



State of the Contact Center 2025

Embracing an Ai-powered customer experience

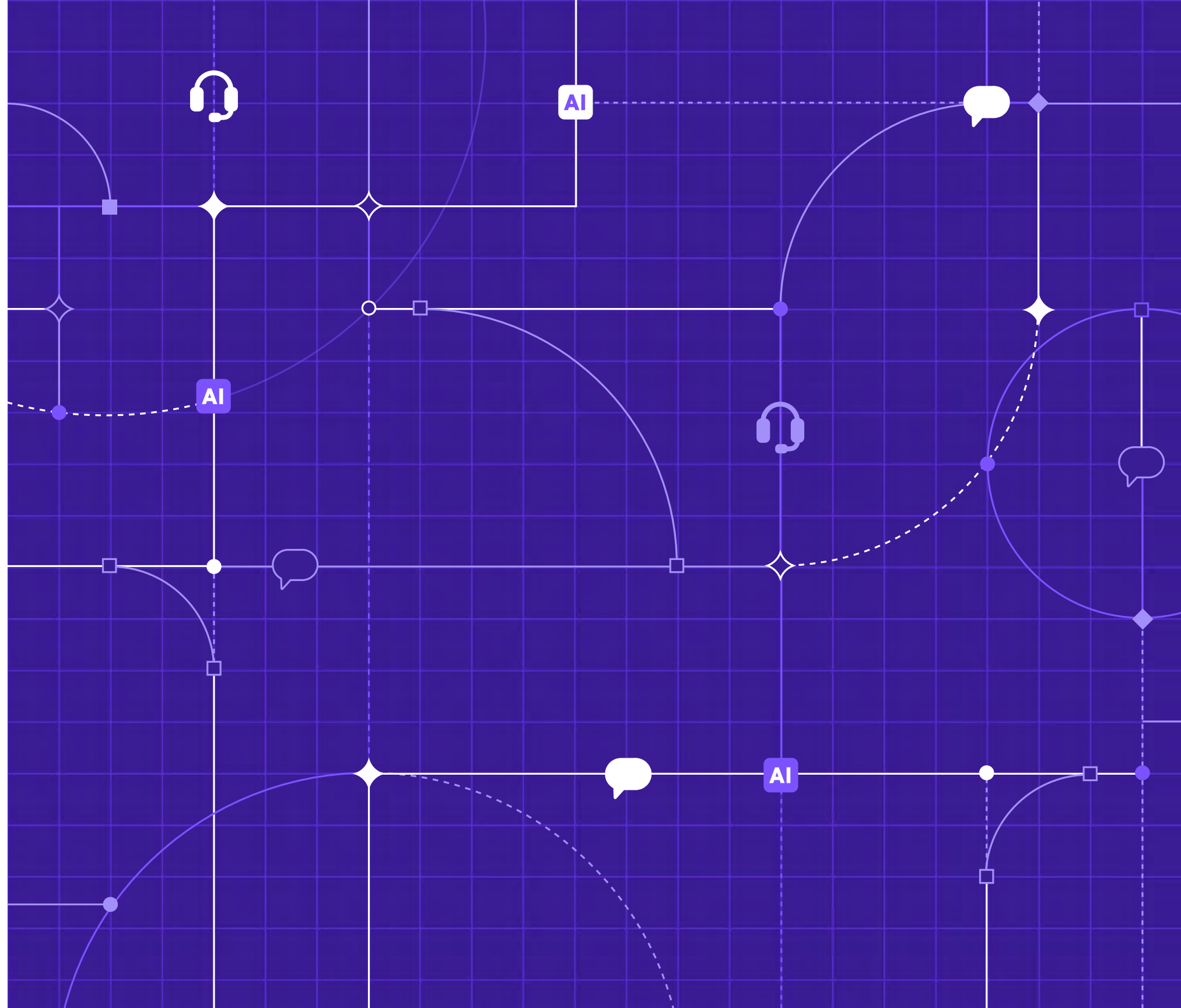


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What will tomorrow's successful Ai-powered contact centers look like?

It's the summer of 2025, and once again, we find ourselves staring into the Ai unknown.

There's no shortage of urgency. Business leaders are being told they need to adopt Ai, fast—while also proving it's delivering real results. And that pressure? It trickles down to the people actually doing the work. According to a recent Pew study, more than half of employed U.S. adults are worried about how Ai will impact their jobs. Only 6% think it will lead to more opportunities.¹

At Dialpad, we've always believed that Ai won't replace people—it will redefine what's possible. But it will change our jobs. How we work, what we prioritize, how we measure success. The companies that thrive will be the ones that meet this moment not just with technology, but with empathy, transparency, and a focus on real human outcomes.

So we went straight to the people who know contact centers best: the agents and supervisors navigating this transformation in real time. We asked 505 of them to tell us what's working, what's hard, and what they really need to succeed in this new era of Ai.

What we heard was clear: the future of Ai in the contact center isn't about human versus machine. It's about humans with machines. Human insight, amplified by Ai.

I hope the insights in this report help you feel a little more grounded, and inspired, as you chart your course forward.

— **Jen Grant**

Chief Marketing Officer, Dialpad

1. October 2024 Pew Research Study among employed U.S. adults to investigate the use of Ai in the workplace

The human/Ai spectrum

Find the right balance for your business



Agents and supervisors agree on customer satisfaction, but see different ways to achieve

What makes a customer interaction successful? It depends who you ask.

Agents and supervisors agree that accurate customer data is the key to driving customer satisfaction, but they hold this view for different reasons.

Agents, who are on the front lines of customer communication, aim to drive customer satisfaction through personal, human connection. The most effective agents understand that a successful customer interaction means more than just resolving the issue — it's about making the customer feel seen, heard, and valued, even if the issue isn't fully resolved.

They see customer data as a tool for empathy and connection which allows them to personalize interactions and show a deep understanding of the customer's needs.

Supervisors, on the other hand, approach customer satisfaction from the perspective of oversight and scalability. They focus on operational KPIs like resolution time to ensure that every interaction meets a consistent standard of quality, no matter the agent.

From this vantage point, customer data enables smoother workflows and repeatable success that ultimately lead to greater customer satisfaction.

Top strategies for improving customer satisfaction

#1 Keeping an accurate history of customer interactions



#2 Reflecting a deep understanding of customer needs



#2 Addressing customer issues or inquiries quickly



#3 Personalized communications with customers



#3 Ensuring consistency across interactions



Every company's unique goals and workflows demand unique Ai strategies and solutions

Real time doesn't always equal the human touch.

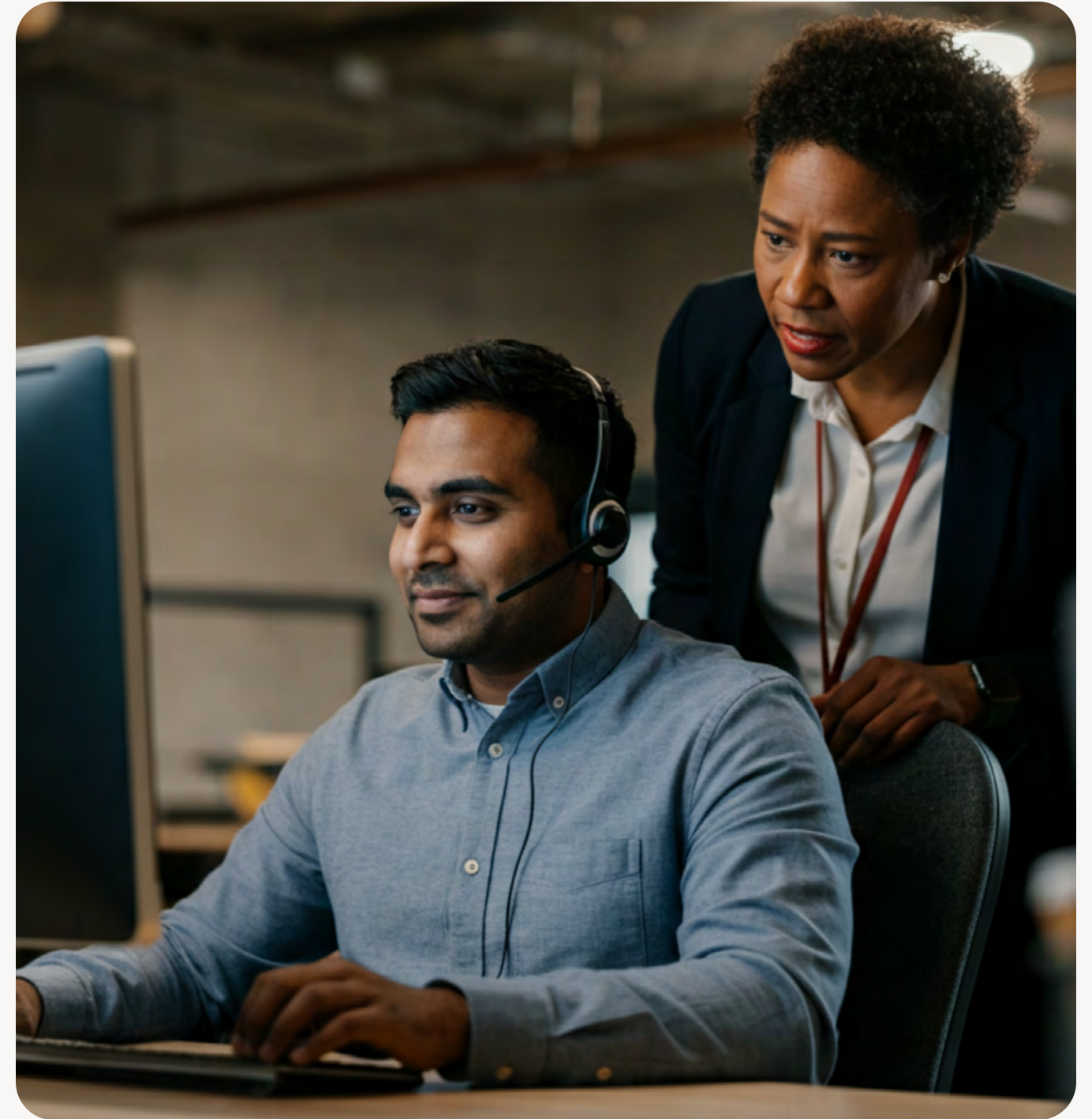
According to Salesforce data, 64% of customers expect companies to respond in real time, a demand that's easily met by Ai tools for straightforward or common questions. For complex issues, however, 59% of customers still prefer to speak with a human agent.²

And when it comes to which of these seemingly opposing goals to focus on, the disconnect between contact center team members remains.

Supervisors are incentivized by speed over quality of resolution, focusing on KPIs like Average Call Time that are now being rendered obsolete by new tools that enable tracking of metrics like CSAT and churn.

Agents seek to resolve every customer's issue and prevent escalations. They believe that establishing a personal human connection is key, but lack the tools and information they'd need in order to achieve these goals.

Close attention to customer preference can help bridge this gap. Many users would prefer to find answers via self-service, without having to wait for an available agent. Emerging conversational Ai agents can deliver resolutions via intuitive, engaging conversation.



². Salesforce State of Service Report

Agents and supervisors alike believe Ai can help resolve these dilemmas



Agents see Ai as a vehicle for stronger customer satisfaction. Supervisors are looking towards operational gains.

Agents hope Ai will make the contact center a center of excellence for customer experience, creating more successful customer interactions through deeper knowledge and leading to stronger customer satisfaction and retention.

Supervisors, by contrast, are focused on how Ai will create value in the way management best understands: improving the bottom line. In fact, Metrigy finds that 41% of contact center leaders see one of Ai's primary roles as advising agents on how to support sales quotas, transforming the organization into a revenue center.

Both groups also believe Ai will lead to improved agent satisfaction and retention—a mutually beneficial outcome.

Top benefits of Ai

Agents	VS	Supervisors
#1 Improved customer satisfaction and retention		#1 Cost savings or reduced operational costs
#2 Improved agent satisfaction and retention		#2 Improved agent satisfaction and retention
#3 Cost savings or reduced operational costs		#3 Improved customer satisfaction and retention
#4 Delivering a better customer experience		#4 Greater quality and consistency across interactions
#5 Greater quality and consistency across interactions		#5 Creating stronger customer connections by anticipating their needs

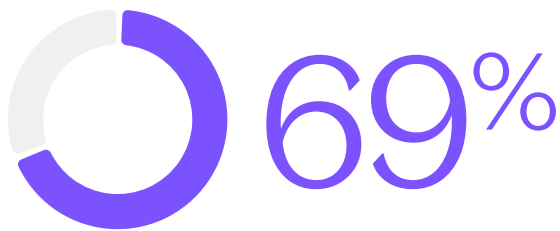
But they also share concerns about Ai’s potential negative impacts

Agents and supervisors alike say Ai must enhance the customer experience, not compromise it.

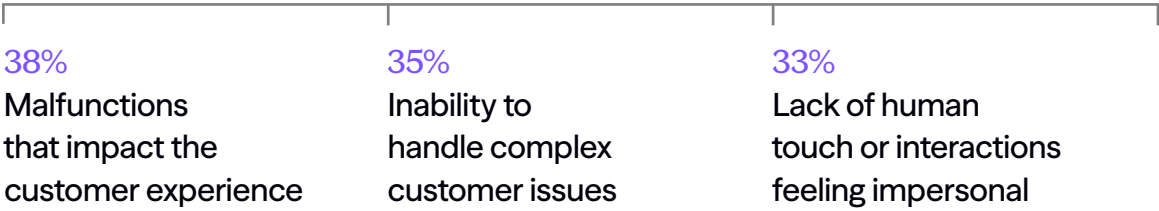
More than 2 out of 3 agents and supervisors express concern that Ai’s limitations could negatively impact customer touchpoints, citing risks like technical malfunctions, an inability to handle complex issues, and a lack of human touch. More than half worry about negative customer reaction, whether because

of general resistance to change or distrust of Ai’s tendency toward occasional inaccuracies, or “hallucinations.”

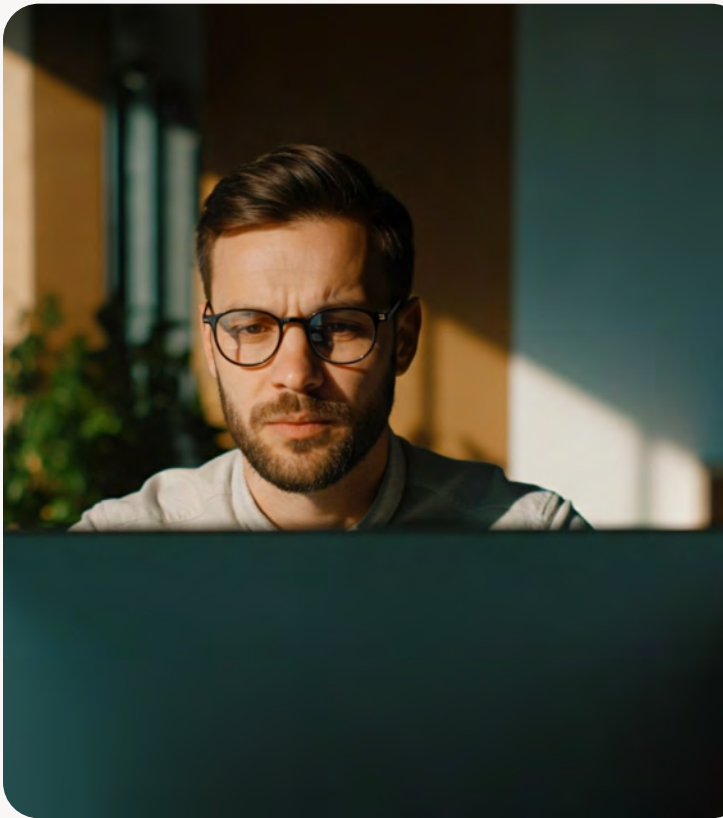
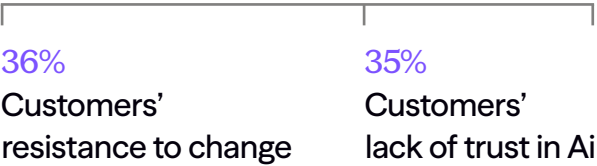
The takeaway is clear: successful Ai integration isn’t just about what the technology is capable of doing, but about how effectively it supports empathetic relationships by building seamless experiences that offer the best of human and Ai assistance.



have concerns about Ai limitations poorly impacting the customer experience



have concerns about customer reactions to Ai



Contact center workers agree on preserving the human touch

But not on what constitutes “too much” and “just enough” Ai

Agents and supervisors agree that Ai can dramatically improve customer interactions, but supervisors are far more cautious about how deeply it should be embedded.

60% of supervisors believe it’s possible to have too much Ai in customer communications, a concern shared by just 42% of agents. And while 53% of agents believe customer communication tools would benefit from more Ai, only 37% of supervisors agree.

This disconnect stems from where each group sees Ai being integrated. While supervisors focus on customer-facing Ai tools and bots, agents imagine Ai that works under the surface to streamline workflows, gather insights, and offer real-time suggestions.

Nearly half of agents believe Ai can increase their customer empathy in several important ways:

- Surfacing relevant real-time info so agents don’t have to
- Automating mundane tasks like notetaking and summaries
- Offering real-time guidance on human agents’ conversations

It’s possible to have too much Ai in customer communications

 **60%**
of supervisors agree

 **42%**
of agents agree



“There are times I need to put the customer on hold so I can focus. I want Ai to do the thinking so I can focus on talking to the customer.”

Evan
Agent



“When it comes to people’s health, there are things that Ai can’t handle. People want to speak to a real person, not a robot.”

Samantha
Supervisor

Action item

Find the human/Ai balance that drives your goals



There's no universal threshold for "too much" Ai.

The right balance between automation and human touch will vary by company, shaped by the complexity of their services, expectations of their customers and the strengths of their teams.

The companies that win won't necessarily be chasing the most advanced bots or most aggressive automation strategies; they'll be focused on taking advantage of Ai to deliver smooth, natural connections across human, and Ai, centered experiences.

It's not that customers don't care whether they're talking to a human or an Ai—they do, especially in emotionally charged or complex moments. But they care more about how the interaction feels. Is it helpful? Does it address my needs? Does it feel personal? Ai that clears those bars without drawing negative attention to itself becomes what we call invisible Ai, enhancing—not usurping—human agents' performance.

To get there, organizations must stop thinking of Ai and humans in opposition, and start designing systems in which Ai amplifies uniquely human qualities like empathy, creativity, and trust.

The hourglass org

Scale business processes where they'll have the greatest impact



Contact center teams are squeezed, but Ai can close the gaps



Scary headlines still warn of Ai's impact on employment. In actual contact centers, lack of staffing means real work is going undone.

According to Metrigy, contact center supervisors manage training, scheduling, and coaching for ~26 agents apiece while facing increasing executive scrutiny.³ These chronically understaffed positions create an hourglass-shaped organizational structure whose management bottlenecks hinder contact centers' potential.

The CSAT (customer satisfaction) problem illustrates how these hourglass orgs are falling short. Most companies generate CSAT scores via post-call surveys that require customers to opt in—a method which captures only a third of customers, skewing CSAT averages and missing important product and operational feedback.⁴

But now Ai can fill this information gap by assigning CSAT scores to 100% of calls and offering neutral, consistent analytical and coaching insights to overworked supervisors.

3. 2025 Metrigy Ai for Business Success Report
4. 2018 Survey Anyplace data



“Ai integration requires teamwork, and my representatives are already overwhelmed by new additions. I see scattered puzzle pieces across multiple systems.”

Samantha
Supervisor

For agents and supervisors, Ai can mean more work, more quality, *and* more satisfaction

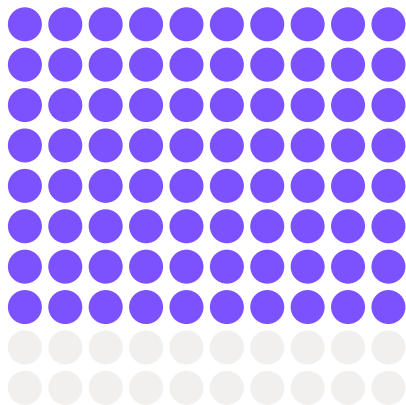
80% of contact center employees in our survey believe headcount at their organization will stay the same or increase as a result of Ai—an opinion also shared by contact center leaders, according to Metrigy.³

Nearly 3 in 4 contact center employees believe Ai will help them do more work. But this is an ideal outcome? On that question, opinions differ.

EFFICIENCY VS. ENJOYMENT: A FALSE DISTINCTION

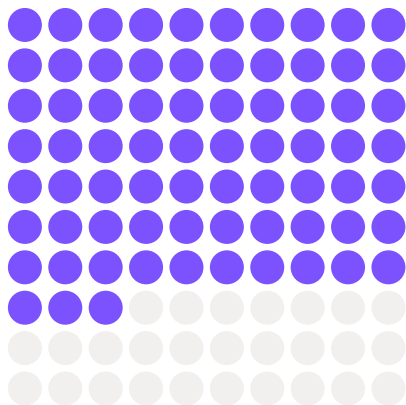
47% of contact center workers want Ai to help them do more work by making them more efficient, while 43% hope to do the same amount of work, but more enjoyably. The remaining 10% want to do less work so they can upskill in other areas.

In reality, these results aren't mutually exclusive. The ideal outcome is that Ai helps team members do their jobs more easily, increasing their job satisfaction today while freeing up time to burnish skills for tomorrow.



80%
of contact center
employees believe

headcount will stay the same or increase



73%
of contact center
employees believe

Ai will enable them to do more work

Ai raises stakes and redefines roles

Agents and supervisors alike see new opportunities and challenges on the horizon as Ai imposes new expectations—and believe this dynamic will only continue to intensify.

Ai's ability to monitor calls and score interactions based on metrics like empathy and connection means agents can be evaluated more holistically. This increased visibility into their customer interactions enables more targeted coaching and development that grow agent skills in meaningful ways.

But with opportunity come expectations. Agents will have to understand how they're being measured and adapt their communication strategies to meet new definitions of success.

What's more, the job itself is evolving. 55% of CX leaders told Metrigy that they're increasing headcount for Ai bot/virtual agent UX designers.³ Agents we spoke with for this survey expect their future responsibilities won't just involve handling customer interactions, but also managing Ai tools—training models, reviewing outputs, and knowing when to step in.



“Now the Ai is listening to calls. You could be an excellent agent, but if you don’t hit those metrics from the new Ai, you can get caught behind the ball.”

Evan
Agent



“The Ai will tell me if there’s an upset customer on a call. It will give me a sad face to let me know someone is upset and I might want to listen in.”

Samantha
Supervisor

Dialpad showcase

Dialpad accelerates real-time Ai to drive ROI and shape the agentic future

20%

Reduction in average handle time

50%

Decrease in post-call work for agents

75%

Reduction in manual tasks for managers

10%

Drop in annual agent turnover

Agents and supervisors see different Ai futures

Agents are ready to lean in on Ai.
Supervisors are bracing for impact.

Nearly 2 in 3 agents believe Ai will positively impact their role, compared to just over a third of supervisors, more than half of whom express fears over job security. The reason? Agents are thinking about how Ai can enhance their work, while supervisors fear the unknown.

Ai will have a **mostly positive** impact on my role



Worried about the effects of Ai on **job security**



Action item

Don't fight the hourglass—fix the bottleneck



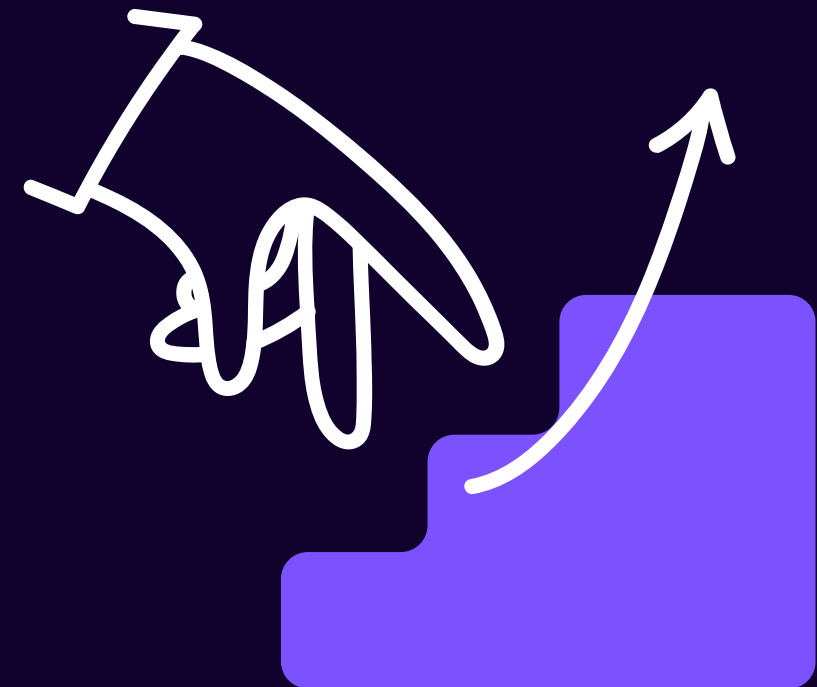
Every contact center has bottlenecks where too few people are trying to manage too many processes, leaving teams struggling to scale.

Ai can fill these gaps, but it's only as powerful as the people who are using it and the data they give their models to access. Fully realizing this technology's force multiplier potential means giving teams the training, tools, and confidence they need to partner with it effectively.

In our final chapter, we'll explore how leading companies are learning to build Ai-ready teams from the ground up.

The Ai literacy imperative

Maximize the value of your Ai investment
by upskilling your team for long-term success

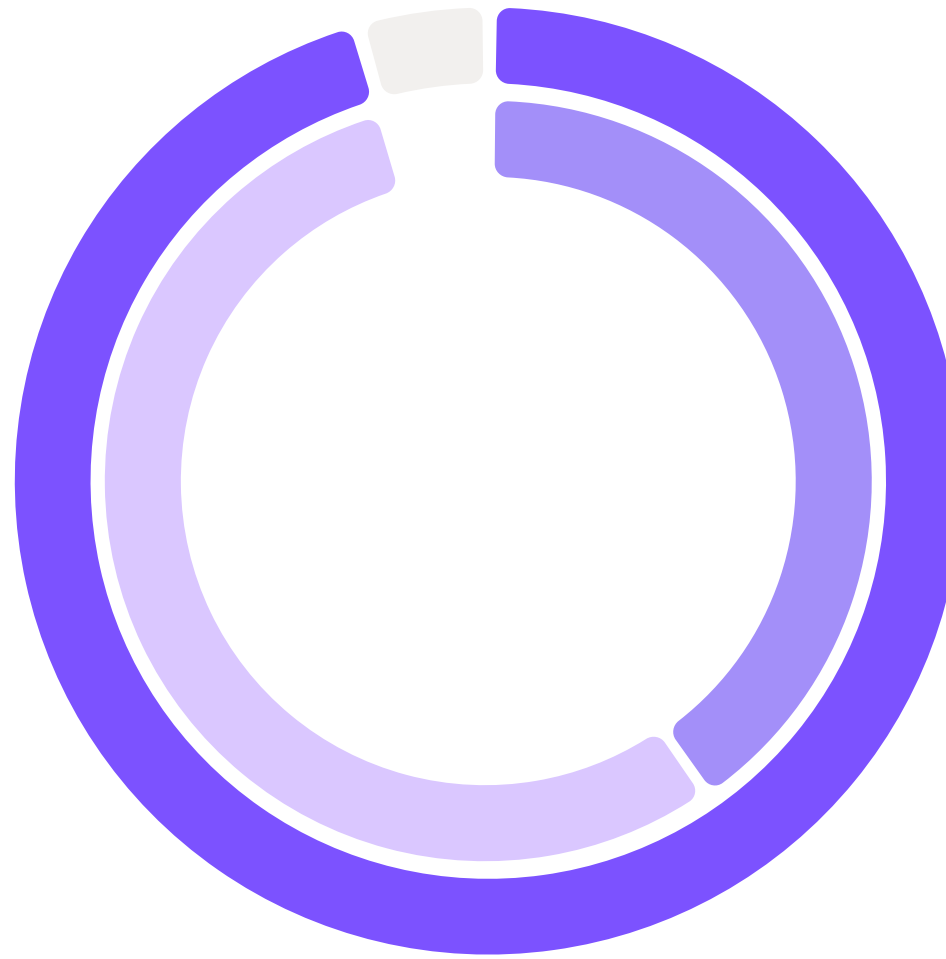


Are your colleagues ready to adopt Ai? Chances are they're already trying.

The real question is whether they're doing so effectively.

According to McKinsey data, business leaders severely underestimate how extensively their employees are using Ai. C-suite leaders estimate that only 4% of their employees use Ai for at least 30% of their work. In fact, as self-reported by employees, that percentage is 3 times greater.⁵

The same is true within contact centers, our study shows an overwhelming 95% of workers say they're using Ai in some capacity.



95%

of contact center workers are using Ai in at least some cases

40% using in most to all cases

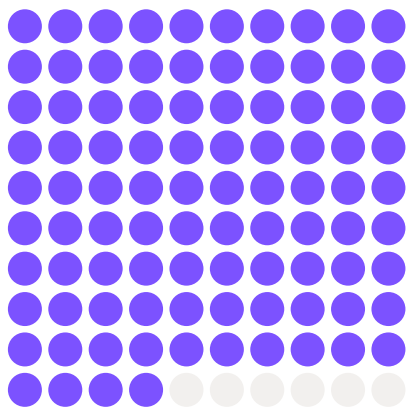
55% using in some cases

5. 2024 McKinsey Study among employees and C-level executives to understand barriers to Ai in the workplace

Skillful Ai adoption will transform the quality and capacity of contact center work

Ai isn't just a time-saver. For contact center workers, it will be a game-changer.

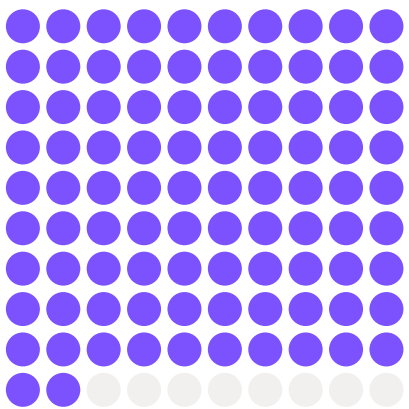
The vast majority of contact center workers believe Ai will make them more effective and efficient by reducing friction, enhancing responsiveness, and raising the bar for performance and customer care.



94%

of contact center workers believe

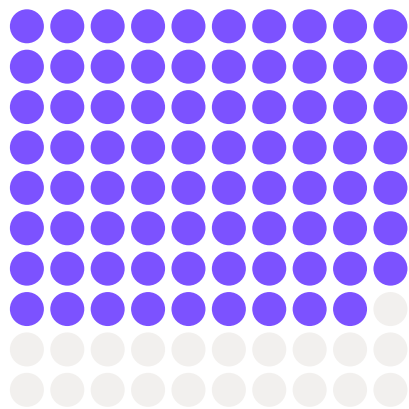
Ai will help me/my team respond to customer needs more effectively



92%

of contact center workers believe

Ai will help me/my team respond to customer needs more efficiently



79%

of contact center workers believe

Ai will help agents elevate the quality of their work

Ai-empowered teams can trade volume for value

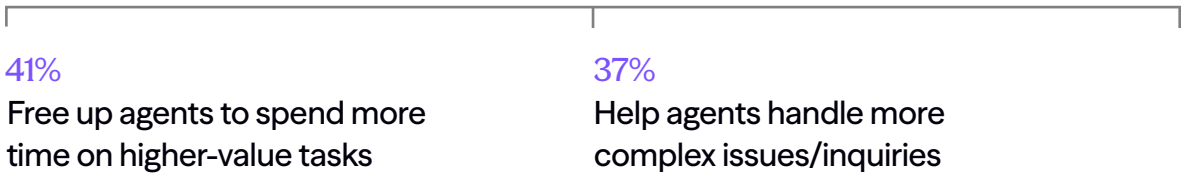
As Ai takes on more routine, repetitive tasks, contact center teams can refocus on more complex strategic goals.

62% of respondents to our survey say Ai will help agents better utilize their time by freeing them to spend more time on higher-impact priorities like complex issues, personalized service, and strategic thinking.

But teams will only reap Ai’s full value if they know how to use it well.



Ai will enable agents to better utilize their time for more strategic and complex tasks



“Ai will help my team get more done and do more strategic thinking. Productivity will increase dramatically, and the business will grow.”

Matthew
Supervisor

Ai literacy is mission-critical, and workers fear falling behind the curve

Despite their excitement around Ai, contact center workers are unsure of their readiness to use it effectively.

More than half have concerns about their Ai skillset — whether that’s not knowing where or how to start, lacking formal training, or feeling unsure about how to apply Ai in a meaningful way on the job.



of contact center workers have concerns about their Ai skillset

30%

Unsure where to start with Ai

28%

Lack of training on how to utilize Ai

24%

Unsure how to use Ai effectively

Supervisors feel particularly behind on the Ai curve — 57% say they want to use Ai in customer communication but don’t know how to get started, compared to just 33% of agents.

Action item

Build your foundations for Ai success



Ai is becoming a table-stakes capability whose impact depends on how well it's understood and applied. Contact centers face a universal and growing need for targeted enablement: not just giving employees access to Ai skills, but making sure they have the confidence, clarity, and support to use them effectively by prioritizing three foundational Ai virtues.

- 1 Strategy:** Identify the parts of your business where the human touch matters most—moments that build trust, drive loyalty, and differentiate your brand. Then ask how Ai can amplify your team's ability to deliver those moments with excellence, and at scale.
- 2 Structure:** At the same time, look for points of friction. Where are your people stretched thin? Where are processes breaking down or leaving value on the table? These are prime opportunities for Ai to make a real difference—not by replacing your teams, but relieving them.
- 3 Support:** Contact centers that master this new era won't be those that automate the fastest, but those that equip their people the best. Help your teams build an Ai toolbox and train them to work with Ai, not around it.

Forward-looking: The literacy imperative

As AI becomes more deeply embedded in contact centers' daily operations, agents and supervisors are confronting a critical reality: those who understand how to use these new tools will thrive; those who don't risk being left behind.

In this report we've offered a framework for the former. The interviews we've discussed here show members of our industry thinking deeply about the state of the contact center in 2025, settling on the customer-centric goals that matter most, and devising strategies to meet them by threading the needle between AI efficiency and human empathy.

We're not here to prescribe a single path forward. Each company, each team, will need to chart its own course.

But the common thread is clear: achieving an AI-powered customer experience requires more than just acquiring tools. It demands building confidence, fluency, and clarity around their use.

AI literacy is no longer a competitive edge—it's a baseline expectation. And the organizations that rise to meet it will be the ones best equipped to deliver the kind of customer experience today's world demands.

If you're just beginning your journey, know this: success starts with the right questions, the right mindset, and a willingness to evolve. And if you're looking for a partner in that evolution, [Dialpad is here to help.](#)

Methodology

We conducted a survey to understand the current and future state of contact center workers in the US, followed by qualitative IDIs to round-out our learnings and gather stories and quotes to bring them to life.

Online Survey

We surveyed 505 full-time contact center workers from February 24 - March 11, 2025. All respondents work at organizations with 300+ employees and use communication tools in their roles.

Managers 255

Contact center workers who oversee or manage a team of agents or sellers

Agents 250

Contact center workers in customer support/service, human resource/ staffing, sales or project management departments;

Total 505

Online board & in-depth interviews

From April 21 - May 2, 2025, we recruited 20 respondents with a similar profile to the quantitative survey to complete online board activities, then conducted additional 60-min in-depth interviews with the 12 best participants.

Managers 4

Agents 8

Total 12