



www.pipelinepub.com

Volume 20, Issue 11

Leveraging Microsoft Teams Growth with AI and Automation

By: [Tony Martino](#)

CSPs are looking to position themselves as essential partners, helping their customers of all sizes to transform the way they collaborate and communicate. To innovate beyond traditional voice solutions, providers can now deliver comprehensive tools that will enhance the Microsoft Teams experience.

Many enterprises currently lack confidence in the ability of Microsoft Teams to replace their existing telephony system. Although Teams is a powerful platform, its feature set and real-time data capabilities are still evolving.



Many CSPs are delivering a range of direct routing services that enable businesses to connect their existing telephony infrastructure with Teams Phone. This provides a cost-effective and flexible solution that ensures a smooth transition to Teams Phone while preserving the investment in existing telephony infrastructure.

Some CSPs opt to host and manage Session Border Controllers, which are essential for connecting traditional telephony systems (PSTN) with Teams. This ensures secure and reliable voice traffic between the enterprise's phone system and Teams. Other CSPs are providing SIP trunking services to facilitate the connection of on-premises PBX systems with Teams Phone, enabling businesses to leverage their existing telephony infrastructure while benefiting from Teams' unified communication features.

Maximizing Analytics Across Multiple Platforms

While the infrastructure is an important part of the solution, CSPs are also investing in managed services for Teams which incorporate deployment, integration, and support. A winning incentive is when Teams and Teams Phone services are bundled with high-speed internet and other value-added services that enable businesses to streamline their communication tools.

An important value-added service that will enhance every Teams installation is the latest software to monitor, analyze, and gain actionable insights into customer interactions and engagement. What makes the latest generation of analytics so powerful is that its capability is comparable across both Teams and traditional telecoms platforms. Consistent user experiences and statistical metrics make it easy to deploy, and since it requires little training, users can unlock further advantages from the

existing technology.

From the outset, analytics can show if the transition of calls from a traditional phone system to Microsoft Teams Phone has been effective, ensuring any changes in technology does not cause a decline in customer experience.

Enhancing Customer Engagement

When an enterprise is looking to enhance their customer services, call analytics is often the first to be deployed. This delivers clear insights into the responsiveness of customer-facing teams, shedding light on factors such as promptness in answering calls, call flows, live call queues, unanswered calls, and most importantly, any missed calls that were not returned. Armed with this information, the organization can allocate appropriate resources to ensure every customer has a good experience.

Once an organization has adopted call analytics for quantitative analysis, adding recording into their operations is often the next step, delivering in-depth qualitative analysis of customer conversations. While some may adopt call recording for practical reasons such as compliance, risk management, training, and dispute resolution, it can also deliver unparalleled insight into customer experience.

For example, managers may use call analytics to identify call handlers that have paused and resumed the most call recordings, which would indicate that credit card payments have been taken. They can review the recordings of these successful interactions to assess customer sentiment, identify underlying factors, and devise strategies to replicate favorable outcomes. Understanding sentiment in a call

which started negative and ended positive (or the other way around), helps to identify the best performing agents, and analyzing calls where similar topics were mentioned takes internal training to the next level. When AI-powered conversation analysis is added to the mix, organizations can uncover customer sentiment around specific key words, spot topics, and analyze important conversations in an automated way.

It is widely appreciated that contented staff members contribute to a positive customer experience. Workplace analytics compliments call analytics and recording as a further value-added service, leveraging Teams data to analyze and determine staff productivity and collaboration. It helps to identify whether staff have the right support network and access to the right colleagues for effective collaboration. For the many organizations working in a hybrid environment, this level of analytics helps maintain consistency and enables managers to understand if staff well-being deteriorates when working from home.

Adding AI to the Portfolio

The addition of AI technology enables managers to identify instances of negative sentiment, prompting managers to access call analytics for a deep dive analysis into call queues, trends, and whether areas of the business are understaffed and leaving customers without attention. It can also measure if the most positive sentiment originates from a single team, or if a team tasked to convey a specific message consistently achieves the required mention in 99 percent of their calls.

AI-powered applications are ideal for CSPs looking to stand out in this market. AI can automate analysis of conversations at scale, providing a holistic view of customer experience and eliminating the need for manual evaluation. AI adds a new dimension where qualitative insights become quantitative, enabling a business to be more effective at seeing clearly what their customer service looks like at scale and, critically, where to make improvements.

Many CSPs integrate third-party analytics apps into a Teams implementation to differentiate and add value to their overall proposition with a heightened level of insight and understanding into both workplace dynamics and customer experiences. CSPs can provide organizations with the means to fully leverage the underlying data within Teams, enhancing both strategic decision-making and operational efficiencies to achieve new levels of productivity. By enabling the comprehensive analysis of all calls, including recording and evaluation, as well as facilitating internal collaboration across various devices and platforms, organizations can attain unprecedented insights into both customer experiences and productivity levels.

It is important to position analytics, automation, and AI as enablers rather than solutions on their own. The best approach is when the technology is distilled into business use cases so that it is clear to the average business how it can help them to improve their specific processes and achieve their end goals. When delivered within the Microsoft ecosystem, these types of tools are now highly accessible and available to businesses of all sizes, democratizing access to sophisticated insights previously reserved for larger enterprises.

It is also important to ensure these tools are as easy as possible to sell, provision, support and bill via comprehensive APIs, with the ability to buy direct or via Microsoft's marketplaces.

The latest call analytics and recording software can integrate with Microsoft Teams as well as calling platforms such as Cisco BroadWorks and Webex Calling. By selecting software with consistency in user interface across platforms, CSPs can continue to offer market-leading analytics and recording across their whole portfolio with no need to skill up or reinvest.