



Navigating the Modern Omnichannel Contact Center

How to use channel-specific insights
to improve efficiency, enhance CX,
and make data-driven business
decisions

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the Leader in The Forrester Wave™:
Conversation Intelligence for
Customer Service, Q3 2023



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Introduction

The modern customer journey is anything but linear. In the past, most contact centers serviced customers strictly through calls, and that may have been enough. Today, customers want to contact brands how and when they choose – including via chat, text, email and more. Just like phone conversations, these omnichannel interactions contain critical feedback and insights.

However, many organizations aren't optimized to analyze this breadth of omnichannel feedback at scale. According to the [2023 CallMiner CX Landscape Report](#), the majority of organizations are still collecting mostly solicited customer experience (CX) and customer satisfaction feedback (71% in 2023 vs. 79% in 2022). Solicited feedback includes methods such as surveys or incentivized reviews, where customers are asked for their opinions. Focusing on solicited feedback only covers just part of the full CX picture (and often just the highs and the lows). Unsolicited feedback, such as insights obtained from day-to-day omnichannel customer interactions, represents the vast majority of customer opinions – along with a major untapped opportunity for organizations. At the same time, 68% of CX Landscape Report respondents say the CX data they collect is often not harnessed to their organization's best advantage. How can organizations not only collect the data they need, but also analyze it to make effective business decisions?

Let's explore how to uncover channel-specific insights across channels to ensure a seamless customer journey, as well as apply these insights toward business improvements that make a difference in both the employee experience (EX) and CX.

Listening throughout the omnichannel customer journey

Customers may already be telling you what you want to know throughout their omnichannel customer journey. Omnichannel takes the customer experience further than multichannel by enabling cross-channel customer engagement. Unlike multichannel, omnichannel refers to some level of integration, data sharing or analytics that work to mitigate the technology "gaps" between each channel of communication.

Common benefits include reduced customer effort by eliminating the need to repeat information, and better intelligence for optimizing agent performance. By providing a means to share intelligence across all communications, omnichannel ensures that information travels with a customer as they switch from digital channels such as online chat to phone support.

Different channels for different customers

Understanding how and when customers prefer to interact with your brand may help you uncover the motivations behind their requests. Having this intelligence can help your team determine how to serve them better – further, for automated channels (e.g. interactive voice response (IVR) or chatbots) and self-service channels, teams can learn from customer interactions to refine these systems and keep them relevant for customers seeking quick answers.



Phone

Phone customers typically want to solve a problem they can't figure out on their own. More often than not, they are seeking a resolution during the first call, and they have a sense of urgency. Also, some are simply more comfortable with phone interactions than digital interactions. Certain customers may be classified as **digitally vulnerable**, meaning they are unfamiliar with or unable to navigate digital systems. For those reasons, it is important to continue to offer and optimize phone as a communication channel, and to understand when a customer may not be comfortable with a digital follow-up.



Chat

Chat customers may not have the time or be in a position where they can sit on a phone call (e.g. they may be multitasking during work hours), or they are trying to solve their issue quicker than sitting in a phone queue. They often are digitally savvy and may have tried to solve a problem using online self-service tools, but were not successful in finding a resolution. These customers expect quick response times and may become fed-up if they have to wait too long and have to revert to other channels like phone.



Email tickets

Asynchronous channels like email or helpdesk tickets often apply to customers who can wait for a response to an issue, or who know that they have an issue that is best served by continuing to interact with the same person (such a supervisor or case-issue manager). These customers may be facing more technical or complex issues that require more time to resolve, and may require the need for an expert.



Self-service

More than half of consumers (58%) report that they prefer to solve customer service issues on their own versus talking to a company representative. These customers tend to be digitally savvy, and often do not have the time (or desire) to interact with an agent. Customers also come to self-service options with issues that they have solved via the same channel before (e.g. confirming an appointment time or account balance.) They take advantage of wikis, Q&As, automated chatbots or other channels to research and get quick answers independently.



Social media

Often reserved for extreme emotions (including happiness and dissatisfaction), these customers may have exhausted all other channels of communication, or may have had an extremely good or bad experience with the brand. These customers (particularly the dissatisfied ones) expect, and often demand, a fast response. **Half of customers** will complain publicly on social media, and if they don't receive an answer, 81% will not recommend that company to their friends. If companies don't attend to these complaints quickly and carefully, these customers can become fuel for full-blown PR crises.

How channel-specific feedback can impact the customer journey

AI-based solutions like conversation intelligence can help teams analyze 100% of omnichannel feedback at scale. By applying unique identifiers to customers, it's possible to understand how a customer's journey flows across all channels, and uncover where they may be experiencing frustration or friction. For example, in the webinar, "[How to unleash the power of chat in your contact center](#)", Midland Credit Management discussed how they effectively leveraged chat to improve their self-service channels, as well as their staffing decisions. The team analyzes trends from 100% of customer interactions, including chat. They apply unique customer IDs to track cross-channel behavior and ask questions accordingly to understand how to make business improvements.

Some examples include:

- If a consumer has an issue with the website, the Midland team can improve that experience by changing some of the format/layouts of the website for self-service.
- Based on findings from chat, the team can add self-service FAQ to help customers answer simple or recurring questions.
- Understanding the drivers for chat can help agents serve customers better based on both volume and what they're asking for. This has been helpful in determining when staff should be scheduled. While the team can't cover all hours for chat, they can measure trends and re-allocate staff accordingly.

Developing an omnichannel listening strategy

Collecting and leveraging AI to analyze unsolicited feedback is an important foundation for developing an omnichannel listening strategy. Customers may already be telling you what you want to know throughout their omnichannel customer journey, as they interact with your brand through both physical and digital touchpoints.

And embracing an omnichannel strategy is good for business – in fact, consumers are 80% more likely to purchase from a brand that provides personalized, omnichannel experiences.

Once you establish your omnichannel strategy and start collecting data from all communication channels, it's important to make sure that data and insights are also accessible to everyone within your organization, particularly CX and contact center business leaders. This 'democratization' makes it possible to leverage data to gain a holistic view of the VoC and make more informed decisions, changes and optimizations as a result, but you don't have to listen to hours of call recordings, or read pages of transcripts and customer feedback to get there.

How conversation intelligence can help

These platforms help derive contextual meaning on top of what is said, helping teams to understand why customers reach out during their omnichannel journeys. Here are a few examples of insights teams can discover through conversation intelligence.

- **Sentiment and emotion.** Sentiment analysis continues to be an important standard within customer service. With the addition of emotional analysis, a more nuanced and complex picture of the customer is available for a business to refine their approaches. Sentiment is a powerful indicator, but is often reflected in a one-dimensional answer to a question (positive, negative, or neutral). Emotional insights can more quickly identify motivational indicators, such as loyalty, distress or churn-likely behaviors.
- **Contact drivers.** Contact drivers help you understand why customers choose to reach out, based on the customer's perception of a certain issue or situation. In addition to contact drivers, you can drill down into customer emotions, frequency of contact, the root causes behind the interaction, and more, to understand the context of a customer interaction.
- **Call dynamics.** From silence to average handle time (AHT) to agent quality scores, conversation intelligence can reveal important dynamics of every customer interaction, either individually or together for trending. For example, on collections calls about financial matters, longer silence times can indicate that an agent is empathetically listening to a customer's needs. On other calls, long silence times can be an indicator of a challenge or process issue, such as if an agent is using call time to take notes, that requires additional training.

Five CX and EX improvements that can be made with omnichannel insights

Optimizing self-service:

Optimizing self-service: Analyzing channel-specific insights for common questions can help determine where to add self-service options or FAQs addressing recurring issues.

Implementing staffing changes:

Based on the frequency of channel interaction, more or fewer agents may need to be staffed, or at different times to ensure coverage.

Changing the customer journey:

If the customer is experiencing points of friction in the customer journey (e.g. bill payment online is too difficult, resulting in an influx of calls), the organization can make process changes to reduce customer effort and ensure a seamless customer experience.

Improving agent satisfaction:

Data-driven feedback can improve an agent's confidence with handling challenging situations and reinforce positive behaviors – leading to better job performance, satisfaction, and retention.

Cross-functional business improvements:

Insights can be shared with other departments such as sales, marketing, and product. For example, a social media customer service issue could easily become a PR crisis – detecting and responding to it before it escalates is key to ensuring customer satisfaction, issue resolution and crisis containment.

With omnichannel, visibility is key

You can't improve what you can't see. That's why visibility into 100% of omnichannel interactions (both solicited and unsolicited) is critical. Unsolicited feedback is perhaps even more powerful than solicited feedback, as it can deliver valuable insights into contact drivers, sentiment, emotion and more.

By understanding how your customers interact within each channel and the context of those interactions, you can improve CX and optimize the customer journey. These improvements also benefit your contact center agents, as they will receive more valuable feedback based on actual data from customer interactions. This type of data-driven feedback improves employee satisfaction, which can have a direct and lasting impact on both morale and customer happiness.

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About CallMiner

CallMiner is the global leader in conversation intelligence to drive business performance improvement. Powered by artificial intelligence and machine learning, CallMiner delivers the industry's most comprehensive platform to analyze omnichannel customer interactions at scale, allowing organizations to interpret sentiment and identify patterns to reveal deep understanding from every conversation.

By connecting the dots between insights and action, CallMiner enables companies to identify areas of opportunity to drive business improvement, growth and transformational change more effectively than ever before. CallMiner is trusted by the world's leading organizations across retail, financial services, healthcare and insurance, travel and hospitality, and more.



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