




Do what matters

 Activating Copilot

 Make AI your partner.

Express yourself within your business context.

Contact center modernization guide

Modernize the contact center with generative AI

Elevate customer experiences as you move from cost to profit center

A relentless focus on customers is good – but it's not enough

For more than a century, business executives around the world have proclaimed that “the customer is king,” and many of the most successful companies – then and now – have had a relentless focus on customer satisfaction.

So what more do you need to know about delivering an **exceptional customer experience**? Why is whatever you're doing to maximize that experience probably not all you could – and likely should – do?

Simply put, the bar for customer experience keeps rising as customers' expectations rise. Much more rides today on customer experience as it becomes one of the **leading competitive factors**. And achieving superb customer experience has never been more challenging as customer channels and choices proliferate.

Customers want their problems solved before they happen. When problems do occur, they want to quickly resolve their issues themselves. They want empathetic, informed and capable customer service agents when human intervention is needed. And they want that customer service on the **channel of their choice**, whether it's social, chat, email, phone or in person.

Excellent customer experience can make or break your ability to meet growing demand. It can build strong **customer trust and loyalty**, reduce costs and increase productivity, but even the leading service solutions can't deliver that outcome in a vacuum. The smooth, seamless support experience that customers expect requires a **comprehensive and thorough approach** to customer service and support that connects all relevant solutions across your platform.

What's standing in your way?

Many companies that want to level up their customer service face challenges, including the following:



Talent shortage

Customer service reps are tough to recruit and quick to leave. Companies need to give reps the tools to be more effective and more satisfied with their jobs.



Manual processes

Companies want to streamline operations, improve results and lower costs. Manual processes can be a key blocker.



Lack of accountability

Without a full understanding of what your agents are doing, it's tough to know what's working and how it can be improved.



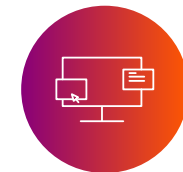
Inaccurate information

First-time resolution is a key goal for businesses; getting the right information where and when it's needed is crucial.



Too much data, not enough insight

Companies need to make their customer-facing decisions better and faster. Analytics and AI can cut through data clutter.



Fragmented customer experience

Omnichannel is great, until each channel becomes its own silo and agents lack a comprehensive customer view.

What the modern contact center can deliver

A modern customer contact center that overcomes these traditional obstacles and enables more personalized and improved customer experiences lets you achieve even more. It can help evolve your contact center from a traditional cost center to a profit center that boosts revenues and margins and accelerates business growth.

It does this with stellar experiences that increase customer loyalty, bringing customers back to you more often. Also, it positions your customer service reps to upsell and cross-sell to customers in a seamless extension of the customer service process.

How much can you gain from this strategy?

Companies that improve their customer experience see a 42% improvement in customer retention, a 33% improvement in customer satisfaction, and a 32% increase in cross-selling and up-selling, [according to one study](#). The effect on revenue can be stunning, [according to Accenture](#), which found 3.5X revenue for companies that view customer service as a value center, rather than as a cost center.



Case Study

Airline uses AI to virtually eliminate customer wait times, boost retention

More than 200,000 [Azul Linhas Aéreas](#) customers are getting an [improved and accelerated customer experience](#) every month by using Céu, the airline's chatbot, built by Avanade with artificial intelligence, natural language and a scalable framework.

Customer wait times have been reduced to nearly zero, retention rates have increased and employees respond to inquiries more efficiently.

The path to the modern contact center

You can't turn your cost-based contact center into a profit center overnight – but there is a clear path on which you can embark to get there.

Cost-centric approach

Most companies start with standard capabilities that address basic customer needs, but often fail when facing complex issues.

Organized digital capabilities

Metric-based improvements can boost efficiency and competitive advantage. But they don't typically provide actionable insight.

Transformative, data-centric capabilities

Companies at the center of service transformation today begin to see growth, automation and innovation.

AI-driven insights

Most companies start with standard capabilities that address basic customer needs, but often fail when facing complex issues.

Embrace what comes next

Continued success requires continued innovation. Companies must optimize service today and embrace aspirational opportunities.



Case Study

Netherlands Bank delivers better customer experience with virtual agents

Netherlands-based [Rabobank](#) found its voice and chat virtual agents for customer support were disjointed and difficult to maintain. Avanade helped the bank to adopt Microsoft Power Virtual Agents to simplify operations, reduce costs and create a better, more cohesive experience for customers.

More and more of those customers are choosing the new virtual agent experience. It completed 50% of contacts without needing to escalate to a human agent, enabling Rabobank to serve more customers more quickly.

Best-of-breed versus the modular approach

It isn't easy to make the journey to a modern customer contact center. If your destination is a contact center that delivers exceptional customer experience while also serving as a profit center and business driver, how do you get there?

That goal sounds like it could mean a time-consuming and expensive big-bang approach – something most companies seek to avoid. And they should avoid it, because the competitive advantage they seek by modernizing their customer contact center can't wait years. Instead, successful companies take a modular approach, one that lets them focus on the most impactful adoptions first, and then go on to implement secondary phases later.

What should that modular approach look like? Traditionally, many companies applied a best-of-breed approach to technology adoption. But times have changed. You need the best of a broad range of technologies today, the ability to use them seamlessly together, and the ability to adopt and integrate new technologies as they develop. Technology solutions touch more parts of the organization and more technologies than ever before, making seamless integration of those parts and technologies a crucial factor.

For example, the great breadth of technologies comprising the modern contact center includes communications, customer relationship management, robotics process automation, data analytics, generative AI, proactive engagement capabilities, intelligent self-service, and collaboration features.

Adopting each technology from a different vendor could leave a company with an integration challenge that derails its path toward the modern contact center.

Instead, successful companies are taking a best-of-platform approach that delivers their priority technologies today while preserving opportunities to adopt evolving technologies as they become available. Adoption and maintenance of the best-of-platform approach is easier and more cost-effective and is consistent with the modular approach. The solution itself is more reliable, employees can make better and fuller use of its capabilities, and ROI is greater – all of which makes it the right approach to achieve the modern contact center.

Case Study

Japanese insurer integrates call center, CRM to enhance customer service

[AEON Insurance Service Co, Ltd.](#) wanted to transform its small, siloed call center with a move to the cloud and integration with the company's Microsoft Dynamics 365 CRM system.

AEON turned to Avanade for its CRM integration, which enables employees to easily share successful examples of cross-selling and other insights. Call center reps can identify and assist customers faster thanks to capabilities including automatic information retrieval. The company plans to deploy an AI chatbot and apply data analytics to incoming call data.

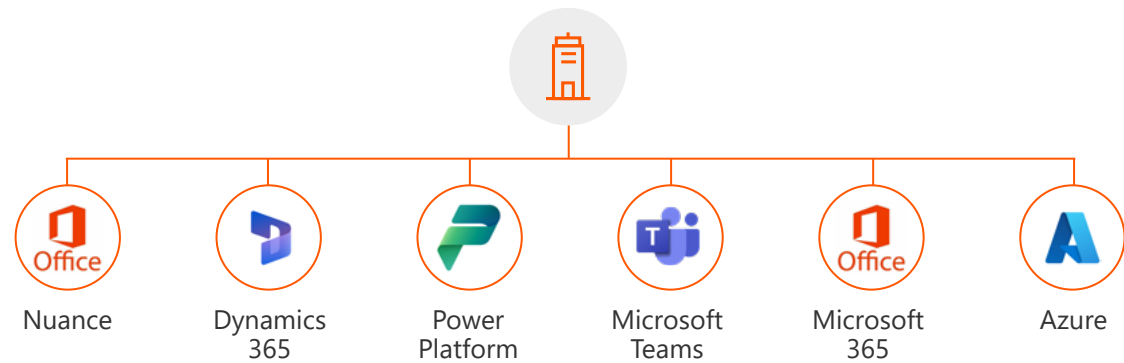


Choose the best approach for you

Only Microsoft offers the full sweep of technologies you need for an at-your-own-pace, component-based, best-of-platform approach to modernize your customer contact center. Those technologies include generative AI, unified communication-as-a-service (UCaaS), contact center as a service (CCaaS), contact center AI (CCAI), and customer relationship management (CRM). Microsoft can also be a first-party voice provider.

And to ensure you can include a breadth of capabilities in your modern contact center, the Microsoft platform is open, modular and extensible both to third-party partner solutions you may already use or wish to include (such as salesforce, Genesys, and SAP).

The foundation of Microsoft's platform approach for modernizing your contact center is a fully integrated stack on the world's most secure cloud: the Microsoft Cloud. That stack includes Microsoft Azure, for secure, easily managed and compliant solutions on a planet-wide scale. It also includes Dynamics 365, Power Platform, Microsoft 365, Teams, and Nuance for new levels of conversational AI, security, fraud detection and automation.



With your modern contact center built on the Microsoft platform, your customers and agents gain tools to resolve issues faster and with more personalized service

Reducing resolution times, boosting first-time resolution and increasing both customer and agent satisfaction. The Microsoft platform also empowers contact centers to offer targeted customer incentives to build brand loyalty and upsell opportunities to boost revenue.



Enables omnichannel engagement and intelligent self-service



Personalizes and safeguards customer interactions



Increases customer acquisition and revenue



Drives IT infrastructure simplicity, flexibility and innovation



Improves agent productivity and modernizes case management

Generative AI raises your modern contact center to a new level



Generative AI is disrupting virtually every function a business undertakes – including customer service. Microsoft leads in providing this capability to organizations via Dynamics 365 Copilot, the world’s first AI copilot in both CRM and ERP. It provides interactive, AI-powered assistance for the modern customer contact center (as well as for sales, marketing and supply chain).

Copilot in Dynamics 365 Customer Service alleviates the pressure that agents often face to resolve customer cases quickly, which can otherwise lead to burnout and lower customer satisfaction. Meanwhile, Copilot for Service is a standalone generative AI assistant that works with the existing Microsoft or third-party ecosystem software you already use. They help agents streamline tasks across both simple and complex cases, while providing personalized service that demonstrates the agent’s commitment to resolving each issue thoroughly and efficiently.

Turn agents into superagents

With Copilot, agents can quickly craft a draft email or chat response to customers with a single click. Copilot understands the context based on the current live conversation, identifies relevant information from trusted websites and internal documents, and crafts a response for the agent to review and send to the customer.

Enrich self-service with AI

Businesses can provide more powerful conversational experiences by leveraging Power Virtual Agents, which are now enhanced with Copilot’s generative AI capabilities. Customers can self-serve and achieve their needs more easily with highly intelligent conversational bots that use trusted websites and the company’s internal data to resolve customer issues. In addition, Nuance, another element of Microsoft’s platform approach to the modern contact center, offers new AI capabilities in Nuance Mix for omni channel conversational AI.



Turbocharge your modern contact center with Avanade's Customer Engagement Solution

Avanade extends the Microsoft platform for the modern contact center with exclusive assets, modules, industry accelerators, connectors, and enhanced analytics and reporting. The result is the most comprehensive Customer Engagement Solution (CES), delivering broader capabilities for seamless cloud integration, customer self-service, personalized service, agent experience and more.

For example, the enhancements for seamless cloud integration include an intelligent command center, interoperability with Genesys Cloud CX and NICE CXone, and a Power Virtual Agent performance testing tool. Similarly, self-service is enhanced with industry-specific cartridges and visual IVR. And personalized, targeted service is augmented with new tools for intent discovery, customer analytics, journey analytics, omnichannel analytics and an experience builder.

Your business can use Avanade CES to:



Meet customers in more ways on the channels they choose and provide tailored service options



Show customers you know them by quickly recognizing and connecting with customers for secure, personalized interactions



Make agents' work effortless so they can resolve issues even faster and create new revenue opportunities



Run faster and leaner with lower costs, greater insights and adaptability to meet future needs



Case Study

Belgian insurer speeds customer service with automation

To improve agent engagements while increasing customer satisfaction, this financial services firm turned to Avanade. We helped it adopt Power Platform and Omnichannel for Customer Service to free up time for agents to leverage their expertise and empathy to better engage with customers. Results include:

- 1 75% increase**
in completed cases per agent
- 2 New Insights**
to support contact center expansion
- 3 Improved**
more efficient case handling process

Why Avanade?

Only Avanade is the No. 1 strategic partner for Microsoft technologies, with more than 90 Microsoft Partner of the Year awards including 18 wins as Microsoft SI Partner of the Year. Our expertise, resources and credentials include:

2023

Microsoft Customer Experience Partner of the Year (Avanade and Accenture)

6,500+

Dynamics 365 experts and **70** Dynamics 365 Delivery Centers in **20 countries**

No. 1

worldwide in Dynamics certifications

The Power of 3, bringing Avanade's expertise together with the technology of Microsoft and the industry experience of Accenture, Avanade's corporate parents

Avanade and Accenture named Leaders in Everest Group's 2023 PEAK Matrix® for Microsoft Dynamics 365



Do what matters

Ready to explore modernizing your customer contact center?

Modernizing your customer contact center with generative AI doesn't have to be an unwieldy, lengthy technology project. In three weeks or less, Avanade can help you identify your key initiatives and target outcomes, conduct assessments and benchmarking against industry standards, create your CES plan and target architectures, create a strategic plan, and identify initial sprints and deliveries. Implementing the modernization plan typically takes months, not years.

To learn more, contact us at www.avanade.com/en/contact

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About Avanade

Avanade is the leading provider of innovative digital, cloud and advisory services, industry solutions and design-led experiences across the Microsoft ecosystem. Every day, our 60,000 professionals in 26 countries make a genuine human impact for our clients, their employees and their customers. Avanade was founded in 2000 by Accenture LLP and Microsoft Corporation. Learn more at www.avanade.com

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