AI agents*

*Interestingly, collaboration skills may well shift from collaborating with other humans to collaborating with fleets of AI agents, who execute the tasks that advisors initiate. Advisors could become managers of these digital co-workers, making multitasking more important than ever.*

*Getting all these skills anatomically aligned in one person is a challenge – and one the industry must address as it redefines the role of the future contact centre.”*

**Dr Nicola Millard, Principal Innovation Partner at BT Business**



# Which Types of AI Innovations Would You Be Most Excited to See?

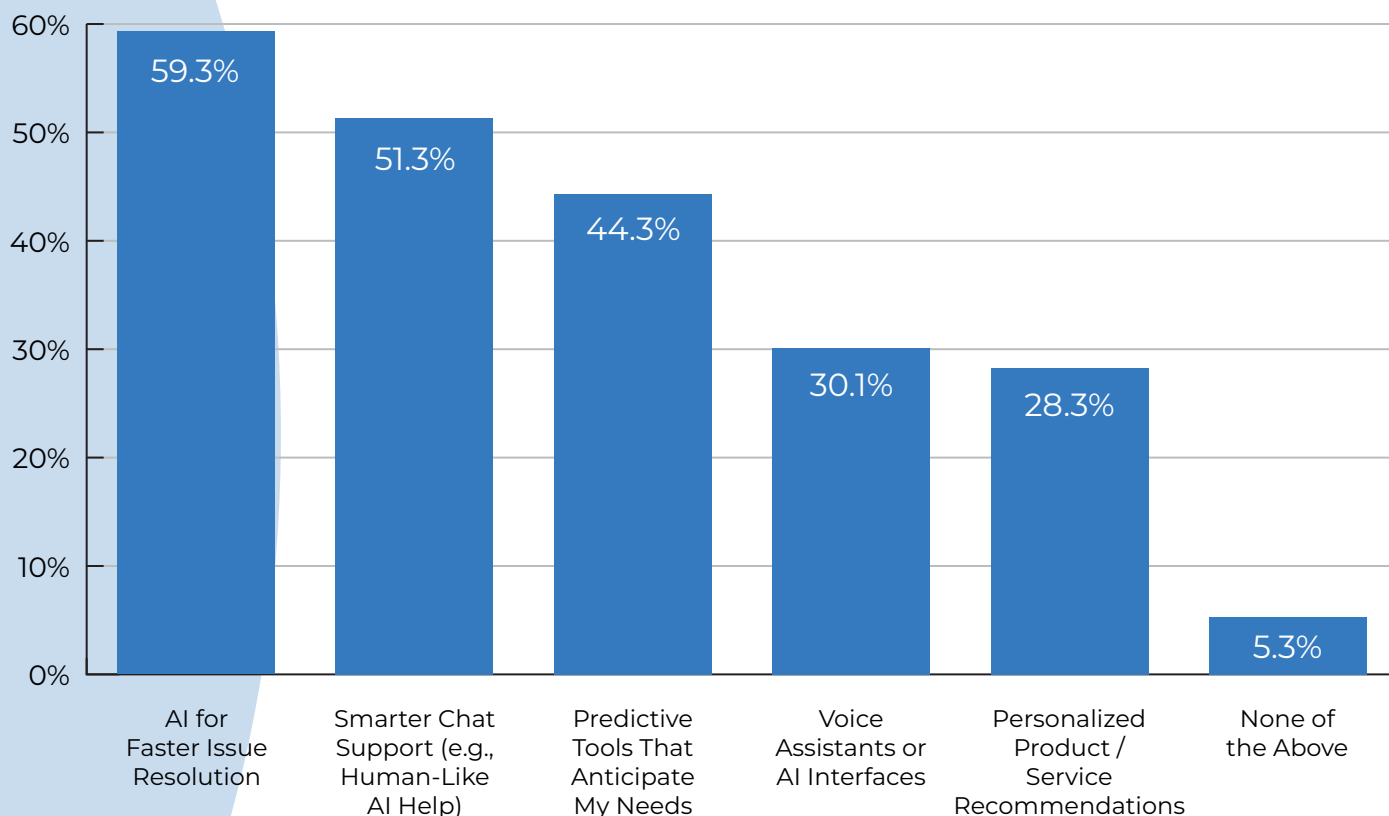
## Faster Issue Resolution Is the Most Sought-After AI Innovation

People clearly have very high expectations for AI innovation – most notably a majority who would be most excited to see AI for faster issue resolution.

This is closely followed by smarter chat support, which is perhaps less of a surprise given the ongoing issues people are experiencing with chatbots right now.

Interestingly, 5.3% of survey respondents said “none of the above” – leaving a question around what exactly they would be most excited to see and where they believe AI will have the biggest impact.

## Which Types of AI Innovations Would You be Most Excited to See?



## **“The Solution Ecosystem Is Continually Improving, and the Cost Is Reducing – Meaning AI Will Become More Accessible to More Businesses”**

*“With new surveys popping up every month showing that consumers feel customer service is getting worse, it’s no surprise to see that the number-one innovation businesses are excited to see is one focused around providing faster resolution.*

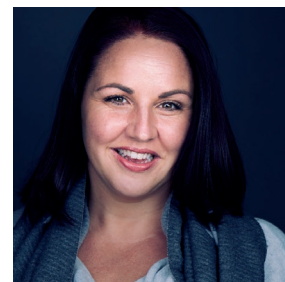
*2026 should resolutely be the year of a new contact centre success metric that combines Average Speed of Answer and First Contact Resolution. I played with ChatGPT on this and, after a bit of back and forth, we came up with the ‘Right Score’ (the % of contacts ‘resolved in good time, high quality, and at the first touch’).*

**💬 Right Score** (the % of contacts ‘resolved in good time, high quality, and at the first touch’).

*That aside, the advancements in AI and the avalanche of options available to brands mean that the race to deliver optimal solutions will be making the vendors invest heavily. This all creates a solution ecosystem that is continually improving, and the cost is reducing too – meaning they will become accessible to more businesses.*

*Businesses are right to be excited about the value these outlined AI capabilities will bring to their customer value and their cost to serve.*

*It is interesting to see that over 50% are excited to see how smarter chatbots will help them. The inference here is that they have a first-generation chatbot that is not delivering, and they are enthused by the potential of re-imagining their bot experience by orchestrating their intent-based bots with generative AI, and potentially agentic AI capabilities. This is valid, but intent-based bots designed well have merit, and the failure in their first generation might be genetically linked to their appreciation of the customer and their design focus – not, as with all these new toys, solved simply by adding new functionality.”*



**Nerys Corfield, Director of Injection Consulting Limited**

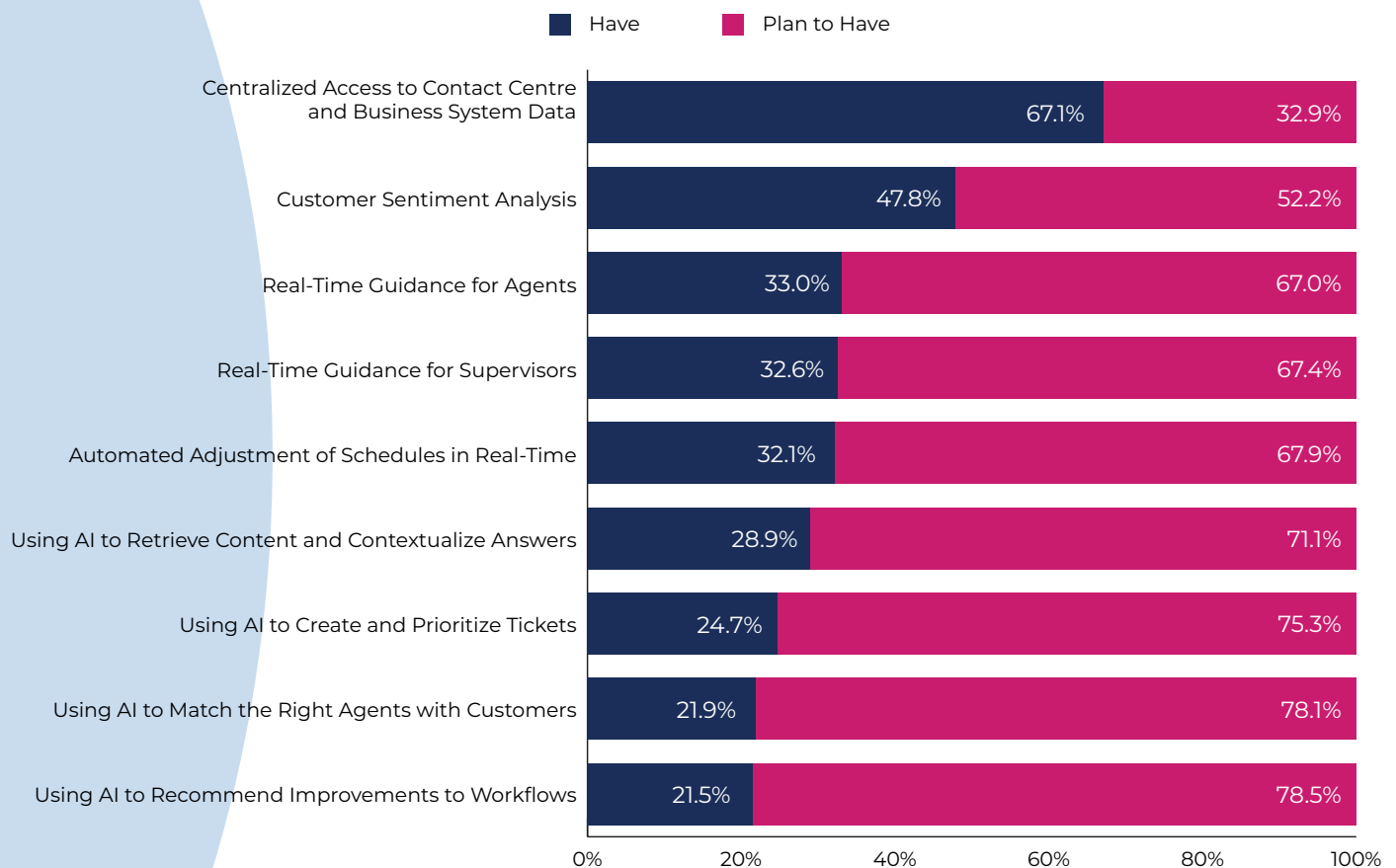
# Which of the Following Do You Already Have, or Plan to Implement in the Next Year?

## A Fifth Already Using AI Features in Day-to-Day Contact Centre Life

It's very exciting to see around a fifth of contact centres already using AI features in day-to-day contact centre life – with 28.9% using AI to retrieve content and contextualize answers, 24.7% to create and prioritize tickets, and 21.9% to match the right agents with customers, whilst a further 21.5% are using AI to recommend improvements to workflows.

To see so many say they also plan to have these features shows that momentum is clearly building in AI usage in contact centres right now – boding well for the year ahead.

## Which of the Following do You Already Have, or Plan to Implement in the Next Year?



## ***“This Extensive Shopping List Is a Key Talking Point in Many Boardrooms Right Now”***

*“This extensive shopping list of technologies – which are focused on driving improvements across the customer experience, the advisor experience, and the operational experience – are taking hold and becoming the key talking points in boardrooms and the CX-focused C-suite in businesses up and down the land.*

*The speed that tech vendors have spun up AI products which deliver material benefits is dizzying. The gold rush to deploy these agent-focused support tools is really positive – and tools like agent assist, real-time knowledge support, and supervisor support are reducing the fear and increasing the confidence in the frontline. All so they are much better equipped to serve customers effectively. This also means agents are likely to stay in post for longer, thus reducing attrition and minimizing the number of new agents who will not be delivering optimal customer service because they are moving up through the competency curve.*

*The other tools on this shopping list are focused on driving operational efficiencies and/or improved customer experiences through more efficient routing and prioritization of requests. I do think there is a slight tension between two of these tools, though, and encourage businesses not to deploy technology for technology’s sake, as there may be unintended consequences.*

*Contact centres deliver efficiencies through having a one-to-many resource model. AI that matches the right advisor with the right customer can reduce that flexibility and arguably should not be necessary if all agents are comfortably and consistently improving their quality through more extensive quality monitoring (via AI) and have real-time access to knowledge.*

*The foundation layer to delivering any of this list effectively lies in the requirement to centralize data, so it is good to see that this is scoring highly. With so many businesses planning on deploying swathes of AI to deliver value, it is really critical not to do this as an isolated AI project. It is organizational change and – to avoid low adoption rates or a disenfranchised workforce – an organizational approach to deploying it should be prioritized.”*



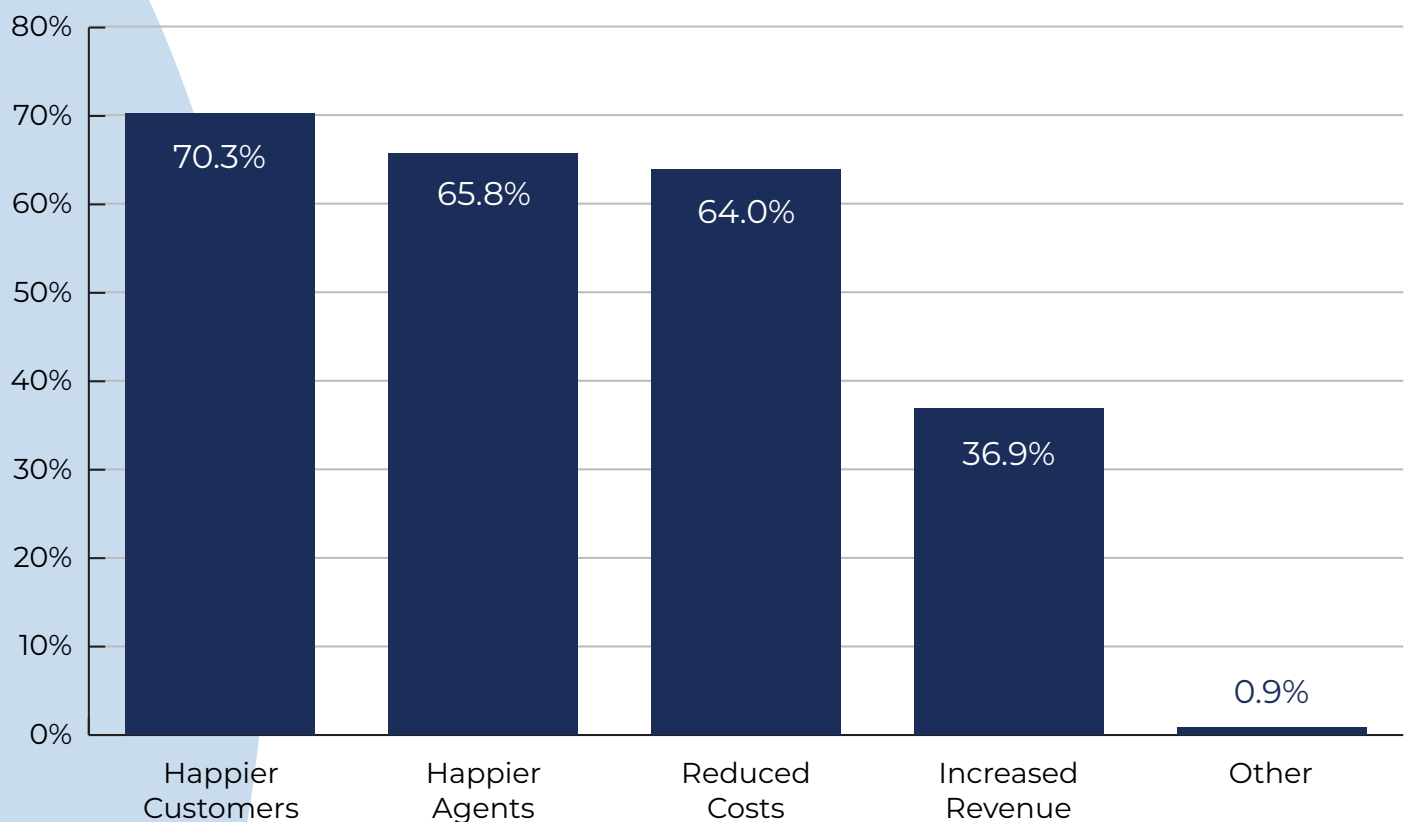
**Nerys Corfield, Director of Injection Consulting Limited**

# Where Do You See AI Achieving the Best Results Within the Next 2 Years?

## People Are Taking a Refreshingly Holistic View on Where AI Will Make a Difference

It's refreshing to see that AI is expected to have the best results in making customers happier in the next two years. Even more so to see happier customers closely ranked alongside happier agents and reduced costs – suggesting that contact centre professionals are taking a holistic view of where AI will make a difference.

### Where Do You See AI Achieving the Best Results Within the Next 2 Years?



## ***“The Most Powerful Outcomes of AI Show Up in Human Experience”***

*“AI is already reshaping contact centres, but the story behind these numbers reveals a deeper truth: organizations aren’t just chasing efficiency any more. They’re waking up to the fact that the most powerful outcomes of AI show up in human experience: customers who feel heard and agents who feel capable. That’s where the energy is, because experience is the currency that compounds.*

*Cost reduction shows up strongly, but the leaders worth watching understand that it’s not an independent outcome. It’s the echo of smarter design. Cut cost without elevating experience and you accelerate churn. Align AI to reduce customer and employee effort, and the savings follow naturally and sustainably.*

*Revenue sits at the bottom today, not because AI lacks the capacity to drive growth, but because too few organizations have rewired their commercial motion to take advantage of it. Over the next two years, that gap will close. AI’s predictive, personalization, and proactive capabilities will shift from theoretical to operational, enabling companies to anticipate demand, prevent attrition, and create value in ways that frontline teams alone cannot scale.*

*The unifying thread across these outcomes is capacity. AI creates it. The differentiator is how leaders put that capacity to work: building trust, deepening relationships, and turning every interaction into a force multiplier for the business.”*



**Justin Robbins, Founder & Principal Analyst at Metric Sherpa**

# Quality Assurance

**The Quality Assurance chapter is sponsored by Scorebuddy.**



# Scorebuddy

QUALITY SCORING SYSTEM

Scorebuddy is a cloud based Quality Assessment platform used to measure and improve staff performance by evaluating multi-channel customer interactions in contact centers.

Together with its contact center quality management solution, Scorebuddy has an integrated Quality Assurance BI solution, Coaching module and customer sentiment survey tool.

Scorebuddy helps improve agent consistency and increase agent engagement, which in-turn improves the overall customer experience. Scorebuddy is designed to collect data quickly and accurately, store it centrally for collaboration with agents, and generate instant analysis and reporting.

[Explore Scorebuddy's Quality Assurance Solutions](#)

**The Quality Assurance chapter has insights from the following people:**

**Adam Boelke, Dara Kiernan, Dan Pratt and Garry Gormley**

# What Would You Like to Change Most Within Your Quality Monitoring Programme?

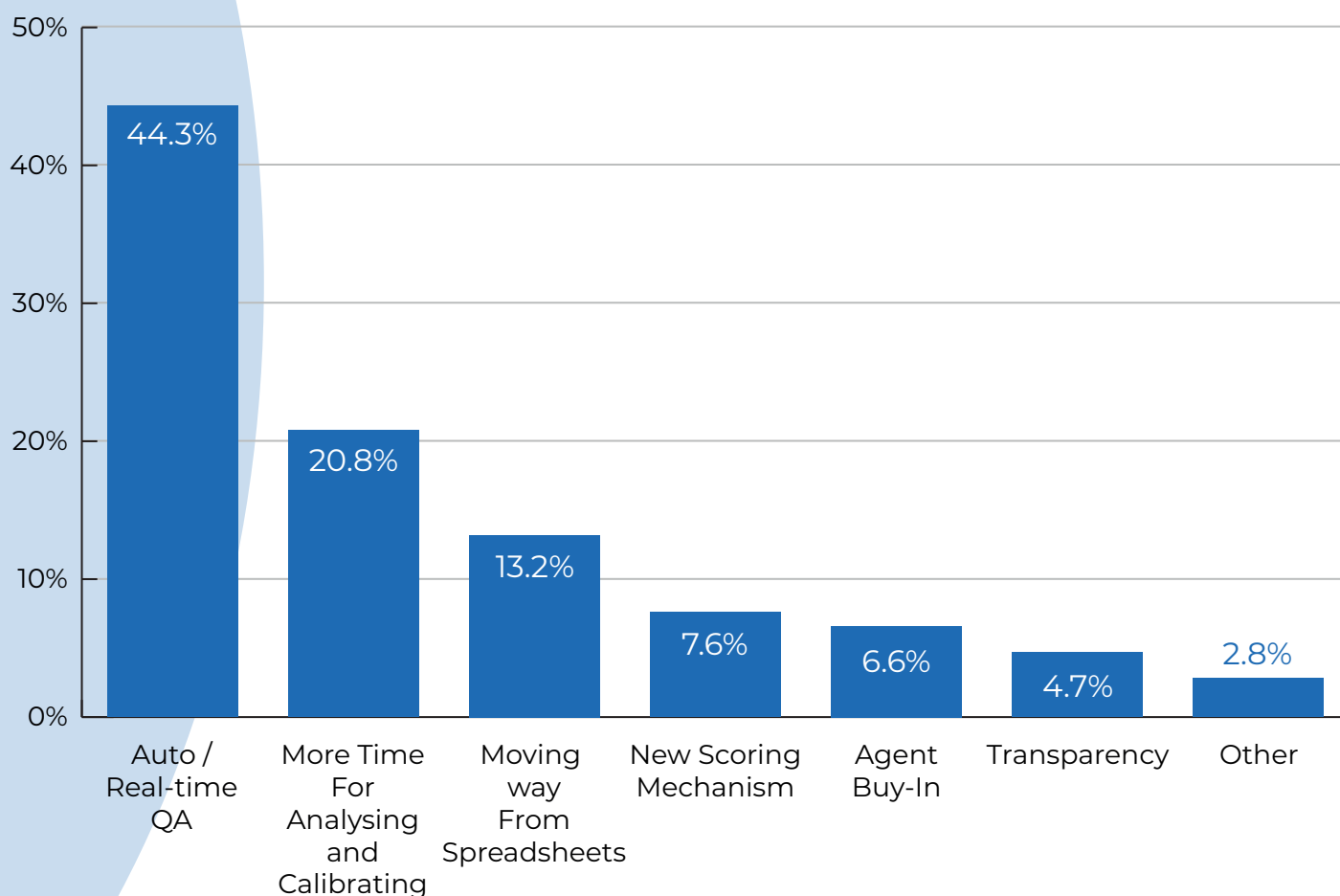
## The Appetite to Switch to Auto/Real-Time QA Is Clear

A new entry in this year's findings, the appetite for auto/real-time QA is clear – with 44.3% saying it's what they'd most like to change within their quality monitoring programme.

The scope of the other responses puts the spotlight on just how challenging the role of a QA is – with 20.8% saying they would like to see more time for analysing and calibrating and 6.6% seeking more agent buy-in.

The findings also reveal just how much catching up some still need to do to align with the latest technology capabilities out there – with a further 13.2% wanting to move away from spreadsheets, whilst 7.6% want a new scoring mechanism.

## What Would You Like to Change Most Within Your Quality Monitoring Programme?



## **“Real-Time QA Is an Opportunity to Shift From Reactive Analysis to Proactive Action”**

*“Quality assurance has always been the cornerstone for improving customer experience and creating a culture of continuous improvement, but traditionally, it has always felt a little like reviewing the ‘black box’ after the flight has landed.*

*Now that AI-driven real-time sentiment analysis and behaviour monitoring is more accessible, it’s not surprising that auto/real-time QA is the most desired change leaders would like to see.*

*This is an opportunity to shift from reactive analysis to proactive action, to gain real-time insights and course-correct during the customer interaction itself, to improve FCR, sales, and customer satisfaction on the spot!*

*Even without the real-time component, utilizing speech-to-text capabilities to evaluate 100% of agent interactions (vs. the small sample size that a QA agent could listen to in the past) significantly improves the balanced insights needed to develop agents and improve customers’ connections with a company.*

**“** *Calibrating what you think is a good call with your agent’s definition, your managers’ definition, and even your boss’s definition is critical to progress.*

*I loved seeing more time for analysing and calibrating as the next top choice. Calibrating what you think is a good call with your agent’s definition, your managers’ definition, and even your boss’s definition is critical to progress. I’ll never forget when my senior VP visited my centre and told me he no longer believed our stellar QA scores after listening to just ten random calls.*



*Moving away from spreadsheets and creating a new scoring mechanism shows leaders are looking for actionable insights beyond just ‘checking the box’ on a yes/no QA form. They’re looking for the details necessary to effectively develop the agent to improve their performance.*

*The most important part of the entire QA process has always been the coaching, and the new insights and capabilities available today turn QA into a high-performance engine for driving strong employee engagement and customer loyalty.”*

**Adam Boelke, Founder of the Alignment Advantage Group**

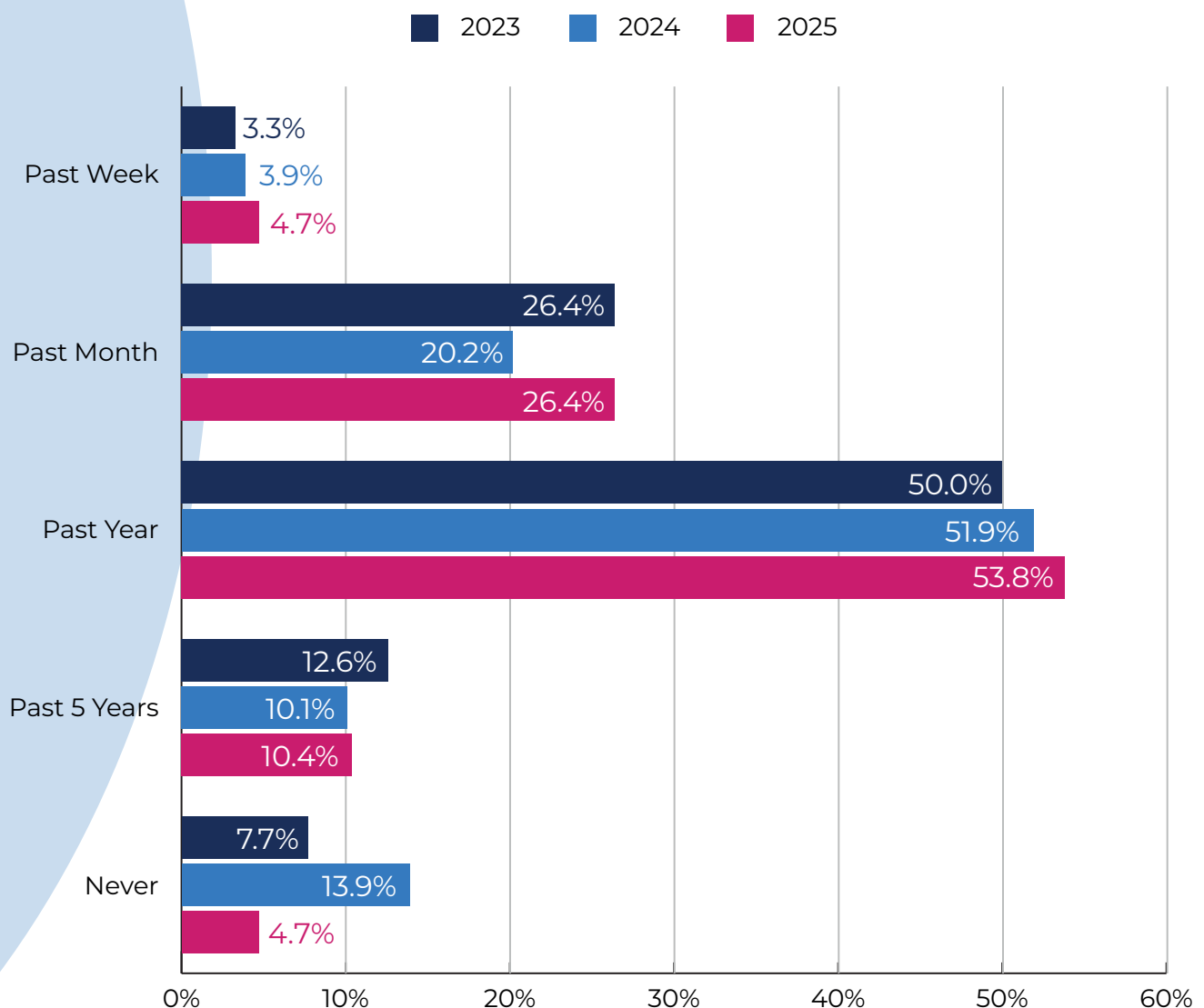
# When Did Your Company Last Change the Questions on Your Quality Scorecard?

## **“Changing a Quality Scorecard Is a Bit Like Changing Your Bedsheets”**

*“If these results tell us anything, it’s that changing a quality scorecard is a bit like changing your bedsheets. Everyone agrees it should happen regularly, most people do it eventually, and a brave few will even admit they’ve left it far too long – Ew!”*

*The results tell us that over half of companies (53.8%) last changed their scorecard in the past year. That’s encouraging – it shows us that leadership teams understand that customer expectations evolve quickly, and that measurement tools can’t stay frozen in time. But only 4.7% updated in the past week, which may suggest that most leaders still treat scorecards like an annual event rather than an everyday tool. Similarly, I wonder if the 53.8% are the same organizations that still deliver performance reviews on an annual basis rather than providing regular reviews throughout the year – I hope not.*

## **When Did Your Company Last Change the Questions on Your Quality Scorecard?**



**Here's the CX problem:** Customers aren't waiting a year for you to catch up. Their patience isn't measured in days any more – it's measured in swipes. If the experience doesn't meet expectations instantly, they swipe left, swipe away, or swipe into a competitor's arms. Today, everything is a swipe or a click: the taxi that arrives in minutes, the groceries that land at your door within the hour, the answer to a question in seconds. Against that backdrop, reviewing your scorecard once a year is like updating your script to remind agents to thank the customer for calling – while the customer has long since stopped calling and switched to digital. Organizations need to adapt and react faster than ever before – because in a swipe-based world, lagging behind isn't just risky, it's invisible.

“ Organizations need to adapt and react faster than ever before – because in a swipe-based world, lagging behind isn't just risky, it's invisible.

**And here's the leadership challenge:** Changing a scorecard feels risky. It forces leaders to question what's always been measured, admit that some metrics no longer matter, and be bold enough to focus on what truly does. Sometimes the hardest part of a process is to remove something from it. To close things off and put them to bed (hopefully in clean bedsheets) can cause anxiety within organizations, but yesterday's practices can't solve today's demands.

Leaders need to be fluent in adjusting and adapting, because both customers and staff are raising the bar every single day. Reactiveness is no longer an option – by the time you react, the moment has passed. And even being proactive – anticipating tomorrow's challenges – may already be too slow, because customer expectations are shifting in real time. The new mindset is being pre-emptive: moving so far ahead of the curve that you're shaping expectations before they're even voiced. That's the agility the modern customer experience demands.

The 26.4% who've updated in the past month – plus the 4.7% who did so in just the past week – are already thinking this way. They're treating scorecards as living documents – flexible frameworks that shift with customer behaviour, not rigid scripts laminated for eternity.

And those who haven't updated in five years (10.4%) or never (4.7%)? That's like still training staff on how to rewind VHS tapes – nostalgic, but not exactly useful.

The trend is clear: companies are waking up to the need for fresher, more flexible measurement. The leaders who thrive will be the ones who treat scorecards like app updates – small, regular tweaks that keep everything running smoothly. Because in the end, measurement isn't about ticking yesterday's boxes – it's about moving from reactive to proactive to truly pre-emptive.

The leaders who thrive will be the ones fluent in today's expectations, brave enough to shape tomorrow's, and fast enough to keep customers swiping right instead of swiping away.”

**Dara Kiernan, Leadership Development and Contact Centre Consultant**



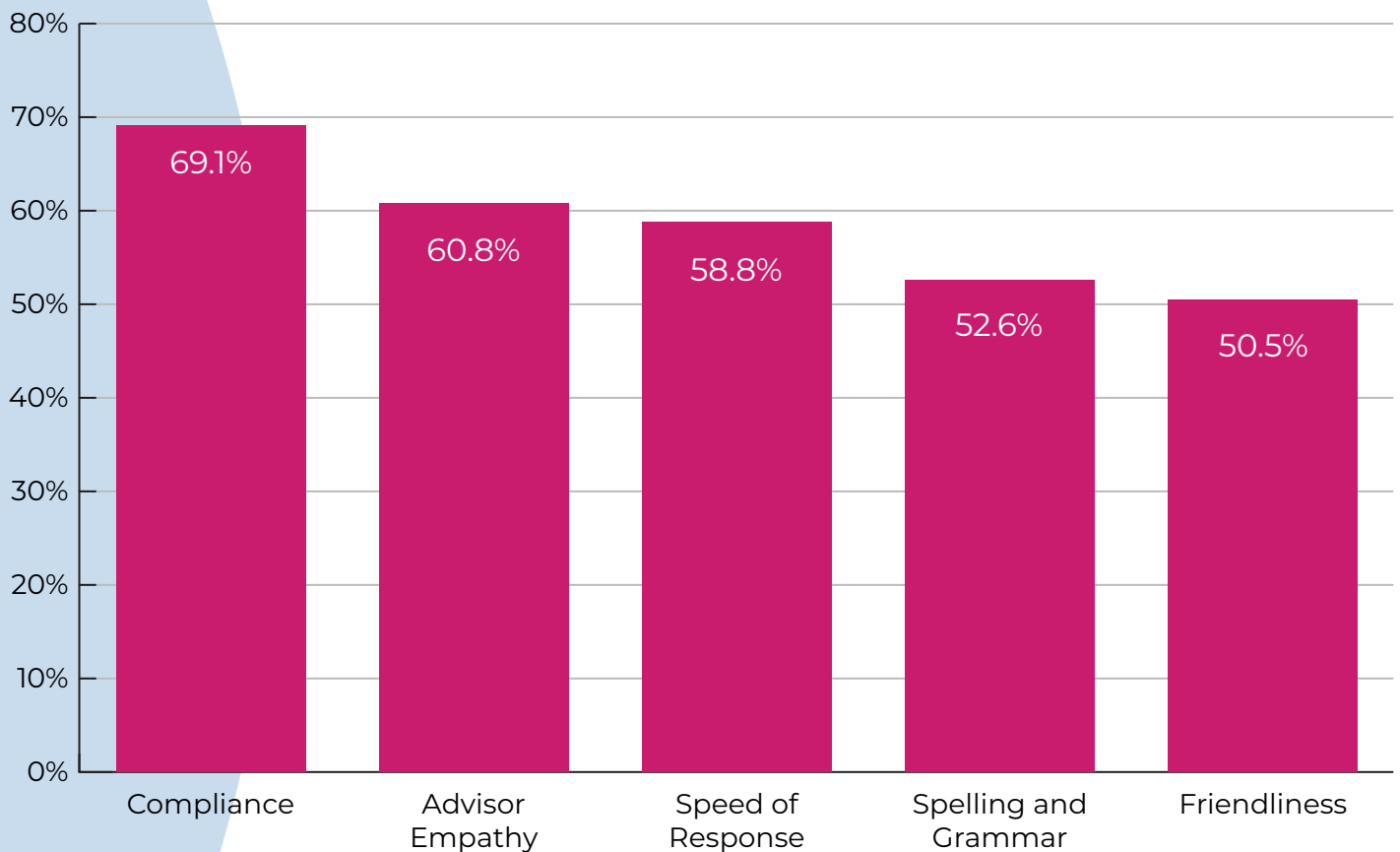
# Which Attributes Do You Measure on Digital Channels?

## ***“Today, Customers Expect Far More: Compliance, Empathy, and Meaningful Speed”***

*“Customer experience on digital channels is evolving fast. The days are long gone of businesses measuring success by how polite or grammatically correct an email was. Today, customers expect far more: compliance, empathy, and meaningful speed.*

*Compliance leads the way at 69.1%, followed by advisor empathy (60.8%) and speed of response (58.8%). Friendliness (50.5%) and spelling and grammar (52.6%) sit slightly lower. These may look like simple percentages, but they reflect powerful forces, regulatory, technological, and cultural, that are shaping the way organizations design customer experiences.*

## **Which Attributes Do You Measure on Digital Channels?**



*It's no surprise that compliance sits at the top. The regulatory environment has never been more demanding, particularly in industries like financial services, healthcare, and utilities.*

*Organizations understand that compliance isn't simply about avoiding penalties; it's about demonstrating responsibility and transparency to their customers. In an era of heightened scrutiny, compliance is now seen as a trust-building exercise. Customers want confidence that businesses are acting with integrity, and measurement in this area ensures that confidence can be consistently delivered.*

*The strong showing for advisor empathy highlights a critical shift. As digital interactions have become the norm, customers no longer view empathy as a 'soft skill' but as a measurable and valuable attribute. With automation and AI handling routine queries, the human advisor's role is increasingly to bring emotional intelligence into the conversation. Measuring empathy is not just about sentiment, it's about loyalty, retention, and long-term value, and I regularly work with organizations to translate empathy from an abstract idea into something tangible that can be trained, measured, and improved.*

“ Measuring empathy is not just about sentiment, it's about loyalty, retention, and long-term value...”

*Speed of response remains a core metric, but the context has changed. In the early years of digital service, speed often overshadowed quality; the faster, the better. Today, customers expect both. They want fast answers, but they also want accurate, empathetic, and compliant ones. This evolution explains why speed is important but not dominant in the results. The real challenge is designing digital journeys where efficiency and quality work hand in hand.*

*Friendliness and spelling/grammar sit lower, but that doesn't mean they're irrelevant. Instead, they've become the minimum standard customers expect. Professionalism, tone, and clarity no longer differentiate an organization; they are the baseline for digital interactions. Companies only really notice gaps here when things go wrong. The real competitive advantage now lies in what goes beyond these basics: empathy, compliance, and quality of resolution.*

*Three key forces stand out.*

*First, regulatory pressure is driving compliance to the top of the agenda.*

*Second, AI and automation are taking over transactional tasks, freeing human advisors to focus on higher-value interactions.*

*Third, customer expectations have matured: people expect efficiency and professionalism, but they are increasingly loyal to organizations that show empathy and integrity.*

*We're seeing a market that has moved beyond measuring superficial markers of service quality. Spelling, grammar, and friendliness still matter, but they no longer set businesses apart. The real markers of success are compliance, empathy, and speed balanced with quality.”*

**Dan Pratt, Founder & Director of DAP Consultancy**



# Which Quality Tools Do You Use?

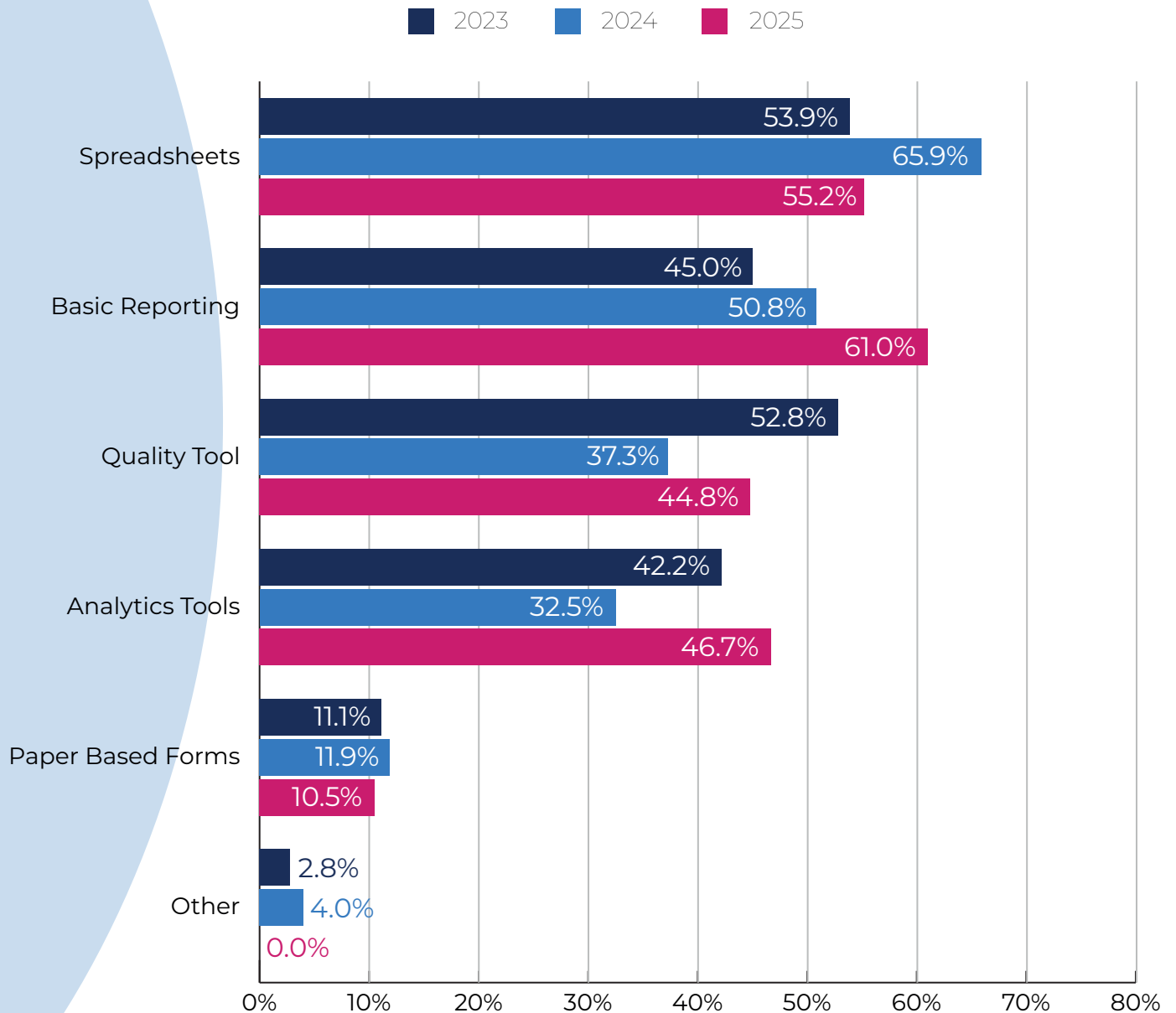
## Reliance on Spreadsheets and Paper-Based Forms Is Decreasing

It is encouraging to see the reliance on spreadsheets (down from 65.9% to 55.2%), and notable gains in the use of basic reporting, quality, and analytics tools.

Hopefully, these shifts will continue in the years to come, as there are massive wins to be had here in terms of efficiency and transparency across the contact centre – particularly when 100% of calls are analysed instead of a mere handful.

Similarly to what we've seen elsewhere in the report, there are smarter ways of doing things in 2025, and it's great to see a shift underway as contact centres prioritize introducing these tools.

## Which Quality Tools Do You Use?



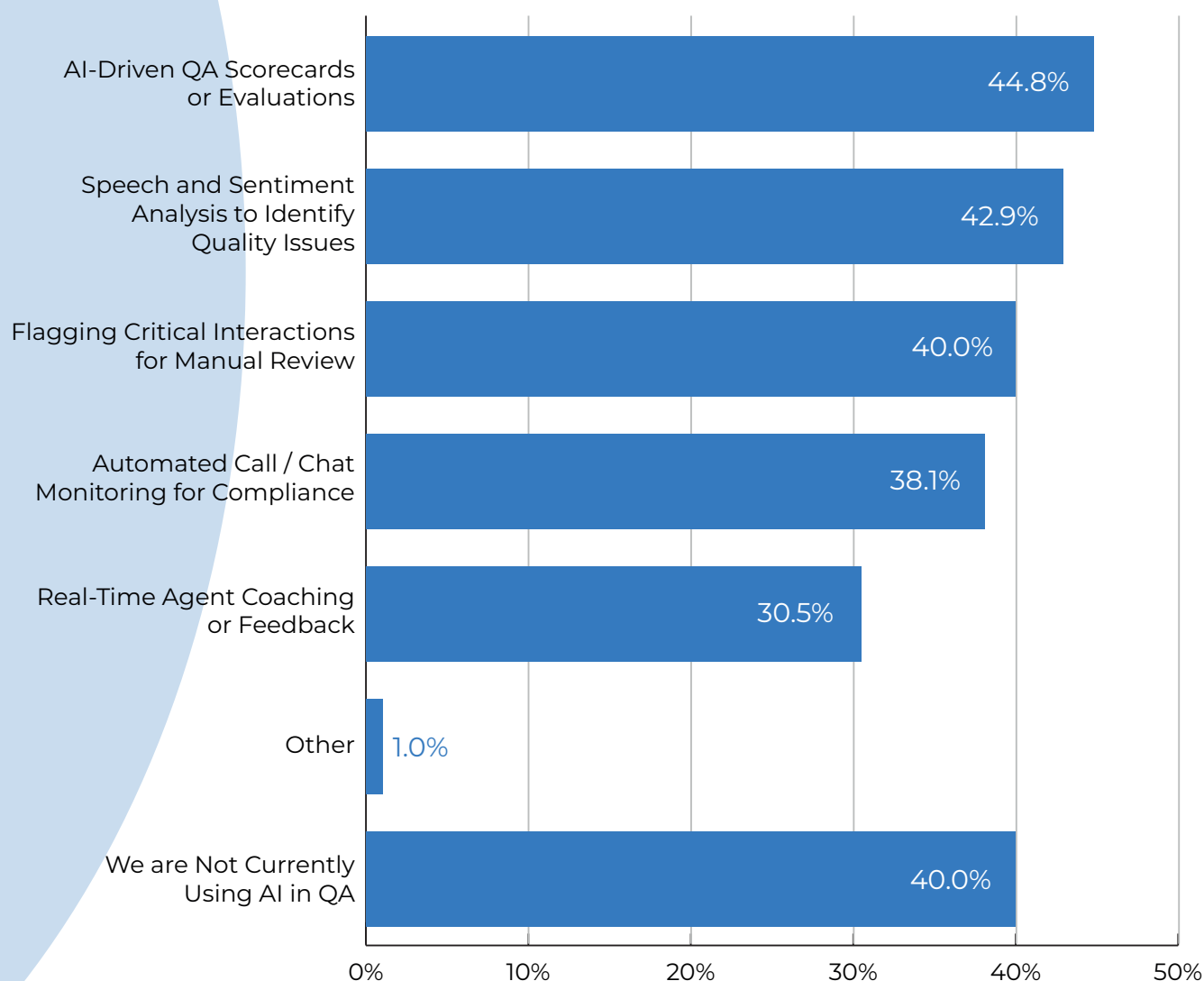
# In What Ways Is Your Organization Currently Using or Planning to Use AI to Support Quality Assurance Efforts?

## AI Can Give Time-Poor QA Teams the Insights and Visibility They Need to Succeed

To see AI-driven QA scorecards, speech and sentiment analysis to identify quality issues, and flagging critical interactions for manual review all ranked highly here is no real surprise – as it emphasizes what we’ve seen elsewhere in the report, that QA professionals are typically time-poor and in desperate need of greater visibility to better support their teams.

It’s equally interesting to see real-time agent coaching or feedback noted by just a third of professionals, suggesting this is an area where people feel more human-to-human (H2H) support is needed. In addition, 40% are not currently using AI in QA at all – perhaps due to lack of time and budget on the current business roadmap or priorities being focused elsewhere.

## In What Ways is Your Organization Currently Using or Planning to Use AI to Support Quality Assurance Efforts?



## **“AI Can Drive Great ROI and Efficiency Savings Across an Operation”**

*“It’s no surprise the top three rated use cases for AI centre around quality management. Given the increasing focus from the regulator on consumer protection, firms are being called on to do more to demonstrate that their customers understand their products and services and are not being misled or mis-sold to. A robust way to attest to this confidently is to use AI-driven scorecards to do the heavy lifting with Auto QA.*

*We know most people only scan around 1–3% of customer conversations, which is not nearly enough for a lot of industries – regardless of the level of regulation. This volume of calls represents a very small percentage of what most teams handle, which means reacting too late to potential breaches and systemic failure areas – which could drive larger re-dress initiatives.*

*So, looking at the priorities here, AI-driven QA, speech and sentiment analysis, and flags for critical incidents for manual review all point in the direction of increased consumer duty pressures and proactive management of the quality agenda.*

*The benefits of this write the business case with potential savings in resource through automated QA scoring, mitigation of fines and re-dress, identification of process improvement opportunities, and increased oversight of agent capability. All these coupled together can drive a great ROI and efficiency saving across the operation.”*

**Garry Gormley, Founder of FAB Solutions**



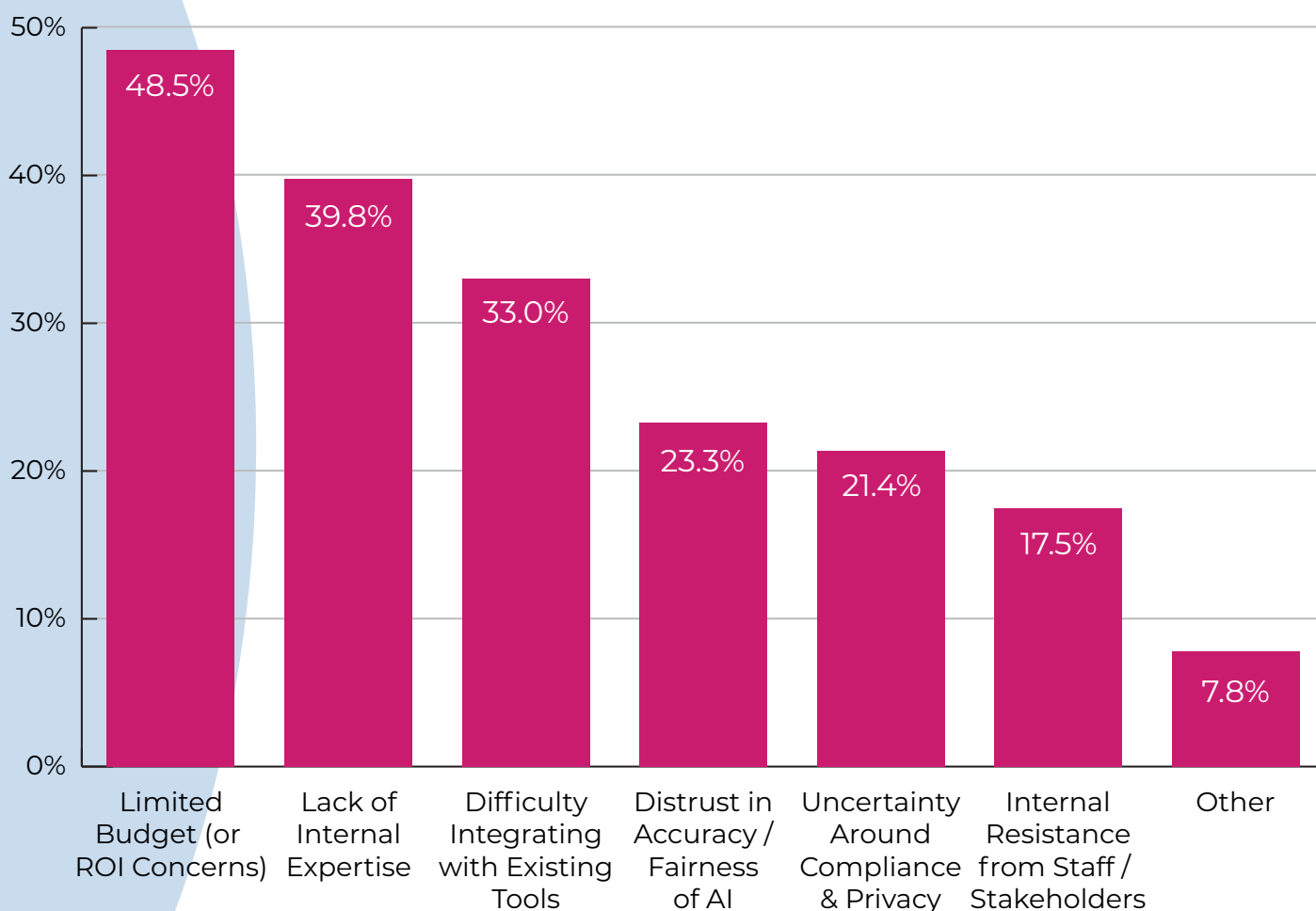
# What Is the Biggest Barrier to Implementing AI in Your QA Programme?

## Integration Challenges and Lack of Skills Holding Teams Back From Bringing AI Into QA

Given that budget is consistently blamed year-on-year as a barrier to running a dream contact centre, it's unsurprising to see it cited here too.

What's interesting, however, is how closely this is followed by the lack of internal expertise and difficulty integrating with existing tools – suggesting there's a lot of work to do behind the scenes to make sure that both existing people and technology are up to scratch to truly embrace what AI has to offer.

### What Is the Biggest Barrier to Implementing AI in Your QA Programme?



## ***“Think About the Key Use Cases That Will Guarantee Some Return on Investment”***

*“Whilst technology is developing at a fast rate, the internal skills and knowledge of those who want to access these tools isn’t moving at the same speed. This means that contact centres need to look externally to experts to help them solve the problem. But are they clear on the problem they are trying to solve? That remains to be seen.*

*With lots of competing priorities and the answer to all of them being AI, it’s no wonder contact centre leaders are struggling to decide what to do and how to approach these problems – especially when, even before looking at tech, some AI experts want to charge a fortune to do the discovery work required.*

*This leads to the first barrier around budget or concern about the ROI. The advice here is to start small! Think about the key use cases that will almost guarantee you some return on your investment.*

*Auto QA is a very attractive one here – although this does require a lot of work upfront to look at scorecards and events and transcript accuracy. Smaller use cases like auto-summarization are likely to give a quicker return and are much easier to deploy. They also showcase the ROI much more easily in the form of AHT and wrap reductions, so don’t bite off more than you can chew to begin with.*

*The next big area is integration, as this can always present an issue if you are on premise or have particular needs of data centres – so make this part of your scoping questions for any suppliers, including how they can integrate into your existing stack. It could be some clever middleware or bridge integrations, or it could be more data extracts and dumps into a data lake somewhere so that it can be manipulated. Either way, be sure to have this conversation with your eyes wide open and with data security at the forefront of the conversation!*

*The final point around internal skills isn’t uncommon, as lots of us are still hiring and upskilling our teams in the technology surrounding AI – and if you don’t have the skills and don’t have time to upskill internally, then outsource to those that can help!*

*Find a recommended supplier who has experience and, at the same time, assign internal resources to become champions to work with them and learn the ropes as a process owner and SME. We all have to start somewhere!”*

**Garry Gormley, Founder of FAB Solutions**



# Workforce Management

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**The Workforce Management chapter is sponsored by Peopleware.**

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**The Workforce Management chapter has insights from the following people:**

**Phil Anderson, Dan Smitley and Juanita Coley**



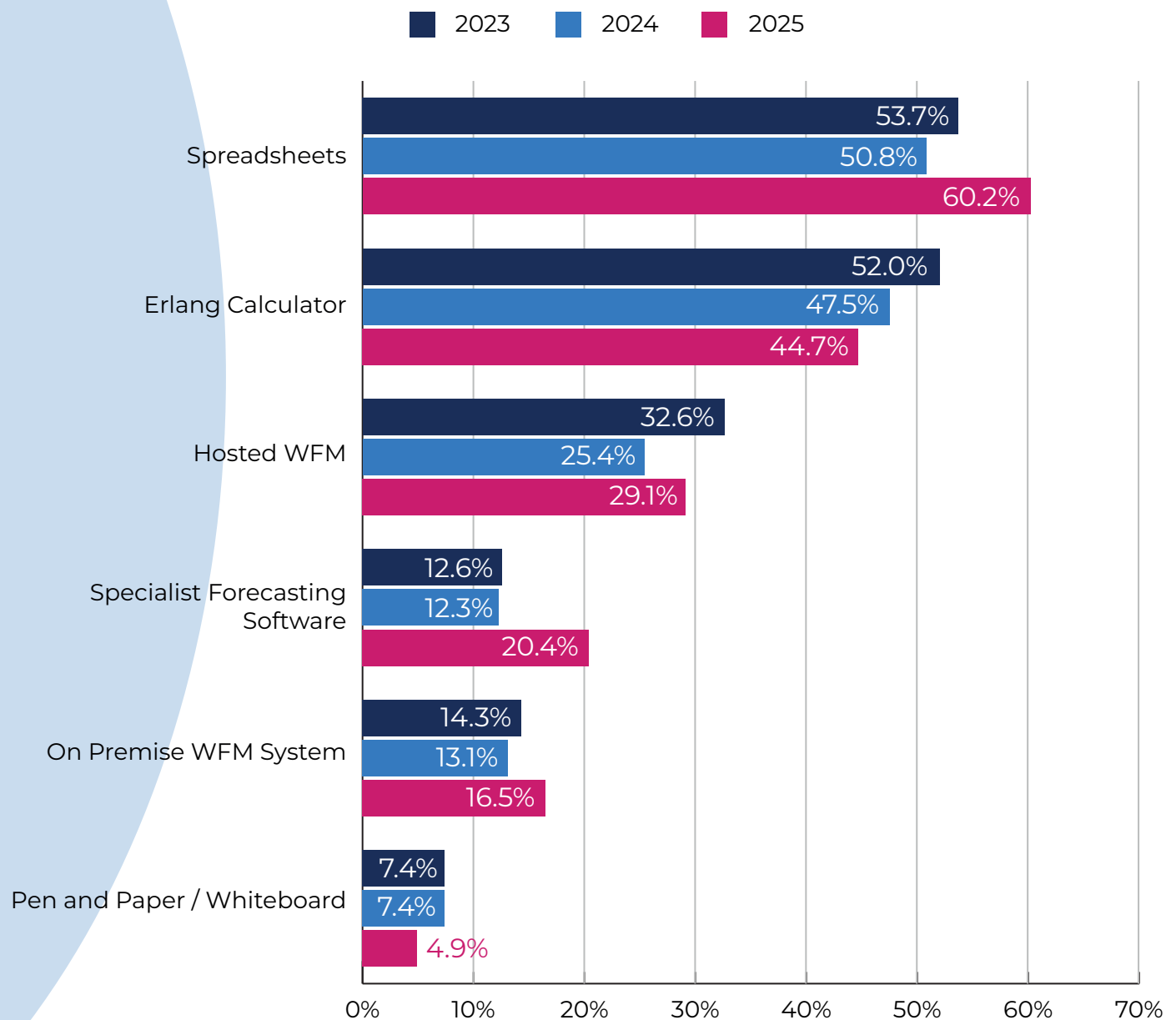
# What Equipment Do You Use for Forecasting and Scheduling?

## WFM System Usage Continues to Grow – But Many Still Rely on Spreadsheets

It's fascinating to see the breakdown here of those who stated they have some kind of WFM system in place (as seen in [Question 2](#)) split across 29.1% using hosted WFM, 20.4% using specialist forecasting software, and 16.5% using on-premise WFM systems – collectively standing at 66%, and up on the 50.8% seen in the 2024 findings.

Overall, this highlights the continued growth in this space, as resource planning teams focus more and more on AI, automation, and simplification, and increasingly realize the limitations of Excel in achieving these goals.

## What Equipment Do You Use for Forecasting and Scheduling?



That being said, spreadsheets continue to hold their ground – used by 60.2% of teams – with some even still using pen and paper/ whiteboards for their forecasting and scheduling. All in all, highlighting that there's still a long way to go before we see consistency in this space.

### **Reliance on Standalone Erlang Calculators Continues to Decline**

It is also interesting to see the year-on-year decline in the use of standalone Erlang calculators – dropping from 52% in 2023, down to 47.5% in 2024, and then down again to 44.7% in 2025.

Notably, they are still being used by almost half of contact centres – but it will be interesting to see how this trend unfolds as WFM system adoption continues to increase, alongside the integration of new AI-powered features, in the years ahead.



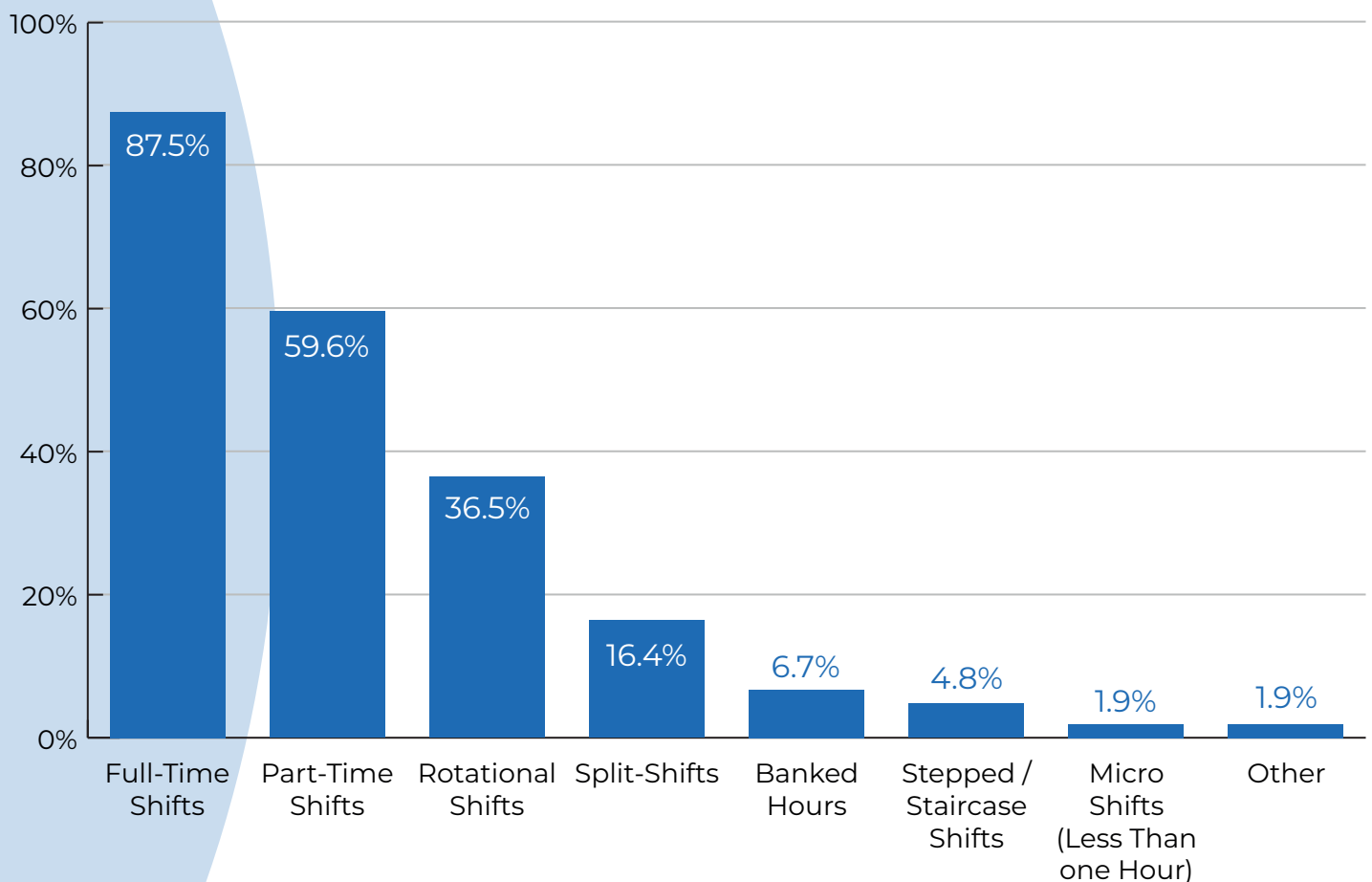
# Which Shift Patterns Do You Use in Your Contact Centre?

## Almost 5% Embracing the Win-Win of Staircase Shifts

For the first time, we asked who is using stepped/staircase shifts – and 4.8% of contact centres said they are embracing the benefits of this approach, thus giving agents the opportunity to work longer days on Mondays and Tuesdays (for example) in return for shortened shifts on Fridays. This is a win-win solution, often used to help tackle demand at peak times early on in the week, while letting agents reclaim some of their weekend when demand is quieter.

*Note, as these are typically against full-time contracts, it's likely this has taken away some of the year-on-year volume from those saying they use full-time shifts in their contact centres.*

## Which Shift Patterns Do You Use in Your Contact Centre?



## Are Micro-Shifts and Split-Shifts Making a Return?

It is also interesting to see the use of micro-shifts on the rise, as well as a slight increase in those using split-shifts – both of which seemed to be on the decline in a post-Covid world with the return to the office and hybrid working. It will be interesting to keep a close eye on this and see if this U-turn continues.

|                                   | 2021  | 2022  | 2023  | 2024  | 2025  |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Full-Time Shifts                  | 90.2% | 90.7% | 90.5% | 93.5% | 87.5% |
| Part-Time Shifts                  | 47.0% | 55.2% | 58.7% | 57.3% | 59.6% |
| Rotational Shifts                 | 36.0% | 32.8% | 31.8% | 33.1% | 36.5% |
| Split-Shifts                      | 19.5% | 20.0% | 21.2% | 14.5% | 16.4% |
| Banked Hours                      | 6.7%  | 9.3%  | 12.9% | 7.3%  | 6.7%  |
| Stepped / Staircase Shifts        | N / A | N / A | N / A | N / A | 4.8%  |
| Micro-Shifts (less than one hour) | 1.8%  | 1.0%  | 0.6%  | 0.0%  | 1.9%  |
| Other                             | 4.3%  | 1.7%  | 4.5%  | 1.6%  | 1.9%  |

### **“Mixing Full- and Part-Time Patterns Can Often Help Improve the Scheduling Fit”**

*“Flexibility is not a one-size-fits-all initiative, it should be a customizable suite of options tailored to your people, business goals, and customer expectations. This includes a wide range of shift templates and supporting practices.*

*Not surprisingly, most organizations use full-time shift patterns; however, what is interesting is that not all do. Matching opening times with demand and full-time shift patterns can often lead to known overstaffing during certain intervals. Therefore, mixing full- and part-time patterns can often help improve the scheduling fit. So, it's also interesting that only 60% use part-time shifts.*

*Split-shifts are another way of improving the schedule fit, along with providing flexibility during the middle of the shift. This works for some people, often with specific flexibility needs or preferences. This can also be hugely useful for those working from home, who don't have to commute at the start/end of each working window. It is surprising that still only a low percentage (16% for 2025) utilize this type of shift pattern. As mentioned earlier, it may not be for everyone, but it definitely works for some.*

*Banked hours is another hugely useful flexibility tool, which helps everyone when done well. There are risks, and it needs to be closely watched; however, there are many case studies which prove both its tactical and strategic success. It is therefore a little disappointing that only 6.7% use this.*

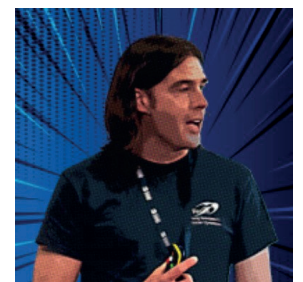
*Stepped/staircase shifts are a new choice for this year and an option which may have different interpretations. However, the essence is that different hours are worked on different days but still total the full contract hours for each week. This is, in some ways, a variation of time-banking, or annualized hours, but with more control over the hours worked. For its first year in the mix, it is good to see almost 5% giving it a go.*

*Shift reviews don't have to be just a tactical exercise. When guided by a strategic vision and supported by a well-developed flexibility toolkit, they become a powerful tool for shaping the future of work in your organization.*

*So, keep asking yourself:*

- Are we still designing shifts around outdated constraints?*
- Have we truly explored the flexibility we could offer?”*

**Phil Anderson, CEO of The Forum**



# What Is Your Biggest Scheduling Problem?

## Contact Centres Are Rising to the Challenge of Handling Absence and Lateness

Somewhat unsurprisingly, dealing with absence and lateness is still cited as the biggest scheduling problem year-on-year.

However, it's promising to see that this has dropped from 47.1% to 39.4%, suggesting that contact centres are taking proactive measures to address high levels of absence and lateness, a trend that hopefully continues into 2026 and beyond!

|                                                             | 2020  | 2021  | 2022  | 2023  | 2024  | 2025  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Dealing with Absence and Lateness                           | 28.7% | 25.4% | 34.2% | 35.7% | 47.1% | 39.4% |
| Volatility / Peaks in the Number of Calls / Contacts        | 29.1% | 29.0% | 29.6% | 25.7% | 22.0% | 30.8% |
| Meeting Service Levels Efficiently                          | 16.1% | 24.9% | 12.9% | 16.8% | 16.3% | 11.5% |
| Requests for Holidays and Time Off                          | 7.9%  | 8.5%  | 10.8% | 12.9% | 7.3%  | 8.7%  |
| Getting User Buy-in / Schedules Do Not Fit User Preferences | 6.3%  | 7.3%  | 7.3%  | 5.6%  | 4.9%  | 7.7%  |
| Other                                                       | 11.9% | 4.9%  | 5.2%  | 3.3%  | 2.4%  | 1.9%  |

## “Contact Centres Are Actually Well Positioned to Use Varying Start/Stop Times and Schedule Lengths, but Not Enough Companies Lean Into That”

*“I see absence and lateness still showing up so highly because contact centres have historically been entry-level roles. These are jobs often filled by people who may not care so much about the work, so they approach schedules with a little more carefreeness. That creates a challenge for WFM, but I also see it as a positive.*

*Mainly this is because contact centres are one of the few industries that act as a development engine – people can still start here and pivot into other parts of the business. A lot of other entry-level roles don't offer that same kind of growth opportunity. So, lateness and absence, to me, really come down to the difficulty of scheduling an entry-level workforce.*

*On volatility, I think a big driver is a lack of imagination. A lot of organizations limit themselves by forcing return-to-office or by sticking to rigid shift structures. Contact centres are actually well positioned to use varying start/stop times and schedule lengths, but not enough companies lean into that. If more organizations encouraged flexibility and innovation, peaks and valleys wouldn't feel like such a big scheduling problem.*

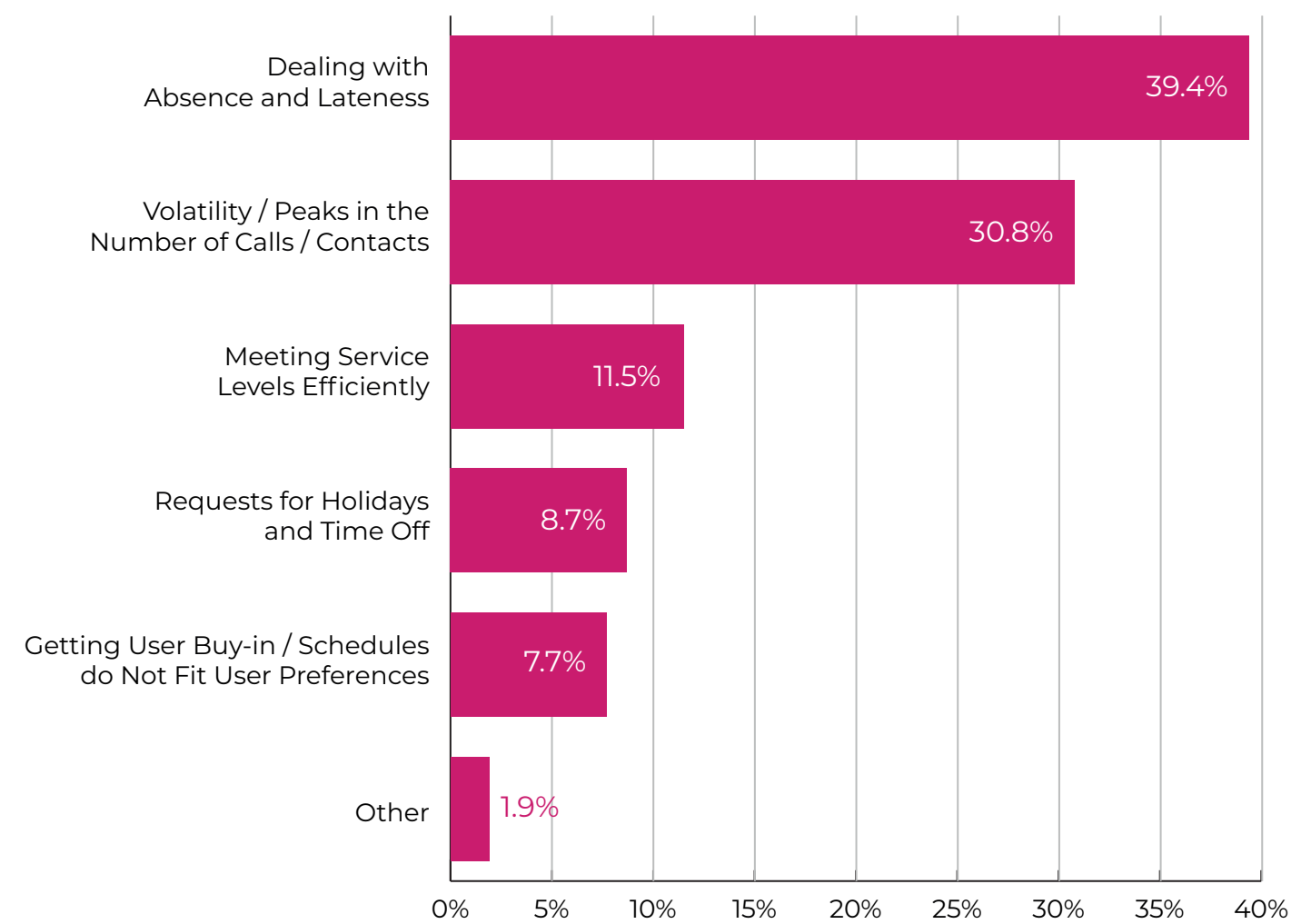


Attendance policies also make this worse. Too many companies still run with ‘two or three infractions and you’re fired’. That system discourages people once they’ve hit a danger zone. A points-based approach can make it easier to manage attendance and keep people engaged.

So overall, these results are driven by the same things that have always been challenges: entry-level roles with high absence, combined with organizations that haven’t yet gotten creative enough with schedules or attendance policies.”

Dan Smitley, Founder of 2:Three Consulting

### What is Your Biggest Scheduling Problem?



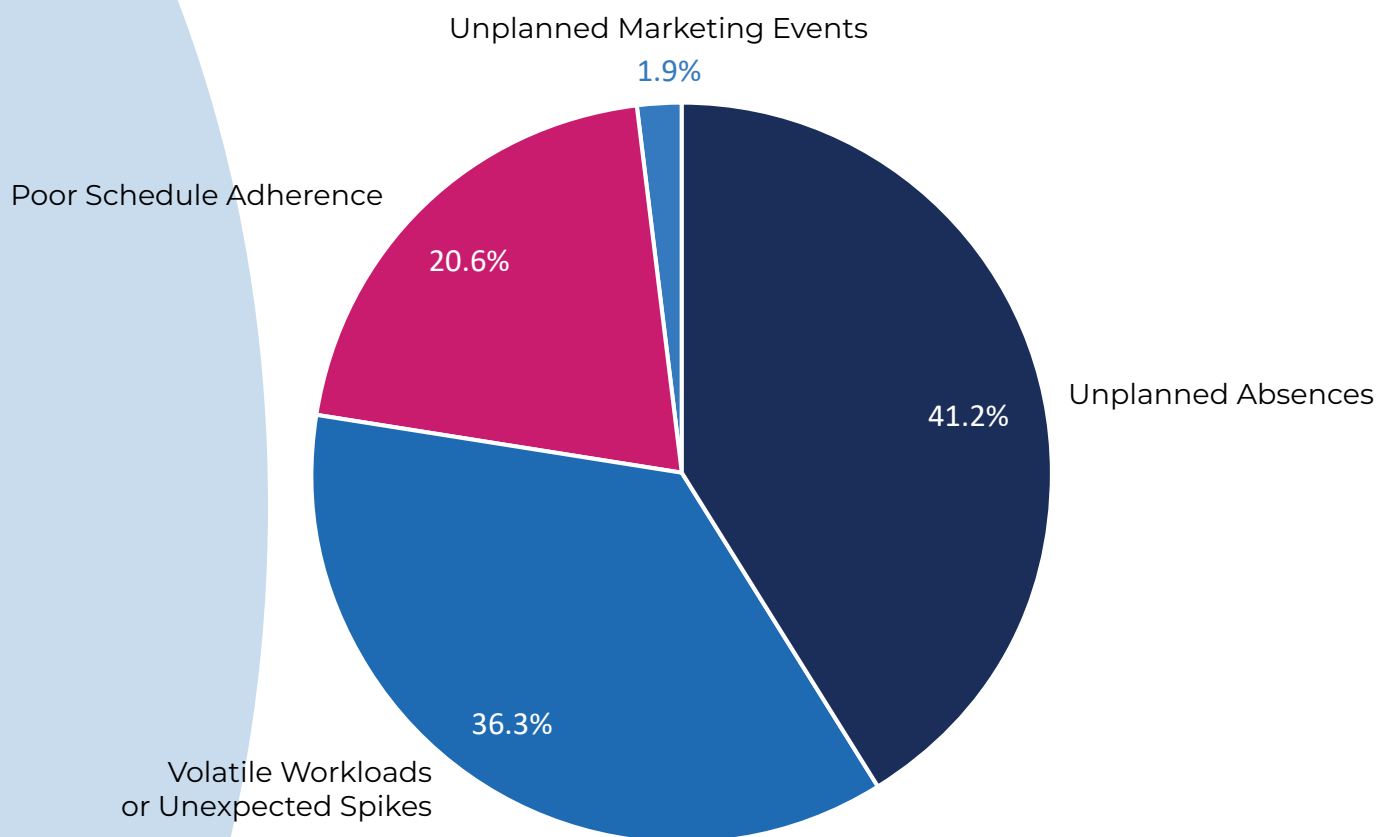
# What Is Your Biggest Intraday Management Problem?

## This Year's Survey Shows Just How Challenging Intraday Management Is

The findings of this year's survey show just how challenging intraday management is – where juggling unplanned absences, volatile workloads, and poor schedule adherence is, quite frankly, business as usual! It's certainly not for the faint-hearted!

What's most surprising here is to see unplanned marketing events ranked so low, as this typically gets a lot of air time when talking to planning teams. Perhaps highlighting that, at times, it's simply easier to point blame at other departments than consider other possibilities.

## What is Your Biggest Intraday Management Problem?



## ***“Intraday Leaders Have to Stay Sharp, Watching Queues in Real Time and Making Adjustments on the Fly”***

*“Funnily enough, these results are exactly what I’d expect. Honestly, I wouldn’t even call this a ‘trend’ in the market right now, it is simply the nature of intraday management. At its core, intraday always comes down to two things: customer demand and agent availability.*

**“** *At its core, intraday always comes down to two things: customer demand and agent availability.*

*On the customer demand side, volatility is a given. You can have the forecast nailed for the day, but if caller behaviour shifts – say demand comes heavy in the AM instead of the PM – your entire plan can fall apart. That’s why intraday leaders have to stay sharp, watching queues in real time and making adjustments on the fly. Forecasts set the stage, but customer behaviour keeps you on your toes.*

*On the agent side, availability is where the rubber meets the road. That boils down to attendance and adherence. Unplanned absences are always going to be a top pain point because they immediately leave you short. But even if you’ve got 100% attendance, the day can still get derailed if adherence is off. Agents might be logged in but sitting in the wrong states, auxed out, tied up with tasks, or simply not where they need to be. And when that happens, it’s just like not having the bodies there at all.*

*So, what this data really confirms is what every WFM leader already knows: intraday success isn’t about avoiding problems, it’s about managing them. Every single day you’re balancing unpredictable customer demand with equally unpredictable agent behaviour. That’s not a trend. That’s just the job ANDDD why I think WFM – specifically RTA – is so critical.”*

**Juanita Coley, CEO & Founder of Solid Rock Consulting**



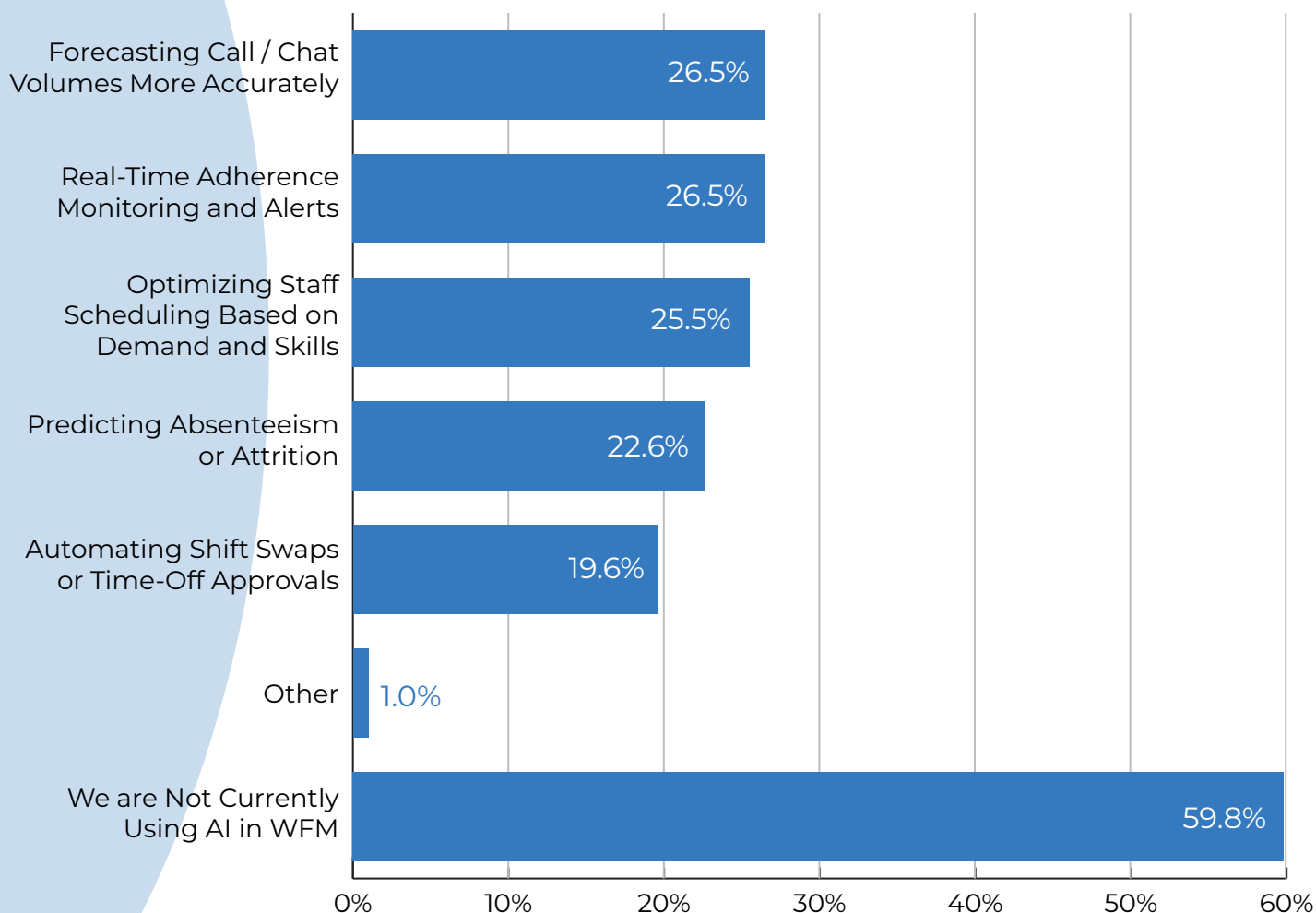
# How Is Your Organization Currently Using or Considering Using AI to Improve Workforce Management?

## There's Some Disconnect Between What Contact Centres Want and What Is Actually Available From Tech Vendors Right Now

Given that we are still so early on in the AI/WFM journey, the individual percentages are far higher than we'd expect to see right now – as many of these features are still under development.

This suggests that the majority of respondents are **considering** these features and can see where they would have a positive impact, but they have less awareness about what is actually available from tech vendors right now.

## How is Your Organization Currently Using or Considering Using AI to Improve Workforce Management?



## **There's a Healthy Appetite for AI-Powered Features That Address Long-Standing Challenges**

That being said, these findings still indicate a healthy appetite for AI-powered features that address long-standing challenges. For example, given the stressful nature of an RTA role – as flagged in [Question 34](#) – it's unsurprising to see real-time adherence monitoring and alerts high on the wish list.

Equally, predicting absenteeism or attrition and automating shift-swaps or time-off approvals are also high on the wish list. Again, no real surprise, given that absence and lateness have been cited as the biggest scheduling challenges year-on-year.

So, what happens next?

Undoubtedly, the leading vendors in the market are investing heavily in this space right now, so it hopefully won't be too long before this wish list becomes a reality.

## **Many Still Have a Long Way to Go Before They Are Even Using a WFM System – Let Alone One Decked Out With AI-Powered Features**

Beyond that, to see almost 60% of contact centre professionals say they are not currently using AI in WFM is perhaps a more realistic snapshot of where contact centres are at in their AI journey right now.

This aligns more closely with other findings in this report that many are still reliant on spreadsheets (even pen and paper) and have a long way to go before they are even using a WFM system – let alone one decked out with AI-powered features.

That being said, it may also be the case that there is simply more lower-hanging fruit for contact centres to “eat” with AI – before they focus specifically on bringing it into their WFM strategy in the years ahead.

# What Scheduling Tools Do You Use to Improve Employee Experience?

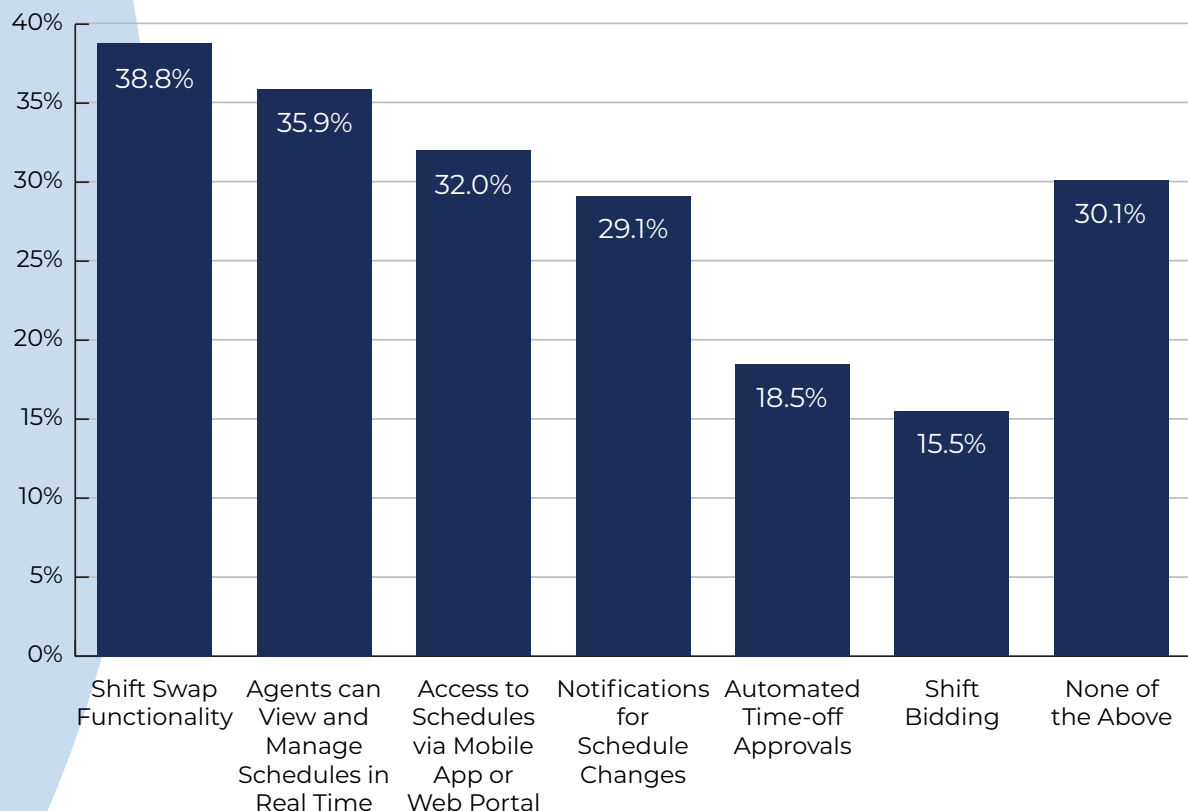
## More Empowered Agents and Declining Absence Issues Go Hand in Hand

There's a really positive picture building across other contact centres with a mix of tools in place. The most popular of these is shift-swap functionality, which allows agents to proactively communicate with their colleagues to swap their own shifts and manage their own time – without needing manual sign-off from their manager. An all-round time-saving win-win.

Beyond that, other tools are being widely used too – including viewing schedules in real time, access via app or web portal, notifications for schedule changes, automated time-off approvals, and shift-bidding.

It's highly possible that the increasingly widespread use of these tools is the reason behind absence and lateness being considered less of a headache than in 2024 (as cited in [Question 33](#)) – as these tools all help to empower agents and give them the flexibility they need to support their mental health and wellbeing.

### What Scheduling Tools Do You Use to Improve Employee Experience?



## A Third Not Using Any Scheduling Tools to Improve Employee Experience

That being said, it's disappointing to see around a third of contact centres not using any scheduling tools that improve employee experience. Whilst this is likely to be more down to a lack of a WFM system than anything else (as aligns with the findings elsewhere in the report), it still puts the spotlight on just how much of a lottery agents are up against in what their contact centre offers them.

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## Scorebuddy

Scorebuddy is a quality assurance solution for scoring customer service calls, emails and web chat. It is a dedicated, stand-alone staff scoring system based in the cloud, requiring no integration.



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# Thanks to our CX Experts

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## **Adam Boelke, Founder of the Alignment Advantage Group**

Adam Boelke is a former F500 Ops VP helping leaders transform their company into top-quartile performance. He is also an award-winning expert in Customer Experience, Employee Experience & Call Center Operations, and Inventor of the 7 Cs to Success method.

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## **Alex Mead, Global Customer Service Experience Leader**

Alex is a Global Customer Experience, Service and Contact Centre Executive Leader with 20+ years transforming customer service, voice and digital contact centres, and CX strategy.

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## **Brittany Hodak, Keynote Speaker & Author of Creating Superfans**

Brittany Hodak is an international keynote speaker and award-winning business leader. Entrepreneur calls her an “expert at creating loyal fans for your brand,” and she is widely regarded as the “go-to source” on creating and retaining superfans.

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## **Dan Pratt, Founder & Director of DAP Consultancy**

Dan is an award-winning Customer Experience and Business Consultant, as well as a Board Advisor with over 10 years of experience within senior Customer Experience management positions with a track record of success.

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## **Dan Smitley, Founder of 2:Three Consulting**

Dan Smitley is a WFM expert, speaker, and consultant. As the founder of 2:Three Consulting, he believes WFM teams can be more than just scheduling and forecasting focused on the optimization of staff.

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### **Danny Wareham, Founder & Director of Firgun**

Danny is a Certified Business Psychologist, coach and speaker with 25+ years of experience across organisations and contact centres in retail, telecommunication, and fintech sectors.

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### **Dara Kiernan, Leadership Development and Contact Centre Consultant**

Dara Kiernan is an award-winning leadership development and contact centre consultant who has spent more than 20 years in contact centres helping leaders develop their skills.

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### **Garry Gormley, Founder of FAB Solutions**

Garry Gormley is an experienced contact centre professional with 20 years in the contact centre industry. Having spent a lot of time in the operation, he understands the dynamics and moving parts of the contact centre and what impacts customer experience first-hand.

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### **Juanita Coley, CEO & Founder of Solid Rock Consulting**

Juanita is responsible for contact centre systems assessment (including business case ROI development) procurement, and implementation, and creates and customizes solutions, as necessary, to ensure appropriate support for clients.

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### **Justin Robbins, Founder & Principal Analyst at Metric Sherpa**

Justin helps software companies, investors, and business leaders cut through noise with research and insights that drive action. With over two decades experience, he bring one of the most well-rounded perspectives in customer experience.

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### **Katie Stabler, CULTIVATE Customer Experience by Design and author of CX-Ism: Re-Defining Business Success**

Katie Stabler is a passionate CX Thought Leader and Experience advocate, who has dedicated the last decade to the world of experience cultivation, working with all walks of industries across the globe, and leaning heavily into the psychological principles of human behaviour.

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### **Maria McCann, Co-Founder of Neos Wave**

Maria McCann is a forward-thinking, award-winning operator shaping how businesses connect with their customers, and their people. With 20+ years in senior customer roles, she's led global teams, rebuilt service models, and redefined what great CX looks like.

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### **Martin Hill-Wilson of Brainfood Consulting**

Martin is a long-standing member of the Customer Engagement community, and former CEO of a pioneering BPO and consultancy. Over his career, Martin has facilitated thousands of learner journeys and is an internationally recognised thought leader.

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### **Martin Jukes, Managing Director, Mpathy Plus**

Martin draws on over 25 years' experience in customer service and CX to help organizations improve their performance and provide better experiences for customers and their people.

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### **Martin Teasdale, Founder of the Team Leader Community**

Martin brings over 25 years of experience in the contact centre industry to his founding role in the Team Leader Community, an online network designed to support and empower contact centre team leaders and managers. He is also founder and host of Get Out of Wrap (GOOW).

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### **Nate Brown, Head of CX Advisory for Metric Sherpa and Co-Founder of CX Accelerator**

Nate loves two things very much... Customer experience and community! He even co-founded CX Accelerator in 2018, bringing together a vibrant collection of CX leaders to help one another maximize their careers and accomplish remarkable things in service.

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### **Nerys Corfield, Director of Injection Consulting Limited**

Nerys Corfield has over a quarter-century of hands-on experience in the world of contact centres – whether it's running them, scrutinising their operations, or judging their performance – and has developed a keen understanding of what truly drives their success.

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### **Dr Nicola Millard, Principal Innovation Partner at BT Business**

Dr Nicola Millard is a well-respected keynote speaker, author & researcher on futurology, psychology, & innovation in customer (CX) & employee experience (EX).

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### **Paul Pember, Founder & Chief Consultant at CX score**

Paul is on a life-long mission to understand and help organizations become customer-centric. At CX score, he works relentlessly to help clients develop world-class customer experience.

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### **Paul Weald, The Contact Centre Innovator**

Paul has worked in the contact centre industry for 30 years, covering all aspects of people, process, digital operations, and customer experience. He believes that every organisation can excel in how it serves its customers – how well you deliver customer service is a true differentiator.

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### **Phil Anderson, CEO of The Forum**

Phil is a recognized thought leader in Customer Strategy & Planning, who champions forecasting, scheduling, and real-time planning as strategic levers for customer loyalty, colleague wellbeing, and organizational success.

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### **Rob Clarke, Director and Co-Founder of Elev-8 Performance**

Rob has extensive cross-functional knowledge built over 20+ years in a variety of leadership, learning, strategic, and operational roles, and leans into this to deliver behavioural change programmes to Elev-8's clients.

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### **Shep Hyken, Chief Amazement Officer (CAO) at Shepard Presentations LLC**

Shep Hyken is a customer service and experience expert, award-winning keynote speaker, researcher, and the Chief Amazement Officer of Shepard Presentations. He is a New York Times and Wall Street Journal bestselling author and has been inducted into the National Speakers Association Hall of Fame.



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### **Vinay Parmar, Managing Director at Customer Whisperers Limited**

Vinay Parmar is a keynote speaker, strategist, and advisor, who has spent over three decades helping businesses transform critical moments into memorable experiences that win hearts, loyalty, and advocacy.



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### **Dr. Zoe Bell, Researcher, Liverpool John Moores University**

Dr. Zoe Bell is a researcher at Liverpool John Moores University, who specialises in improving the health and working conditions of contact centre advisors across the UK.



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### **Megan Jones, Editor, Call Centre Helper**

Megan interviews inspiring people across the contact centre industry to capture these amazing voices and turn them into best practice articles – covering all elements of what it takes to deliver truly outstanding employee and customer experiences.



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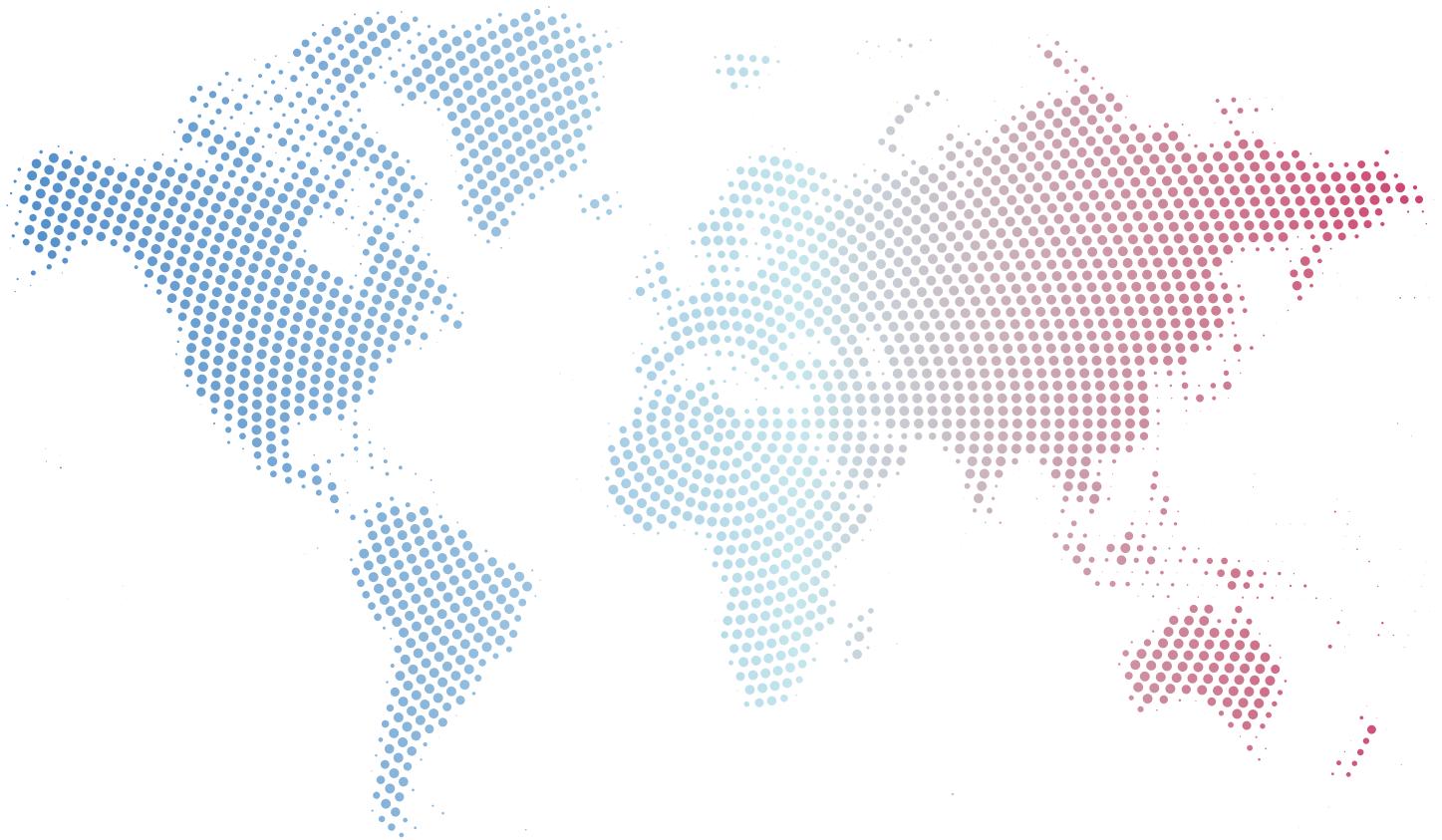
### **Xander Freeman, Director, Call Centre Helper**

Xander is a regular host and moderator of webinars, interviews, and live panels on a wide range of topics in the customer contact space – sharing insights on CX innovation, AI, workforce management, and more.



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