

Uncover the true value of your customer support organization



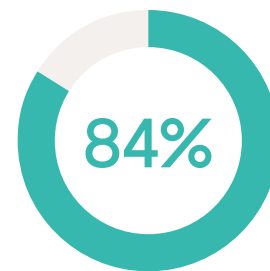
A great customer experience helps to build ongoing relationships, yet many support organizations don't have the tools to provide personal and productive engagements.

Relationships matter. In particular, customer relationships can make or break a business. In today's always-on, connected world, where customers have a multitude of options at the swipe of a screen or the click of a link, a great experience with your organization can cultivate brand loyalty, repeat business, and social promotion among a customer's circles of influence. And at the heart of every great relationship—and the frontline of customer experience—is a support center that cares about customer satisfaction, with the tools and technology to provide encounters that are meaningful, personal, and productive.

Although customer support departments may have traditionally been perceived as cost centers, they can be hidden treasures that add value and competitive advantage to an organization by building great relationships. With the right tools, your support organization can provide real metrics on the value and nature of interactions with customers.

Yet customer expectations today are high and patience is thin. Market research by Accenture shows that a majority of customers expect customer service to be easier, more convenient, and faster.

That study also shows that 52% of respondents switched providers due to poor customer service, and once a customer is lost, 68% do not come back.

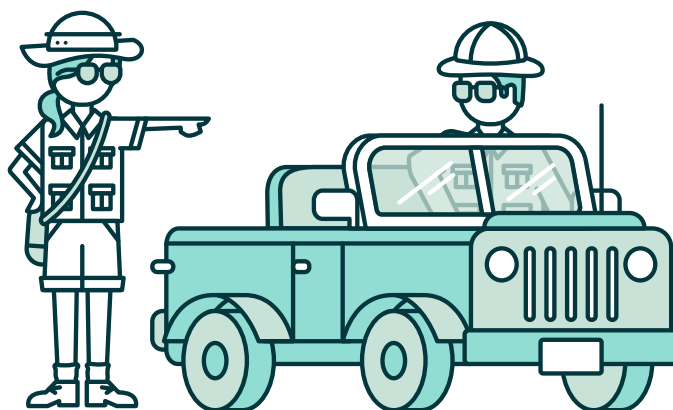


Meanwhile, Forrester Research finds that while 84% of companies aspire to be customer experience (CX) leaders, only 1 in 5 deliver good or great CX.

Underscoring the importance of CX, Forrester also says that customers are willing to pay 4.5 times more for an excellent customer experience versus a poor customer experience.

A recent survey by Gatepoint Research finds that while the top goal for the majority of customer support organizations is to raise satisfaction levels, staff are still struggling with systems that are hard to use and integrate—making it difficult to deliver a consistent customer experience across channels and agents.

Gatepoint Research surveyed more than 100 high-level IT executives and customer service professionals on technology trends in customer support centers. Survey participants represent wide variety of industries—business services, financial services, high tech and general manufacturing, retail trade, telecom services, wholesale trade, healthcare, construction, education, and transportation—and a wide range of revenue levels:



15%

represent Fortune 1000 companies with revenues greater than \$1.5 billion.

15%

represent mid-market firms with revenues from \$250 million to \$500 million.

19%

represent large firms with revenues from \$500 million to \$1.5 billion.

51%

represent small companies with revenues less than \$250 million.

In addition, 40% of the organizations responding to the survey employ fewer than 25 agents while 19% use more than 250 agents.

What matters the most?

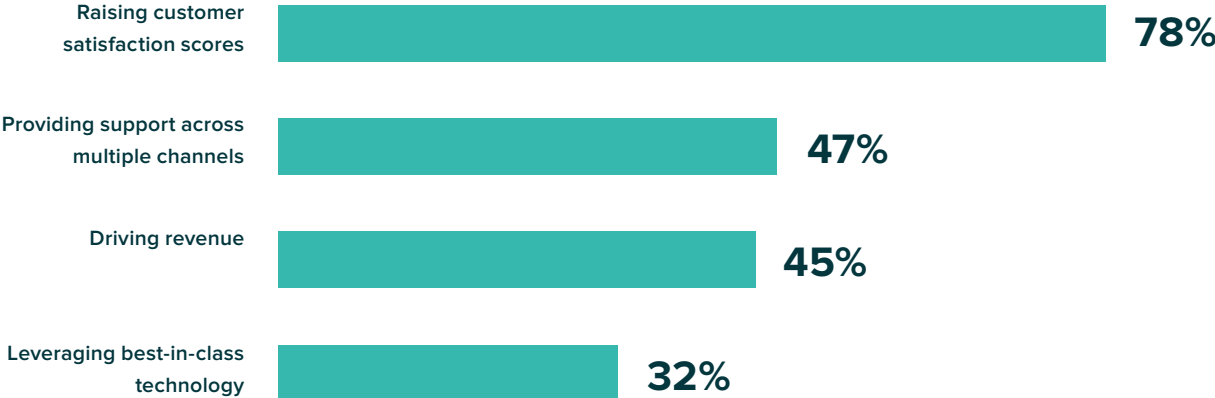
Customer satisfaction

Today’s customers want responsive, personalized support on the channels they prefer. They don’t want a support organization that just fields complaints; they want help with problem solving and with making better choices. Most important, they want to feel valued.

Among Gatepoint survey respondents, a large majority (78%) report that raising customer satisfaction scores is what matters most to them (Figure 1). And nearly half (47%) cite providing support across multiple channels as important. This is followed by driving revenue (45%) and leveraging best-in-class technology (32%).

Not only does customer satisfaction rank the highest in importance for these respondents, but a whopping 89% say they are committed to doing right by the customer. They also recognize customer support is a competitive advantage, with 52% saying their organizations win customers due to outstanding service.

FIGURE 1:
Increasing customer satisfaction the top goal



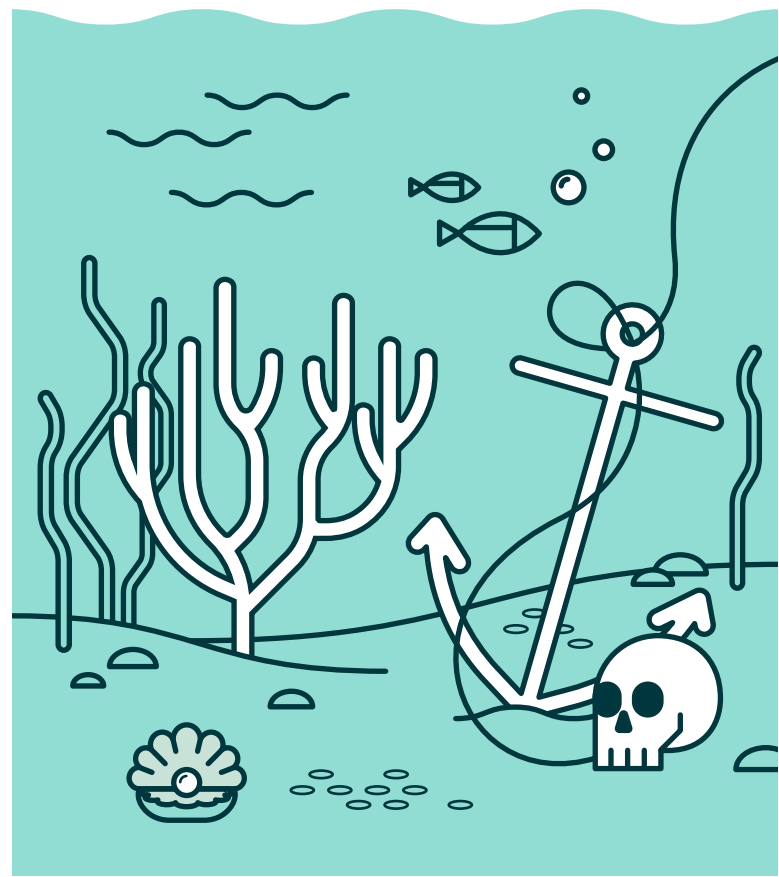
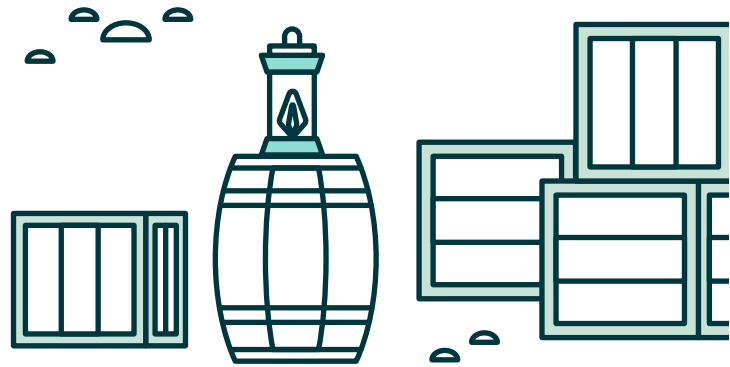
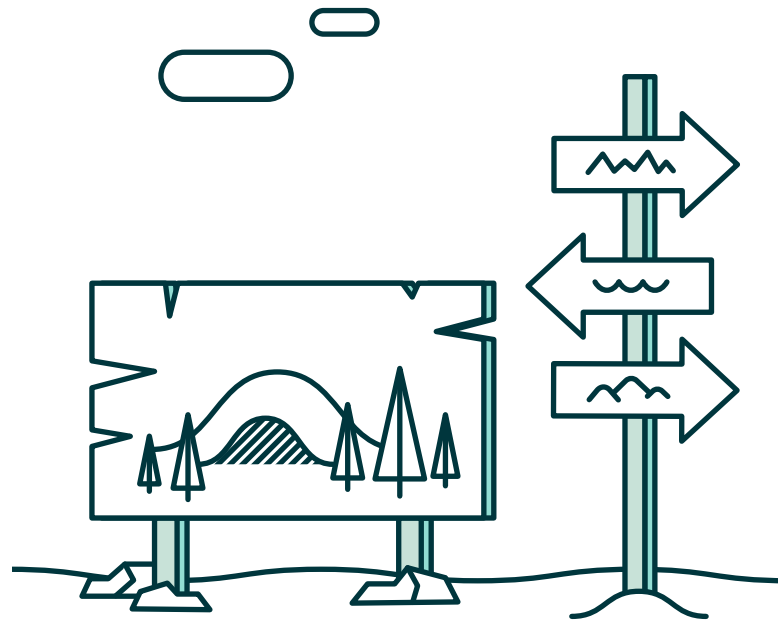
Customer frustrations are ongoing

Yet today's support organizations recognize that while outstanding service is goal, they are not always achieving that. Gatepoint survey respondents acknowledge that customers have ongoing frustrations with the support organization.

The biggest issue is that customer experience varies based on agent, channel, etc., according to 54% (Figure 2). Moreover, 39% say customers have conflicting experience across different platforms, such as phone and email. And 17% report a minimal presence on social channels or lack of response on social media.

"Customers want a single experience with companies based on their preferences and history, not the needs and shift patterns of internal departments."

—Adrian McDermott,
President of Products, Zendesk



Another frustration is that issue resolution times on phone and email are unacceptable, according to 33% of respondents, and another 17% says customers are frustrated by their interactions with the support center.

Research firm Gartner says it behooves organizations to be empathetic to these frustrations. According to a [recent report](#), “Through 2020, businesses that deploy CRM technology in such a way that it reflects empathy toward the customer are three times more likely to fend off a digital disrupter.”

The report went on to say that “While it’s still early days for being able to measure the economic impact of empathy in business, it’s worth noting that companies that have successfully disrupted existing business models did so because of the empathy they felt for customers dealing with inefficient processes and experiences.”

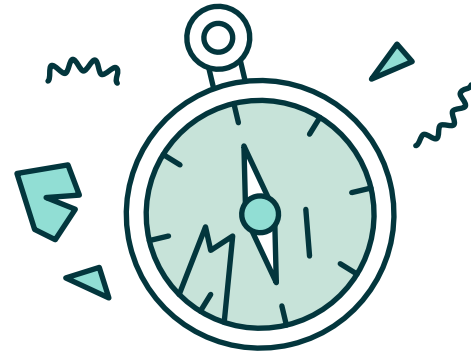
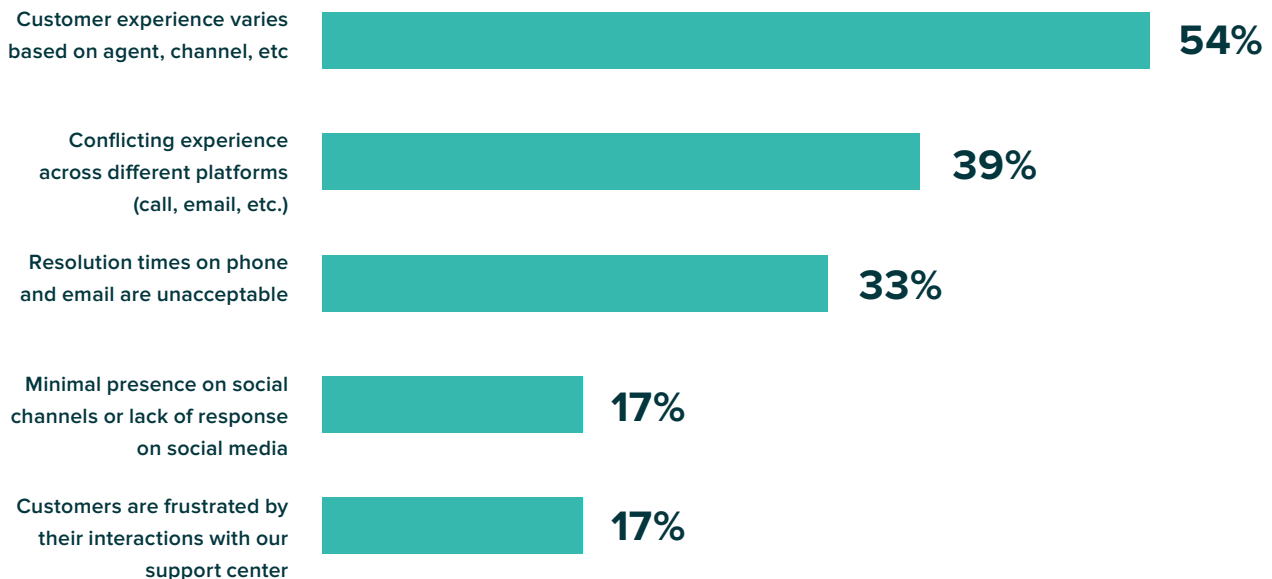


FIGURE 2:
Uneven service the main cause of customer frustration



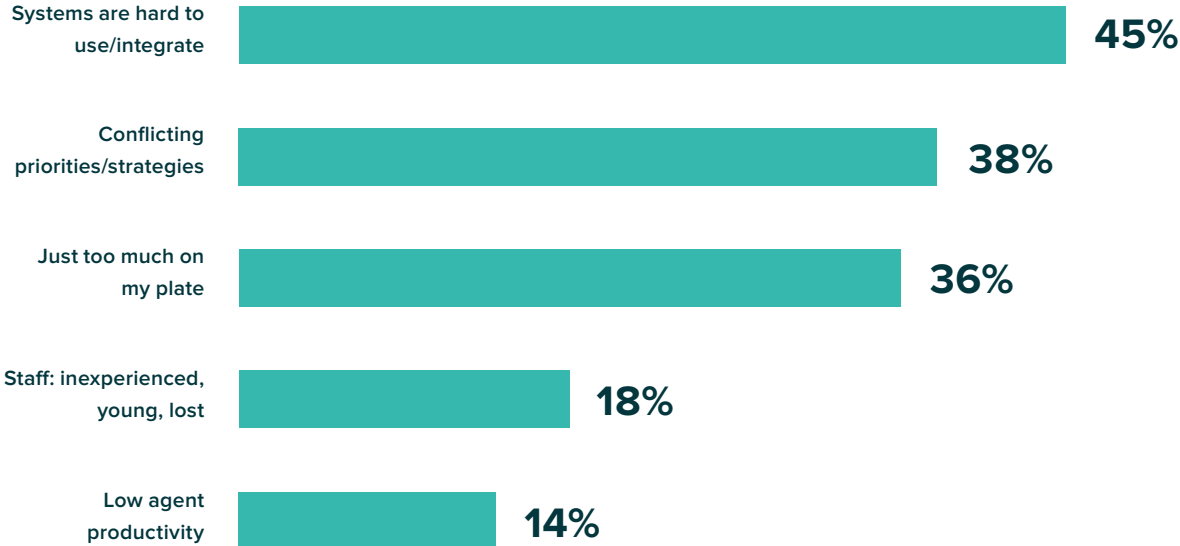
Support professionals have gripes too

Increasing customer satisfaction requires giving agents effective tools for collaboration, information gathering, and automation. That includes providing 24/7 self-service support with easy access to the answers they need, wherever they are.

Forrester data shows that while 72% of businesses say improving customer experience is their top priority, only 63% of marketers prioritize implementing technology investments that will help them reach this goal.

Indeed, the Gatepoint survey respondents' **top complaint (45%) is that systems are hard to use and/or integrate (Figure 3)**. And 38% of respondents cite conflicting priorities/strategies, while 36% say there is just too much on their plate. Other complaints include inexperienced/young staff (18%) and low agent productivity (14%).

FIGURE 3:
Complexity, conflict, congestion are support professionals' top complaints



Conclusion

A successful customer support center can be a key player in a company's strategic advantage over the competition. High customer satisfaction scores can translate into brand loyalty and market domination. Indeed, 51% of Gatepoint survey respondents say leadership views customer service as a potential competitive advantage.

Yet customer expectations are high.

How can your organization build a high-quality, effective customer support center that helps you build relationships that are more meaningful, personal, and productive?

Start by giving support professionals an easy-to-use platform that simplifies the tough work of customer service, and provides the tools that allow your agents to interact with customers how and when they choose.

With great support will come great relationships.



Zendesk: Intuitive tools to manage relationships

To build meaningful relationships that boost loyalty and the bottom line, today's organizations need to better understand their customers, improve communication, and offer support where and when it's needed most—and deliver a great, consistent customer experience across channels and agents. That means customer support organizations need the tools and technology that enable them to cultivate those relationships.

The Zendesk family of products is focused on improving customer relationships. In addition to providing the tools for superior customer service, Zendesk offers products that create a more personal connection between customers and organizations through customer intelligence and deeper analytics.

“For too long, business software has been built for businesses at the expense of customers. It's been built for department silos and separate ‘clouds,’ not the seamless experience customers expect today,” said Mikkel Svane, Zendesk founder and CEO. “We're changing that with products built for relationships first.”

In Gartner's “Magic Quadrant for the CRM Customer Engagement Center 2016,” which examines the global market for customer service and support applications for organizations with CECs as large as 20,000+ agents, Zendesk is in the leader quadrant.

All of the products in the Zendesk family work closely together through a common user interface and are being developed to provide single login and a shared customer data platform. Adrian McDermott, senior vice president of product development at Zendesk, said:

“We're creating a shared memory for organizations so they know their customers and can connect with them in the moment.”

For more information on how your organization can build better customer relationships, go to www.zendesk.com