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Solving the CX Data Disconnect for Business Process Outsourcers

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More businesses are choosing to use a Business Process Outsourcer (BPO), for their front-end operations, with 55 percent currently outsourcing part of their customer care operations and 47 percent expecting to increase their outsourcing by the end of next year, states a McKinsey survey. Using a BPO enables these companies to focus on their core competencies while leveraging the expertise and technologies of a third-party provider. However, the chief driver in outsourcing Customer Experience (CX) is no longer cost or efficiency, with 44 percent of service leaders now looking to BPO partnerships to enhance CX outcomes, according to Gartner.

There's been a marked shift towards a value-added strategic partnership which is seeing clients request Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) such as customer satisfaction scores (CSAT), efficiency gains or demonstrable increases in revenue. It's a trend observed by the UK Contact Centre Outsourcing Report 2025, which notes fees are now being directly tied to outcome-based results rather than hours or ticket volumes, so that instead of looking to reduce cost to serve by 10% and a response window of 24 hours, clients are looking for improved Net Promoter Scores (NPS) and new revenue opportunities during calls.

Yet delivering this value-led proposition using traditional call centre operations is no mean feat. CX BPOs use a plethora of tools including their own routing platforms, Workforce Management (WFM)/Workforce Engagement (WEM) systems, and Quality Assurance (QA) systems to evaluate and analyze performance. It's a convoluted tech stack that often results in disconnected, inconsistent reporting and a lack of real-time visibility.

Siloed Data

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For BPOs to offer customers an omichannel customer experience, handling customer interactions over voice, email, chat, social media and web self-service portals, there will typically be a series of proprietary platforms from vendors like Genesys, Cisco, Avaya, Amazon Connect, NICE/inContact to handle specific channels. Each platform will have its own reporting tools and these do not talk to each other. So, for a BPO with one vendor's contact center in Europe and another in North America, likely using different vendor technology, getting a consolidated global view is extremely difficult.

The only way of amalgamating the data from each platform is to manually export and combine or via a complex data warehouse project. Then there are the integration challenges to consider, such as aligning timestamp formats, merging agent IDs that differ across systems, and reconciling interaction IDs, all of which creates a labor-intensive and error-prone process. As a consequence, reports then tend to be delayed or contain incomplete information, creating a distortion of the accurate picture.

The lack of seamless multi-platform integrations means BPOs can't easily compare performance or share best practices across units. Moreover, maintaining separate reporting silos is costly and limits agility – any change (like a new KPI) has to be implemented in multiple systems – and it's a situation that's getting more difficult to resolve as more technologies such as AI chatbots and analysis are added to the mix.

Needless to say, platform vendors have very little appetite to unify data from other systems. Their raison d'etre is to focus on their own ecosystems and to improve their functionality through the addition of AI, machine learning, and analytics to assess how effectively these interactions are handled and to improve customer outcomes. But this doesn't help the BPO who is struggling with a fragmented technology stack and needs to be able to collate and turn the data available to them into meaningful insights.

The Need for Better Visibility

The drive to deliver value also means the BPO needs to be able to contextualise those insights. Typically, tools split real-time and historic analysis into two separate streams, which means the business can't correlate what's happened now against what happened earlier. Siloed reporting can also result in inconsistencies where the numbers between real-time versus final reports do not correlate, so there is no single version of truth.

Ideally, the BPO needs real-time dashboards that provide a holistic view, covering not just raw queue stats but potentially customer journey insights and sentiment, so the contact centre can rebalance workloads or assist a struggling agent. They also need historical analysis in order to pull up trend reports or slice-and-dice the data, but that needs to be made available on demand, without waiting for overnight processing. For the BPO, this visibility is crucial to prevent small issues from becoming problems and to avoid the prospect of missed SLAs.

There's also the problem of differing metrics. Typically, a CX BPO will provide agent level KPIs such as average handling time (AHT) of a call, first contact resolution (FCR) to show how many calls were resolved on the first pass, and after call work (ACW) to determine the amount of effort expended post-call. They'll also look to track CSAT and will quality-

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assess the accuracy and compliance of agent interactions. On top of these, there are broader metrics that look at escalation rates, repeat contact rates, and agent utilisation rates, and these will all be measured against predetermined thresholds set out in the SLA.

A Game Changer

However, these metrics are all predicated towards the low complexity and high call volume values we saw five years ago. They're time and cost rather than outcome based. To turn that around and deliver value, the BPO will need to use all the data at its disposal to provide instant insights into the entire customer journey. For that, it needs to adopt a new metric: the 'Customer Effort Score' (CES).

CES is generated across all customer interactions and journeys and is based upon the amount of friction the customer meets along the way. Perhaps the customer starts with an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) call, is directed to a self-service bot, then speaks to a live agent, only to be transferred to a colleague, where they are put on hold and forced to repeat themselves before their query is resolved. Understandably, the vexation the customer feels at each of these points is likely to increase. Ineffective self-service, transfers or being put on hold are all events that should be captured, with each weighted by an algorithm according to the intensity of the effort and when it happened in the journey. This then results in a score, with root cause and context for every contact.

CES could be a game changer for the BPO as this real-time metric can enable customer service to become more sensitive and responsive to customers. It provides context, enabling contact centre agents to respond on a more personal level and even gauge when a customer might be about to churn so that corrective action can be taken. It could also be a key metric for interpreting data from across numerous systems; one of the problems BPOs have to deal with is reconciling metrics across different vendors, making optimisation and benchmarking difficult. But in order to get to the point where CES can be assessed, the BPO must solve the problem of oversight by capturing all the data from its systems.

Lost and Hidden Data

This isn't just a straightforward matter of integration, however, as many CX platforms disregard key data. Interactions and agent activities often go unreported or under-analysed because they're considered "noise" or simply aren't captured, with examples including short-abandoned calls (customers who hang up quickly), repeat dials to the IVR that never reach an agent, blind transfers that lead nowhere, prolonged hold times that end in hang-ups, or ACW or idle states.

These unproductive contacts and activities can consume significant resources as well as degrading customer experience, yet they remain hidden in fragmented logs or are excluded from standard reports. In fact, studies and real-world deployments have found that up to 40 percent of contact centre time is unproductive time that traditional analytics often miss . Without visibility into these missed contacts and wasted efforts, contact centre leaders can't truly identify where customers are encountering friction and take action to manage end-to-end experiences.

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Another major problem with the tech stack for BPOs is that these disparate systems can reduce agility. The interconnected nature of the ecosystem means that every time the BPO wishes to upgrade or replace a platform it faces a slow and painful migration process. Transitions are delayed or disrupted by the need to replace or rewire every supporting tool, from WFM to analytics, at the same time.

Taking a Tech-Agnostic Approach

It's an issue that has seen some BPOs turn turtle and decide to become more technologically involved, with the UK Contact Centre Outsourcing Report 2025 pointing out that many BPOs are now blurring the lines between traditional outsourcers and tech providers. However, such a strategy is not without its risks. Those that move towards becoming full-suite providers will close off their ecosystems, making it harder to accommodate mixed environments or preserve best-of-breed components.

Clearly there's a need for a step change in how CX BPOs function because the current fractured delivery model provides neither the customer nor the BPO with sufficient visibility, preventing synergy. The proprietary tech stack of siloed systems, hidden contacts and rigid metrics, all point to the need for a holistic solution that can pull data, even when it is hidden, combine it and make it available in real-time.

One possible solution is to create a vendor agnostic layer which can leverage all of that metadata to provide multi-platform, multi-organisation observability. Such an approach unifies and consolidates disparate customer contact data into one comprehensive model to deliver a single version of truth, allowing the BPO to deliver CX services that are not just reactive, but proactive and data driven. This also allows the BPO to combine that data with information from its WFM or WEM solution to improve agent handling.

Being able to use a single source of truth is also vital to enable AI respond accurately and to prevent it going off message. Currently, AI is configured to only reference validated data to gain a deeper understanding of the domain and customer interaction business use cases it is automating and supporting but there remains the risk of it being influenced by the customer's own phraseology and altering overtime leading it to respond inappropriately. Having a unified platform enables that AI to be trained, monitored and corrected by bringing a human back into the loop.

By breaking free from the constraints of siloed systems and unifying contact centre management, the provider can deliver better experiences, streamline operations, and achieve outcomes that were once thought unattainable. It's only through this approach that the BPO can truly realise its potential as a strategic partner able to offer valuable insights by supercharging contact centre performance.

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