

New Calabrio Research: Consumers Judge Brands Based on their Customer Service Experience, but Brands are not Empowering Contact Centre Employees for Success

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90% of managers think they are treating agents as brand guardians, yet only 33% of consumers agree.

Minneapolis, MN — Sept. 15, 2022 – Calabrio, the workforce performance company, has identified a direct correlation between contact centres, brand loyalty and brand revenue. The global research report, State of the Contact Centre 2022: Empowering the Contact Centre as Brand Guardian

(https://info.calabrio.com/uk/state-of-the-contact-centre-report/?utm_medium=Public_Relations&utm_source=PR_Artistry&SF) uncovered a surprising gap between the role contact centre agents play in consumer brand perception and how much employers support and empower those same agents to be brand guardians.

Both consumers (97%) and contact centre managers (98%) agree that customer service interactions have an impact on whether consumers stay loyal to a brand. And a vast majority (88%) of contact centre managers also agree that brand perception directly impacts overall company revenue. When positive customer experience (CX) interactions boost loyalty, revenue follows.

“We know that contact centre interactions can make or break a customer relationship, leading to increases or decreases in revenue,” said Tom Goodmanson, president and CEO of Calabrio. “How smoothly those interactions go is a direct result of how agents are trained and how they are supported with the right tools and technology. It’s critical for brand loyalty that agents feel confident to make the right decisions at any given moment. And the most efficient way to improve the customer experience is to empower contact centre agents as brand guardians.”

The jump to the cloud revolutionised how agents work and learn, opening opportunities to build stronger customer relationships. To accelerate this, agents now need a more flexible and more autonomous work experience, accessibility to best practices, and digital tools that help them shape the optimal customer journey across all possible interaction channels.

In short, agents need to be truly empowered as frontline brand guardians to protect revenue streams.

Voice reigns supreme

AI-powered chatbots have gained in popularity, but nearly 80% of consumers still rank phone interactions as their preferred customer service channel. Yet contact centre managers have a mismatched perception of how important voice channels are to brand image. Managers ranked voice channels third, behind email and web interactions.

This gap may be leading to a misplaced focus on newer channels, such as social media and apps. Instead, consumers overwhelmingly think contact centres should prioritize agent training (70%) and fill staffing gaps (58%), instead of adding additional channels like chatbots or virtual assistants.

Loyalty is fleeting. Bad experiences have BIG impacts

60% of consumers say they switched brands due to a negative contact centre experience— most leaving after only two negative experiences. Even a single negative experience significantly damages consumers’

perceptions across future interactions. In fact, consumers with a recent negative experience were less than half as likely to say contact centres were doing a good job in any category. In other words, recency bias is powerful — and it is hard to recover once consumer confidence is lost.

Other critical disconnects

The study shows significant gaps between consumers' experiences and the service contact centre managers think they are delivering:

- Availability of human agents – 80% of managers think they are meeting or exceeding customer expectations for access to live agents. But only 37% of consumers agree.
- Quick response times – 79% of managers think they are meeting or exceeding customer expectations for response, but only 45% of consumers agree.
- Needing to feel heard and understood – 84% of managers think they are meeting, or exceeding customers' needs to feel heard and understood by the brand, but only 45% of consumers agree.

"Consumer expectations continue to grow, demanding better and faster results. In the eyes of the consumer, contact centres are not doing enough to empower agents on the channels that have the most impact on brand perception," says Blake Morgan, customer experience futurist and Calabrio Customer Connect (C3) (<https://www.calabriocustomerconnect.com/>) keynote speaker. "Managers acknowledge there is work to do, but the question is, how quickly can changes be made to protect both the brand image and revenue?"

Tom Goodmanson will present the findings from the State of the Contact Center report and discuss the future of customer experience and the contact centre's ability to embrace its role as a brand guardian with Blake Morgan on September 27, at C3 (<https://leverage.swoogo.com/2022c3/begin>).

The study consisted of 500 respondents from the US, UK, Nordics and DACH, split evenly across consumers and contact centre managers. To see the full report, go to: State of the Contact Centre 2022: Empowering the Contact Centre as Brand Guardian

(https://info.calabrio.com/uk/state-of-the-contact-centre-report/?utm_medium=Public_Relations&utm_source=PR_Artistry&SF)

About Calabrio (<https://www.calabrio.com/>)

Calabrio is a trusted ally to leading brands. The digital foundation of a customer-centric contact center, the Calabrio ONE workforce performance suite helps enrich and understand human interactions, empowering your contact center as a brand guardian. We maximize agent performance, exceed customer expectations, and boost workforce efficiency using connected data, AI-fueled analytics, automated workforce management and personalized coaching. Only Calabrio ONE unites workforce optimization (WFO), agent engagement and business intelligence solutions into a true-cloud, fully integrated suite that adapts to your business.

Media Contact:

Mary Phillips, PR Artistry

Tel: +44 1491 845553

mary@pra-ltd.co.uk