

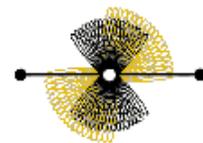
Research Report

Technology Adoption Strategies

for

All-In-One Contact Center Solutions

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Research Report

Technology Adoption Strategies for All-In-One Contact Center Solutions

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

All-in-one solutions provide contact centers with a platform that includes all important functionalities from one provider: Automatic Contact (or Call) Distribution (ACD), Interactive Voice Response (IVR), Voicemail, Fax, Recording, Automatic Dialing, Workforce Management, Web-based interactions like chat, Customer Satisfaction measurement, etc.

Our previous two studies showed that all-in-one solutions are becoming a preferred deployment method among contact center managers, and that such solutions are considerably more economical than multi-point systems on a total cost basis.

However, it seemed that many contact center managers who preferred an all-in-one solution felt such solutions required a so-called “rip-and-replace” approach. This approach, in turn, seems beyond the reach of many managers, who have major legacy multi-point systems and limited budgets.

Key Findings:

This study investigated the experiences of contact center managers and found:

- All-in-one systems *do not* have to be adopted via rip-and-replace approaches.
- Centers have made successful conversions to all-in-one systems through one of several migration approaches.
- The keys to success are good self-knowledge, meticulous planning and excellent integration for as long as the legacy systems continue to be used.
- This said, most managers who decide to adopt all-in-one systems prefer to have as short a change-over as possible, for compelling operational reasons.
- In addition, when the numbers are run, the financial advantages of quick and complete adoption may command attention.

The high level conclusion is thus that there are many paths to all-in-one adoption. There is not a single roadmap, or a monolithic best-practices approach, but rather a matrix of considerations that managers should take into account when making their technology decisions.

The justifications for considering an all-in-one system remain those revealed by the first two research papers: operational simplicity and lower costs. This paper shows how, on a practical level, managers who want to migrate to all-in-one, but are daunted by the perceived need to “rip-and-replace”, may follow alternative paths toward their goal. By providing an analytical framework, and a matrix-style roadmap, this paper can open managers’ eyes to possibilities that they might not have considered. Then they can take decisions with better information and greater confidence.

Background and Purpose of This Study

This study is the third component of a trilogy that has explored a relatively new model of contact center technology - - the so-called “all-in-one” model. Under this model, one vendor provides all needed functionalities for the contact center, as opposed to the “multi-point solution” model, in which numerous vendors supply the needed solutions, which are then integrated, on a customized basis, for the center.

The first study, on industry perceptions of all-in-one systems, broke new ground and had the following major findings:

- From a contact center viewpoint, all-in-one solutions are less burdensome in terms of administration, vendor relationships and technology evaluation time
- Two thirds of all respondents expressed a preference for a single vendor to supply their needs
- Integration is simplified, and functionality is enhanced, with mature all-in-one systems
- Adding functionality is significantly easier for those with all-in-one platforms. They simply add licenses for the needed modules from their all-in-one provider.

The second study drilled down into the cost side of the technology choice, looking at all costs apart from initial “sticker” costs of the system. Its major findings were as follows:

- Total annualized cost per agent for all-in-one solutions averages less than half that of multi-point solutions
- The total cost of installation and integration for all-in-one solutions is 15% lower compared to multi-point systems

- The average annualized system administration cost per agent for all-in-one solutions is 60% lower compared to multi-point solutions

Thus, the first study indicated that managers prefer the operational benefits of all-in-one solutions, and the second study indicated that this preference appears well supported by the financial benefits flowing from all-in-one platforms.

With the characteristics and advantages of all-in-one systems indicated through the first two studies, we wanted to explore another key element: adoption.

This is important on a practical level, because most contact centers are living with a variety of existing technologies that may be difficult to simply eliminate. While an industry analyst or expert consultant may pronounce one technology or another as the “best-practices solution” for a center, the contact center manager has to manage and plan for the future with things like legacy systems, budget, and integration challenges in mind. Not having a clean technology slate before him or her, the manager has to determine if a radical shift is feasible in practice.

As is well known, the contact center industry began life with multi-point solutions being the only option for contact centers. Vendors arose which specialized in a specific functionality, to meet emerging technology needs. Therefore, “buy-and-integrate” was the only option for contact center managers.

All-in-one solution providers only came on the scene during the latter half of the 1990’s, and really only have made their mark on the industry in the years since 2000. Therefore, most adopters of an all-in-one solution, at least among established centers, had to get there either by “rip-and-replace” or by some sort of migration strategy. This element, i.e. the strategies for moving from a multi-point to an all-in-one system, has never been fully investigated to our knowledge.

We had noted that many managers with whom we spoke assumed that adoption of an all-in-one solution required complete and immediate abandonment of current point solutions. Under this perception, “all-in-one” means “all-or-nothing” as well as “all-at-once”. That is, an all-in-one system must be adopted in its entirety or not at all.

This perception is completely understandable; after all, the essence of an “all-in-one” system is that it substitutes for all of the current multi-point systems: ACD, IVR, Voicemail, Fax, Recording, Automatic Dialer, Workforce Management, Web-based interactions like Chat, Customer Satisfaction Measurement, etc. Thus, if a center wants to have these functionalities, and

it wants to have an all-in-one system, it would seem that this conventional wisdom should be correct.

However, must there really be a “rip-and-replace” approach, or is it possible to migrate gradually toward an all-in-one platform as existing systems age out? If this is possible, is it advisable? Are there specific analytical keys to making the best decisions for success? These questions intrigued us. We wanted to see what the market had to say on these matters.

Behind these questions are some important considerations:

- Technology platforms in general are central to contact center success.
- Center management should have a rolling five-year vision of where their technology is headed – based on future needs, the age of existing technology, budget, etc.
- Total replacement is more difficult for some centers with entrenched legacy systems; thus the advantages of an all-in-one system may seem out of reach for managers of such centers.

By challenging the “rip-and-replace” conventional wisdom on this topic, we wanted to see what concrete experiences existed to uphold, or undermine, this “wisdom”. For this purpose, we have defined “migration” as a strategy of adoption over time. As became clear from this study, “migration” has several sub-definitions, which we shall explore later.

Definition of Best Practices

We have defined Best Practices as follows:

“Best Practices are those defined steps that have been shown to achieve the highest possible effectiveness and efficiency for a given business process”.

Therefore, Best Practices do not necessarily align with the lowest cost, or with “conventional wisdom”. Our research has repeatedly shown that Best Practices tend to emerge in innovative contact centers that show a deep respect for their customers, their employees AND their metrics. It is by reviewing and analyzing their metrics consistently, while trying well-structured improvement initiatives, that they move toward optimization of their center’s performance. That, in turn, helps the center contribute to enterprise value, whether the center is for-profit, governmental, or non-profit in nature.

The present study challenged our definition of Best Practices. We went into the study open to the possibility that we would discover a coherent Best Practices “roadmap” for technology adoption that could be applied to all-in-one solutions. Instead we found that the roads to success were varied, and the definition of Best Practices depended on key factors that are individual to each contact center, including:

- The age of legacy systems currently in the center; this is particularly important if the systems have been allowed to fall several upgrades behind;
- Management’s ability to deal with complex technology and multiple vendor relationships;
- Sensitivity to administration costs;
- Number of locations to be converted;
- And other factors.

Therefore, we adopted a matrix approach to the issues, based on the technology situation in which the center finds itself, the capabilities and bandwidth of management, and the risk factors involved in “rip-and-replace” versus a migration strategy.

The results of this matrix approach are presented at the end of the study.

INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

Technology is a key component of every contact center, yet it is often a source of bafflement and frustration for contact center managers. Asking your people to operate at peak efficiency is neither practical nor fair if the tools they are given to work with are not optimal as well. Customers have come to expect that contact centers will have seamless integration of people, processes and technology that will provide them with the kind of service that keeps them happy and keeps them coming back. This is the sort of service that builds loyalty and profits for the company.

For most contact center managers, however, their contact center technology is like their automobile: as long as it works and there is someone else to fix it when there is a problem, all is well. Managers see themselves as managers of people, not mavens of technology. They know good technology when they see it, but they are not really at ease with the inner workings, and must rely on their technology administrators to deal with issues that arise.

It is in this context that we began our series of studies on all-in-one solutions versus multi-point solutions. We found that contact center managers preferred having only one solution provider by a margin of 2 to 1 for operational reasons, and we also found in our second study that financial calculations in fact support that position. We also noted, however, that the majority of centers today still have multi-point solutions installed, which would be expected since all-in-one offerings have come to market more recently. According to our survey, three out of four of those claiming multi-point solutions would like to have a single provider, but in fact are living with multiple point solutions.

The question becomes: what are the barriers to change for those who currently have a multi-point solution, but would like to have a single provider platform?

This research is aimed at exploring this question from the point of view of those responsible for contact centers: the managers, the technology experts and the operations managers. What are the options available to get from point A to point B, and what do the experiences of other centers tell us in this regard?

Definition of Multi-Point versus All-in-One Solutions

Before describing the research, let us reprise yet again the definitions of multi-point and all-in-one solutions provided in the previous studies:

1. A multi-point solution is a solution provided by a specific vendor that satisfies one functional need, such as Automatic Contact Distribution (ACD), Interactive Voice Response (IVR), workforce management (WFM), and many more. In the multi-point strategy, a contact center manager will choose and pay for a collection of individual point solutions, and then have them integrated together by software integration specialists. The center will employ on-site experts to administer each solution. Vendors offering these types of solution range from those that provide just one point solution to those that provide a product suite of point solutions – typically acquired, brought together by the vendor and sold with integration services. It is important to note that a vendor that has a suite of acquired point solutions is not the same as an all-in-one solution. Such vendors do not qualify under the all-in-one definition, as they still require separate administrative interfaces and additional integration software. This distinction will be clearer after reading the next paragraph.
2. An all-in-one solution is a complete, pre-integrated suite of contact center products provided by a single vendor. Typically the technology is “born” integrated (or organically grown from the beginning), with the components designed to work seamlessly together and provide a single point of administration. In the all-in-one strategy, a contact center manager has one relationship with one vendor that provides all, or most, components under one contract. The all-in-one strategy comes in two versions, as follows:
 - a. The all-in-one hardware/software solution can be located on-premise at the contact center, with on-premise employees dedicated to operating the system.
 - b. Alternatively, the all-in-one solution can be hosted off-premise at a third party’s site, with the contact center paying only a non-recurring start-up fee, followed by a “usage” fee, i.e., pay-as-you-go. In this scenario of the all-in-one solution, there are no boxes on-site, and thus no employees dedicated to operating them. Technical support on-site is limited to keeping desktop computers running and connected to the Internet.

On a schematic graphic, a typical multi-point solution contact center looks like the following:

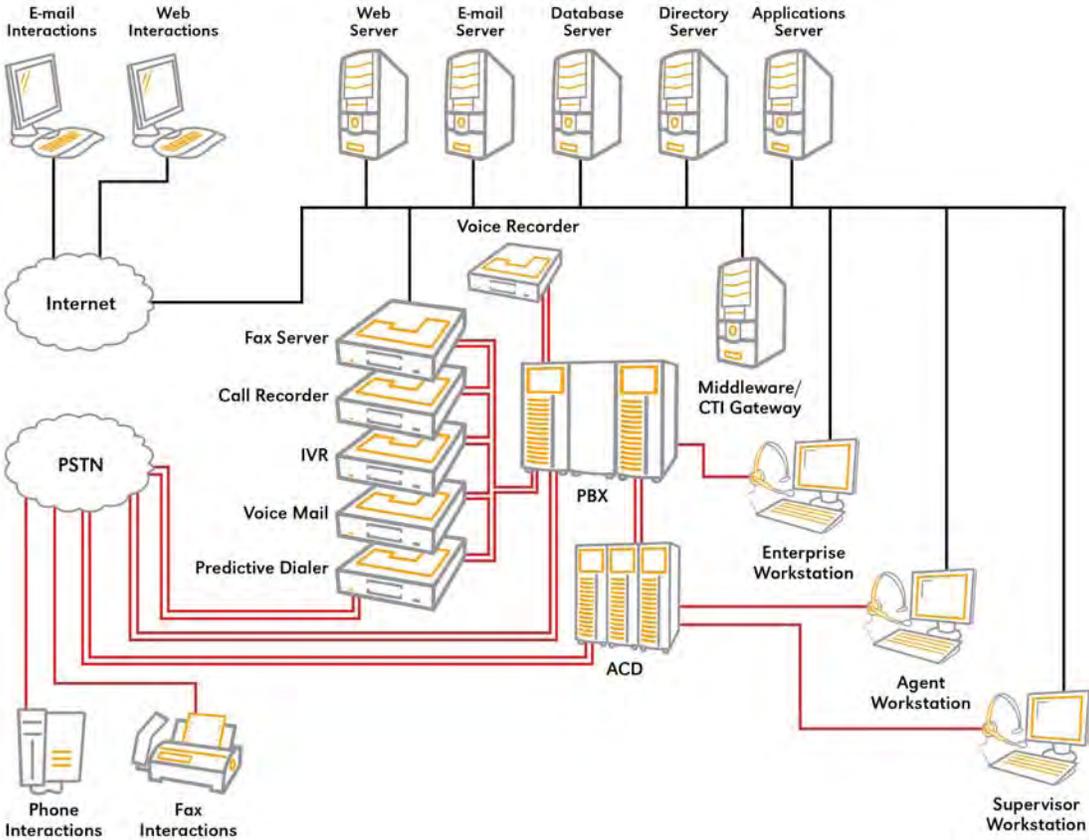


Figure 1 - Diagram of typical multi-point solution contact center

By contrast, all-in-one solutions (which use software that runs on a normal server rather than a proprietary firmware/hardware “box”) look more like the following diagram:

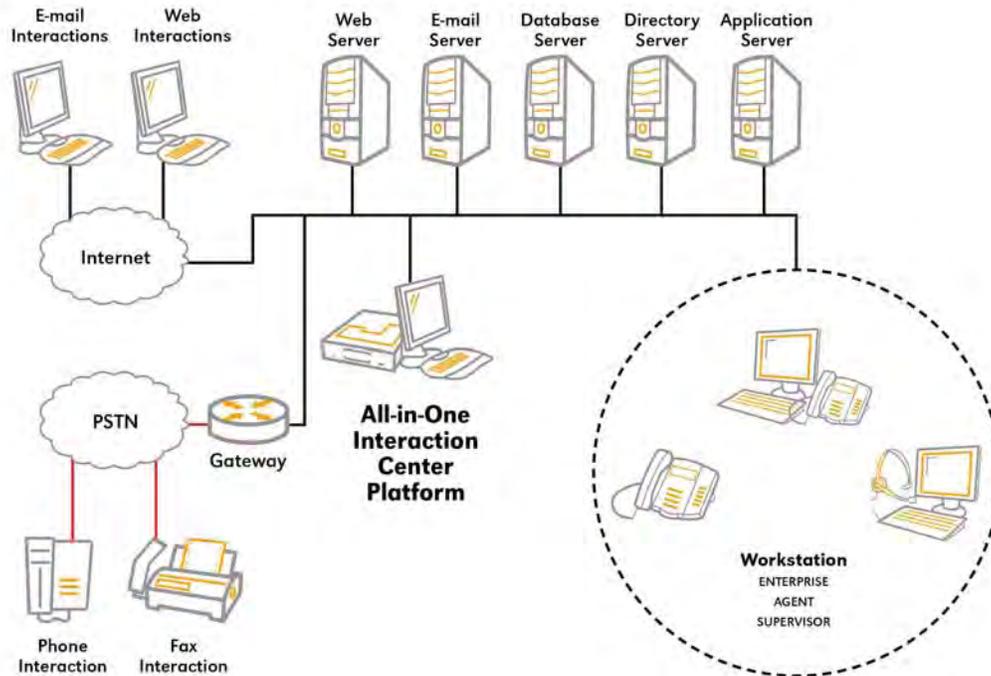


Figure 2 - Diagram of all-in-one solution contact center

On-premise all-in-one solutions are of more recent origin than multi-point solutions, which means that most contact centers have multi-point legacy solutions, and a smaller, but growing percentage have all-in-one solutions.

The off-premise, all-in-one solution appears to be an “emerging model” where the contact center has no complicated technology on-site to worry about. The center only pays a usage fee and, as important, no major capital investment is needed to get started. However, this option may have additional challenges relative to the ability to customize applications, and/or there might be reduced flexibility in the architecture. There might also be some concerns about off-premise data security.

Finally, for both on-premise and off-premise all-in-one solutions, major upgrades over time are included in the periodic fees, which is not necessarily the case with maintenance costs for multi-point solutions.

Framing the Great Debate Once More: Multi versus All-in-One

The debate regarding the efficacy and efficiency of the two models was put forth in our previous research papers as follows;

- According to believers in the multi-point strategy, assembling pieces allows the contact center to choose the “best-of-breed” solution for each technology component, and thus is a superior approach. No single vendor can cover all functionalities with excellent offerings.
- Supporters of the all-in-one approach respond that much of the technology in the all-in-one suites is already best-of-breed, and in other cases the functional delta between the all-in-one suite offering and the “best” multi-point offering is small and does not have noticeable impact for most centers.
- On the issue of technology integration, the all-in-one supporters take a strong stance, noting the huge problems often posed by adding on new technologies from disparate vendors, and are ready to share the scars of more than one multi-point integration horror story. They like having fewer boxes and administrators to deal with. Drag and drop programming tools offered by all-in-one providers have made it significantly easier to set up and change advanced contact flows with no integration programming required.
- The multi-point people respond that integration has been getting easier and more predictable over the last few years with the gradual introduction of industry standards, and that most of the integration horror stories pre-date today’s technical realities. They point out that recent merger activity in the industry means that certain “product suites” are, in fact, product integrations, rather than organic sibling offerings. They also note that some components of large CRM suites have proven to be difficult for some to implement.
- The all-in-one supporters contend that all-in-one systems are leading the way with open standards. However, until industry standards are more widespread and more meaningful for multi-point suppliers, integration of multi-point solutions will continue to present significant headaches for managers along with higher costs. Data that is separately configured across multiple applications makes it difficult to unify things usefully in a multi-point world.
- Regarding system upgrades, and/or enhancements and/or changes, the all-in-one supporters contend that these are easier, as they do not have to deal with the impact one component upgrade might have on all other components. .
- The multi-point people respond that the current individual solutions are much more user-friendly than in the past, allowing average technical professionals to make changes without major headaches, assuming, of course that these technicians are available.

Important note: this white paper takes a step beyond the previous two white papers. It carves out the subset of people who are already believers in the efficacy of all-in-one solutions and focuses on the issues of adoption and migration that face them.

Research Methodology

The present study had the following components:

1. Questionnaire

A questionnaire (Appendix B) was sent out to contact center managers in the Center for Customer-Driven Quality - BenchmarkPortal database. This questionnaire asked basic “framing” questions about the contact center and inquired whether the respondents had all-in-one or multi-point solution technology in their contact centers.

The questionnaire then went on to ask about the following key areas:

- How satisfied they are with their systems
- How their costs compare with any previous system
- How they adopted their system – all at once, or through migration over time, and why
- Preference, in terms of single vendor or multiple vendor suppliers for contact center technology

The information gleaned from the questionnaire is presented in the next section.

2. Individual Interviews

We interviewed a sample of six well-established contact center operations, representing a variety of sizes, industries and functionalities. All of those interviewed currently use all-in-one solutions, and the purpose of the interview was to understand how they arrived at their current platform. All had started out with multiple-point solution systems, given that all-in-one vendors have been in the market for barely a decade. In particular, we were interested in whether they had migrated to all-in-one over time, or had performed a “rip-and-replace” action, totally moving from their previous system to an all-in-one system.

The information from these interviews is presented in abbreviated case study form following presentation of the questionnaire results.

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY RESEARCH

AND INTERPRETATION

As part of our research, we polled our community of contact center managers regarding their technology, their perceptions and their experiences in the realm of all-in-one versus multi-point solutions. The invitation to the survey included the following preface:

“Here is a quick survey on technology platforms - - a real ‘hot button’ issue for contact centers today. All-In-One solutions are systems that include the major contact center functionalities (ACD, IVR / self service, WFM, etc.), supplied by one vendor. Multi-Point systems integrate these functionalities from several point solutions, from one or more vendors. There is a lively debate over the advantages of each, and we at BenchmarkPortal are bringing the latest research to our community, and asking what you think.”

We particularly wanted to focus on questions of adoption:

- For those who had already moved from one system to the other
- For those who were considering an all-in-one system, but had not made any change.

In this way we would understand:

- The experiences of those who had made the move
- The perceptions and concerns of those who had not made a move.

This is interesting because we see resistance to new technology in many areas of the contact center. Since optimal technology is key to optimal performance and low costs (as our benchmarking studies show time and again), understanding and addressing this resistance is important to our mission of improving contact center performance.

The results of our survey are summarized in the following graphics.

The first set of questions was aimed at determining the technology platforms of the respondents and their level of satisfaction with those platforms.

What kind of technology platform do you have currently?

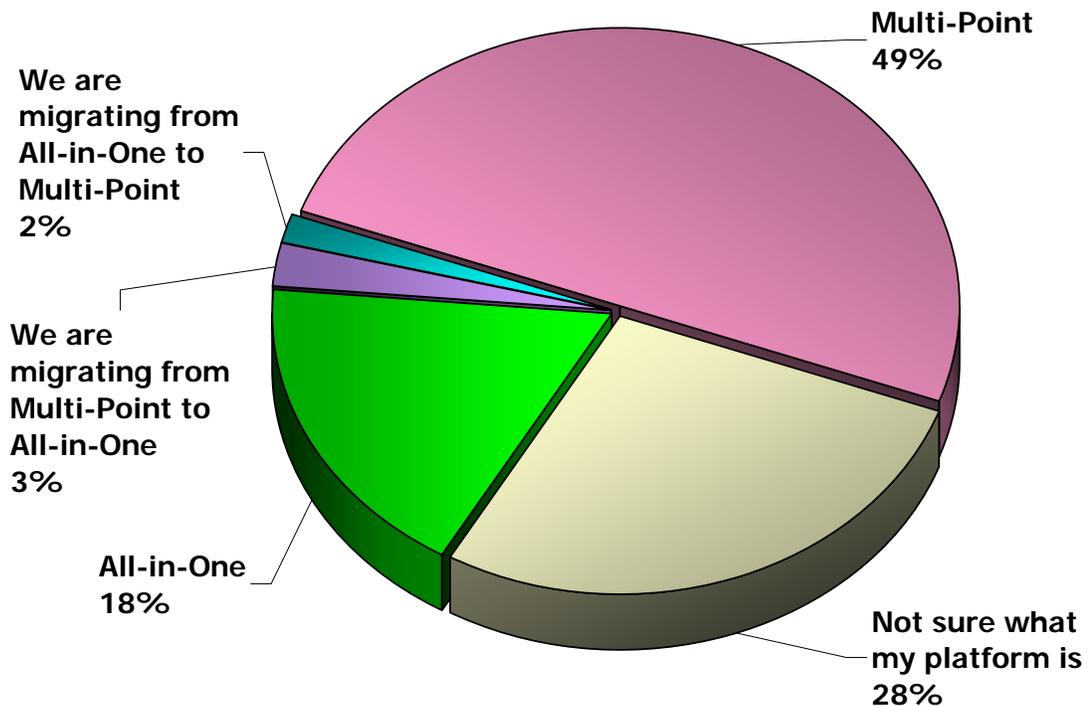


Figure 3 – Type of technology platform used by participants

The results of this question surprised us in that over one in four respondents were not sure what sort of technology platform they had. However, this does support some of our previous experience that indicates many contact center managers are simply untrained or uninterested in many aspects of contact center technology. Possibly as well, the existence of integrators who piece together solutions from various vendors, but who present a single point of contact for the contact center, may confuse some contact center managers as to what type of system they have.

Note that, although such integrators may provide the contact center with the single point of contact, the solutions they provide are not considered all-in-one solutions from a technology platform point of view.

Half of the respondents indicated that they used a multi-point solution, while approximately one in six, or 18%, report using an all-in-one solution.

We then asked the multi-point respondents and the all-in-one respondents how satisfied they are with their systems.

How satisfied are you currently with your All-in-One system?

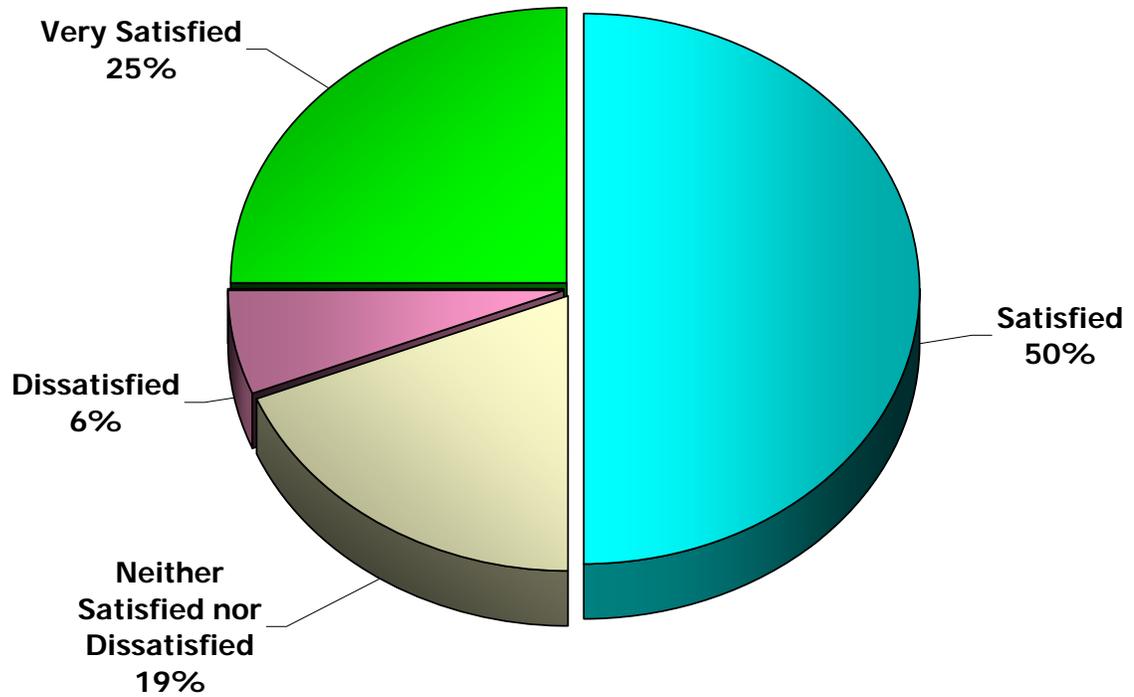


Figure 4 – Satisfaction of participants using All-in-One systems

How satisfied are you with your Multi-Point system?

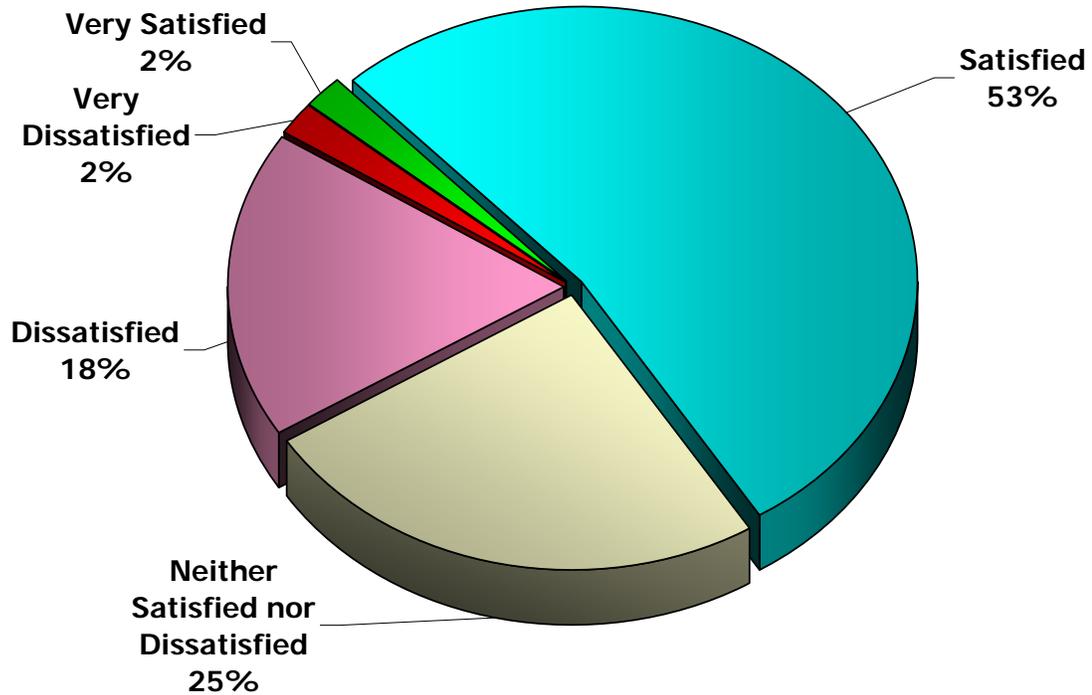


Figure 5 – Satisfaction of participants using Multi-Point systems

The results here were striking. Seventy-five percent of respondents with an all-in-one system were very satisfied or satisfied with their system, while only fifty-five percent of those with multi-point systems fell into the same categories. At the bottom end of the scale, fully one in five multi-point respondents was dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, while none of the all-in-one users was very dissatisfied and only six percent pronounced themselves dissatisfied.

Thus, the satisfaction quotient associated with an all-in-one solution was shown to be measurably higher as compared with multi-point solutions.

In light of this situation, it was useful to have a response to the following question from those who currently have a multi-point solution:

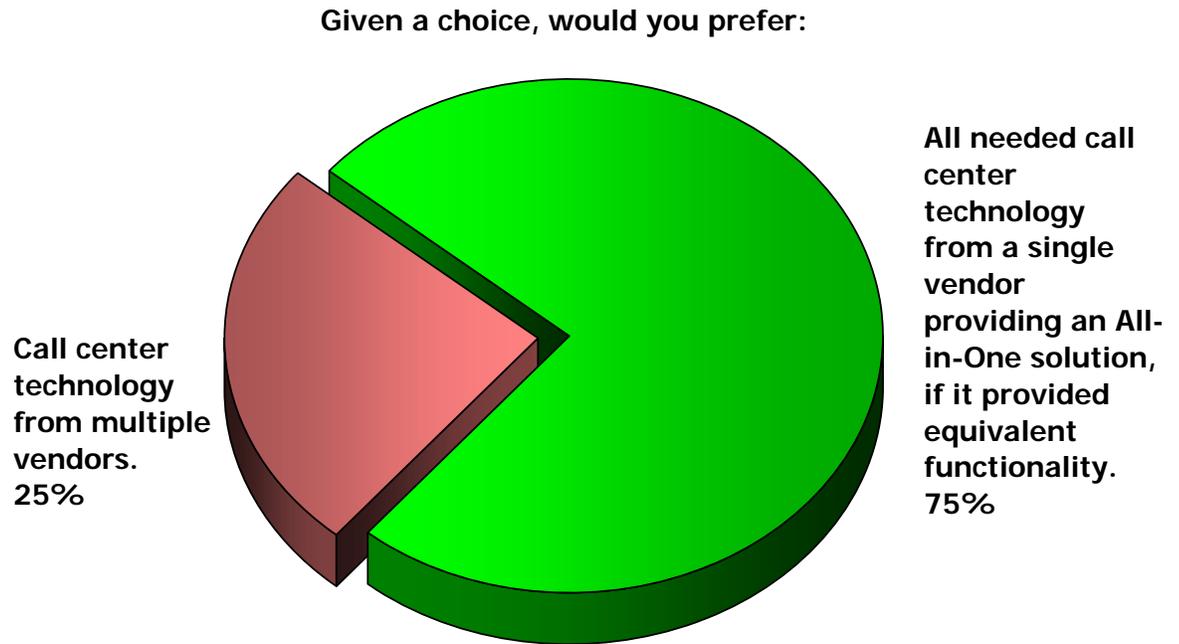


Figure 6 – Preference of technology by participants, given a choice

A decisive three quarters of respondents with multi-point solutions, would, given a choice, opt for an all-in-one solution. This confirms the results of an earlier study, and indicates the appeal felt by managers for an all-in-one solution.

Our previous research had also indicated that the managerial preference is supported by financial analysis: i.e. all-in-one solutions tend to cost less than multi-point solutions, due to lower acquisition and maintenance costs.

The answers regarding costs from participants in the current study who had lived through a transition from multi-point to all-in-one were as follows:

Please compare the technical systems administration costs and maintenance costs of your All-in-One solution to your former Multi-Point solutions platform. The overall costs of administering your All-in-One solution are:

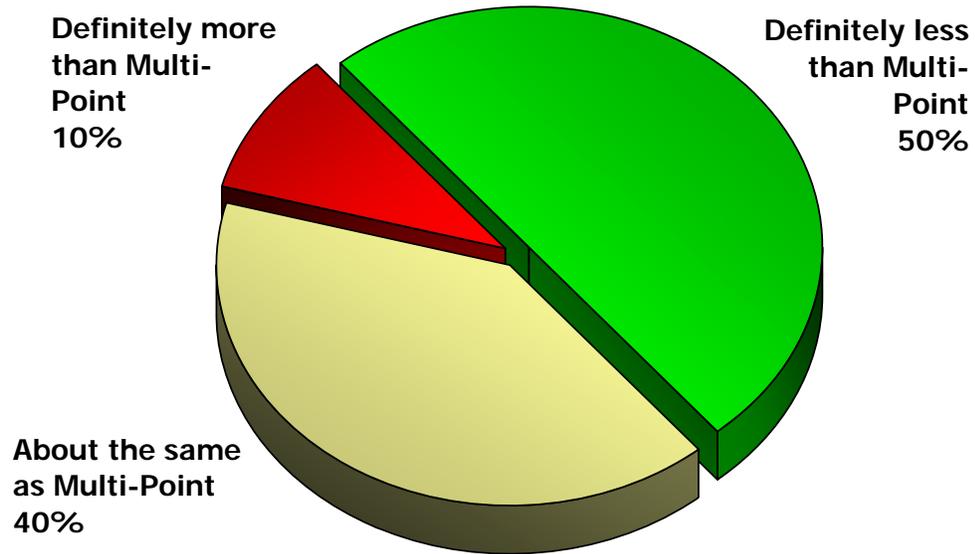


Figure 7 – Comparison of costs: Present All-in-One system vs. former Multi-Point system

These responses indicate that all-in-one systems generally cost less, or no more, than a multi-point solution. This is in keeping with the findings of our previous white paper on costs (other than initial purchase costs), which calculated the costs of acquisition, installation, maintenance, administration and upgrades, and found that the costs of all-in-one systems were generally less than those of multi-point systems. Cost of acquisition and integration were 15% lower, annualized administration costs were 60% lower, and the total annualized cost per agent for the all-in-one solutions averaged less than half the cost of a multi-point solution.

Next we asked about how all-in-one respondents had adopted their current platforms:

Did you adopt your All-in-One system at one point in time, or did you migrate to it over time?

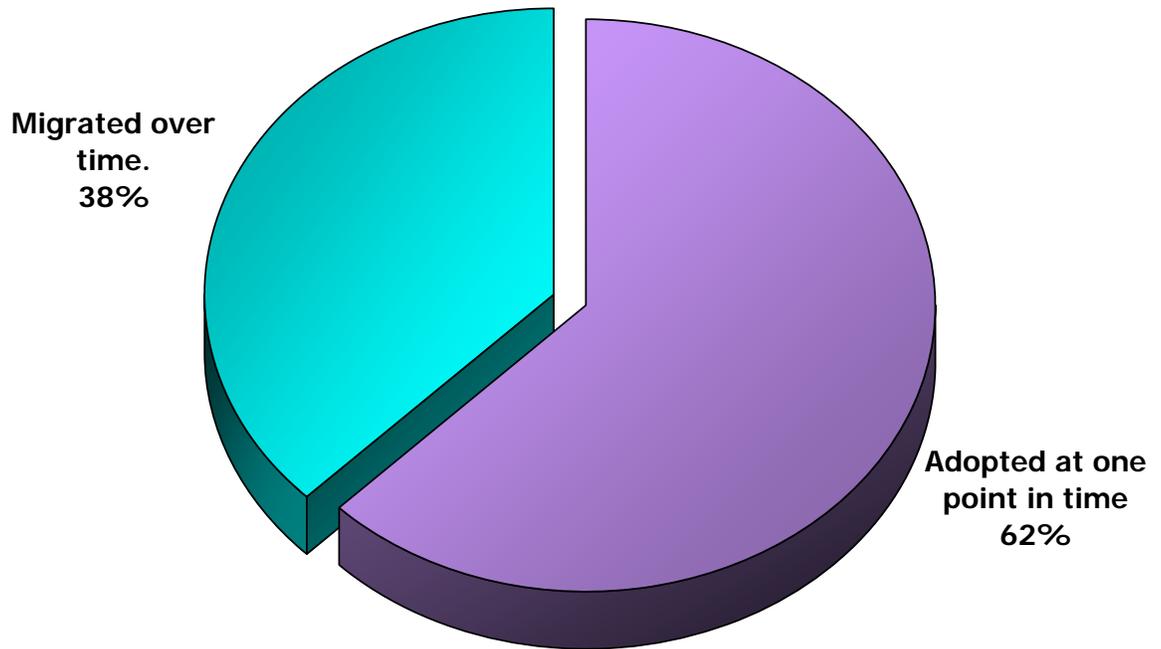


Figure 8 – Adoption of All-in-One systems: All at once vs. migration over time

This result was a major eye-opener. It showed that, while almost two thirds of those using an all-in-one system adopted it all at once, more than one in three migrated to their all-in-one system over time. This let us know that there was an important experience base in the market of people who did not do “rip and replace”, but instead migrated to an all-in-one system over a period of time.

If you adopted All-in-One technology all at once, was that because you felt it was necessary to do so?

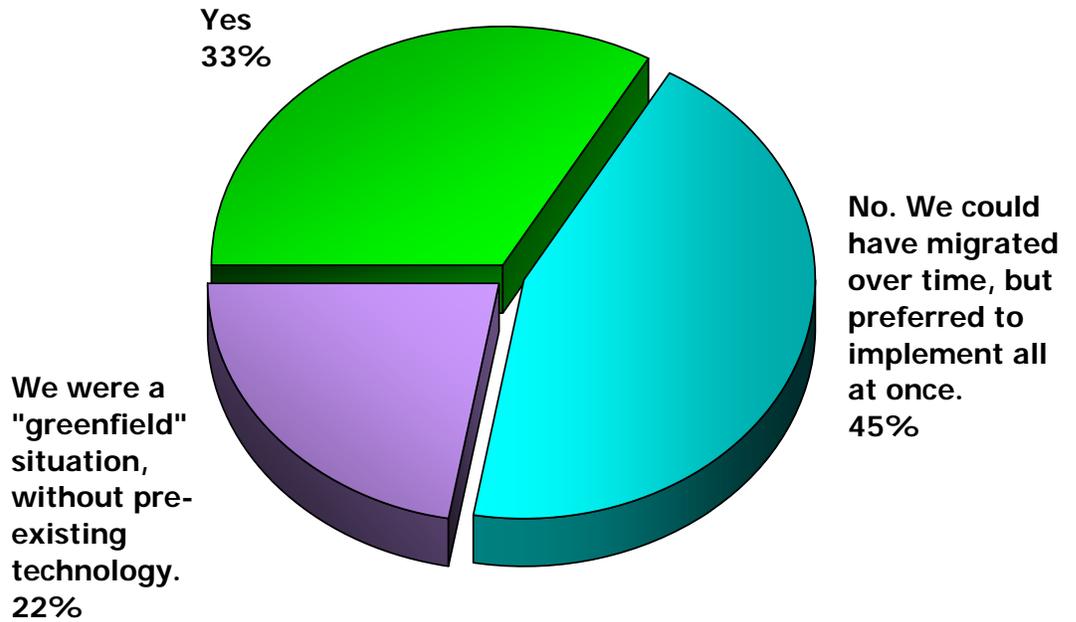


Figure 9 – Adoption of All-in-One systems: Reasons

Also interesting were the number of respondents who did “rip and replace” even though they felt they could have migrated to the all-in-one solution over time.

Please describe your experience with migrating to/from an All-in-One system compared with other IT initiatives:

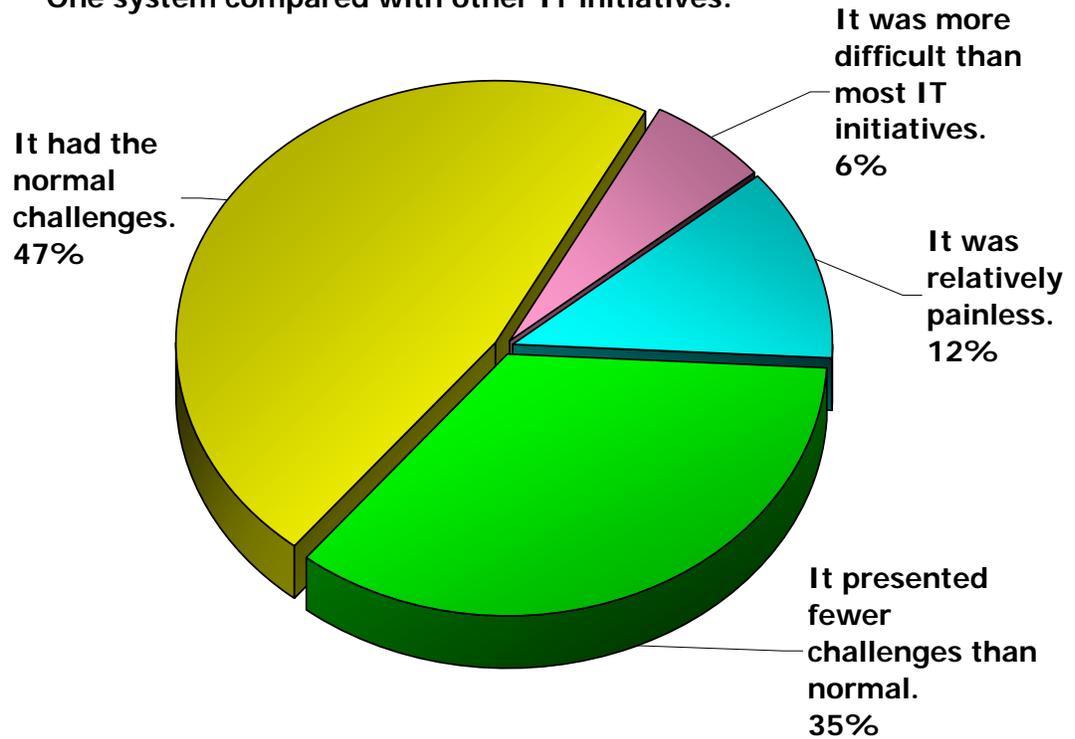


Figure 10 – Ranking of difficulty migrating to/from All-in-One systems compared with other IT initiatives.

Only 6% felt migrating to an all-in-one system was more difficult than other IT initiatives. Forty-seven percent found the transition presented the normal challenges, while the same percent (47%) felt the transition was easier than normal or relatively painless.

We then asked those with a multi-point solution to opine regarding methods of adoption. We wanted to see if there was resistance that would inevitably accompany a need to totally change a technology platform.

Do you see installation of an All-in-One solution as "rip-and-replace", i.e. you would need to scrap your current system entirely to install an All-in-One solution?

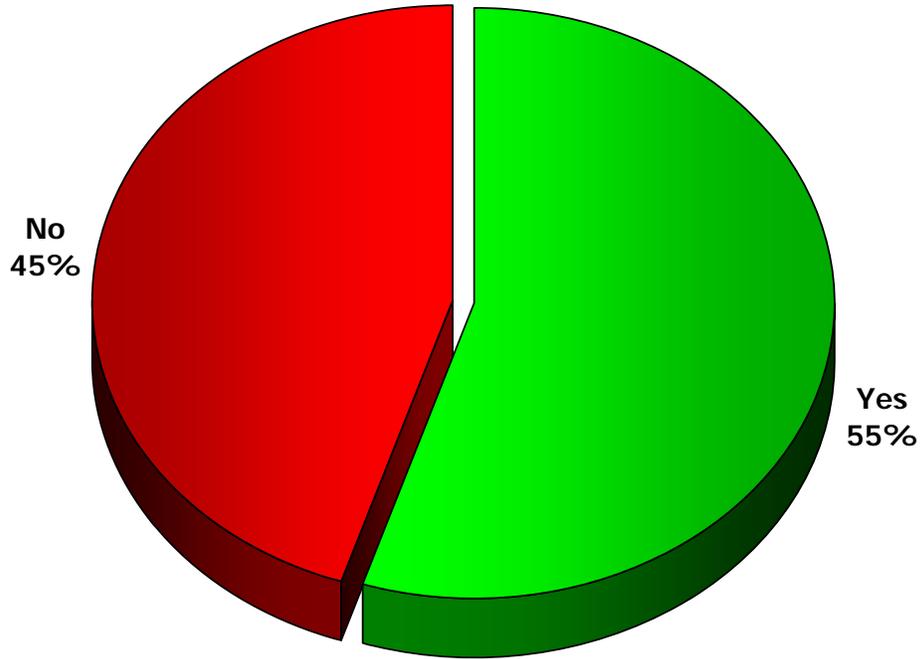


Figure 11 – Participants view of installation of an All-in-One solution in their operation

Over half of those with multi-point solutions regard a switch to an all-in-one system to be a “rip and replace” exercise. However, a larger minority than was expected indicated they understood that “rip-and-replace” was not their only option.

We drilled down on this issue with the following question to those having a multi-point solution platform and who perceived all-in-one as requiring rip-and-replace:

If you could migrate to a full-function All-in-One system over time, (i.e. keeping point solutions until they aged out, then adopting components of an All-in-One system) would that be attractive for you?

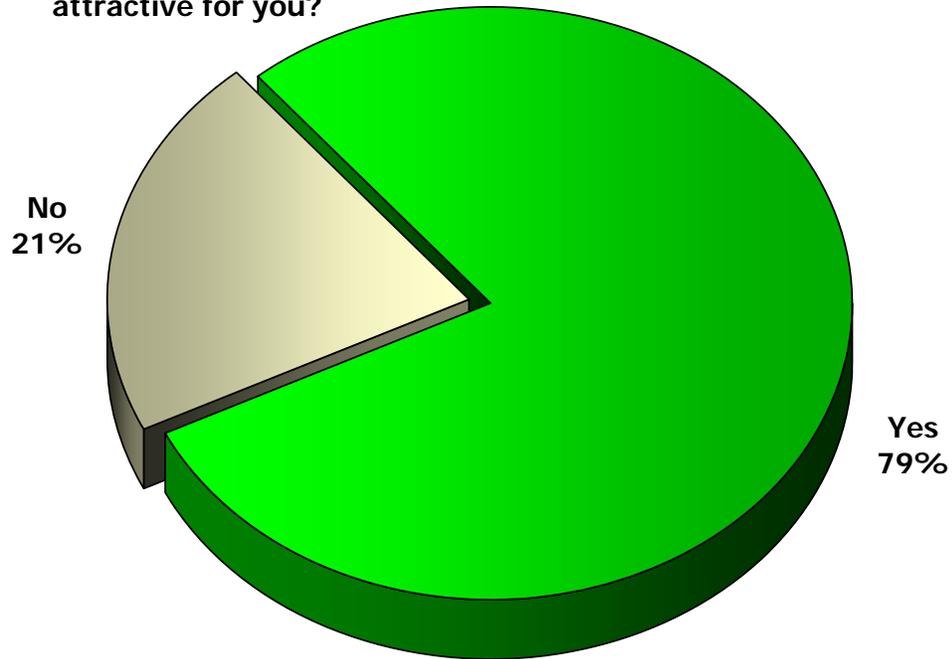


Figure 12 – Participants view of implementation over time of an All-in-One solution in their operation

Of the majority who felt that a move to all-in-one required “rip and replace”, almost four out of five said that a migration strategy would be attractive to them if it were possible to do so.

Understanding that a platform-changing decision was not all in the hands of contact center managers, we asked them to share their answers on the following important questions:

Would a planned migration strategy make an All-in-One system more acceptable to your IT colleagues?

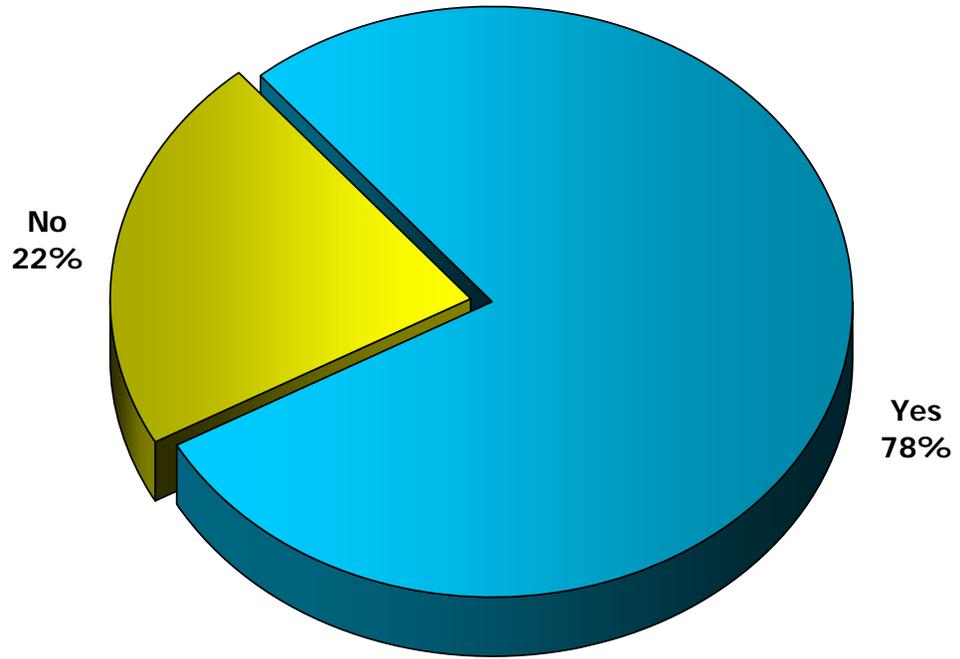


Figure 13 – Participants view of their IT colleagues' acceptance of a planned migration strategy for an All-in-One solution in their operation

Would a planned migration strategy make an All-in-One system more acceptable to your senior management?

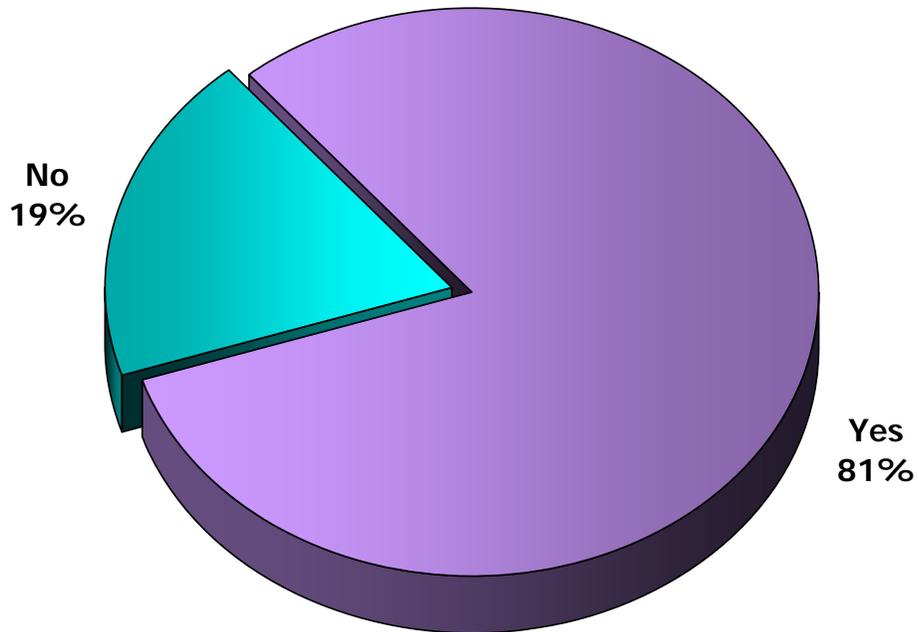


Figure 14 – Participants view of senior managements' acceptance of a planned migration strategy for implementation of an All-in-One solution in their operation

Similar numbers (about four out of five) indicated that adoption of an all-in-one solution platform would be more acceptable to their senior managers and their IT colleagues if it were done under a planned migration strategy, rather than rip-and-replace.

Insights and Analysis from the Survey

Major insights from the survey of call center managers are:

- Most centers still use multi-point solutions, but over one in five is now using an all-in-one solution, or is migrating to an all-in-one solution.
- Users of all-in-one solutions are statistically more satisfied overall than users of multi-point solutions. Twenty-five percent of the all-in-one users describe themselves as “very satisfied”, while only 2% of the multi-point users fall into this top box category.
- Three quarters of the current multi-point users would prefer to have an all-in-one platform if they could
- Half of all all-in-one users say their costs are “definitely less” than their former multi-point systems
- While most multi-point solution users believe a change to all-in-one would require rip-and-replace, a substantial minority is aware they could migrate over time.
- In fact, 38% of those who now have an all-in-one platform responded that they migrated to that solution over time.
- The migration experience presented the same or fewer challenges than other IT initiatives in all but six percent of cases.
- Approximately four out of five managers at multi-point solution centers feel that a migration strategy would make adoption of an all-in-one platform more attractive to them, as well as to their IT colleagues and their senior managers.

RESULTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS: ABBREVIATED CASE STUDIES

Results of Individual Interviews

As the survey indicated, the contact center world is divided between:

- those who see the multi-point solution platform as appropriate for them; and
- those who either have, or would like to have, an all-in-one platform.

Since the survey also indicated that the second group is large, and since practical issues of technology adoption are of concern to all contact center managers, we conducted a series of interviews with center managers who represented a variety of adoption strategies. These ranged from those who had taken a “rip-and-replace” strategy toward platform adoption, to those who took a more gradual “migration” approach to adoption. The process was enlightening and occasionally surprising.

The size of operations interviewed varied from a small center, with 25 full-time equivalents, to a call center operation with 5,000 people in multiple locations. Some of those interviewed had all internal personnel, while others had some combination of internal, at-home and outsourced personnel.

Industry segments and contact center functions included:

- Property & Casualty Insurance
- Life Insurance
- Investment/ annuity
- Internal Help Desk
- Retail
- Credit Card
- Banking/Credit Union
- Mortgage Finance

- Payroll processing and business services
- Collections
- Tech Support – Website

This gave us a good cross-section of contact center perspectives:

- Contact types included inbound and outbound of virtually all categories; customer service, technical support, order taking, claims processing, lead generation, collections, etc.
- All of the centers interviewed were based in North America, but some had operations in other parts of the world.
- As indicated above, all of the centers interviewed had moved to an all-in-one platform after having previously been on a multi-point solution platform.

The following are a sampling of condensed case studies that illustrate different stories of adoption. We hope one or more of these stories can offer insights to readers who are contemplating a move to an all-in-one platform.

Case Study 1: STEP BY STEP...BUILDING ON A UNIFIED PLATFORM

This very large contact center operation has 2,500 agents housed in 20 different contact centers, of which 5 are of major size. The different locations had numerous technologies from different vendors, including separate providers for ACD and IVR, Workforce Management, Recording and others. Management bore many “scars” from integration of their multi-point systems, and found the multitude of solutions detrimental to customer service and to their overall success.

Management did its research on alternative solutions. They liked the all-in-one concept, but felt they could not do a “forklift” replacement of the entire system. With so many bad technology experiences in the past, they felt it would be too much for them.

As a result, they started with the new ACD from the all-in-one provider they had chosen from their research. They integrated this piece into their overall system; in a sense they acquired the all-in-one provider’s ACD as a point solution for their center. After the ACD proved itself out, they “turned on” the all-in-one provider’s IVR and recording applications by extending their license agreement to cover these functionalities.

Workforce management functionality was delayed a bit, in part to allow them to move gradually, and in part to allow the vendor to upgrade its offering. Ultimately they adopted the workforce management module of their

all-in-one provider, even if they were not convinced that it was best in breed. The managers decided it gave them at least 80% of what was needed. “We were willing to give up on 20% to have one vendor”, in the words of one manager. As a result, they finished basic migration to the all-in-one provider for all centers last year, including recording and email queuing.

The manager noted that “Issues with the old multi-point system would take up to 3 months to resolve. In contrast, our all-in-one vendor once worked with us over a weekend on an important requirement and got it done.” With an all-in-one vendor, there can be no finger pointing by one point-solution vendor at another point-solution vendor. All responsibility for the platform rests in the hands of the all-in-one provider, who bears the burden of making it work.

There still are some important challenges, including migration to a single toll free number for their 10 customer-facing centers. However, “this issue is really a struggle with people and processes” more than with the technology, which management feels is up to the challenge.

We found in this interview that there is a second migration story to tell as well. Specifically, the company is currently migrating the entire enterprise to their all-in-one provider’s telephony platform, to provide unified communications for all corporate users. They have started rolling this out through the company, department by department. This is a case where technology that took root in the contact center environment was ultimately deemed the best solution for the rest of the enterprise as well.

In addition, they are also considering workflow functionality offered by their all-in-one provider, with so-called “communications-based process automation”, or CBPA for short. With CBPA, their workflow processes and task points are made into “work objects” that are pulled into and through the communications network. For example, if a customer is late in paying, this is noted in the system, which will immediately send messages and create tasks for people in the shipping, sales and the outbound collections area - - with the aim of addressing and hopefully rectifying the situation. Each task completed creates other tasks until all tasks are completed and the situation is properly closed.

Currently, the center’s management is looking at all options, including their all-in-one provider. Whenever they need new technology they always look at market offerings, and so far they have always gone back to their all-in-one provider in the end. This is in part because of the technology, and in part because of the responsiveness they have found. “We need a vendor willing to tailor with us. All-in-one which is not flexible or customizable would not work for us.”

“For us, ‘Best Practices’ means getting what we need to meet client needs – provide them with a unique, personalized experience and a one-and-done

result.” They have found this facilitated with their current all-in-one provider.

A final bit of advice from the manager regards communication: leverage your provider’s user group functions. Quality interaction with your vendor and your peer users is a valuable thing.

In sum, this is a case where the migration plan was not fully drafted from the start. Rather, the center dipped in its toes and then, step by step, worked its way into the water. For them it has worked well, as indicated by their stated high satisfaction with their current situation.

Case Study 2: PLAN THE WORK AND WORK THE PLAN

This major retail operation had separate vendors for its solutions. Then, in 1999 they found themselves in high-growth mode and decided they needed an upgrade. Management did an analysis of their then-current systems and concluded that there was nothing worth keeping.

Rather than use an RFP process, they investigated the various offerings in the marketplace themselves, and settled on working with a VAR that represented an all-in-one solution. They then assembled a detailed plan for change-over. Rather than rip-and-replace over a weekend, they decided on a phased migration plan based on contact type functionality.

First they put their inbound contact centers on the new system, beginning with the PBX/ACD. Initial implementation was difficult. The inexperience of their team in a high growth environment showed. At the time (a decade ago), the vendor was also new. Since then, things have gotten much easier.

They added IVR functionality shortly afterwards, and then added contact routing, contact recording and CTI/screen pop capabilities later on. All of these latter functionalities were new for the center, so they did not have to replace incumbent systems.

The migration process is not totally complete. The center is still integrated with another well-known vendor for workforce management, since it has suited their needs thus far.

Costs of the technology seem to be comparable overall due to licensing fees, though administration costs are much less than they were with the previous multi-point platform.

Management would “absolutely recommend” an all-in-one migration strategy to others. The best thing, in their opinion, is to stage adoption over time, in workable chunks. “Pick a vendor that is structured enough to give you what you need, and personalized enough to work closely with you to customize for your needs.”

Case Study 3 : LAST MINUTE VENDOR BRINGS BIG SAVINGS

This company has two in-house contact centers located in the central section of the U.S., with a total of 300 full time agents, 25 part time and 20 at-home agents. They have also used outsourcers as well.

They service a nationwide network of stores, mainly assisting in-store personnel with the technology needed to run the store processes. A major problem is turnover of the people they support, which can reach 90% in some years. “We are continually training ‘newbie’s””, stated the manager, “It is a major challenge for us”. The contact center itself also has a turnover rate of 40 – 50%, so management really felt it needed an efficient system that would be easy to train on, would have seamless integration and would not be an unnecessary distraction for management.

They needed an email system in the late 1990’s, when email and web traffic began to grow for them. Their email routing system was very people-intensive, requiring manual routing. Management tried to work with the contact center’s ACD point solution supplier on an email product, but it did not work. They began to see that their point system provider for the ACD, regardless of size, was unable to provide technologies outside of its area of specialization.

They subsequently did an RFP to cover multiple functionalities. At first, five well-known suppliers, including their existing point suppliers, were involved. At the last minute, an all-in-one supplier joined the field. The all-in-one concept was new at the time, but contact center management bought in.

According to one manger, “the interesting part was convincing the telecom group! They did not believe a switch could run on a server.” When it was demonstrated that this would work, the telecom colleagues gave consent, and senior management concurred.

After considerable planning, the new system was implemented over a couple of weeks: Web, then ACD/PBX, then IVR, then recording.

Costs decreased as they stopped manually supporting email functions, which is saving them three FTE annually, or approximately \$180,000 every year. Also, on the systems administration side, they are saving about five FTE at approximately \$75,000 each, for a total of \$375,000 every year. There are other savings as well on the maintenance side, though the amount of these savings is harder to quantify. In addition, they enjoy better reporting than they had previously. With an all-in-one supplier, applications are tied together and it is easier to get accurate reports of the center’s operations.

For the point-system pieces they continued using, they hired a VAR of their all-in-one supplier who understood how to integrate with their legacy solutions. It has worked out well for them.

Currently, they are considering their all-in-one vendor's customer satisfaction email and post-contact IVR surveys. If these are adopted, only their workforce management system will be outside the purview of their all-in-one provider.

The manager interviewed rated their current satisfaction with their technology platform as a 5 out of 5. As for the best-in-class issue, they have not felt disappointed. All of the applications are at least version 3, thus, they are mature and reflect best-in-class functionality. There is "no point in having separate point solutions" any longer, according to this manager. "Change always is hard, but it is easier with all-in-one."

Case Study 4: HALF AND HALF

This center is active in the mortgage finance industry. It has 50 full-time agents, 10 part-time agents and 10 home agents.

They had been struggling with separate point solutions for ACD, IVR and Auto dialer. Reporting capabilities were "awful"; there was lack of access to information, and they could not extract and manipulate data, which impeded proper management.

They started looking for new technology 8 years ago, as their PBX and ACD were aging. Management did not want to rip and replace, preferring instead to migrate gradually. Aided by a physical move that made changing technology more logical, they were able to put half the company on the new all-in-one system in September 2002. They then put the rest of the company on in March 2003. During the overlap period, they kept the two systems separate, and no substantial integration was necessary.

The process presented the normal challenges for an IT initiative. As they have added new all-in-one technology over time, the process has become easier.

Costs under the new system are definitely lower, and the manager indicated that he would recommend migration strategy to others. He suggests heavy training before and during implementation. He also urges maximum flow of information from the vendor on case studies and customizations that are available to users.

Case Study 5 : A “NEAR CORE SYSTEM CONVERSION” THAT WORKED

This progressive credit union wanted to leap ahead in terms of technology. They had an ACD that was supplied by a major vendor and other technology that was provided by other companies.

After exploring the options, they decided to migrate to an all-in-one platform, a process that is still in progress.

In March/April 2008 they changed the initial voice systems (ACD) over to their new system, using VOIP.

In June, 2008, they changed to their all-in-one supplier for chat functionality. This was a major issue for them, since they are a “chat intensive shop”, in the words of one manager, with certain agents able to handle up to 10 – 12 chats simultaneously. They were apprehensive, but management gives a lot of credit to the vendor. It took a while to change people, and this had remained the most difficult part of the process, since system times are a bit longer than with the previous system.

In September, 2008 they installed the outbound dialer offered by their all-in-one supplier. Finally, in December, they installed the IVR offered by their all-in-one vendor.

The migration went very smoothly for a near “core system conversion” experience. Staggering the change-over to the new platform mitigated risk and resulted in fewer challenges than anticipated. The magnitude of the project was great for them, and came with a big learning curve. Management is extremely happy with the improvement in reports they now receive.

Today management recommends a migration strategy to others, and gives their all-in-one system 5 out of 5 on the satisfaction scale. They were able to keep certain legacy components, including codes and website shortcuts that were near and dear to existing customers, while growing for the future with new systems. This helps them with their retention imperative even as they are pushing for new customers.

One manager had this final advice for others: “Be sure the bottom is selling up. Our company is quick to change for members – so we needed a vendor who could adapt technology with us – and it’s just easier to do with one vendor.”

Case Study 6 : CENTER BY CENTER R&R MAKES THE MOST SENSE

This very large operation (5,000 agents) was behind on upgrades from their multi-point suppliers. They needed to modernize urgently, and were concerned about meshing upgrades for their separately provided ACD, IVR, reporting and other systems. Their on-premise ACD vendor quoted them \$8 million for the needed upgrade. Then they received a \$2 million quote for an

all-in-one system that provided greater flexibility and functionality, and their decision was made.

Management talked about adopting the new system in steps, which seemed at first like the prudent way to proceed. However, as they studied the technical aspects and ran the financial numbers, it became clear that it was cleaner and cheaper to completely cut with the old system and adopt the new system whole, on a center by center basis. The financial saving of changing quickly and completely is a compelling component of many situations, and reflects the conclusions of our previous white paper.

They did the cut-over during one weekend for two centers. It was somewhat painful, in that it was very different for their users. If they had to do it over again, according to one manager, they would have spent more time on training. However, they learned from their experiences. By the time they did the cut over in other locations, the change was seamless and much easier.

The manager noted that the more behind a center is on upgrades for its point solutions, the more sense a rip and replace all-in-one strategy makes. Upgrade of one box can set off a chain reaction of integration needs and upgrade requirements for the rest of the systems. The costs are high, so it may be best to simply bite the bullet and convert fully to the new all-in-one platform.

Management estimates that costs are 25% lower with all-in-one, and they rate their satisfaction at 5 out of 5. In the opinion of the manager we interviewed, “you are asking for trouble and headaches when you worry about support for a multi-point solution.”

Insights and Analysis from the Interview Case Studies

Major insights from the interview case studies were as follows:

- There are many paths toward adoption of all-in-one platforms
- The proper method for a given center depends on many factors, including the current status of its point solutions. The more behind those solutions are on upgrades, the more expensive and disruptive the upgrade process will be for the various point solutions, and therefore the more logical it is to consider a direct leap to a modern all-in-one platform
- The proper implementation approach is also critical, and should include meticulous planning and generous amounts of training before and during the change-over. Know your tolerance for change, and adopt new technology in “manageable chunks”. Keep the human factor in mind...always!
- Budget is always important, and comprehensive financial calculations to determine whether rip-and-replace should be created and analyzed
- Managers should look for vendors who are willing to work closely in partnership with them, not just on the installation but also on the customization of their all-in-one solution. This should also apply to reporting, which is key to good management.
- In practice, managers really like the “one throat to choke” aspect of having an all-in-one solution vendor. Focusing responsibility on one vendor means no finger-pointing and quicker results.
- Given the advantages of all-in-one platforms in the contact center environment, they are now being expanded to the rest of the enterprise. We expect all-in-one platforms to lead in CEBP (communications-enabled business processes) and CBPA (communications-based process automation) in the future, since the concepts of functional interconnectedness and integrated work process flows (which are key for CEBP and CBPA) come fairly naturally to all-in-one providers, which have made a business of integrating different functionalities seamlessly.

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE RESEARCH

Managers surveyed for this paper indicate that the all-in-one platform continues to attract adherents, both among those who have this technology, and those who do not, but wish they did.

Therefore, the pathways to adoption are of great interest to contact center managers. Our research indicated that:

- Managers do not have to face an all-or-nothing, rip-and-replace decision if they decide to adopt an all-in-one system
- There is a sizeable experience base of people who have migrated to all-in-one platforms over time (38% of respondents who have all-in-one platforms).
- Migration to an all-in-one system is generally no more difficult, and is frequently less difficult, than other IT initiatives.
- It should be noted that other managers have evaluated the pros and cons of migration versus quick conversion, and have opted for the latter on rational operational and economic grounds.
- Approximately four out of five managers with multi-point solutions feel that a gradual migration strategy would make adoption of an all-in-one solution more attractive to them, their IT departments, and their senior managers. This indicates that there is a need for better understanding and communication on the part of all-in-one vendors, that their solution can be adopted on a gradual migration basis.
- The appropriate pathway to adoption is an individual decision, that should be approached thoughtfully and should take the following elements into account:
 - The age of current multi-point technology (the further behind you are on version updates, the more quick conversion can make economic and operational sense);

- The degree to which your legacy technology is embedded into the rest of your technology, your processes, and your customer-facing technology (the higher the quotient here, the more it may make sense to migrate gradually);
- Management’s knowledge and bandwidth capacity to handle technology migration without distractions;
- Budget considerations; be sure to carry out a thorough financial analysis of the rip-and-replace option, and set it side-by-side with a similar analysis of the migration options available.
- The number of locations that you have (staged change can be easier when there are several sites to be converted)
- Evaluation of the human factor; keep people’s level of tolerance in mind, and avoid massive simultaneous change if that could threaten your operation
- What is happening (or will happen) with the enterprise’s overall technology platform? If there is a move toward an all-in-one enterprise platform for communication and perhaps a move toward CEBP or CBPA (communications-enabled business processes or communications-based processes automation), then moving to an all-in-one provider in phased coordination with your colleagues in other parts of the enterprise could provide a powerful stimulant to enterprise value.

In sum, the best way to plan adoption is to take stock of one’s business mission, technology, operations, people and customers, then calculate the dollars and estimate the steps that are optimal for you. In this way you can move to the platform right for you, and be happy about how you arrived there.

Adoption Matrix Reflecting Research Findings: Description and Use

Salient factors contained in this study have been put into the following Adoption Matrix for reference purposes. At the outset of our research, it seemed logical that we might find an identifiable “roadmap” for those who had chosen to migrate to an all-in-one platform gradually over time. We were struck first by the larger than expected number of managers who had chosen a migration approach to adoption, as opposed to rip-and-replace (see figure 8 above). Secondly, we discovered that the paths taken for migration were several, as were the factors favoring each path.

So, rather than a unitary best practices “step function” toward adoption, we found more of a matrix function, in which the preferred mode of adoption depended on differing factors. These observations have been included in the matrix below.

For example, if a center is several upgrades behind on its point solutions, it is more attractive to proceed with a rip-and-replace, since partial adoption of all-in-one, while upgrading the other point solutions, is expensive and presents challenges in integration and adaptation on the part of personnel. As indicated by the manager in Case Study 6 above, it made no functional or economic sense to do anything but a rip-and-replace adoption in the case of their center, which was several versions behind on upgrades.

Another factor is management's ability to deal easily with technological complexity. While rip-and-replace presents inevitable "cut-over" challenges, once it is done, management has the advantage of simplicity as compared with a hybrid system. Management that lacks either the skills or the desire to deal with integration may conclude that it is better to rip-and-replace, while management that is at ease with the technological implications of gradual migration may favor that approach, especially if it has legacy point systems it does not want to replace immediately. A similar analysis should be performed by management regarding its ability and desire to deal with multiple vendors, and sensitivity to costs of system administration.

Numerous centers still have highly manual systems for routing, workforce management, reporting and other functions. Converting from these systems requires substantial changes in people and procedures, and brings major cost advantages as well. Management analysis will tend to favor full and immediate replacement of these systems with an all-in-one system.

Finally, operations that have several centers may find it appropriate to pursue a sort of combination strategy, performing rip-and-replace for one center at a time, thus migrating to a full all-in-one platform on a sequential basis.

We are certain that there are other elements that can pertain to other specific instances; we offer these Research Conclusions and this Adoption Matrix as starting points for managers to perform their own self-examinations regarding the best path for them.

Adoption Matrix

Current Contact Center Situation	Migration Strategy	Rip & Replace
	(comments)	(comments)
Multi-point solutions are several upgrade versions behind	Less attractive	More attractive
Level of ability of people to deal with technological complexity	More able	Less able
Level of ability to deal with simultaneous change	Less able	More able
Concerns of IT department and senior managers regarding change	More concerned	Less concerned
Sensitivity to hassle factor in dealing with multiple vendors	Less sensitive	More sensitive
Sensitivity to costs of administration	Less sensitive	More sensitive
Existence of manual legacy systems	Delays benefit	Quick benefits
Numerous locations that can be switched sequentially	More appropriate to mitigate risk	Less appropriate

Figure 15 – Adoption Matrix

APPENDIX A - BIOGRAPHIES

Principal Investigator



Dr. Jon Anton (also known as “Dr. Jon”) is an Adjunct Professor at Purdue University and the Director of Benchmark Research at the Center for Customer-Driven Quality™ at Purdue. He specializes in enhancing customer service strategy through inbound contact centers, and e-business centers, using the latest in telecommunications (voice) and computer technology. He also focuses on using the Internet for external customer access, as well as Intranets and middleware.

Since 1995, Dr. Jon has been the principal investigator of the Purdue University Contact Center Benchmark Research. This data is now collected at the BenchmarkPortal.com Web site, where it is placed into a data warehouse that currently contains over ten million data points on contact center performance.

Dr. Jon has assisted over 400 companies in improving their customer service strategy/delivery by the design and implementation of inbound and outbound contact centers, as well as in the decision-making process of using teleservices providers for maximizing service levels while minimizing costs per contact. In August of 1996, *Contact Center Magazine* honored Dr. Jon by selecting him as an Original Pioneer of the emerging contact center industry. In October of 2000, Dr. Jon was named to the Contact Center Hall of Fame. In January of 2001, Dr. Jon was selected for the industry’s “Leaders and Legends” Award by Help Desk 2000. Dr. Jon is also a member of the National Committee for Quality Assurance.

Dr. Jon has guided corporate executives in strategically re-positioning their contact centers as robust customer access centers through a combination of benchmarking, re-engineering, consolidation, outsourcing, and Web-enablement. The resulting single point of contact for the customer allows business to be conducted anywhere, anytime, and in any form. By better understanding the customer lifetime value, Dr. Jon has developed techniques for calculating the ROI for customer service initiatives.

Dr. Jon has published 117 papers on customer service and contact center methods in industry journals. In 1997, one of his papers on self-service was awarded the best article of the year by *Customer Relationship Management Magazine*.

Dr. Jon has published twenty-seven professional books:

1. *Coaching Contact Center Agents*
2. *Interpreting the Voice of the Customer*
3. *Defining Customer Care*
4. *Contact Center Management by the Numbers*
5. *Listening to the Voice of the Customer*
6. *Minimizing Agent Turnover*
7. *Speech Enabled IVR Customer Service*
8. *From Cost to Profit Center: How Technology Enables the Difference*
9. *Managing Web-Based Customer Experiences: Self-service Integrated with Assisted Service*
10. *Customer Service and the Human Experience: We, the People, Make a Difference*
11. *Customer Service at a Crossroads: What You Do Next to Improve Performance Will Determine Your Company's Destiny*
12. *Offshore Outsourcing Opportunities*
13. *Optimizing Outbound Contacting: The Strategic Use of Predictive Dialers*
14. *Customer Relationship Management Technology: Building the Infrastructure for Customer Collaboration*
15. *Customer Obsession: Your Roadmap to Profitable CRM*
16. *Integrating People with Process and Technology*
17. *Selecting a Teleservices Partner*
18. *How to Conduct a Contact Center Performance Audit: A to Z*
19. *20:20 CRM A Visionary Insight into Unique Customer Contact*
20. *e-Business Customer Service*
21. *Customer Relationship Management, The Bottom Line to Optimizing Your ROI*
22. *Contact Center Performance Enhancement Using Simulation and Modeling*
23. *Contact Center Benchmarking: How Good is "Good Enough"*
24. *Contact Center Management by the Numbers*
25. *CRM: Making Hard Decisions with Soft Numbers*
26. *Inbound Customer Contact Center Design*

27. Computer-Assisted Learning

Dr. Jon's formal education was in technology, including a Doctorate of Science and a Master of Science from Harvard University, a Master of Science from the University of Connecticut, and a Bachelor of Science from the University of Notre Dame. He also completed a three-summer intensive Executive Education program in Business at the Graduate School of Business at Stanford University.

Dr. Jon can be reached at Purdue University at 765-494-8357 or at BenchmarkPortal at <DrJonAnton@BenchmarkPortal.com.

Senior Research Executive



Bruce Belfiore is Senior Research Executive at the Center for Customer-Driven Quality at Purdue University, and is Director of Best Practice Research at BenchmarkPortal, Inc., which provides best practices information to the customer contact industry worldwide.

A dual national, Bruce has divided his career between North America and Europe, and has fulfilled work assignments in Asia and Africa as well. He has worked in the finance sector with international commercial and investment banks. Bruce worked with the Bain & Co. management consulting group in Italy and formed a specialty unit advising clients in the field of corporate finance. While in Europe, Bruce was also a speaker and writer on business topics in English and Italian.

Bruce first became involved in the contact center sector over a decade ago and joined BenchmarkPortal, Inc. in 2000. Bruce is the author of the books *Benchmarking for Profits!*, a manual for best practices contact center benchmarking, as well as its sequel, *Benchmarking at its Best for Contact Centers*. He is currently working on another book, *Shareholder Value and Customer Contact* with Dr. Jon Anton of Purdue University.

He is involved with the certification of Contact Centers of Excellence under the Center of Customer-Driven Quality at Purdue University, administered by BenchmarkPortal. He is also Dean of the College of Contact Center Excellence, which provides an advanced curriculum to contact center managers.

Bruce is co-inventor of a patent for a symbolic language system, Simbly™, with important contact center applications. Simbly, which uses nested symbols to encapsulate and standardize frequently used text “chunks” has been shown in research to lower data entry time by 17 to 20%, and offers advantages to operations that must deal with more than one language.

Bruce holds an A.B. degree from Harvard College, a J.D degree from Harvard Law School, and an MBA degree from Harvard Business School, where he also attended the HBS Entrepreneur’s Tool Kit program in 2000. He has published numerous articles and has been a featured speaker in both English and Italian on a variety of business topics.

Bruce can be reached at BruceBelfiore@BenchmarkPortal.com.

Content Editor



John Chatterley is Director of Research, Content & Analysis, and Chief Editor at BenchmarkPortal. John has published numerous customized benchmarking reports, research reports, One-Minute™ Survey reports, and White Papers. Mr. Chatterley is editor/writer/analyst of BenchmarkPortal's annual series of 42 detailed industry reports covering the spectrum of contact center industry sectors, and is Chief editor/analyst of BenchmarkPortal's series of One-Minute™ Surveys. He authored a comprehensive White Paper study entitled "Improving Contact Center Performance through Optimized Site Selection." Mr. Chatterley has been and continues to be retained for his contact center expertise with numerous contact centers and consulting firms, both domestically and internationally. He is a faculty member with the College of Call Center Excellence.

Mr. Chatterley has co-authored numerous books with Dr. Jon Anton, including:

- "Coaching Contact Center Agents,"
- "Defining Customer Care,"
- "Automated Self-Service Using Speech Recognition,"
- "Listening to the Voice of the Customer,
- "Contact Center Management by the Numbers" (also co-authored with Kamal Webb),
- "Offshore Outsourcing Opportunities, "
- "Selecting a Teleservices Partner,"

and is currently working on several others.

John's professional career spans more than 20 years of experience in contact center management and consulting. Mr. Chatterley designed, implemented, staffed and managed three 500+ seat contact center sites in Arizona, Nevada, and California, and has extensive contact center operational management experience. He possesses first-hand experience at all levels of a contact center including front-line technical support agent, supervisor, team lead, analyst, designer, contact center manager, and operations director. John is a Purdue Certified Contact Center Auditor and a BenchmarkPortal Certified Benchmarking Instructor and Analyst. John's professional education was in Electrical Engineering & Computer Science at Southern Utah University, and subsequently at the University of Utah.

APPENDIX B – SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Invitation:

“Here is a quick survey on technology platforms - - a real ‘hot button’ issue for call centers today. **All-In-One solutions** are systems that include the major call center functionalities (ACD, IVR / self service, WFM, etc.), supplied by one vendor. **Multi-Point systems** *integrate* these functionalities from several point solutions, from one or more vendors. There is a lively debate over the advantages of each, and we at BenchmarkPortal are bringing the latest research to our community. Previous research findings indicated:

- a. Given a choice, two thirds of call center managers would prefer to get all needed functionality from a single vendor, and feel that all-in-one platforms have become more attractive over time;
- b. The total annualized cost per agent for all-in-one solutions is substantially lower as compared with Multi-Point systems.

This One-Minute Survey explores some further questions”

Survey Questions:

1. What kind of technology platform do you have currently?
 - a. All-in-One
 - b. Multi-Point (skip to n.7)
 - c. We are migrating from Multi-Point to All-in-One (skip to n. 6)
 - d. We are migrating from All-in-One to Multi-Point (skip to n. 13)
 - e. Not sure what my platform is (skip to n. 8)

2. (If All-in-One): How satisfied are you currently with your All-in-One system?
 - a. Very satisfied
 - b. Satisfied
 - c. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 - d. Dissatisfied
 - e. Very dissatisfied
3. Please compare the technical systems administration costs and maintenance costs of your All-in-One solution to your former Multi-Point solutions platform. The overall costs of administering your All-in-One solution are:
 - a. Definitely less than Multi-Point
 - b. About the same as Multi-Point
 - c. Definitely more than Multi-Point
 - d. Don't know. Our All-in-One system was already installed when I arrived.
4. Did you adopt your All-in-One system at one point in time, or did you migrate to it over time?
 - a. Adopted at one point in time
 - b. Migrated over time. (skip to n. 6)
5. If you adopted All-in-One technology all at once, was that because you felt you had to do so?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No. We could have migrated over time, but preferred to implement all at once
 - c. We were a "greenfield" situation, without pre-existing technology
 - i. (all answers skip to n. 14)

6. (If migrated over time). Please describe your experience with migrating to/from an All-in-One system compared with other IT initiatives:
 - a. It was relatively painless
 - b. It presented fewer challenges than normal
 - c. It had the normal challenges
 - d. It was more difficult than most IT initiatives
 - i. (all answers skip to 14)
7. (If Multi-Point): How satisfied are you with your system?
 - a. Very satisfied
 - b. Satisfied
 - c. Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 - d. Dissatisfied
 - e. Very dissatisfied
8. Given a choice, would you prefer:
 - a. All needed call center technology from a single vendor providing an All-in-One solution, if it provided equivalent functionality
 - b. Call center technology from multiple vendors
9. Do you see installation of an All-in-One solution as “rip-and-replace”, i.e. you would need to scrap your current system entirely to install an All-in-One solution?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
10. If you could migrate to a full-function All-in-One system over time, (i.e. keeping point solutions until they aged out, then adopting components of an All-in-One system) would that be attractive for you?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

11. Would a planned migration strategy make an All-in-One system more acceptable to your IT colleagues?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
12. Would a planned migration strategy make an All-in-One system more acceptable to your senior management?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
13. What were your reasons for abandoning your All-in-One system for a Multi-Point solution platform? (open ended)
14. What other comments do you have regarding All-in-One versus Multi-Point solutions? (open ended)
15. What other questions would you like to have researched on this or other technology topics? (open ended)

Thank you for your participation!!