

Technical Customer Support: A Hidden Revenue and Loyalty Creator

There's a sea change transpiring within customer support right now owing to ever-increasing customer expectations and complexity around problem-solving.

Rewinding just a few years, there were still certain, somewhat disconnected, factions of the c-suite who looked upon support functions as mere low-value cost centres, putting them under pressure to trim budgets and deliver savings wherever possible – a disposition that would often lead to a narrow-minded customer service vision and a focus on legacy, now counterintuitive, performance metrics. Today, they're playing catch-up to their peers who viewed them otherwise: sources inherently capable of triggering business growth and fostering long-term organisational resilience.

Indeed, consumer behaviours are changing. The landscape is changing. And support dynamics are changing with them. Customer service has

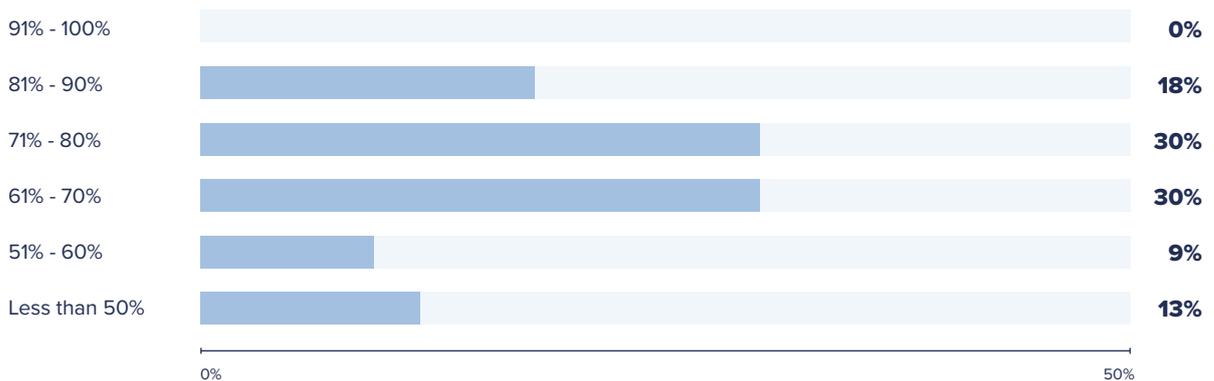
evolved into a key business battleground and a critical component in the buying journey against waning consumer loyalty. Queries will arise and issues will surface with products and services – that's unavoidable; a natural part of business. What's determinative here is how quickly, comprehensively, and effectively brands deal with them. Suffice it to say, one of the single biggest ingredients of standout customer service today is a company's ability to resolve problems at the first time of asking – otherwise known as first contact resolution (FCR).

The benefits of optimising against FCR are at once numerous and profound. Be it clearing up a utility bill discrepancy, fixing technical product troubles, or rectifying an error with online ordering – providing instant resolution can sow the seeds of other important needle-moving, loyalty-driving KPIs (think: customer satisfaction (CSAT) and net promoter score (NPS)). A high FCR rate will also likely lead to a reduction in repeat calls, or repeat contact, and thus free agents up to work on more complex situations. In essence, it creates a perpetual cycle of efficiency gains.

Collaborative research conducted by CCW Europe and GoTo – built on data collected from members of the CCW Europe community – paints a picture of where the industry stands around FCR. The study reveals that only around one in two brands currently have an FCR rate north of 70%, and there are no brands driving anything above 90%. Just under one

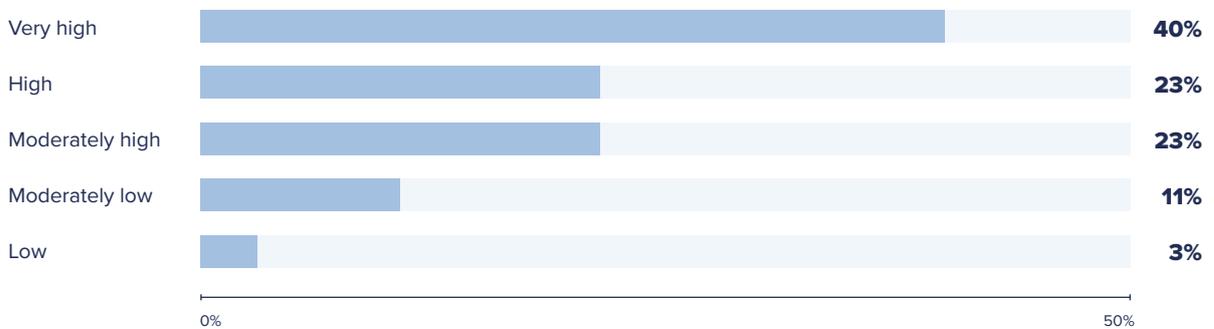
in eight brands are delivering FCR below 50%. The takeaway? There’s room for improvement across the board – and savvy brands are starting to recognise this. The same study found that 63% of brands have improving FCR either high, or very high, on their CX agenda over the next 12 months. Just 3% report that FCR is a low priority.

What is your first contact resolution rate today?



Source: CCW Europe and GoTo collaborative research with members of the CCW Europe community

How high on your company’s CX agenda is improving first contact resolution over the next 12 months?



Source: CCW Europe and GoTo collaborative research with members of the CCW Europe community

It’s clear, then, that there’s a burgeoning opportunity here.

With so many metrics in play for customer support, it can be all too easy for contact centre leaders to get sidetracked from what is truly adding value for customers. Case in point: a low average handle time, or a low average talk time, or a low average speed

of answer don’t mean a dime unless they’re coupled with full resolution. A focus on FCR is the gateway to enhancing brand image and trust, powering customer satisfaction, and ultimately unlocking a hidden avenue of revenue growth.

It offers a win-win scenario for all the relevant stakeholders.

The challenges with driving FCR

Of course, though, like everything in business, anything worth having comes with some significant roadblocks. If it didn't, everybody would be doing it. High FCR rates are the culmination of getting a multitude of technological and operational ducks in a row.

The most important piece is empowering frontline agents and technicians with the tools they need specific to their business model. This may include:

- Predictive analytics and machine learning to enable the accurate collection and management of customer data in the first instance.
- Automation and AI-driven functionalities to help reduce waiting time for customers and swiftly identify and diagnose customer issues.
- Remote support capabilities to facilitate agent-customer communication and eliminate potential friction where more technical assistance is required.

"The first challenge that contact centres face is being able to meet customers on their own terms," says Csaba Jaromi, Senior Director of Solutions Consulting for the EMEA region at GoTo – a remote IT support solutions provider. "There's a reason why we don't refer to them as "call centres" anymore. Today, we use the term "contact centre" because there are so many channels through which to engage with customers. The challenge for contact centres is

analysing where their customer base wants to meet and connect, and then ensuring that when human agents are required to engage with a customer, they're trained appropriately and aligned with the customer mindset. Thus, the challenges are both technical and human."

Indeed, this human enabler piece is another critical component on the path to FCR differentiation. The modern consumer is more discerning and demanding than ever before – they have come to expect stellar customer service at every turn and they're increasingly seeking value in every single interaction they have with the companies they deal with. Against that mandate, customer support agents face an imperative to continuously upgrade and evolve the way they provide support to ensure they are well-equipped to care for customers in all circumstances. This includes training in building soft skills (empathy, understanding, problem-solving), dealing with customer vulnerability, and dealing effectively with more complicated trouble-shooting scenarios. Without empowerment in these areas, support agents may struggle to provide a level of truly transformative customer service – the type that can boost loyalty and spur retention.

It's important, therefore, that any brand-technology provider partnership goes beyond the plain digital aspect of FCR to help contact centres place more attention on the underlying human side of customer service – on personalisation, on customisation, on connection, on trust.



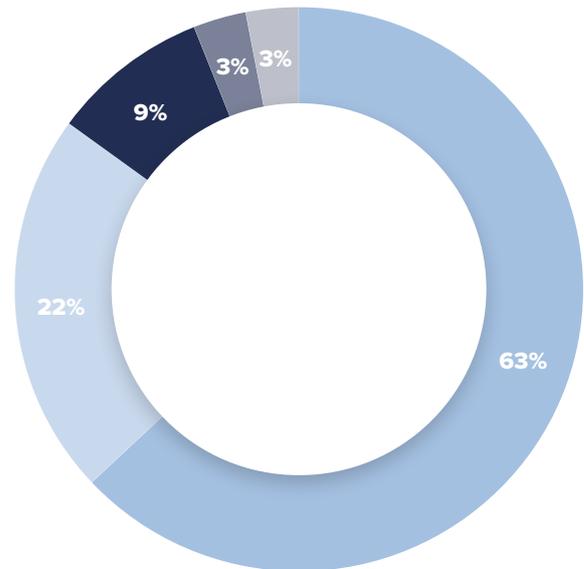
How to drive FCR – an untapped solution

So, how are brands working to propel their FCR rates higher today? What internal conditions are they creating and what channels are they utilising to drive the transformation?



What is the most commonly used tool your contact centre employs to drive first contact resolution?

- Interactive voice response (IVR)
- Real-time agent assistance
- Intelligent call routing
- Smart handover
- Other



Source: CCW Europe and GoTo collaborative research with members of the CCW Europe community

There are so many tools to choose from, getting the right one in place is key. Sixty three percent of brands report that interactive voice response (IVR) technology is their primary tool when it comes to moving the needle with FCR, while 22% rely more prominently on real time agent assist mechanisms. Intelligent call routing is the tool of choice for 9% of contact centre leaders and 3% are focusing on smart handover solutions.

What's conspicuous by its absence here is remote video support technology – or, in other words, the capacity to create visual engagement and a more tailored, interactive customer experience.

Reporting a broken household compliance, fixing an unreliable internet connection, reconnecting a disconnected smart meter, repairing a faulty

computer application, servicing a defective remote device, processing an insurance claim – there are times when audio-based support just doesn't quite fit the requirements of the situation. And the use cases are many. When more technical issues with product and service functionality arise like this, delivering timely and effective resolution on first contact can become that much more difficult as customers and agents spend an inordinate amount of time going back and forth describing issues, and testing potential solutions. This problem becomes particularly acute when the customer lacks any technical knowledge or capabilities.

It's during these moments that remote video assistance comes into play, allowing support teams to visualise problems with ease and then present solutions accordingly at a faster clip.

Consider these statistics:

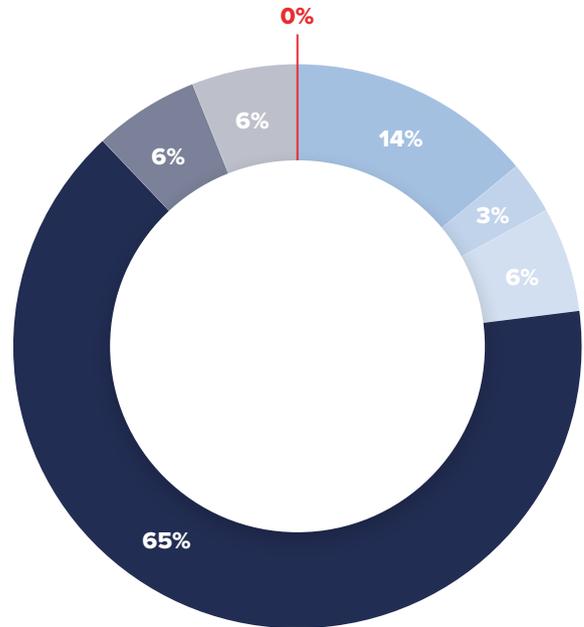
14% of brands predominantly offer visual support via in-person site visits

0% of brands utilise camera sharing functionalities

65% of brands have no visualisation support in place whatsoever

What method does your business most commonly use to provide visual assistance/support for customers?

- ✓ Camera sharing
- In-person site visits
- Screen sharing
- Video conferencing
- No visualisation support in place
- Not relevant to our business
- Other



Source: CCW Europe and GoTo collaborative research with members of the CCW Europe community

This final statistic tells an extraordinary story.

Two in three brands are leaving a huge opportunity on the metaphorical table when it comes to driving FCR (and, consequently, a superior digital experience).

And the reasons for that appear to be varied.

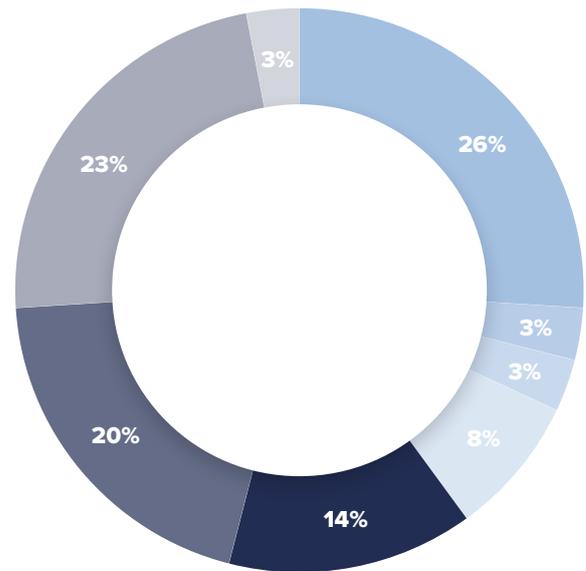
The most common barrier to adoption of video-based support technology, cited by 26% of brands, is security and privacy concerns. A minimal understanding of the concept follows up in second (23%), shining a light on the fact that many contact centre leaders have a blind spot here that they may do well to address. At a time when companies are actively and progressively competing over customer experience, no growth mechanisms should be left untapped. To do so is to risk falling seriously behind.

Beyond these top two hurdles, other brands pinpointed an inability to demonstrate ROI, a lack of internal skills, operating on legacy technology systems, integration roadblocks, and implementation and management costs as causes for not entering this particular technology conversation.



What is your biggest barrier to adopting remote video customer support?

- Security/privacy concerns
- Lack of internal skills/knowledge
- Operating on legacy technology systems
- Integration roadblocks
- Implementation and management costs
- Demonstrating ROI
- Minimal understanding of the concept
- Other



Source: CCW Europe and GoTo collaborative research with members of the CCW Europe community

The good news for forward-thinking brands, though, is that novel solutions are available in the market right now replete with tools designed to knock down these potential roadblocks.

Enter: LogMeIn Rescue. GoTo's own cloud-based technical remote support platform that has visual engagement functionalities built in. It's a solution used by some of the world's largest brands to enrich their customer service channel portfolio and fill the support gap that exists when more technical product or service assistance is required.

Take Lenovo, for instance – a long-time Rescue customer.

This global technology company, operational in over 160 countries, was facing issues around scalability – they were struggling to provide effective support around its wide-ranging product portfolio containing computers, tablets, smartphones, and other personal devices. The customer service team needed to, first, reduce the number of service repairs, and then unlock the capacity to scale or adjust quickly and easily. Rescue partnered with

Lenovo to nullify these problems, deploying the Rescue Lens tool to enable agents to connect with customers via video so they could see problems in real time. The outcome? Average handling times are going down, delivery of service time is going down, and the cost per incident is going down; together resulting in approximately \$1 million in savings per year.

Similarly, another early Rescue-adopter, Supportwave – an on-demand IT support marketplace – is achieving greater levels of consistency, speed, and simplicity since their collaboration began. "Rescue has been hugely beneficial as the time to assistance is much quicker than it was", Supportwave CTO Darren Strydom explains. "This means customers don't feel like they are paying for time that is being wasted. We can now manage disputes with ease as the recordings are available for us to look at as and when we need to. The Live Lens option was an absolute winner for our first contact resolution. It enables our IT experts to perform on-site level work through the remote platform, extending our reach into countries where we don't currently have a team on the ground."

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Contact centres have a challenge on their hands. Can they deliver support precisely where, and precisely when, their customers need it, in a timeframe that doesn’t meaningfully interrupt their day?

If they can, a whole host of reputational and financial benefits await.

The advantages of cloud-based technology

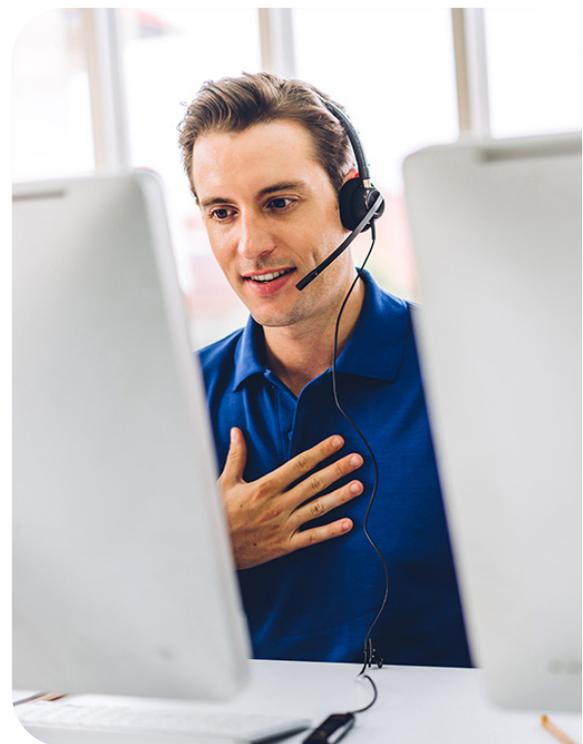
It’s important to highlight the cloud technology element of this equation. It cannot be understated.

With Rescue, the cloud delivery model delivers scalability and introduces agility. Contact centres can seamlessly scale up or down as needed to cater for any seasonal variability in demand. It also enables access to customer data in real-time to really cultivate effective end-to-end care and foster a customer-centric mindset whereby agents are meeting customers in their moment. Then there’s the ease with which cloud-based solutions can integrate with other systems and tools, which can streamline processes and improve FCR.

“The fact that Rescue was able to fit in with existing workflows at Supportwave was one of the primary criteria for us when adopting the technology,” Strydom notes. “We needed the customer and Supportwave experience to be totally seamless so that there was no confusion or hesitation (particularly for the customer). The meeting we had with the technical team to discuss how the API worked and what our options were made it clear quickly that Rescue was the solution we had been looking for.”

The benefits don’t stop there either.

Cloud technology can facilitate the sharing of data and resources across disparate departments, which enhances organisational collaboration. This, in turn, makes it easier for agents to access fresh information and the knowledge bases they need to improve the support they offer and promote standardised communication across the contact ecosystem. For the cloud to fully nurture collaboration, though, every stakeholder (agents and customers) must be confident in security and privacy credentials. Rescue maintains a watertight security operation with various layers of permissions and controls embedded into its systems that help protect contact data and ensure total compliance with regulatory requirements.



Darren Blayney, former Transformation and Service Enablement Consultant at BT, describes the robust security guardrails Rescue has in place: “BT’s call handling time has decreased by 33% with Rescue”, he reveals. “Customers spend much less time talking because BT agents can see the issue. And that’s built on accessibility and security – BT sends over a BT-branded SMS with a one-and-done connection link, and then within 20 seconds, agents can visualise exactly what the customer wants them to look at. That’s powerful. BT conducted an incredibly strict security review of Rescue. It was a key consideration – it was important to see all the relevant industry security accreditation. The technology is all approval-based so it’s all driven by the customer – they can choose what they show BT.”

At GoTo, there is an understanding that delivering a service over the cloud sometimes requires a slightly different approach to security and customer identification. “When brands are entering into remote engagement with a customer over the cloud, clear rules of engagement and privacy controls are essential”, Jaromi says. “GoTo’s Rescue solution is great at ensuring safeguards as part of a secure, multi-level approach.”

A report exploring the use cases of Rescue puts quantitative data around some of the perks brands can enjoy with remote technical support.

Indeed, from a pool of 30 Rescue users:

- 57% report a reduction in IT time
- 57% report a reduction in IT ticket escalations
- 57% report a reduction in on-site visits
- 53% report a reduction in time spent diagnosing problems
- 43% report a reduction in mean time to resolve (MTTR)
- 73% report an improvement in employee experience

And so, this is where contact centres can really move the dial on becoming value centres – revenue-drivers – for their organisations. All these benefits can directly impact bottom lines – such meaningful time savings in so many different areas will filter through to enhance agent productivity and customer satisfaction, which is itself a massive profit driver through greater loyalty and retention.

Simply put, it may appear a paradoxical concept on the surface, but investing in the contact centre, and the right tools deployed within, can prove to be a real game changer for a brand’s holistic digital experience.

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Final words

One of the central missions of every company today must be cultivating memorable customer experiences (in a good way) – even when things go wrong. Especially when things go wrong.

The contact centre thus presents a huge opportunity for businesses to differentiate, to stand above – but only if it is equipped with the means to deliver contact resolution at the first time of asking. And while doing so is fraught with difficulty, digital, cloud-based solutions like Rescue make it much easier.

“At Supportwave, our ambitions are, and always have been, simple,” Strydom summarises. “We want to be

the platform that people come to for any tech support problems they may be facing, whether its individuals, businesses, or MSPs. Having Rescue as a partner in this journey has allowed us to strengthen the integrity of our platform, our reputation with our customers, and the confidence of our Supportwave team that they have the correct technology to solve anything that may come their way.”

Against the sea change transpiring within customer support right now, Rescue offers some of the most compelling tools to help contact centre leaders ride the waves.

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If you are interested in learning more about using LogMeIn Rescue to provide visual customer support, please contact Jen Brown, GoTo's Senior Director, International Marketing.



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