eBook

Unlock healthcare innovation. Move to the cloud.

Webex Contact Center

webex
by CISCO

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Introduction

A new era for healthcare unfolds

Healthcare is one of the most complex and challenging industries of our times. It is heavily regulated, with numerous laws and standards adding stringent compliance requirements to providers and payers.

Adding to this complexity are competitive pressures from new market entrants like direct-to-consumer telehealth services, escalating healthcare costs, digital transformation, staffing shortages, and increasing patient expectations for convenient, automated, and flexible access to healthcare, anytime and anywhere.

Another factor adding to the complexity is the fragmentation of healthcare data, which is often scattered across various systems such as electronic health records (EHR), insurance claims, and specialized health information platforms. This fragmentation makes data integration, workflow management, and patient communication more challenging.

Like many industries, healthcare is experiencing higher than ever staffing shortages, particularly among frontline workers, and even more so for those who work in contact centers, where stress levels can ride high.

Research by Gartner reveals that frontline workers want stability, flexibility, and control over where they work, what they work on, and when they work. Like your patients, they too want better experiences.

One of the most important drivers for long-term success is how your organization engages with patients. As the bar for better experiences continues to rise, so do the expectations for a high performing contact center.

The contact center after all, is the heartbeat of every business. It's the vital component of a business's well-being. The essential link between your staff and patients. Whether it fails or succeeds is a testament to the level of importance your organization places on nurturing patient relationships and ensuring their satisfaction.

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It's time for change

According to McKinsey & Company, healthcare organizations lag significantly in digital engagement, placing second-lowest in digital consumer adoption compared to industries such as banking, government, travel, entertainment, retail, and insurance.

To catch up and meet evolving consumer expectations, healthcare providers must prioritize digital engagement efforts.

Prioritizing your patients

Creating a culture of patient-centricity starts with understanding how your patients engage with your organization and taking a multifaceted approach that puts their needs at the very center of their healthcare journey.

Understanding their journey requires insights, which can often be difficult to obtain when using legacy technology platforms that lack interoperability and flexibility to consolidate patient data from different sources.

Your staff play a key role in becoming patient-centric. It's important for them to understand and embrace the relationship between teamwork and responsiveness, between responsiveness and patient satisfaction, between patient satisfaction and patient outcomes, between outcomes and revenues, between revenues and profitability.

But shifts in workplace culture aren't easy; they require more than just the human aspect and can only be achieved when your employees are supported by the right internal processes and technologies.

This entails questioning the status quo and finding new ways to use technologies to increase efficiency, streamline processes, better serve employees, and deliver more value to your patients.

Achieving this requires digital transformation across your organization. This means integrating modern technology into all areas of the business, to improve your ability to evolve with the market, support business growth, and adapt to rapidly changing patient expectations.

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The promise of cloud technology

Digital transformation has accelerated the trend to transition to cloud services or Software as a Service (SaaS), from legacy systems and applications.

According to a global research study by KPMG, "SaaS offers a compelling path to accelerated transformation. With rapid releases of new functionality, it allows for steady improvements in agility, automation, security, data management, customer experience, and more."

But when it comes to the contact center, the trend to move to cloud has been slower. More than 2/3 of contact center agents are still on-premises, according to communications industry research firm McGee-Smith Analytics. According to Sheila McGee-Smith "Technology has changed how consumers shop or consume services. The need to interact with the companies that supply goods and services is universal. And despite the often-heavy involvement of the information technology department, the focus of migration to the cloud for contact center software is not on technology, but on customer experience."

Historically, improving customer experience meant hiring and increasing the number of highly trained, costly, premium contact center agents. Today it involves investments in cloud technology that gives healthcare organizations and other businesses access to feature innovation, flexibility, automation, scalability, and agility. Only then can a business adapt quicky to change and improve their competitive advantage.

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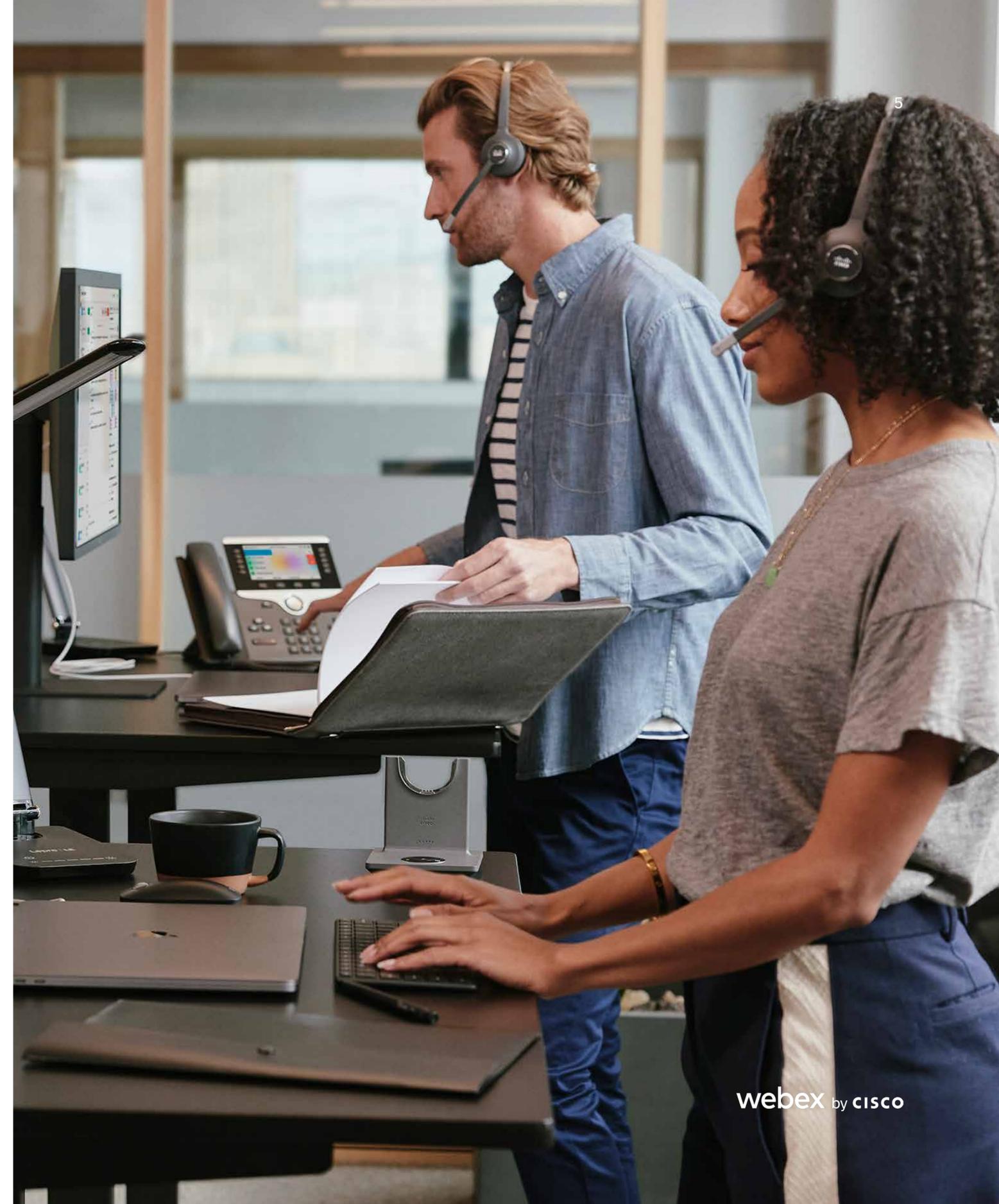
Every business faces the same customer experience imperative

Maximize satisfaction

Minimize cost

The CX imperative

Call centers have been around since the 1960s and the customer experience imperative has remained unchanged: Retaining satisfied customers while minimizing costs.

Every smart business is constantly looking for ways to reduce costs and operate more productively. Since labor is the single biggest expense in a contact center, cutting staff, changing schedules, shifting the supervisor-to agent ratio, and even outsourcing to a temp agency are often the first steps taken.

But the focus must always be to maintain a high quality of customer service. To maximize satisfaction for the consumer and keep them happy so they remain loyal to your brand, which leads to increased revenues.

However, no company has infinite resources to scale agents to handle every consumer engagement. And even if they did, the costs would far outweigh the benefits. The goal is to strike a balance between cost efficiency and customer satisfaction.

This puts added pressure on the contact center to apply the right amount of efficiency and human touch to every interaction.

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# How to maximize patient satisfaction and minimize costs

Maximize satisfaction ♡

- Deploy the right channels to meet patients where they're at

- Offer patients intuitive AI self-service options 24/7

- Empower agents with "just-in-time" AI assistance

- Streamline engagement with integrated healthcare applications

- Automate call summarization to save time and reduce wait times

- Provide agents with easy real-time access to back-office clinical staff

- Establish remote working to maximize resources and improve agent satisfaction

Minimize cost $

- Shift CAPEX to OPEX by deploying a cloud contact center

- Switch to a predictable budget with subscription-based pricing

- Use workforce optimization tools to efficiently scale and optimize staffing

- Deflect common queries to virtual assistants to resolve issues without the help from agents

- Reduce hardware infrastructure, maintenance and upgrade costs

- Scale on-demand without additional hardware or IT assistance

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Virtualization where you can, human where you must

Do/Learn

Human interaction

Virtualized interactions

Automate
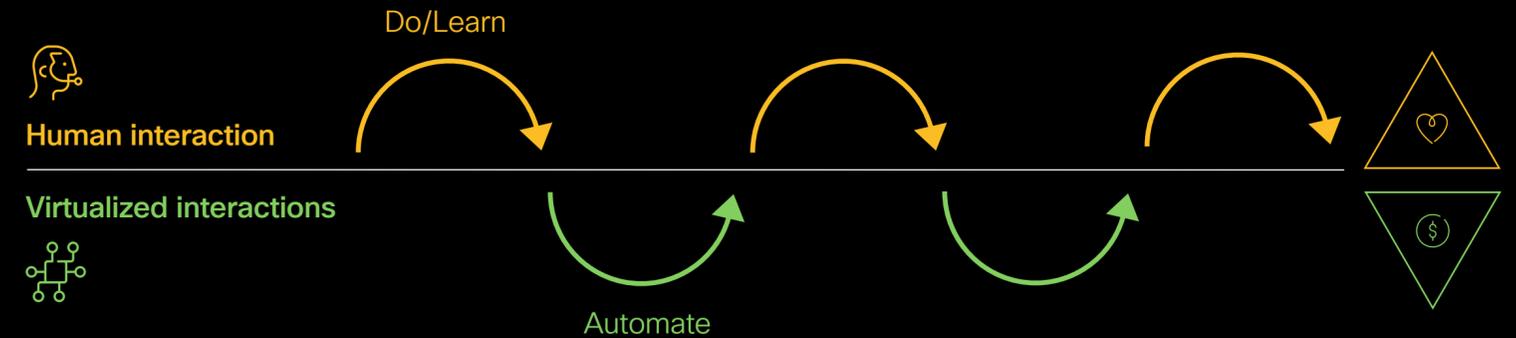
The journey to digital transformation

There are two types of organizations on the journey to digital transformation. The first is the type looking for a complete digital transformation to the business – integrating technology into all areas of the business resulting in fundamental changes to how the business operates and how value is delivered to customers, from a company-wide perspective.

The second type has no impetus to change, and yet there is a need to improve customer service. Customer satisfaction (CSAT) scores have declined, while competition has grown.

This requires a digital overhaul to the contact center. It involves finding the right balance between manual tasks and automation, and between human and virtualized interactions that will steer consumers to the most efficient resolution. And while digital transformation is inevitable, there are certain situations where the human touch remains indispensable.

But for healthcare organizations, it's impossible to engage with every patient in the same way at every possible touchpoint. There is no "one size fits all". Although personalization remains an integral part of exceptional patient experience, it's challenging to accommodate a diverse set of patient requests within a single environment.

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According to research by McKinsey & Company, more than half of consumers engage with three to five channels during each journey they take toward making a purchase or resolving a request.

The challenge lies in providing a set of seamlessly integrated channels that meet the needs of your most important revenue-generating, value-generating requests.

For healthcare organizations, getting this right requires a patient-centric mindset and a contact center solution that supports omnichannel journeys. Patients want choices. They should be able to choose how they engage with your organization. They might want to use text messaging or apps like Facebook Messenger or WhatsApp to avoid making a phone call.

The limitations of your legacy on-premises contact center technology shouldn't dictate what kind of omnichannel experiences you build for your patients. Your agents need a seamless system that allows them to see each patient's journey and efficiently engage with any patient regardless of what channel was used.

By focusing on patient needs, your organization can provide personalized experiences that lead to better patient outcomes, satisfaction, and loyalty.

McKinsey & Company

58%

of customers engage with three to five channels during each journey

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Why cloud now?

The longer you stay on-premises, the more it is costing you

There could be many reasons why your current contact center solution isn't working for you anymore. Perhaps the vendor who has supported you for many years is no longer viable from both a financial point of view or from a roadmap perspective. They can't keep up with the pace of innovation that your business requires, which has both direct and indirect costs to your business.

If your contact center is running on a legacy on-premises platform, it may be at its "end of life". This makes it more difficult to maintain, parts are more expensive and harder to find, repairs take longer, and technical support becomes scarcer.

You may find it difficult to add new functionality. For example, say your patients are asking for the ability to engage with your business on WhatsApp. You can do this easily with a cloud contact center platform that supports omnichannel interactions. It's a matter of configuration.

However, when dealing with on-premises systems it's not that straightforward. It could entail changes to your infrastructure and potentially expensive custom integration.

Are you stifling innovation?

When we think about tech innovation, artificial intelligence (AI) is usually the first thing that comes to mind. AI is built into just about every piece of cloud software today. In the contact center it's being used to increase agent efficiency and provide proactive self-service options to consumers. AI is also being used to learn from conversations and identify common themes that can aid in improving operations and uncovering healthcare or billing-related issues.

But AI requires data and leveraging data becomes almost impossible with an on-premises platform because it lacks the flexibility to consolidate data from different sources. You're unable to bring in the right data, from the right source, at the right time. This impacts your ability to make "just-in-time" decisions that allow your organization to respond quickly to patient needs or shifts in the market.

For example, a cloud contact center enables you to easily pull in patient data from your CRM or EHR to make routing decisions in real-time, or to assist your agents by displaying information about the patient's most recent appointments, prescription refills, medical background, health history and other data about the patient. This leads to improvements in first contact resolution (FCR) as well as agent and patient satisfaction.

With cloud, your contact center staff is less reliant on the IT department when making rapid and responsive changes in the contact center. For example, adding new skills or re-skilling a new agent can be done within minutes from a supervisor dashboard. Access to real-time analytics and historical reports is available at any time without IT involvement.

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Is your technology in silos?

Another limiting factor with an on-premises solution is that you most likely need several vendors to address all the needs of your contact center. Or perhaps you have multiple vendors because of mergers or acquisitions or different departments making separate tech buying decisions. This is quite common, especially in larger healthcare organizations but it does make things more complicated. Getting all the components to integrate and work together seamlessly isn't easy. Making changes can be difficult.

Security becomes easier

Healthcare is a data-rich industry targeted by bad actors with cyberattacks on the rise and getting more sophisticated. Ensuring the security of your organization and its data is a very big decision and a core part of how you operate. The growing collection, usage, and sharing of patient data heightens the risk of exposure.

In the cloud, the vendor is now accountable for security and it's much easier to keep up with healthcare compliance, cybersecurity frameworks, and the latest privacy regulations including HITRUST, PHI, NIST, ISO/IEC, PCI, DSS, HIPAA, and GDPR.

This removes the burden from your IT staff so they can focus on supporting daily operations and strategic business initiatives.

Security becomes easier when you keep everything in the cloud.

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Running your contact center on an on-premises legacy platform drives up costs, hampers innovation, and creates a disjointed experience for both your staff and patients.

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The barriers and costs of legacy contact center platforms

Although there are a few advantages of using an on-premises contact center platform, such as having full control and ownership over the hardware, software, and security of the data, the cons far exceed the pros.

Lack of innovation

Some of the deficiencies of on-premises technology include the inability to automate tasks, personalize customer journeys, offer self-serve options, or support artificial intelligence and other advanced technologies that enable innovation and support growth initiatives.

IT inefficiency

Considerable investments need to be made to maintain a reliable infrastructure, such as expiring support licenses or contract terms, in-house IT staff time and effort spent on system upkeep, and manipulating data between legacy systems and modern cloud applications.

Unreliable software updates

Long development cycles and lack of updates to software bugs and features can have a negative impact to the system's reliability and availability as well as loss of productivity and downtime, not to mention revenues.

Can't retain top talent

Often overlooked, attracting and retaining top talent in your IT department and contact center can become much more difficult when your business relies on outdated and cumbersome technology.

High operating costs

Capital and operating expenses directly associated with maintaining on-premises hardware and software are costly.

Unable to scale

On-premises contact center technology is very difficult to scale up and down and has technical limitations with extensibility, reliability, performance, and security.

Slows down business

The complexity and inefficiency of on-premises technology can cause delays in patient care delivery and other important digital initiatives, which can put your organization at a significant competitive disadvantage.

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What is a cloud contact center?

As your healthcare organization moves operations to the cloud to meet your digital transformation objectives, the contact center is no exception. With increased agility, flexibility, scale, and less capital investment, the cloud provides access to feature innovation and velocity and creates new opportunities to innovate and grow.

A cloud contact center is a software solution that allows healthcare organizations to handle all inbound and outbound patient communications. Cloud contact centers expand on the functionality of traditional call centers by enabling consumers to connect through their preferred channels, including SMS text messaging, voice, chat, email and social media.

The biggest advantage of a cloud deployment is the ability to quickly transform your contact center from a cost center to a strategic business asset. The cloud requires no upfront capital investment, plus it gives all your employees instant access to new features, without disrupting their daily activities or productivity.

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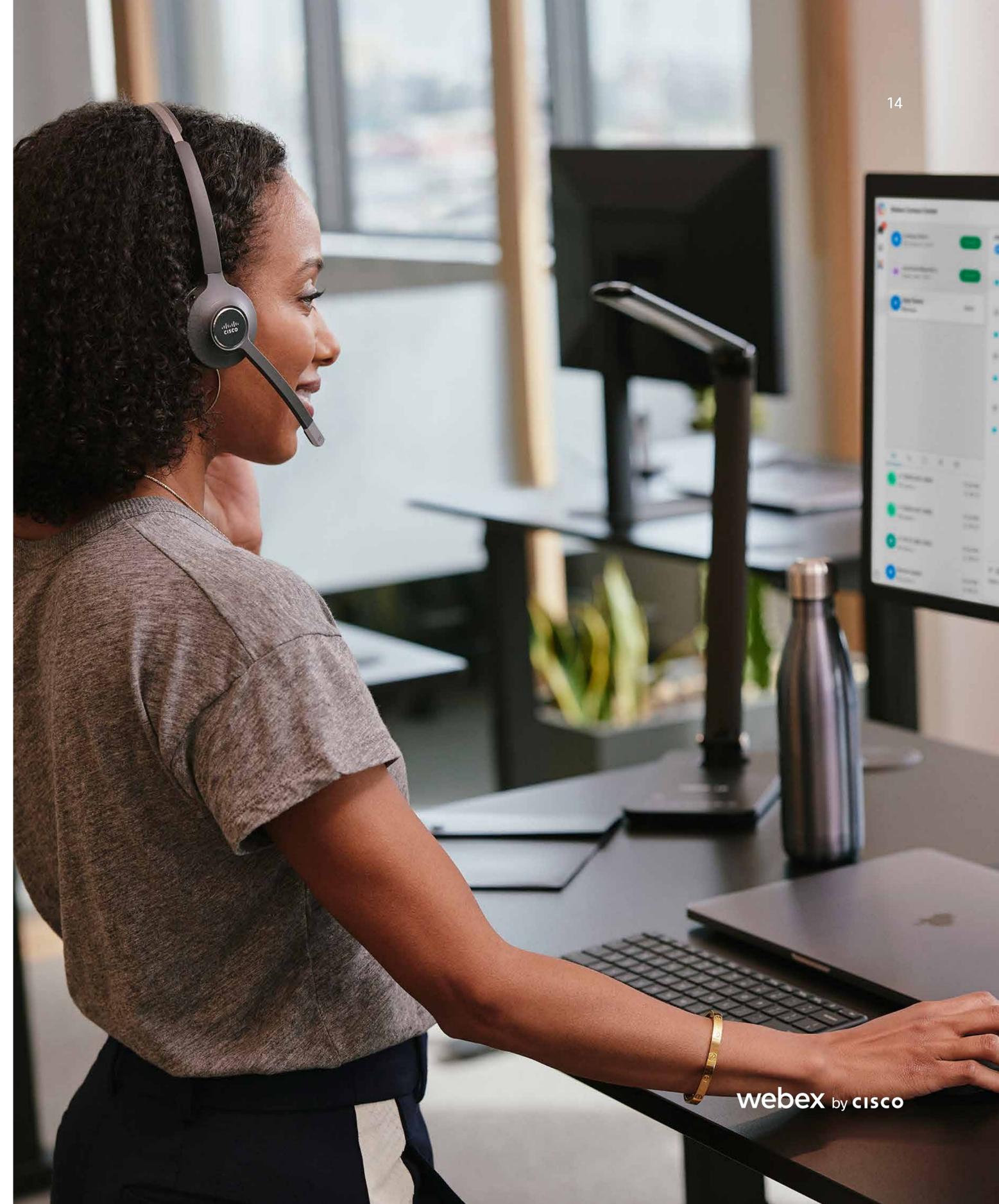
A cloud contact center is designed for extensibility and customization, enabling easy integration to other cloud applications critical to running your business such as workforce management, collaboration, E-mail, CRM, EHR, EMR, and other medical software applications.

Your employees benefit from more streamlined workflows and greater efficiency while accessing data from multiple tools and applications. Agents have patient information at their fingertips, leading to faster resolution and higher satisfaction.

Innovative cloud features and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), and natural language processing (NLP) offer opportunities to more intelligently route patients to the right destination the first time, provide intuitive self-service options, automate time-consuming tasks, and provide real-time guidance and content to agents based on historical context of the patient's previous journey interactions.

A cloud contact center also enables faster deployments and more frequent updates of new capabilities, which optimizes IT resources and reduces disruption to the business.

IT tasks such as data backups, software updates and resource provisioning can be automated, freeing your IT staff's valuable time to focus on more strategic and productive tasks.

In addition to reducing capital overlay, a subscription-based paying model provides for more accurate and predictable budgeting. Last but not least, the cloud provides higher security, which helps healthcare organizations meet strict regulatory and legal compliance requirements, while protecting contact center uptime and patient privacy.

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AI innovation with purpose

Automation is one of the main reasons that businesses
are increasing investment in cloud software.

Automation is one of the main reasons that businesses are increasing investment in cloud software.

Emerging AI technologies including ML and NLP are being strategically and responsibly deployed in the contact center to automate functionalities that are time-consuming or manually expensive, and to reduce the cost per call.

Responsible AI doesn't mean slow innovation. It means responsible solutions that are purpose-built, secure, and trustworthy. Purpose-built AI is designed to achieve a very specific function that will solve a specific problem. It offers creative ways to save time, create efficiencies, and it enhances the performance of employees to help them achieve more and provide better experiences to consumers.

Investments in purpose-built AI can yield cost savings and better productivity and efficiency almost immediately with an ROI of months, not years.

AI is being used to understand the intent or language of the patient when they're responding to self-service options such as voice prompts or messaging with an AI-powered chatbot, resulting in a richer, more intuitive and conversational experience. In a Cisco consumer research study on the changing expectation of customer experience, we learned that while 59% of consumers feel current self-service bots fall short, a significant 94% are open to using them if they provide more personalized, efficient, and human-like interactions.

Aberdeen Research

80%

of companies are turning to AI to harness the potential of their existing data to drive enhanced customer experiences and impactful business outcomes

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Agent empowerment

AI is being used to assist agents with time-saving features such as just-in-time assistance during the patient engagement and automating call summarization. This empowers agents with context and information that enables them to provide accurate and efficient service to patients, while helping to minimize agent burnout.

According to research by the Gitnux, agents spend 37% of their time doing unproductive work which leads to burnout. AI ensures agents have instant access to information, so that they can keep conversations on track and assist patients in a more timely and personalized manner.

Cisco Global Consumer Research Study

94%

of consumers are open to using self-service bots if they provide more personalized, efficient, and human-like interactions

"AI is already in use everywhere. It isn't a separate thing from the software. AI is built into software. It's the next revolution of IT and the next generation of software."

Shiela McGee-Smith
Founder and Principal Analyst, McGee-Smith Analytics

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Transforming customer experiences

Leaving lasting impressions with your patients can be challenging in today's competitive landscape, but when done well, your contact center has the potential to create extraordinary experiences that differentiate your organization and drive satisfaction and loyalty.

Today's consumers are tech savvy. They expect everything to be available digitally and they want to reach out in a variety of ways – be it through a phone call, email, text, chat or social media. This poses a challenge for healthcare organizations to effectively handle multiple channels while efficiently routing patients to the appropriate resources.

We learned from our consumer research study that there are three key factors to customer loyalty: 1) rapid engagement, 2) quick problem resolution, and 3) contextual understanding. A majority – 93% – of consumers consider rapid engagement to be essential, and 92% believe customer service agents should have prior knowledge and context of their inquiry.

Cisco Global Consumer Research Study

93%

of consumers consider rapid engagement to be an important factor to brand loyalty

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Top 3 factors to customer loyalty

Patients, like other consumers, want convenience and accuracy, and they don't want to waste time. They seek instant results and prefer to handle tasks independently whenever possible.

But trust is also an essential factor to loyalty, especially in healthcare. According to a PwC 2023 Trust Survey, 74% of consumers believe that the key to building customer trust is 1) when a business quickly responds to and resolves customer issues and 2) delivers a consistent and reliable customer experience. Trust turns into referrals. 58% of consumers in the survey have recommended a company they trust to friends and family.

As healthcare organizations strive to become more patient-centric, the constraints of legacy, on-premises contact center deployments become more apparent. Aside from the high costs of owning and maintaining legacy hardware infrastructure, on-premises contact centers lack the ability to easily and cost-effectively add new features that enable personalized multi-channel engagement, and contextual understanding for quick issue resolution.

The contact center requires greater efficiency and automation and a seamless omnichannel patient experience, that can only be made possible with a cloud-based contact center solution.
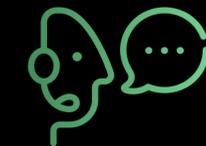
Rapid engagement

Quick resolution

Contextual understanding

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Key facts about consumer loyalty to their healthcare provider

6x
More likely to stay with their healthcare providers if they trust them

2x
More likely to switch provider with negative front desk or online experience versus a poor clinical experience

84%
Are likely to stay with their provider if they are easy to work with

Accenture Research

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Lower your costs—the promise of the cloud

One of the biggest factors for transitioning from on-premises to cloud are the financial benefits of moving expenses from capital expenditure to operating expenditure. As budgets get tighter and IT teams get smaller, the need to improve operational efficiency and reduce costs becomes greater.

By adopting the cloud, healthcare organizations can free their IT teams from managing computing infrastructure, such as servers, storage devices, switches, and databases, and empower them to create greater value by taking advantage of the latest cloud technology and tools.

Broaden your talent pool

One of the limiting factors of on-premises contact centers is that they are tied to a particular geographic location and involve high infrastructure costs and total cost of ownership (TCO). This narrows the talent pool and hinders access to a diverse range of skills and expertise for the business.

On the other hand, a cloud contact center supports call center and IT staff working from any location, minimizing infrastructure and overhead costs, while providing workplace flexibility which has been proven to increase employee satisfaction, retention, and productivity.

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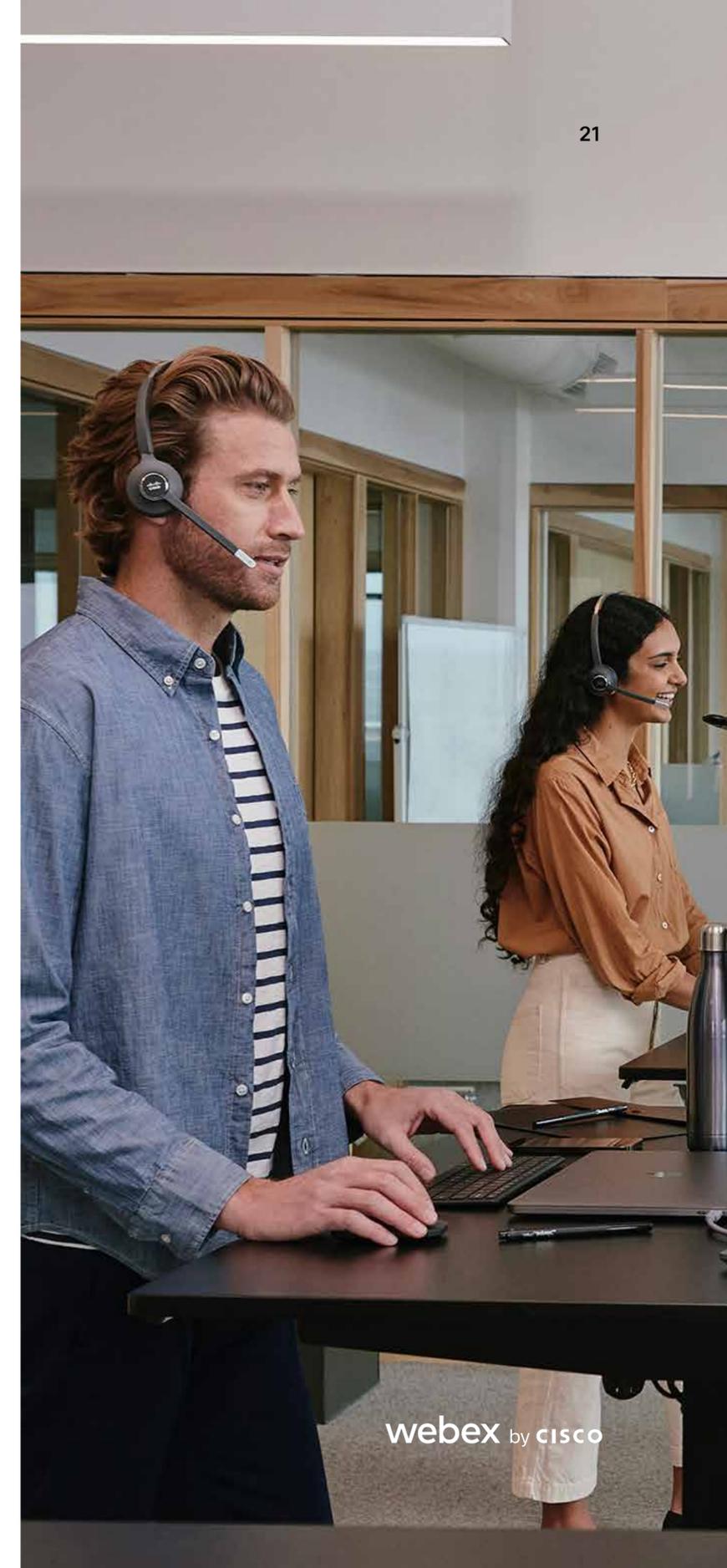
Reduce integration complexity

The contact center is one of the most interconnected applications in a business. The average contact center needs access to more than six applications to resolve consumer queries. This number only increases in healthcare. For example, a contact center handling patient queries for a HMO may need to access CRM, EHR, EMR, billing systems, E-mail, communications and collaboration software, appointment systems, clinical decision-making systems, plus knowledge bases and FAQs, to name a few.

These applications are most likely already cloud-based, so integrating them with a legacy on-premises contact center infrastructure will not be "plug and play". On-premises contact center solutions are simply not designed for extensibility and flexibility which means integrations will be costly and IT resource intensive.

A cloud contact center, however, is extensible, flexible, and scalable which makes it easy to adapt to changes in your organization and seamlessly integrate with other cloud-based applications, all without costly customization and development efforts.

Hassle-free upgrades

On-premises contact center technology has long deployment and upgrade times, which create bottlenecks and delays in IT initiatives leading to inefficiencies and employee end-user dissatisfaction. It's also more complex to undertake upgrades when dealing with geographically dispersed contact centers and remote agents.

Meanwhile, a cloud-based contact center allows you to add new features and bug fixes faster and more frequently, which optimizes IT resources, improves productivity, and minimizes disruption to the business. Software updates can be automated and scheduled during off-peak hours.

Scalability is also much easier. Increasing and decreasing the number of agents in real time, or on a predetermined schedule is a simple configuration and you pay only for the licenses and features you use at any given time.

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The ROI of Cloud Contact Center

Forrester's analysis of four current Cisco customers found that Webex Contact Center reduced contact center costs, improved visibility, simplified management, and boosted customer experience – while providing dependability, agility, and the ability to globally scale.

· $1.7 million from reduced IT support costs

· $3.6 million from reduced contact center agent labor

· $3.5 million from legacy license savings

· $2.8 million from streamlined customer care support and quality management staff

· $3.6 million from avoided cost of downtime

The interviewed organizations, with 12M annual calls, achieved benefits of $15.22M and an ROI of 304% over three years, by replacing their legacy on-premises products with Webex Contact Center.

Forrester

The Total Economic Impact™ of Webex Contact Center

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"Using cloud-based contact center solutions, organizations can get immediate and automatic access to the latest and most advanced technologies without bearing the expenses, hassles, and potential disruptions accompanying onsite upgrades."

Markets and Markets

Cloud-based Contact Center Market – Global Forecast to 2027

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Focus on agent experience

While AI technology is clearly playing a critical role in automating processes and low-level tasks, the contact center agent is here to stay. This is why healthcare providers are focusing more on agent experience, satisfaction, and retention. A survey conducted by Gartner Research revealed that 58% of organizations are investing in improving frontline worker experience.

Routine transactional queries are now frequently addressed through digital self-service tools such as AI chat and voice virtual agents. However, more intricate patient inquiries need

to be managed by a human agent, and a certain percentage of consumers still prefer to not interact with self-service options.

Resolving complex interactions involving complicated issues and possibly even upset patients, requires a distinct set of agent skills and knowledge for effective and efficient resolution. Agents are being asked to do more in less time, elevating the risk of burnout. According to research by Gitnux, the average handle time for contact center agents has increased by 44% due to burnout.

Gartner Frontline Worker Experience Reinvented Survey

58%

of organizations that employ frontline workers have invested in improving their experience in the past year

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Agent burnout leads to attrition which presents a financial burden to healthcare organizations. The average attrition cost per contact center employee is $10,000 - $20,000, including $4,000 to $7,000 in upfront training and $5,000 - $10,000 in lost productivity getting new hires up to speed, according to a study by McKinsey & Company.

Healthcare organizations are recognizing the importance of retaining happy agents and the role that technology plays in freeing agents to fully focus on solving problems with creativity, and creating a connection with the patient to drive higher satisfaction and loyalty.

Cloud-based contact center solutions are significantly more intuitive than on-premises solutions and designed with ease of use in mind. They minimize agent frustration and empower them with real-time access to the information they need to provide very targeted and personalized patient experiences.

When combined with cloud-based collaboration tools, agents have the capacity to draw on the expertise of their clinical and administrative staff to resolve patient requests on first contact. In a study by Metrigy on the benefits of combining contact center and collaboration software, IT, business, and CX leaders found that it provided a 23% increase in agent productivity, 22% reduction in per-agent operating costs, 48% increase in customer ratings, and 56% reduction in annual operational costs.

McKinsey & Company

$10K – 20K

The cost of attrition per contact center agent

Metrigy

23%

Increase in agent productivity with a combined platform for contact center and collaboration

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What's stopping you from moving to cloud?

If you're a CEO, CIO, CTO, CDO, or CXO you already know the benefits of cloud and what it can do for your business. But it's not always easy to modernize and transform technology, especially when it has a direct impact on your patients. The decision to move your on-premises contact center infrastructure to the cloud is no small task but consider the potential effect this will have on employee productivity and satisfaction, operational efficiency, revenue outcomes, and patient lifetime value.

Get executive team buy-in

There are several challenges you need to overcome to take this quantum leap, and getting agreement from top management should be your priority. Assuming there is agreement that digitization is important for the business, then support for the cloud enablement needed to accelerate your digital strategy will be easier. The bottom line is that you can't have a digital strategy without cloud and to get to cloud more quickly, contact center leaders, CDOs, CXOs and CIOs need the support from their CTO and CEO to help them through the cloud journey.

Budget for business value

Funding for cloud transformation should focus not only on cost and efficiency, but rather on the advantages it brings to the business. From a strategic perspective this means digital transformation, faster innovation, simplified experiences, revenue growth, and increased competitive advantage. From a contact center perspective this means greater flexibility, easier scalability, higher patient satisfaction and employee retention.

Consider the return on investment (ROI). Cloud platforms can help create new digital patient experiences in days rather than months and can have an enormous impact on competitive advantage and profitability.

By prioritizing the patient initiatives and departments that would gain the most value from the speed, innovation, and scalability that cloud offers, you can establish a roadmap that guides where investments should be made first.

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Having the right IT skills

Legacy on-premises infrastructures are inherently inefficient – both from a technology perspective and IT staffing perspective. Cloud technology can dramatically increase IT efficiencies, but it does require specialized IT skills that can be upskilled within or hired externally.

The focus of your IT staff should be on expertise and willingness to learn and be open to change. You'll need a smaller number of highly talented, well-paid people who don't need to live in locations where you have offices. Attracting and retaining top cloud talent is a smart investment critical to your success and needs to be considered as you plan and budget for your digital transformation strategy.

When is the right time?

The perfect time to migrate to the cloud will be different for every organization.

Legacy on-premises hardware

If your contact center is running on legacy on-premises hardware, sooner or later, it will need to be replaced.

Expanding and upgrading on-premises equipment is extremely expensive. The longer you stay, the more it will cost. If you're concerned with the long-term costs of owning and operating outdated legacy equipment, it might be the perfect time to migrate to the cloud.

Different contact centers at multiple sites

If you are maintaining different contact center systems at different sites, you're probably not balancing call loads and using your agents efficiently, which is increasing costs. It's complex, time-consuming and expensive to run and manage multiple geographically dispersed contact centers and remote agents. You might be juggling upgrades between sites to minimize downtime. If your goal is to optimize and scale across locations, it might be time to move to the cloud.

Relocating contact centers

If you are relocating your business or one of your contact center locations, it will be IT resource intensive, take weeks or perhaps months, and may even cause disruption or downtime to your business. It might be quicker and cheaper to replace your old contact center system with a new cloud-based contact center solution.

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Integrating with cloud applications

If your contact center is like most, you depend on other SaaS applications like a EHR to run your business. On-premises contact centers are not designed with an open architecture, which makes it difficult and expensive to integrate with modern cloud-based applications. If your goal is to streamline workflows and create better experiences for your agents and patients, it's probably the right time to migrate to the cloud.

Increasing call volume

If your call volume, number of agents, or distributed sites are increasing, it will be difficult to scale and manage the needed expansion with an on-premises contact center system. You would continue to have higher capital expenses and may still be limited by the number of ports the system can support. If you need scalability to support business agility and growth, it's time to migrate to cloud.

High total cost of ownership (TCO)

It's a known fact that on-premises contact center infrastructure costs and TCO are much higher than a cloud-based contact center. If your goal is to reduce your ongoing operating expenses and long-term costs, it might be time to do an analysis of your current TCO. Operating expenses to consider are IT resources, testing, patching and upgrades, back-ups, integrations, customization of workflows, and end user training. Long term expenses to consider are migrations, replacements, license monitoring, future upgrades, and other hidden costs such as replacing servers that have reached their end of life.

IT consolidation

If you are looking for ways to consolidate your IT infrastructure so you can simplify and reduce costs, it makes sense to take a more business-wide approach and look for a platform that can support your contact center and all your communications needs. A cloud-based collaboration platform with calling, messaging, video, meetings, and contact center capabilities will be easier and less expensive to manage, will simplify user onboarding and provisioning of services, and will help to reduce technology silos, data silos, and organization silos that ultimately hurt your ability to respond fast to market demands and your patients.

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Are you ready to unlock innovation?

Today's healthcare CIOs, contact center and CX leaders are under constant pressure to do more with less and become both technologists and business leaders.

Every healthcare organization wants to operate more efficiently, delight patients, and outperform their competition. Fully embracing technology is increasingly vital to drive automation, make employees more productive, provide greater value to patients, and enhance overall business outcomes.

Cloud migration is no longer just a convenience, but an essential requirement to achieve these results.

Leveraging the cloud empowers your organization to innovate faster, scale more effectively, adapt quickly to change, improve efficiencies, enhance security, reduce costs, and drive competitive differentiation – all lead to business growth. Falling behind is not an option. So what should you do next?

When the only certainty is change and the only speed is faster, companies that stand still will soon be left behind.

McKinsey & Company

The care of one – Hyperpersonalization of customer care

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Consider the following three actions:

01

Technology alignment

Ensure your current technology and IT objectives are aligned with your digital transformation and overall business goals.

02

Prioritize legacy systems

Create a clear roadmap that resolves technology misalignments, targeting legacy systems first, and prioritizing where patient experiences can be optimized.

03

Hybrid approach

Identify one use case where cloud digitization can deliver immediate cost savings, while providing increased efficiency and better patient experiences.

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Here's what success looks like

✓ Outpacing your competition because your business can adapt quickly to change

✓ Being able to lower costs and reduce complexity because your contact center infrastructure is in the cloud

✓ Improving profitability because you're able to provide proactive and personalized service to your patients

✓ Improving agent satisfaction and retention because you've empowered them to work smarter, from where they want and when they want

✓ A culture where collaboration is simple and convenient across your entire organization, enabling you to respond faster to your patients

✓ Higher net promoter scores and patient satisfaction because your contact center has on-demand access to context and subject matter experts

✓ Improving scale and reducing wait times because you can balance call loads across locations regardless of geography

✓ Having deeper and more meaningful relationships with your patients because you're using AI-driven insights to predict their needs

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About Webex Contact Center

For decades, Cisco has been a leader in the telephony, unified communications, and contact center industries, setting the pace with innovative solutions and leveraging its financial stability, market leadership, global reach, and strong network of partners.

Cisco's cutting-edge technologies have enabled more integrated patient care and streamlined workflows across healthcare organizations, hospitals, and clinics. These solutions pave the way for a more connected, secure, and sustainable future in healthcare.

The Webex platform for calling, collaboration, and contact center is an extensible, reliable, cloud solution available globally, trusted by millions, and protected by Cisco's end-to-end security.

Webex Contact Center is a next-generation cloud contact center solution powered by artificial intelligence and enhanced with data insights, helping businesses deliver smart, proactive, and personalized experiences to their customers, over any channel, at any time, from anywhere.

Webex Contact Center brings innovation, flexibility, agility, security, and global scalability to thousands of organizations of all sizes, across all industries. Enterprise leading features such as intelligent skills-based routing, intuitive chatbot assistance, seamless omnichannel experiences, customer and agent insights, analytics and reporting, seamless integration to 3rd party business applications, and a full set of collaboration tools enable over 3.2 million contact center agents and their teams, to work together to solve customer issues quickly and efficiently, the first time.

Click here to learn more about Webex Contact Center.

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Appendix

Comparing on-premises and cloud contact centers

ON-PREMISES	CLOUD
· More initial costs; High cost of ownership	· Fewer initial costs; Shift CAPEX to OPEX; Predictable subscription-based pricing model
· In-house IT staff has complete control over maintenance, updates, and security	· Cloud contact center provider handles maintenance, updates, and security
· Difficult to scale up and down, especially with geographically dispersed contact centers	· Easy to scale on-demand and optimize staffing without IT staff assistance
· Difficult to staff and support remote agents	· Fully supports work-from-home for agents, supervisors, and IT staff
· Upgrades take long and require some downtime	· Updates available frequently and without disruption
· Costly and complex to integrate with other applications	· Is extensible, flexible and integrates easily with other cloud applications
· Configuration changes require IT support and difficult to do on-demand	· Configuration is simple and doesn't require IT involvement: intuitive drag-and-drop admin experience
· Complex and costly to innovate with AI advanced technologies	· Leverages AI-powered features to drive automation, efficiencies, and self-service options

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