A Genesys eBook

Ten considerations for moving your contact centre to the cloud
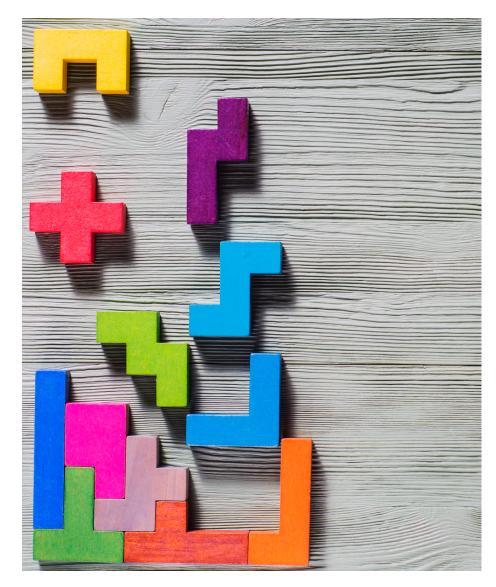
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Choosing the right contact centre partner will ensure your customer journey success

The maturity of cloud platforms inspires new confidence in moving mission critical systems to the cloud to gain agility, scale, and cost benefits. How can your company achieve these benefits? What steps are necessary to begin your contact centre's inevitable move to the cloud? You'll want to find a trusted partner who offers broad functionality and can help you navigate the wide range of service and solution options, and new capabilities.

This eBook offers ten key considerations for selecting a partner and moving to a cloud-based contact centre. Evaluating these criteria and answering critical questions at the outset enables you to select the solution provider that is the best match with your organisation's business goals and requirements. With the knowledge gained, you'll migrate your contact centre to the cloud with confidence.
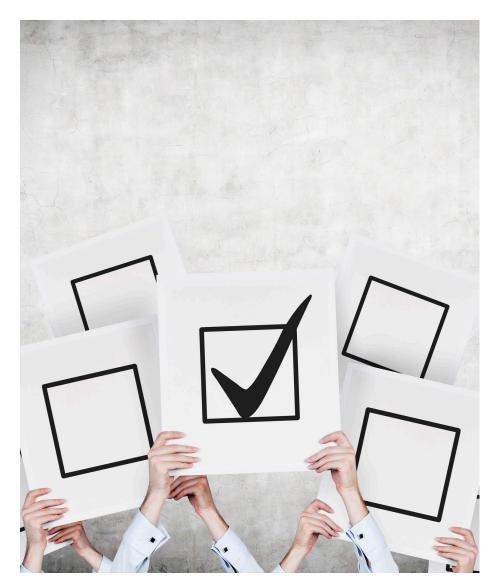
1. Cultural Fit

Is the vendor you're considering aligned with your company's goals and strategies?

Moving to the cloud is a big step for most organisations. An important first step to choosing the right vendor to help implement and manage your cloud contact centre is to understand their business philosophy, company history, and values. Ask these questions to gain assurance about cultural fit.

- Does the solution provider share the same values as your company in areas such as accountability, leadership, innovation, and responsiveness?

- Does the service provider have a proven history in the contact centre business, with capabilities to address your strategic business initiatives?

- Does your contact centre modernisation plan consider enhancements beyond your customer engagement capabilities, such as operational efficiency and employee engagement?

2. Customer references for your industry

Have you spoken with reference customers similar to you in size, business goals, strategies, and requirements?

Speaking with reference customers who've worked with the vendor you're considering can provide valuable insights into the level of effort required and the issues you're likely to face. Here are a few questions to ask:

- In what ways has the solution provider helped improve their customer and employee engagement and continued to optimise business operations after go-live?

- Can they deliver a full contact centre service offering with comprehensive capabilities and unique services, or do they provide point solutions?

- How can the solution provider help you support global customers with a "follow-the-sun" approach?

Talk to other businesses that have deployed a cloud solution with the vendor you are considering. This can arm you with first-hand knowledge and validation of proposed solutions, third-party integration capabilities, professional services, and industry expertise.
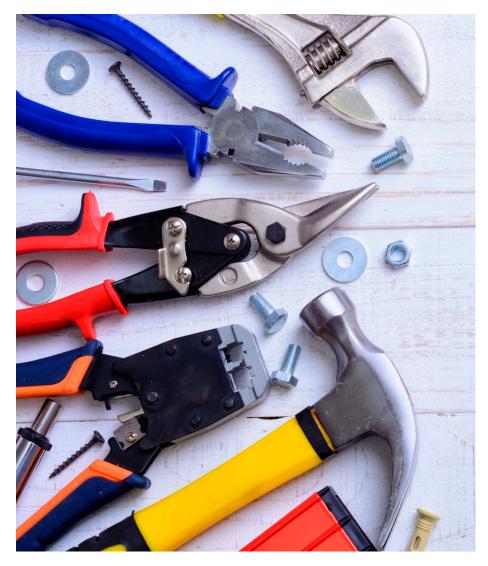
3. Customisation to match your business

How will your solution provider address the level of customisation you need?

One of the common myths about moving contact centres to the cloud is that you must adhere to a one-size-fits-all approach dictated by cloud contact centre vendors.

Each organisation has unique customisation needs based on specific requirements, timeline, and focus. Evaluate your customisation needs and how the vendor you're considering would work with you to understand and customise their solution to meet your needs. The right service provider works with you to build a cloudbased solution that fits your specific business requirements, regardless of your size.
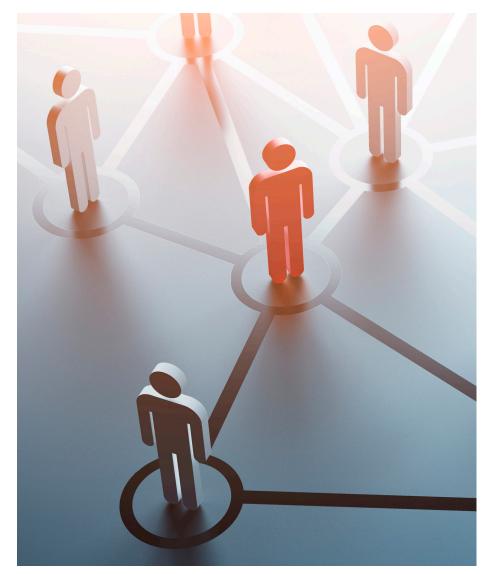
4. Integration and tools

What level of integration is possible and what tools and expertise are available?

The right contact centre provider helps you integrate its applications with your legacy systems and infrastructure to ensure seamless solutions. This will optimise both customer experience and agent efficiency.

Evaluate the openness of the technology platform and its adherence with industry standards, especially when considering the complexities of cloud-centric integrations. This gives insight into both integration capabilities as well as the opportunities you'll have to work with partners in the future.

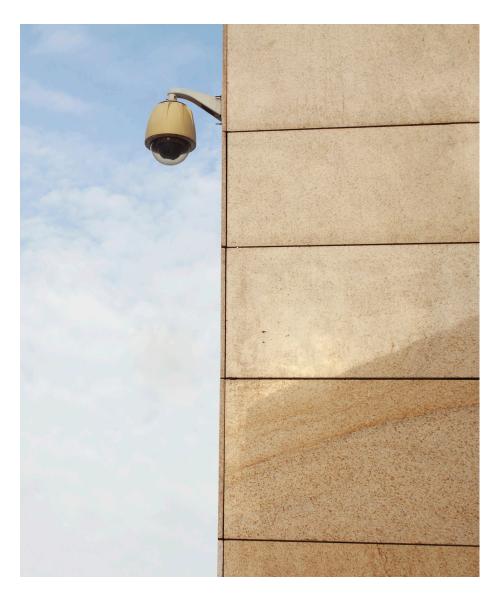# 5. Technology and service partners to extend capabilities

Does your solution provider have a broad partner network available to provide extensibility?

A solution provider is typically as good as the company it keeps. What kind of platform APIs are available to third-party developers? How open and extensible is the technology platform? Do they support industry-standard web services? Can its capabilities be enhanced as needed when your business requirements change?

Who are their technology and implementation partners? The depth and breadth of a provider's technology ecosystem and the third-party solutions available are a good test of their vision, level of technology innovation and investments, and the strength of their partner ecosystem.

Look for providers who work with a range of partners that add new capabilities and value, are validated by customer references, and offer extension applications available through an open marketplace.
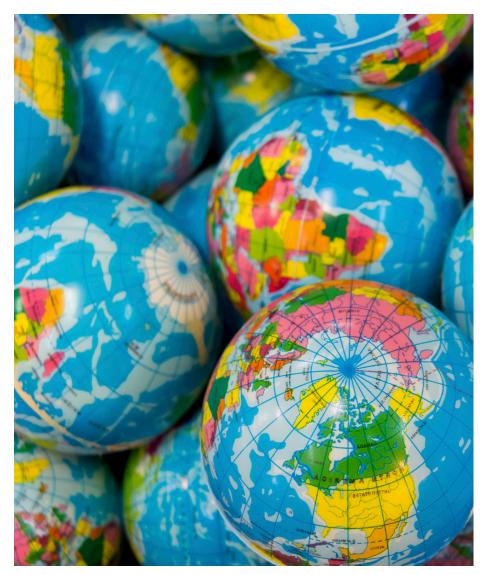
6. Security and compliance

Has your vendor invested in security and compliance capabilities and are they certified?

To your customers, data security and privacy are paramount. Each week there's another front-page news story about data breaches and other security violations. The reality is, if your provider is continually investing in security, cloud-based contact centres can be more secure than on-premises solutions.

Choose a cloud service provider able to prove that their solutions are fully compliant and certified with the latest industry specifications, such as Payment Card Industry (PCI), Service Organisation Control (SOC), ISO 27001 Information Security Standard, and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
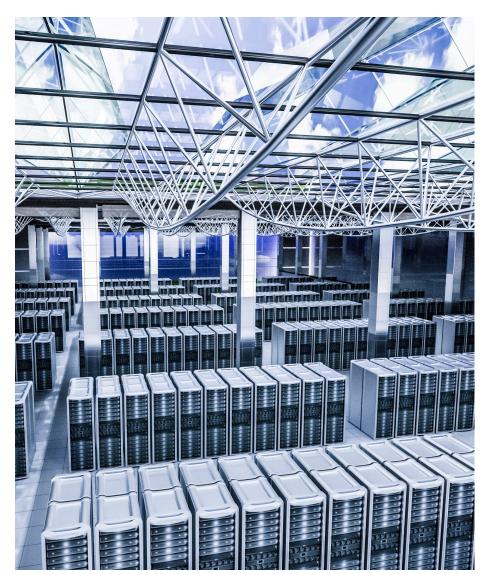
7. Geographic reach

Will you be able to support distributed teams across different geographies?

Organisations with customers spread around the globe often need to route different types of interactions to different parts of the world based on required skills, time of day, channels used, and traffic volume. A global, universal queue can help you manage virtual teams worldwide and ensure that customers receive a level of service and support that "follows-the-sun" to respond effectively.

If your company is looking to extend legacy on-premises contact centre systems to new parts of the world, cloud-based contact centres can help you establish new locations and support additional agent groups more quickly and without costly investments in infrastructure.

8. Business continuity

Does the solution provider offer geographically distributed high availability and other business continuity options?

Your contact centre is your customer relationship lifeline. Understanding your provider's ability to ensure uptime and business-as-usual operations is another critical step in the provider evaluation process.

While many cloud providers offer a variety of redundant capabilities among data centres within their infrastructure, look for key capabilities such as:

- Secure data centres with geographic separation
- Full network capacity and awareness
- Support for an open standards-based IP infrastructure
- Seamless failover capability across multiple data centres

A true global provider enables regional disaster recovery in case of an outage or other problems isolated within a specific location. The ability of your contact centre to fail-over to another instance—yet maintain continuity of information and service delivery to your customers—is critical to your business and to your brand.

9. Innovation and responsiveness

Does the vendor have a good track record for innovation and responsiveness to changing requirements?

Among the core benefits of deploying a cloud-based contact centre is continuous improvement. The vision your service provider has for innovation affects your continued success. Their ability to execute on that vision will give you important tools to streamline customer journeys, which will translate into improved customer experience and competitive advantage for your business.

Evaluate your provider's track record of new product and service introductions and continuous capability upgrades.

10. Future of the contact centre

What are the best ways to future-proof your contact centre investments?

As customers evolve toward greater mobility and new technologies go mainstream, leveraging the cloud becomes the easiest path for you to keep up with changing requirements. The increasing volume and type of interactions between companies and their consumers will occur over websites, social networks, and through mobile channels, such as text and video.

Cloud technologies are already in place to support these advancements. Analytics can help you determine the best way to orchestrate customer journeys and even anticipate customer needs. In a dynamic marketplace, find out how your provider's roadmap will help you innovate and serve customers in the future.

Summary

By 2020, according to Gartner, "more leading-edge IT capabilities will be available only in the cloud, forcing reluctant organisations closer to cloud adoption."1 As more contact centres move to the cloud, service providers need to stay on the cutting edge of contact centre technology innovation to help customers stay current and innovative in the way they handle customer experience.

Take the time and effort up front to consider these ten evaluation criteria. Having a good sense for your business requirements, your prospective partner's capabilities, and the cultural fit will pay off in helping you realise your business goals in the long run.

1. "Gartner: Cloud will be the "default option" for software deployment by 2020," in NetworkWorld, (Framingham, Mass.: Network World, Inc., June 22, 2016).

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