Simplifying and Automating the Contact Centre

Paul Weald

Thought for the day….

Why is there a problem that needs to be solved?

➤ July 2023 edition of the UK Customer Satisfaction Index (UKCSI) overall benchmark score has fallen to 76.6 (out of 100)
  - drop of 1.8 points compared to July 2022
  - lowest score since 2015

➤ More negative impacts on CSAT from problems and bad experiences (compared to a year ago)

Source: Institute of Customer Service

Thought for the day....

Why is there a problem that needs to be solved?

➤ CCMA annual research into consumer perceptions of customer service

- In 2023 34% consumers believe customer service is worsening, almost double the 18% who believe service is improving

➤ With differences in attitude caused by age related factors and the impact of the cost of living crisis
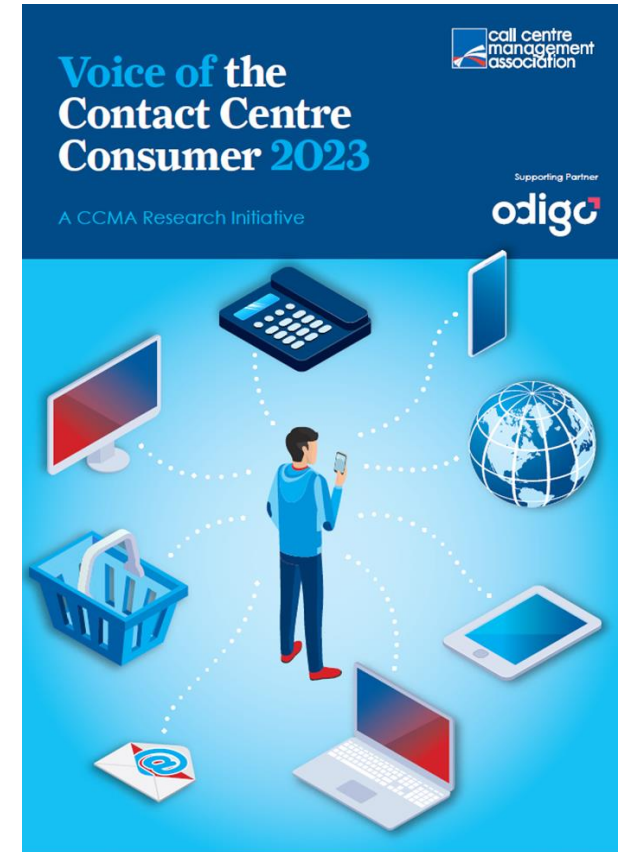
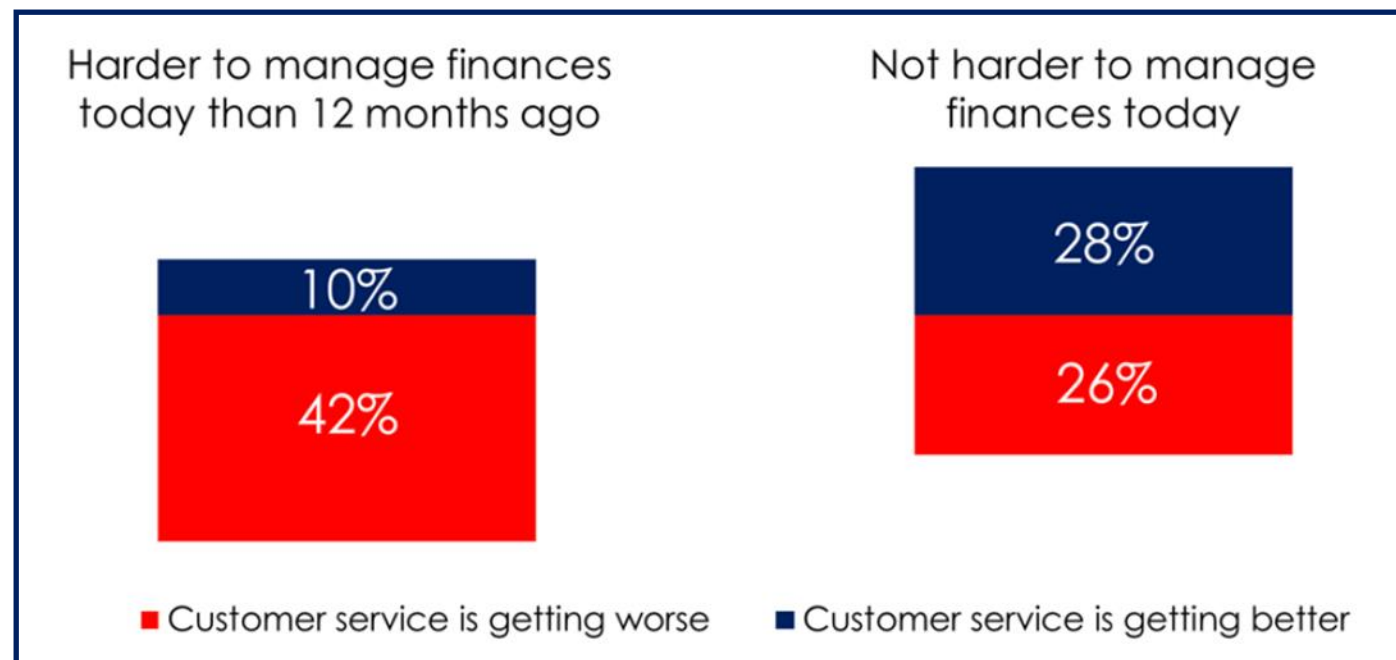*Source: Call Centre Management Association*

CCMA research findings

Impact of cost of living crisis

> 53% of those surveyed said that it is more difficult to manage their finances today compared with a year ago

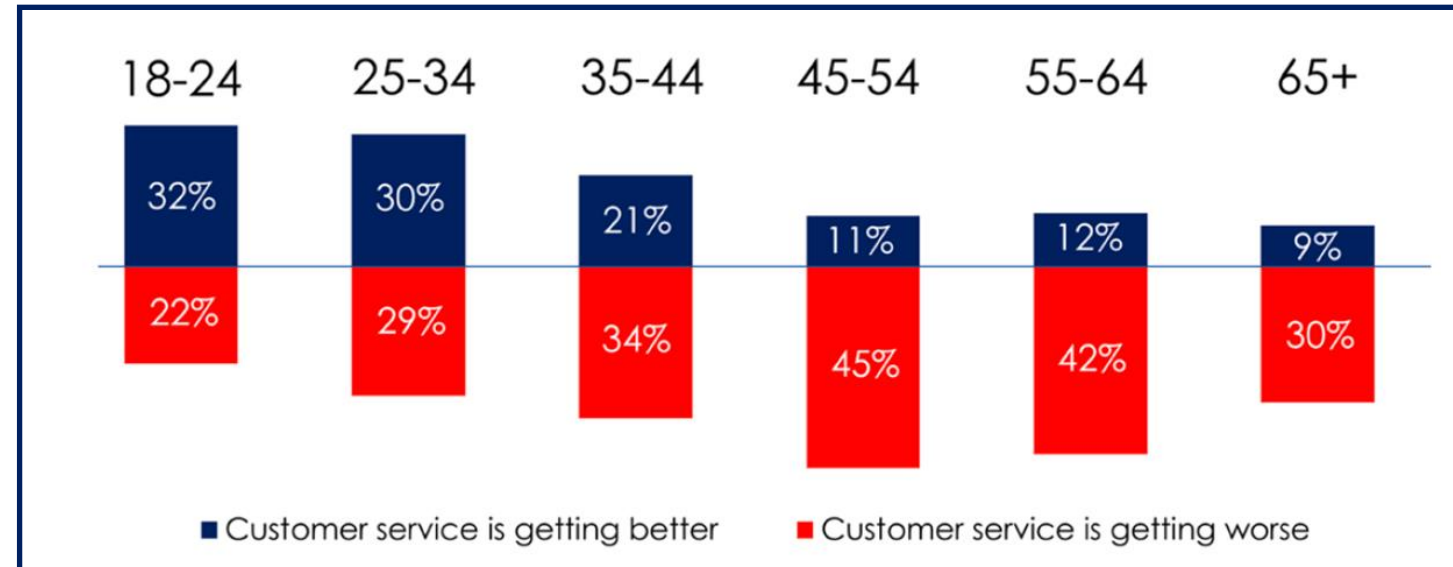> And amongst those struggling 42% perceived worse customer service

Harder to manage finances today than 12 months ago

Not harder to manage finances today

10%

42%

28%

26%

■ Customer service is getting worse   ■ Customer service is getting better

CCMA research findings

Generational differences

▶ The 45-64 age groups reported the highest levels of dissatisfaction

▶ They may also exhibit particularly low tolerance for broken self-serve journeys and a stronger desire to connect with a human advisor in the event of issues arising

18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
32%	30%	21%	11%	12%	9%
22%	29%	34%	45%	42%	30%

■ Customer service is getting better   ■ Customer service is getting worse

What do companies need to do about it?

Recognise what customer's value and what leaves them frustrated

▶ "**From the perspective of customers**, the leading issues organisations should improve on are:
- making it easy to contact the right person to help
- employee behaviours and competence
- and website navigation."

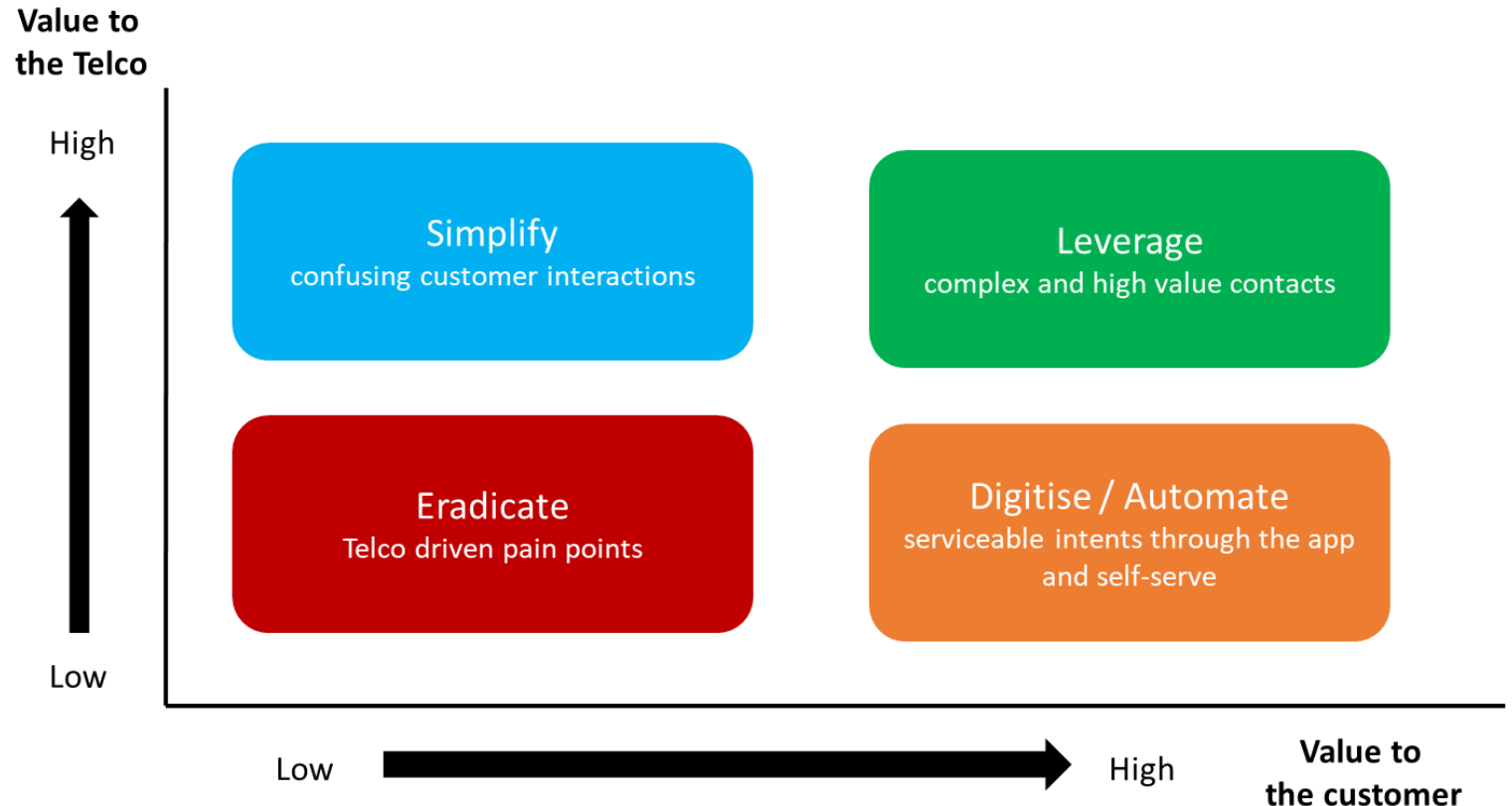▶ Let's start by deciding what to automate and simplify, and where customers will still expect the human touch

JULY 2023

UK Customer Satisfaction Index

The state of customer satisfaction in the UK

Source: Institute of Customer Service

A case study of a global Telco

Intent modelling based on customer and business value

➤ Identified the value of over 100 different contact reasons

➤ Assigned them to different contact handling approaches

Value to the Telco

High

Simplify
confusing customer interactions

Leverage
complex and high value contacts

Eradicate
Telco driven pain points

Digitise / Automate
serviceable intents through the app and self-serve

Low

Low → High

Value to the customer

# Intent modelling

For example

Intent	Approach	Focus
I want to buy a new device	Leverage	Agent interaction (Sales through Service)
I want to buy new services / add-ons (to my current device)	Digitise	App self-service conversation
I have a question about a communication or notification I received	Simplify	Identification of root cause (that generates downstream failure demand)
My broadband is not working or has a weak or no signal (one time or ongoing)	Eliminate	Combination of self-serve tools (to help the customer diagnose their problem), root cause analysis and intent based routing

Determining the improvement focus

Ranking the intent based on importance

➤ The other KPI used was NPS score, in particular the proportion of hard detractors as this correlated strongly to customer propensity to churn (at contract renewal)

➤ The criteria used to identify the priority for action were:
1. The contact volume (of that intent)
2. The approach required (self-serve vs root cause analysis vs assisted service)
3. The customer outcome – resolution rate (FCR) and hard detractor NPS score

Importance

High

Low
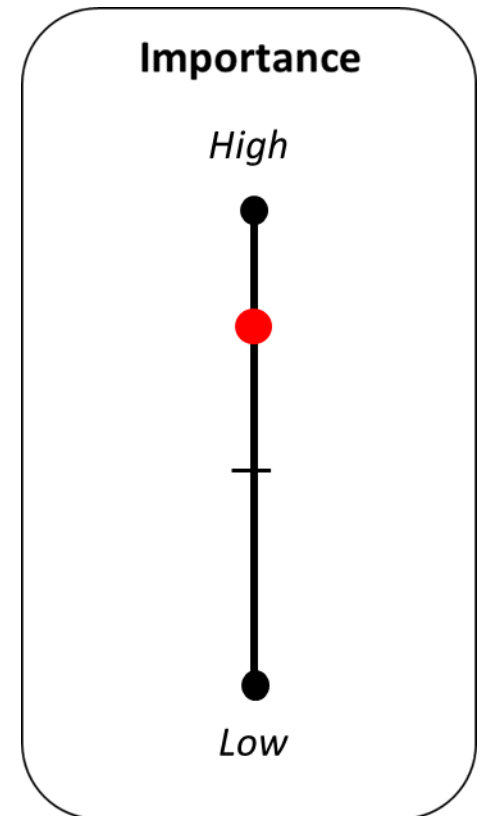
Measurement across all interactions

Data is – and always has been – key to eliminating bias

> In WW2 aircraft returning from missions were always examined in detail for damage from enemy fire.

> Abraham Wald pointed out that the data that was missing was the most important. The phenomenon was called survivorship bias.

> Aircraft that did not return held the key data to survival. **Reinforcing areas that had no damage data recorded** increased the survival rate of the fleet
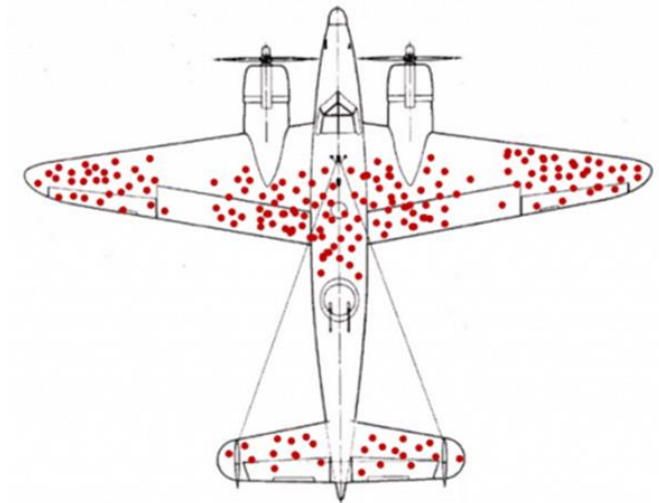
Through AI/ML you can gain insight from 100% of interactions – eliminating the bias associated with call sampling

Example improvements
Enhanced capabilities for routing, real time agent support and training

Capability	Action	Description
1. Improved routing	Agent matching / routing	Assign incoming customers to the agent best equipped to handle issue based on customer intent
	Chat concurrency	Agent matching based on customer intent, agent experience level and availability of process specific automation (suggested answers)
2. Real time agent support	Call transcription	100% of all calls are transcribed in real-time based on automated speech recognition models, producing high quality real-time transcription of the conversation flow on the agent desktop
	Conversation response suggestion	Predicts what an agent should say or do in direct response to conversations and current desktop actions
3. Coaching	New agent onboarding	Guide agent action during the conversation where the Machine Learning is trained by top quartile agent behaviour plus a library of training materials that document process requirements
	Agent behaviour & compliance detection	Identify where agent is not complying with regulatory requirements and company policies

Key focus areas
Enhanced capabilities for routing, real time agent support and training

Pre-call

In-call

Post-call

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