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REDUCE
AFTER-CALL
WORK AND AVERAGE
HANDLE TIME WITH
**CONVERSATIONAL AI
AND AUTOMATION**



The intense challenges created by the impact of COVID-19 on contact centers have made it perfectly clear that the archaic systems of yesterday cannot handle the demands of the rapidly evolving new normal of customer service and support. Many customer service operations have been unable to effectively scale their environments and processes to deliver a quality experience and a speedy resolution.

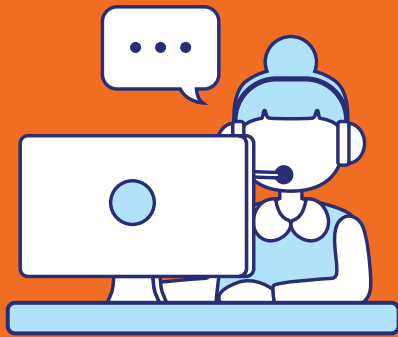
Even before the pandemic hit, contact centers struggled with how to deliver excellent customer experiences in the most efficient way possible. One area that often doesn't get nearly the attention it should in terms of improving efficiency, productivity, and both customer and agent experiences is the area of after-call work.

After-call work is when summaries are written, calls are categorized, actions are taken or scheduled, and other steps followed to ensure that the history of the conversation is accurately documented for future interactions with your company. While made up of mostly routine tasks, after-call work is nonetheless an important, and necessary, part of customer support and a driver of customer satisfaction.



How does after-call work impact the customer and the contact center?

After-call work encompasses the various tasks that customer service staff must accomplish after each call has ended. Depending on the industry, these tasks can include, but aren't limited to:



- Categorizing and logging the call
- Documenting/summarizing the interaction in call notes
- Updating information in various systems such as customer relationship management (CRM) software
- Performing follow-up tasks such as sending a confirmation email or scheduling follow-up actions

While the importance of the actual conversation between the customer and the person providing support should not be underestimated, the quality and effectiveness of after-call work is just as critical to the customer's overall perception of the experience and the brand.

A promise made to follow up that is not kept, tasks that are not performed correctly, or errors made because of manual data entry by agents can quickly negate the positive effects of a good conversational experience. Even when follow-up occurs, when the customer contacts the company in the future, can a different agent immediately understand what happened the last time?

At the same time, customer service operations must balance how much work is accomplished during the call with the customer versus after the call. Long wait times for customers while agents enter data

is a common source of frustration. Yet, after-call work that takes an average of two minutes after every call means that it takes that much longer before agents are available for the next call, which is especially frustrating now because of increased call volume and customers' preference to speak with a human.



58%

more customers prefer to solve urgent issues by calling for support rather than using other channels.

Source: Accenture's Keep Me Index/Moments That Matter study, 2019. Global telecom industry. n=11,757.

How much time should it take?

While there are no industry standards or benchmarks for the time spent on after-call work, it's obvious that the time should be as short as possible while still enabling quality and completeness. After all, a contact center agent cannot take the next call or interact with another customer until the prior interaction is wrapped up. Which is why after-call work is counted as part of the average handling time of a call.

According to calculations conducted from February to August 2020, Call Centre Helper's Erlang Calculator shows that average handle time across multiple industries and geographies is 6 minutes and 10 seconds. Using AI and automation to reduce after-call work shortens average handle time as well as average call waiting time, while increasing agent productivity and efficiency.

AI streamlines and automates after-call work

Think about the benefits to your organization of minimizing the amount of time and energy spent on menial, tedious tasks involved in wrapping up a customer interaction. Doing so could have a dramatic impact on costs, staffing, wait times, call quality, and customer satisfaction.

Where traditional solutions have failed to transform the contact center, conversation-centric AI and automation are delivering significant and measurable business value, including automating after-call work. Called conversational service automation (CSA), it uses conversational AI, robotic process automation (RPA), and workflow automation to bridge humans and

machines as well as back- and front-office operations throughout the customer conversation.

For those interactions where a live agent is involved, CSA first automatically transfers from conversational self-service to a human agent and uses AI to detect the emotion, sentiment, and intent of the customer in real time to provide agents with the next best action and coaching guidance. During the interaction with the customer, CSA automatically listens and transcribes the call in real time, while simultaneously being the agent's co-pilot, providing insights and recommendations during the call.



When the call is finished, CSA presents the call summary for the agent to edit and confirm before automatically updating the customer relationship management (CRM) system and providing automated call disposition to maintain quality of call categories. Because the agent only needs to review and edit the summary, the customer experience during the call remains conversational, while less time is needed after the call to wrap it up properly and the number of errors is reduced.

Conversational Service Automation is the only platform that addresses the entire conversational experience for both customers and agents, using conversational AI, RPA, and workflow automation to blend front-office and back-office operations.



Conversational AI delivers measurable results

Using conversational AI to analyze the call and automation to eliminate manual, repetitive tasks such as entering information into other systems, a CSA platform shortens the time needed for after-call work, improves agent efficiency, ensures quality and consistency of wrap-up efforts, and reduces the average handle time. In addition, automating the call disposition improves accuracy and drives better quality of call categories in the CRM system.

For agents, automation reduces the stress—both during and after the call—of capturing the important information from the interaction. Agents can pay attention to the conversation without worrying about capturing every word said because the CSA platform will automatically summarize the conversation.

Using a CSA platform, a healthcare company with more than 1,000 agents across multiple contact centers achieved an 80 percent reduction in after-call work and a 20 percent reduction in average handle time, which, together with other automation benefits, is expected to save the company \$6 million annually.

A major telecommunications company piloted a CSA platform to automate call summaries for 16,000 agents handling more than 5 million calls per month. Based on its findings, the telecom estimates it can reduce agent wrap-up time by 60 percent and reduce the time spent documenting a call by 30 seconds for an annual savings of \$38 million.

Similarly, a large U.S. financial organization is seeing a 27 percent reduction in after-call work. A global hospitality brand reduced agent talk time and wrap-up effort by 15 percent by automating call summaries.

CSA automates and improves the entire conversation

A conversation-centric approach to AI and automation can deliver measurable, sustainable business value by eliminating the repetitive, time-consuming, and frustrating after-call tasks and streamlining after-call work. However, why stop at automating after-call work?

By using CSA to automate and improve the entire conversation self-service, human-to-human, and after the call-you can transform the contact center and the customer experience while reducing costs and maintaining high quality even as call volumes escalate.

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Learn more about CSA in this whitepaper

“Understand and Improve Every Conversation: Uniphore Conversational Service Automation Transforms the Customer and Agent Experience and Reduces Costs.”

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