Cloud contact centre platform selection guide

Good morning team!

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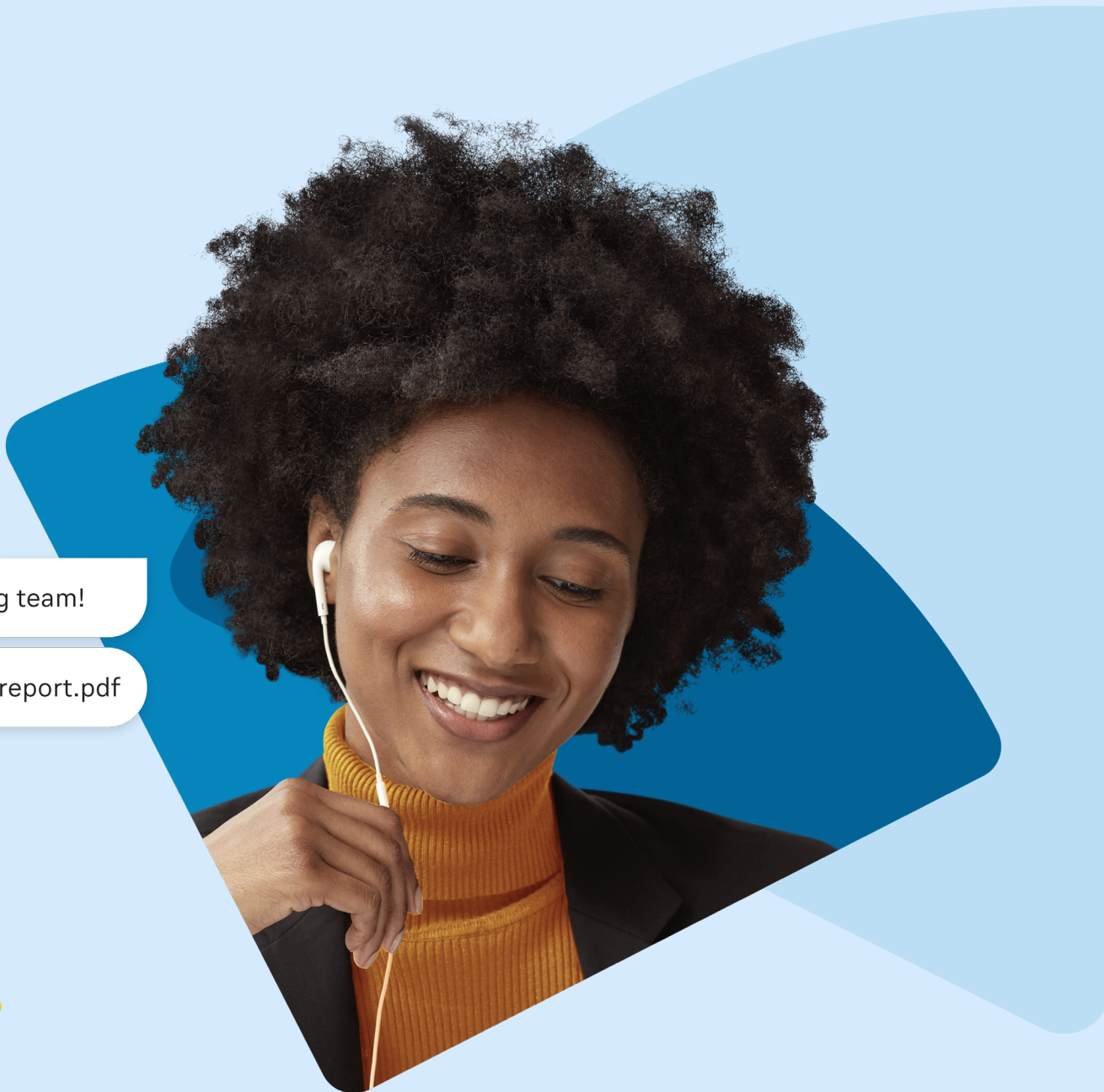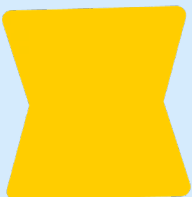
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Executive summary:
What this eBook is about

In today's ultra-competitive business environment, delivering exceptional customer experiences is an absolute must. Your customers are driving the success of your business, and if you fall behind on their service demands, you can quickly fall behind the competition, too.

The fact that the majority of customer interactions occur within the contact centre isn't just industry knowledge — it's an industry-wide opportunity. By choosing the best outbound or blended call centre platform, you can equip agents with the functionality and tools they require to anticipate customer needs, increase productivity and boost revenue, all while providing exceptional service.

This guide will help as you embark on the search for the most comprehensive outbound and blended cloud call centre platform. It will take you from the blank slate of unrealised call centre potential to a clear, step-by-step solution for finding the platform that will help you reach and engage your audience to create lasting, profitable relationships.

**Introduction:
What's right in front of you
vs what's actually right for you**

The contact centre market is saturated with solutions that look and sound the same. But how do you pick the solution that is best for your business and not just the one that everyone else is using? You need to develop a game plan to build your outbound contact centre strategy. Before you kick off your search, you should start by thinking long-term.

Think about moving your contact centre infrastructure to the cloud for scalability, improved agent productivity and increased customer satisfaction.

Consider how you want to communicate with your customers, keeping in mind that their needs may change over time.

Determine how you can empower your agents with the tools they need to succeed, while providing the best possible customer experience.

The right contact centre system provides you the functionality, tools and the foundation for your team to execute exceptional customer service, and it grows and scales with you.

Define your needs:
What's on your outbound contact centre wish list?

Before you choose an outbound contact centre solution, it's important to take stock of the benefits that might mean the most to your business and your customers. What's most important to your agents in a call centre solution? How do you want to communicate with customers? What shifts do you envision for your business strategy in the future?

Every business is unique — and the nature of your business will be a deciding factor in determining what kind of call centre software is ideal to combine with existing infrastructure. To do your due diligence, it's wise to assemble a cross-functional team that can evaluate current business processes, rank potential call centre benefits, and determine how your evaluation process should stack up to ensure your selection moves you as seamlessly as possible toward your goals.

As you convene for discussion, here are some questions to bring to the table:

- What types of interactions will your team handle most, and how can an outbound or blended cloud contact centre solution help you manage them?

- What obstacles are currently getting in the way of delivering proactive customer service?

- Which communication channels do your customers currently use most often?

- What kinds of customer and performance data do you want to capture, keep and use?
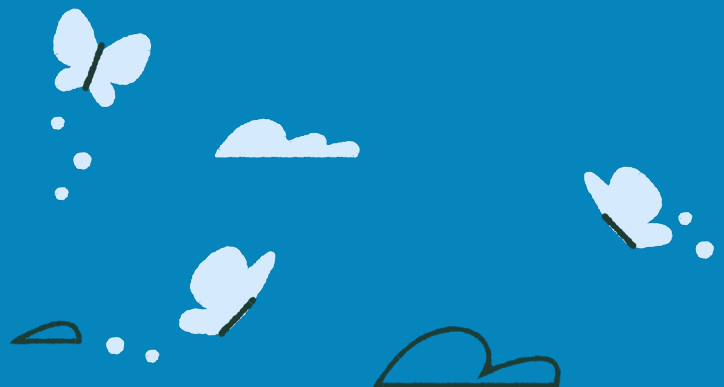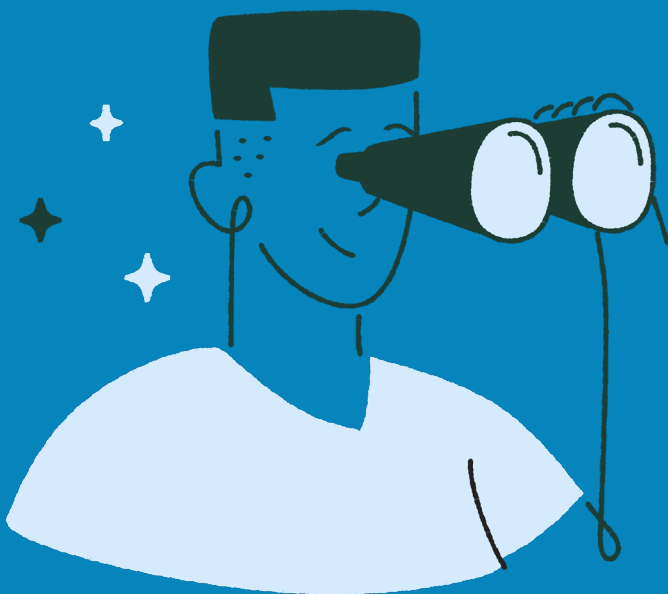
Tip: Include all stakeholders
when discussing requirements.
Make sure you talk about:

✓ **Agent learning curve:**
How much training will this require?

✓ **Growth potential:**
How will you scale with your
success?

✓ **Integrations:**
Will your call centre integrate with
other software you are currently
using?

List the requirements: What's a must-have and what's a nice-to-have?

Once you've mapped out your business goals and talked them through with your team, you can start to think about specific feature requirements. Here are some that you'll want to keep top of mind:

Architecture

- A multi-tenant call centre suite that provides a simplified, intuitive UI for smoother operations, from prospecting to closing deals

- Compliance-supporting technology (OFCOM Telemarketing Sales Rules, DNC Registry, GDPR, etc.)

- Scalability and reliability

Integrations

- Quick, one-click access to CRM software that ensures agents are armed with as much customer information as possible, right when they need it

- Business intelligence applications for improved analytics

Productivity features

- An all-in-one solution that improves productivity by combining predictive, progressive, preview, CRM-driven, blended dialling and more

- On-call guidance and tailored scripts to help agents win engagements in real time

- Workforce engagement management tools to help with performance monitoring, resource management and quality recording

Reporting and analytics

- Rich dashboard setups that enable agents to monitor KPIs such as average handle time, conversation rates, first-call closes and occupancy

- The ability to easily track and measure agent performance through a closed, consistent feedback loop

Make an informed decision:
More thoughtful decisions, more
achievable goals

It's easy to get distracted on your shopping trip for the perfect outbound contact centre solution. There's plenty of slick marketing acting as shiny distractions, an abundance of important considerations, and no shortage of options to sort through. But fancy features and the cool factor won't help your business team reach its goals — for that, you'll need a spot-on selection. Set your sights on finding a solution that can be easily customised to propel service goals, and don't forget to stay customer-focused during the discovery, research and implementation processes.

☑ Do your research

Look at review websites and research vendors. Take your time to compile lists of vendors that interest you. Dig into unbiased reviews from people who use the systems daily. Identify strengths and weaknesses and compare them to the goals you and your team have solidified.

☑ Consult the experts

Don't just look to everyday users for insight as to how well solutions do or do not work. Read industry publications and analyst reports. Tracking trends this way will help you keep upcoming changes top of mind and unearth the complexities, issues and opportunities in your space that your team might have overlooked.

☑ Ask the tough questions

Once you have identified your must-have list of features and built your list of potential vendors, it's time to interview your top contenders. Send a request for proposal that includes questions about SLAs, support and processes, such as:

- What does your implementation process look like with the number of agent seats I plan to deploy?

- Do the tools you offer integrate with the systems I already have in place?

- What is the platform's expected uptime?

- How will this vendor support my long-term success?

✓ Compare costs

It's natural that you'll want to choose a call centre software provider with the highest performance at the most reasonable price. Of course, it's true that cost is a key deciding factor in any purchase decision, but don't let it be your driving criterion. It's better to invest more in a call centre that can directly benefit your business, empower you to improve customer service and scale with future needs.

✓ Choose what's best for your business

After a few months of operation, it is important that you evaluate your call centre and how it is performing against your established metrics. You can do this using the KPIs previously identified. Periodic evaluations help you monitor customer service quality and overall productivity, and the evaluations serve as a guide to continuously improve performance.

Remember

Providing a great experience across all touchpoints is critical for a company's success. According to research from Avanade and Sitecore, organisations see a threefold return on investments into their customer experience strategy.

Conclusion:
Take action,
reap the rewards

At the end of the day, you know your business best. Once you've done your homework, talked with your team and uncovered your options, it's time to make a decision. After all, the sooner you select an outbound call centre solution, the sooner you can start reaping the benefits. Your agents will thank you later. Or, if they don't, your customer ratings and sales quotas will.

RingCentral