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KEEPING PACE WITH THE MODERN CUSTOMER

Businesses need to embrace the speed and agility of today's consumer or risk alienating their most critical stakeholders

RECOGNIZING THE NEW NORMAL

"You say you want a revolution. Well, you know, we all want to change the world." – The Beatles

The Beatles said it best all those years ago, and today the promise of a revolution still rings true.

Business as we know it is in the midst of a major revolution – one that has companies large and small racing to make the most of the digital economy. Just consider the most visible examples: Airbnb, Uber, Warby Parker and the like.

It's the millennial generation that's actually out to change the world, fueling the digital revolution.

Why? Because they represent a whole new breed of tech-savvy customers. And those enlightened customers demand ease, speed and consistency, no matter how they choose to connect with companies.

It's the new normal, and every business needs to get on board.

RECOGNIZING THE NEW NORMAL

While millennials are demanding simpler and more intuitive ways to connect, they are also rapidly filling the agent role, bringing with them that same need for:

EASE **SPEED** **CONSISTENCY**

As this new breed of agent supports the newest generation of customers, they expect all of the necessary tools to satisfy even the most demanding.

The numbers paint that picture in vivid color:

42% Expect social support within 12 hours.
Nielson, "How Social Media Impacts Brand Marketing," 2011

62% Want to engage on social with brands they buy.
Millennial Branding, "Elite Daily And Millennial Branding Release Landmark Study on The Millennial Consumer," 2015

"Please hold...."

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SWITCHING FROM REAL-LIFE TO REAL-TIME

Customers are slowly but surely moving their shopping habits online. Companies that can align their customer engagement strategies across their brand platforms will stay ahead of the game.
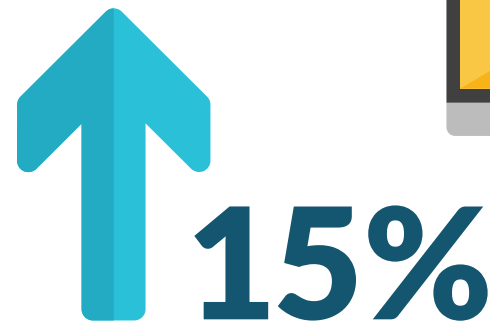
FOOT TRAFFIC has declined by

5%

year over year in almost every month during the last couple of years.[1]

E-COMMERCE SALES have grown by

15%

year over year every quarter.[2]

1 Forbes, "American Eagle Outfitters: Why Omni-Channel Was An Inevitable Move," 2014
2 Ibid, [1]

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UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES

The millennial generation knows exactly what it wants and expectations are high — very high. They are empowered in their personal life and demand the same in their work life. Millennials are always on, always connected, and always juggling an ever-changing arsenal of tools — from mobile phones to social networks. So when it comes to doing business, they expect each touchpoint to be as productive as any other. No exceptions, no excuses.

ANY TIME.

ANY WHERE.
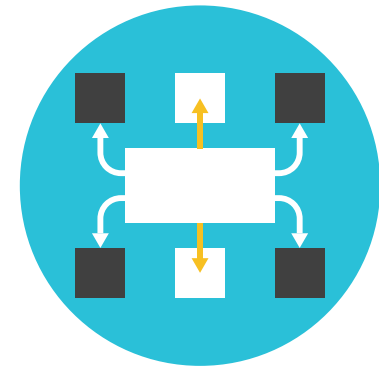
ANY HOW.

NAVIGATING COMPLEXITY

For digital natives, the world has always had endless ways to connect.

So it's no surprise that millennials are reaching out to the contact center from all directions.

Just think about the touchpoints that can be used to resolve a problem or make an informed purchase decision. Customers are tweeting their frustrations, backed up by a detailed email demanding immediate action and even a frantic call to speed the process. Agents must be able to instantaneously connect all of these dots to make sure their customer walks away happy.

Not an easy feat, given the complexity of this digital age.

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UNDERSTANDING THE STAKES

MORE THAN HALF of U.S. online consumers will abandon their online purchase if they cannot find a quick answer to their questions.

Forrester, "Trends 2016: The Future of Customer Service," April 2016

73% OF ONLINE CONSUMERS say that valuing their time is the most important thing a company can do to provide them with good service, up two points from 2012.

Forrester, "Trends 2016: The Future of Customer Service," April 2016

62% OF U.S. ONLINE ADULTS would like to be able to move between customer service channels without having to repeat their situation.

Forrester, "Win Funding For Your Customer Service Project," April 2016

Poor service on even one channel is enough to drive a millennial straight to the competition.

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Around **84% OF RETAILERS** polled worldwide believed that creating a consistent customer experience across channels was very important.

eMarketer, "Retailers Lag Behind Consumers' Omnichannel Desires," 2013

LESS THAN ONE THIRD of small and mid-size contact centers have the capability to integrate across channels or business function.

Frost & Sullivan, "Enterprise Priorities in North America," 2014

33%
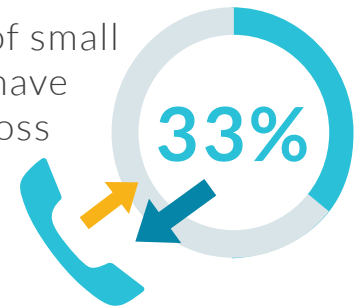
Despite understanding its importance, retailers have been slow to invest in multichannel consistency.

ONLY 36% of contact center decision-makers say their firms have implemented multichannel integration to provide consistent experiences.

Forrester, "Contact Centers Must Go Digital Or Die," April 2015

ONLY ONE THIRD of contact centers manage inquiries in a standard way.

Forrester, "Contact Centers Must Go Digital Or Die," April 2015

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CATERING TO MILLENNIALS

The very complexity that comes with the millennial generation's high expectations can lead to trouble. Agents are forced to muddle through multiple connection points—from phone and email to social forums—all while juggling discreet applications that don't talk to each other. That kind of complexity can result in disjointed, inefficient, and uninformed interactions that make for difficult, slow experiences—a frustration for even for the most patient customers.

Millennials won't settle for such frustrating experiences. And, given today's competitive climate, they have every right to place the bar high. Only the best businesses make the grade—the ones that understand their needs and, more importantly, respect them.

The ones that adapt to and embrace what these digital natives know: that technology can significantly improve your life. Any business that drops the evolutionary ball sends a stark message— that they are not in sync with their most critical stakeholders.

But the companies that evolve with their customers can win big. That requires a level of seamlessness that simplifies the agents' role; a solution that allows them to sift through the clutter and connect the dots. That kind of 360 degree view empowers agents to better serve their customers, even recognize new opportunities to nurture and grow—even repair—relationships. And that translates into very real and very tangible impacts to top- and bottom-lines.

POSITIVELY IMPACTING THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Companies need to get a handle on this new normal—and soon—or risk the consequences.

When millennials are disappointed or frustrated with a company, they aren't shy about broadcasting their bad experiences across various social media platforms.

The good news is the opposite is true as well. When businesses focus on digitally meeting the millennial's needs, they are quick to dole out kudos. After all, this is the generation that popularized gamification and public reviews.

Expectations will keep growing. Each new generation will build on the best ideas from the one previous and they won't hesitate to throw out the obsolete. The new normal is and will continue to be a demand for the latest and greatest.

STAYING AHEAD OF THE EVOLUTION

Instead of facing the problem head-on, companies have tried to adapt their aging software by simply bolting on new channels (and software) as needed. As with any "Frankenstein" approach, though, the resulting contact center becomes a slow-moving monster, full of disjointed parts. It's time to dismantle the monster—tool by tool, process by process—to find out exactly what is holding the contact center back.

Staying ahead of the curve is as much about understanding the new customer as it is about leveraging a forward-thinking strategy and technology to match. For many, it's a matter of stepping beyond the status quo, rethinking and retooling to properly serve their market—always keeping their ever-evolving customer top of mind.

Present agents with consistent experience regardless of the communication channel embraced by customer – seamless multichannel blending.

**Continuously innovate the experience** without additional investment - cloud deployment.

Remember the importance of integrating access to data and leveraging analysis capabilities – big data access.

Eliminate the need for different applications and pools of agents for different channels - universal and bullseye routing.

SATISFYING CUSTOMERS OVER MANY CHANNELS
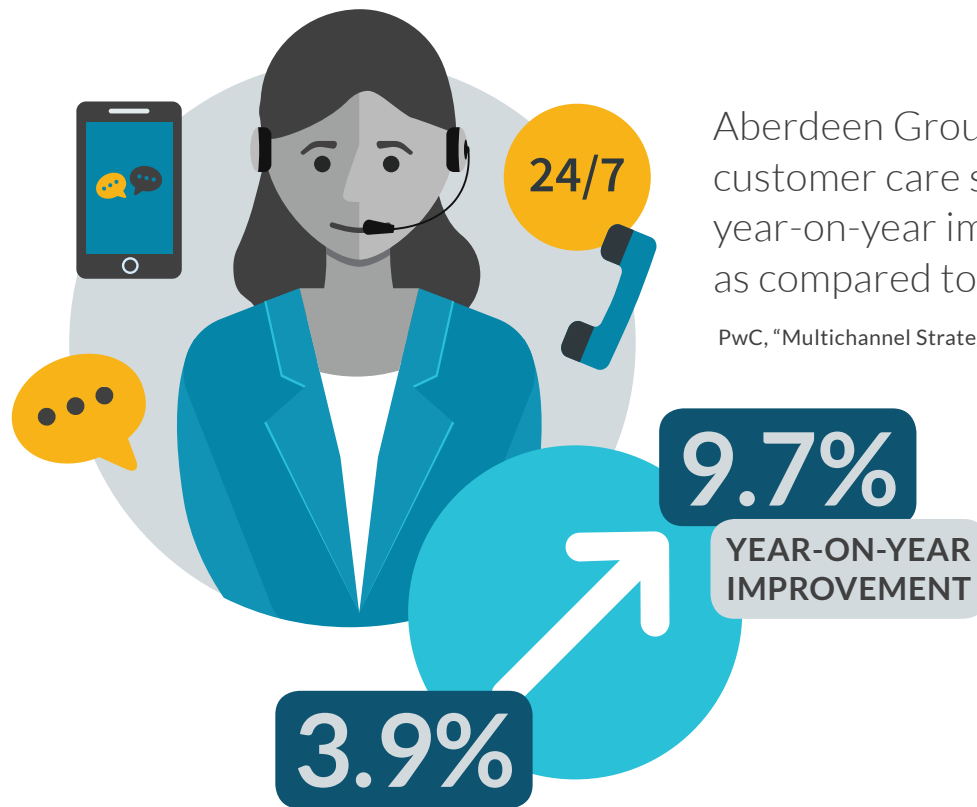
Aberdeen Group states that a multichannel customer care strategy can achieve more than twice year-on-year improvement in customer satisfaction, as compared to their peers using a single channel.

PwC, "Multichannel Strategy," 2013

24/7

9.7%

YEAR-ON-YEAR
IMPROVEMENT

3.9%

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BOTTOM LINE

Any connection with a customer is an opportunity to improve, nurture, renew and solidify the relationship — and today's customer craves the kind of intuitive experience they get with data-fueled leaders like Google or Amazon. They expect (even demand) the same level of service from every business partner. That means seamless connections across every imaginable touchpoint—whether social, mobile or even tried-and-true landline. For companies, capitalizing on this opportunity starts with understanding the new customer and ends with empowering their agents with the tools they need to fulfill the high expectations of that enlightened breed of millennials.

Find out how PureCloud Engage℠ can exceed your customers' expectations.

SCHEDULE A DEMO TODAY.