

State of Contact Centres 2026



85%

85% say their organisation is prepared to implement AI



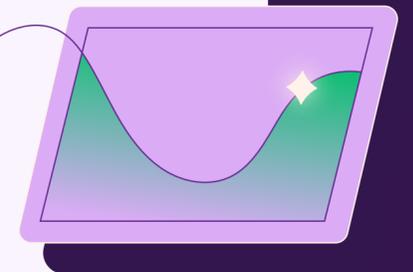
50%

50% say multiple technology vendors increase maintenance costs



91%

91% believe agent-assist tools will be valuable in supporting agents



The State of Contact Centres 2026 report takes a closer look at how CX leaders are navigating the changing CX space. Based on insights from 1,505 CX leaders and contact centre professionals across Europe, it reveals the trends, challenges, and opportunities shaping the next chapter of customer service.

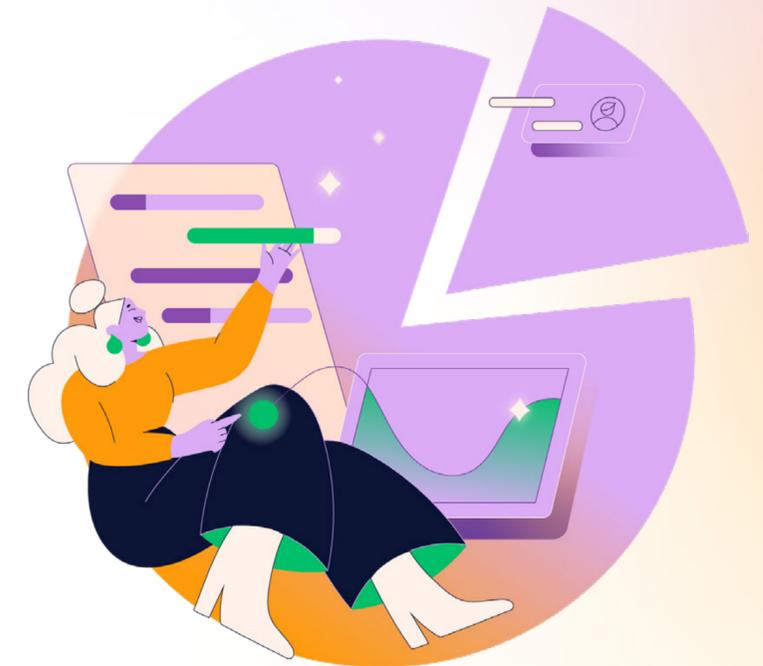
The next chapter for contact centres

Customer expectations continue to rise, and technology is playing an even bigger role in how contact centres deliver service. Artificial intelligence is moving from pilot projects to everyday use, supporting agents, automating workflows, and influencing how customers interact with businesses. At the same time, leaders are asking important questions: how to balance automation with empathy, how to reduce the complexity of multiple systems, and how to make sure agents are equipped for a future where humans and AI work side by side.

The State of Contact Centres 2026 report looks at how CX leaders across Europe are responding to these challenges. Drawing on insights from more than 1,500 contact centre leaders and professionals, it highlights the trends, obstacles, and opportunities that will define the coming years.

This edition goes deeper into the role of AI in contact centres, examining where it is already delivering value and where leaders see the greatest potential. From copilots and conversational intelligence to agentic AI and smarter self-service, the findings show how organisations are adapting to meet customer needs while keeping the human touch at the centre of service.

Here, you'll find practical insights and forward-looking strategies from your peers – contact centre leaders – offering a clear view of how to prepare your contact centre for what's next.



METHODOLOGY

OnePoll, on behalf of Puzzel, conducted an online survey of 1,505 contact centre professionals across the United Kingdom, Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark. Respondents represent organisations of all sizes and industries.

Executive summary

TREND 1

Consolidation of tech stacks is urgent

Contact centres are juggling too many systems – and paying the price. Leaders use almost four vendors on average, and half say this drives up maintenance costs.

94%

agreeing consolidation is essential, simplifying the stack has become a top priority.

TREND 2

AI adoption is accelerating, but maturity still varies

AI is now a strategic focus, but readiness levels differ. 85% of CX leaders say their organisation is prepared to implement AI, yet only a third feel fully prepared. 35% have a clear AI strategy, while 32% are still testing.

85%

of CX leaders say their organisation is prepared to implement AI

TREND 3

AI is moving from testing to tangible results

AI is starting to show results. 83% say their AI self-service options as effective without agent involvement, and many report measurable gains: 39% see faster resolution times and 30% report improved satisfaction, productivity, or cost per contact.

83%

say their AI self-service options as effective without agent involvement



TREND 4

Conversation data is becoming core infrastructure

78% of contact centres now use AI to analyse customer conversations. As adoption of voice AI and conversational intelligence grows, teams are shifting from reactive reporting to insight that drives coaching, decisions, and better customer experiences.

78%

of contact centres now use AI to analyse customer conversations

TREND 5

Agents under strain, but AI seen as part of the solution

High volumes and demanding interactions continue to stretch teams. Leaders increasingly see AI as a way to help: 89% believe it will shorten training and support ongoing development, with agent-assist tools easing pressure and boosting confidence.

89%

believe it will shorten training and support ongoing development,

TREND 6

Copilots are giving agents the backup they've been waiting for

91% of CX leaders say AI copilots and agent-assist tools will be essential in the next two years, giving agents real-time guidance, easier access to knowledge, and admin relief – helping them work faster and deliver more consistent, human service.

91%

of CX leaders say AI copilots and agent-assist tools will be essential in the next two years



Rising expectations remain the defining challenge

Despite steady advances in AI, automation, and new technologies, one challenge continues to overshadow the rest: keeping up with customers. Expectations for faster, more personal, and always-available service are rising across every region, and leaders know it.

In fact, our survey reveals that **meeting customer expectations is seen as the single biggest challenge for 2026**. As demands for instant support and seamless experiences grow, leaders recognise that the ability to keep pace with customers will define success in the years ahead.

At the same time, CX teams are grappling with high workloads, budget pressures, and complex tech stacks. Other challenges, from integrating new technologies and proving ROI, to recruiting and retaining skilled agents, remain high on the agenda. But they all point to one central truth: customers expect more, and delivering on those expectations is becoming harder.

To keep up, CX leaders are rethinking how they work. They're investing in new technology, agent development, and personalisation to close the gap between what customers expect and what teams can deliver. Increasingly, **AI and automation are at the centre of those plans**.

For many, AI is no longer an experiment but a key enabler for speed, efficiency, and better service. Leaders see AI as a way to handle routine work, surface insights faster, and empower agents to focus on more meaningful interactions. Improving customer experience, agent productivity, and data and analytics are the top AI-driven priorities for the year ahead, alongside reducing operational costs and scaling self-service.

The message is clear: contact centres aren't just adopting new tools, but building smarter, more human systems that blend automation with empathy, data with insight, and technology with trust.

Biggest challenges for contact centres in 2026

- Keeping up with rising customer expectations
- Integrating new technologies with legacy systems
- Budget constraints
- Recruiting and retaining skilled agents
- Ensuring compliance and data security
- Proving ROI from AI investments

Top priorities for AI and automation in the next year

- Improving customer experience
- Improving agent productivity and support
- Strengthening data and analytics
- Reducing operational costs
- Scaling self-service and automation
- Delivering more personalised experiences

TREND 1

Consolidation of tech stacks is urgent

Technology has become both a lifeline and a liability for contact centres. For years, the discussion has centred on moving from on-premise to cloud, or from multiple systems to one unified solution. But how does the technology space really look today?

Our survey shows that most contact centres are still grappling with complex tech stacks. 42% use two to three vendors, 31% use four to five, and 19% manage more than five (a number that rises to 39% for organisations with 1000+ employees). Meaning, on average, contact centres rely on 3.9 different platforms, a number that climbs among larger organisations (500+ employees) and decreases among smaller teams and Dutch contact centres. Only 3% have achieved a single, unified platform.

This fragmentation comes at a cost. Half (50%) of CX leaders say multiple vendors lead to higher maintenance and support costs, while 47% struggle with training across multiple tools. Nearly as many point to data inconsistencies (45%) and integration

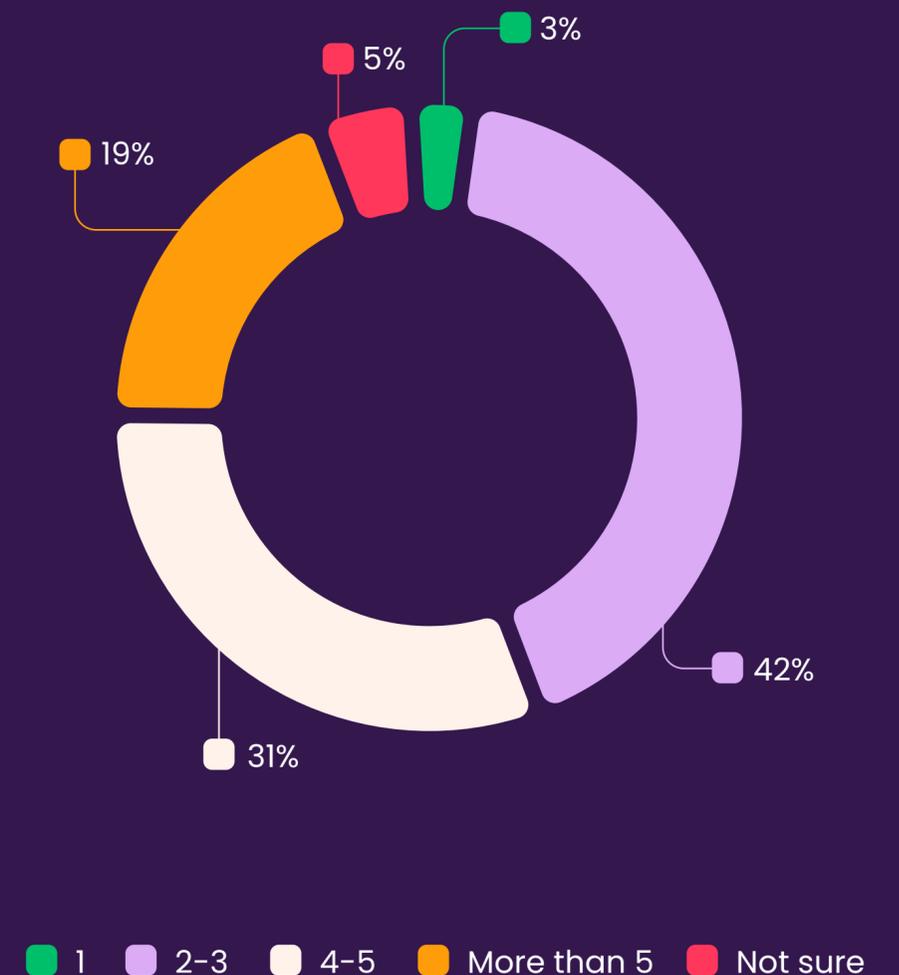
complexity (44%), with a third (33%) reporting that juggling several systems slows operations. Only 4% say they face no major issues managing their tech stack.

It's no surprise, then, that integrating new technologies with legacy systems is stated as the second biggest challenge for 2026 overall. Many leaders find that adding new AI capabilities or communication channels simply adds another layer of complexity when older systems can't keep up. The result is a growing push to modernise, not just to consolidate vendors, but to ensure every component of the tech stack works together seamlessly.

94%

of CX leaders see tech stack consolidation as important for improving performance and efficiency, rising to 98% among organisations with 500–999 employees.

How many different technology platforms or vendors does your contact centre use today?



Beyond the cost and complexity, there's a growing time burden too. Over seven in ten (71%) teams spend at least five hours each month maintaining their tech stack, most commonly between five and ten hours (38%), while a third (33%) spend up to 20 hours, and 13% more than that.

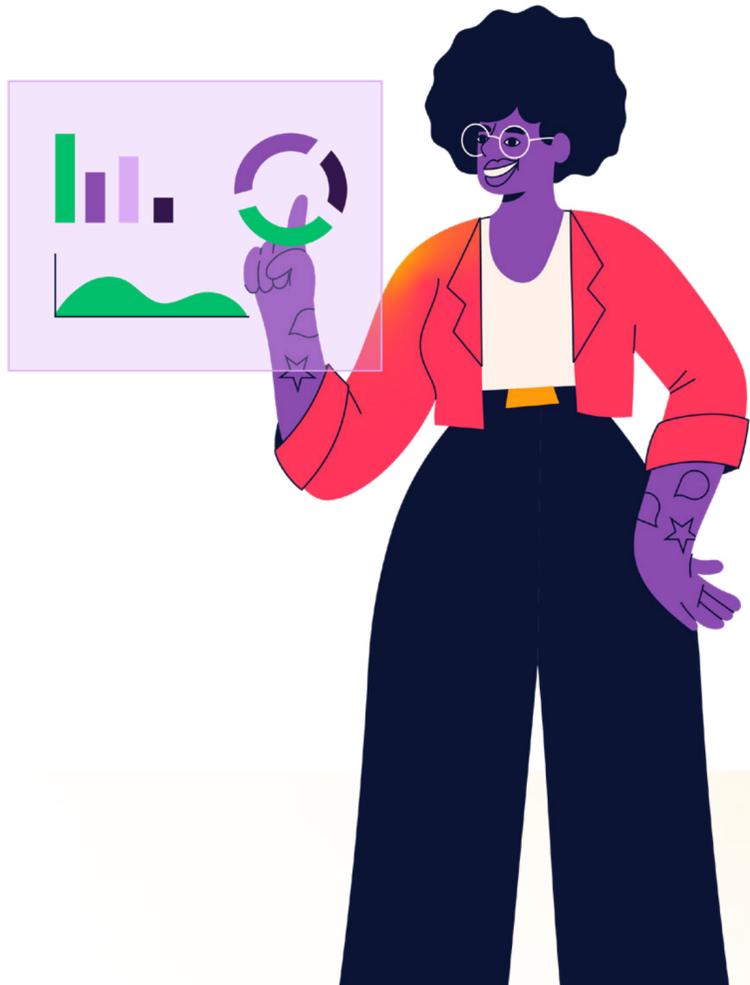
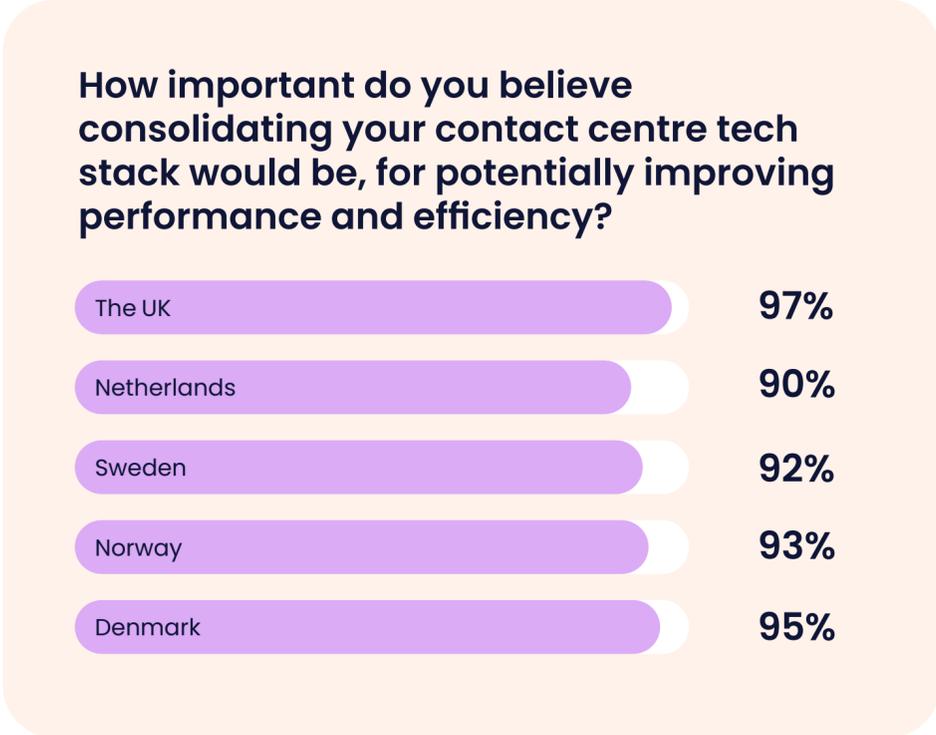
CX leaders agree the change is urgent: 94% see stack consolidation as essential to improving performance, rising to 98% among organisations with 500–999 employees.

Across Europe, the appetite for simplification is strong. In the Netherlands, leaders manage an average of 3.7 vendors, compared to 3.97 in the UK and the Nordics. Sweden reports the highest average at just over four (4.06), and nearly one in five leaders overall manage more than five platforms. The urgency is greatest in the UK, where 97% say consolidation is essential, and more than half (58%) describe it as "very important."

The direction of travel is clear. Leaders want fewer, more integrated platforms that reduce overheads, cut complexity, and give agents the consistent systems they need to work effectively.

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AI adoption is accelerating, but maturity varies

AI is changing the game for customer service teams. But while adoption is growing fast, maturity levels still vary widely. While many contact centres are moving beyond pilots, plenty are still working out how to scale what works.

More than a third (35%) of CX leaders say their organisation has a clear, long-term AI strategy and vision, while another third (32%) is still actively testing, unsure how to scale what they've started. Moreover, 12% admit they're under pressure to adopt quickly.

Readiness is high, with 85% of leaders saying their business is prepared to implement AI – a figure that rises to 90% among organisations with 500–999 employees. But confidence drops when it comes to execution. Just over a third (34%) describe their organisation as fully prepared. The biggest roadblocks? A lack of internal AI expertise, concerns about data privacy and compliance, and limited budgets, suggesting that many teams have the

ambition but not yet the infrastructure or skills to execute effectively.

Regionally, the picture differs. In Denmark, 63% of organisations report having a long-term AI strategy, making it the most mature market we surveyed. Norway follows with 33%, while Sweden stands at 30%, with many still in testing. The UK remains a strong performer, with 39% having a clear strategy and 8% already seeing results, while the Netherlands trails slightly at 29%. Despite these differences, readiness is high across all regions, 88% in the UK, 84% in the Nordics, and 82% in the Netherlands, showing strong intent but uneven execution.

85%

of CX leaders say they're ready to implement AI, but only a third feel fully prepared, proof that ambition is high, yet execution remains the next big hurdle.



“My advice for successful AI adoption would be: don't rush to implement it without a clear purpose. A lot of leaders are implementing AI because they feel they have to—often under pressure from executives or the board, and fear of being left behind. Truly understanding what you're trying to solve, and then designing the right solution around that, is paramount to successful adoption.”

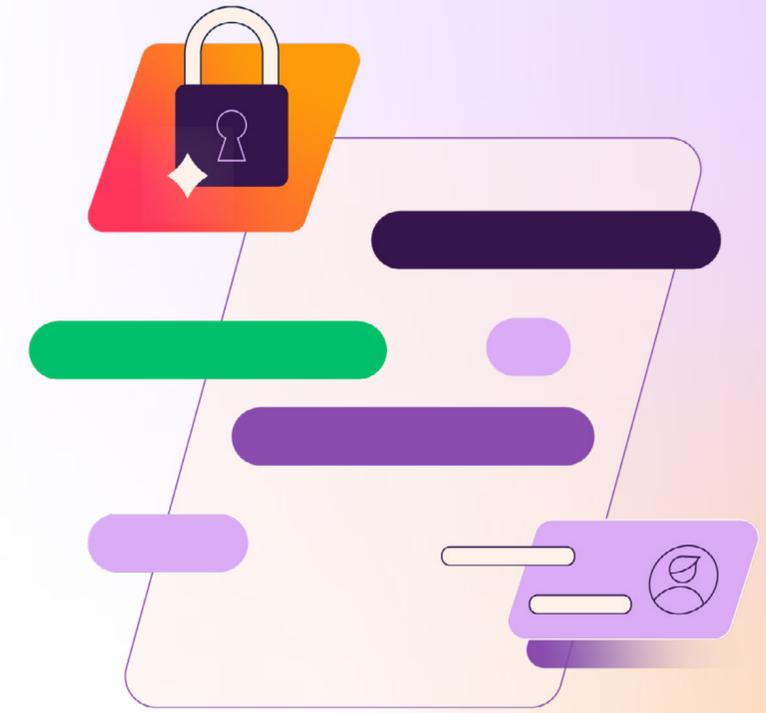


Dan Allen,
Deputy Director – Member Services, at NRLA

Take the quiz: [How AI-ready is your contact centre?](#)

The top barriers to implementing AI

Even with strong intent and clear strategies, many contact centres are struggling to scale their AI initiatives from pilot projects to enterprise-wide success. Leaders cite a mix of technical, operational, and cultural hurdles standing in the way of progress:



30%

Lack of internal AI expertise

27%

Concerns about data privacy and compliance

24%

Budget limitations

22%

Integration delays or complexity

21%

Model accuracy or training issues

AI is moving from testing to tangible results

As AI adoption accelerates, the focus is shifting from experimentation to measurable outcomes. For many contact centres, the question is no longer whether AI can create value, but how much impact it can deliver, and where.

For CX leaders, the priorities are clear: to deliver faster, more personalised, and more efficient service. Nearly half (49%) say their top priority with AI and automation is to enable 24/7 support, while 45% focus on improving customer experience and 39% on speeding up resolution times. Others aim to reduce costs (36%) and ease agent workload (29%), proving that AI is being used to drive both customer and operational outcomes.

And the results are beginning to materialise. **83% of leaders say their AI-powered self-service channels are effective at resolving customer issues without agent involvement**, rising to 90% in organisations with 500–999 employees. This frees teams to focus

on complex, high-value interactions. Almost four in ten (39%) say AI has already helped deliver faster resolution times, while 30% report measurable gains in reduced cost per contact, higher agent productivity, and improved customer satisfaction. A further 29% have seen higher self-service resolution rates, and over a quarter report better reporting accuracy and quality assurance. Only 8% say they've seen no measurable results yet — proof that for many, AI is already making a real difference.

83%

of CX leaders say their AI-powered self-service options are effective at resolving issues without agent involvement

When asked, which key outcomes do you aim to achieve with the implementation of AI and automation, CX leaders say:

Providing 24/7 support	49%
Improving customer experience	45%
Speeding up resolution times	39%
Reducing costs	36%
Reducing agent workload	29%

When asked, have you seen measurable impact from AI tools in any of the following areas, CX leaders say:

Faster resolution times	39%
Reduced cost per contact	30%
Increased agent productivity	30%
Improved customer satisfaction	30%
Higher self-service resolution rates	29%
More accurate reporting or QA	26%
Better compliance or risk management	24%

How contact centres are using AI: From chatbots to conversational intelligence

AI CHATBOTS

Four in ten (40%) of contact centres now use AI-powered chatbots,

up from last year's planned 36%. Many are now combining chatbots with other automation to handle simple queries seamlessly before passing complex cases to agents.

40%

AI COPILOTS

30% of contact centres have deployed AI copilots

or agent-assist tools that provide real-time guidance, surface knowledge, and automate follow-up tasks. These intelligent assistants help agents work faster, ramp up quicker, and spend more time on meaningful customer interactions, turning AI into a true teammate rather than a replacement.

30%

VOICE AI

Voice automation is maturing fast.

More than a third (36%) of contact centres now use AI-powered voicebots to handle inbound calls — up from 22% last year — while 39% use AI for intelligent call routing and 34% to assist agents in real time during live conversations.

36%

AGENTIC AI

Beyond copilots and conversational intelligence, contact centres are beginning to explore agentic AI-systems

that can anticipate needs, prioritise tasks, and act autonomously. 27% of leaders say they plan to invest in or expand in these proactive, human-guided assistants over the coming years.

27%

EMAIL AUTOMATION

Six in ten contact centres use email as a communication channel,

and 31% now use AI to automate email responses — reducing manual admin, improving consistency, and speeding up replies for customers. Many teams are also experimenting with generative AI to suggest tone-appropriate, personalised responses while maintaining human oversight.

31%

CONVERSATIONAL ANALYTICS

Almost eight in ten contact centres use AI or automation to analyse customer interactions.

Conversational analytics tools help teams move beyond basic reporting — turning everyday exchanges into insights that reveal customer sentiment, flag emerging issues, and guide real-time improvements in service quality.

78%



Conversation data is becoming core infrastructure

Customer conversations have become one of the most valuable sources of insight in the contact centre, and leaders are now unlocking their full potential.

Last year, 68% of CX leaders said conversational analytics would be critical for improving service, and this year's findings show that prediction becoming reality. Now, almost **eight in ten (78%)** contact centres use some form of AI or automation to analyse their interactions. Of these, 41% rely on basic automation such as keyword spotting, while 37% have adopted advanced conversational intelligence tools that identify trends, sentiment, and intent in real time. Adoption is even higher in Denmark, where 71% use these tools.

Yet, one in five still don't use AI or automation to analyse customer conversations, revealing untapped potential.

As leaders look ahead, priorities are shifting from capturing data to connecting it. When asked which areas would benefit most from more AI, leaders point to reporting and analytics, real-time guidance for agents, root-cause analysis, and quality assurance — all areas where better visibility can directly improve both customer experience and operational performance.

By connecting data across channels and uncovering hidden patterns, conversation analytics is enabling contact centres to turn everyday interactions into continuous insight — supporting smarter decisions, stronger coaching, and more consistent service.

78%

contact centres use some form of AI or automation to analyse their interactions.



“I see conversational analytics as a key capability, because every customer interaction is a learning opportunity. When we can truly understand empathy, good dialogue and customer sentiment, we gain the ability to grasp how customers feel, not just what they say.”



Søren Kristian Steffensen,
Analytics Manager at DSB



Related read: [Why your customer conversations are your most underused CX asset](#)

The impact in numbers:

(based on Puzzel customer results)

SPOTLIGHT:

The rise of Conversational Intelligence

Customer conversations are becoming a key source of operational insight. With 78% now using AI or automation to analyse customer conversations, and 37% deploying advanced conversational intelligence tools, teams are gaining a deeper understanding of tone, sentiment, and intent in real time.

✓ **+62%**

Increase in customer satisfaction

✓ **98%**

AI tagging accuracy across interactions



✓ **400h**

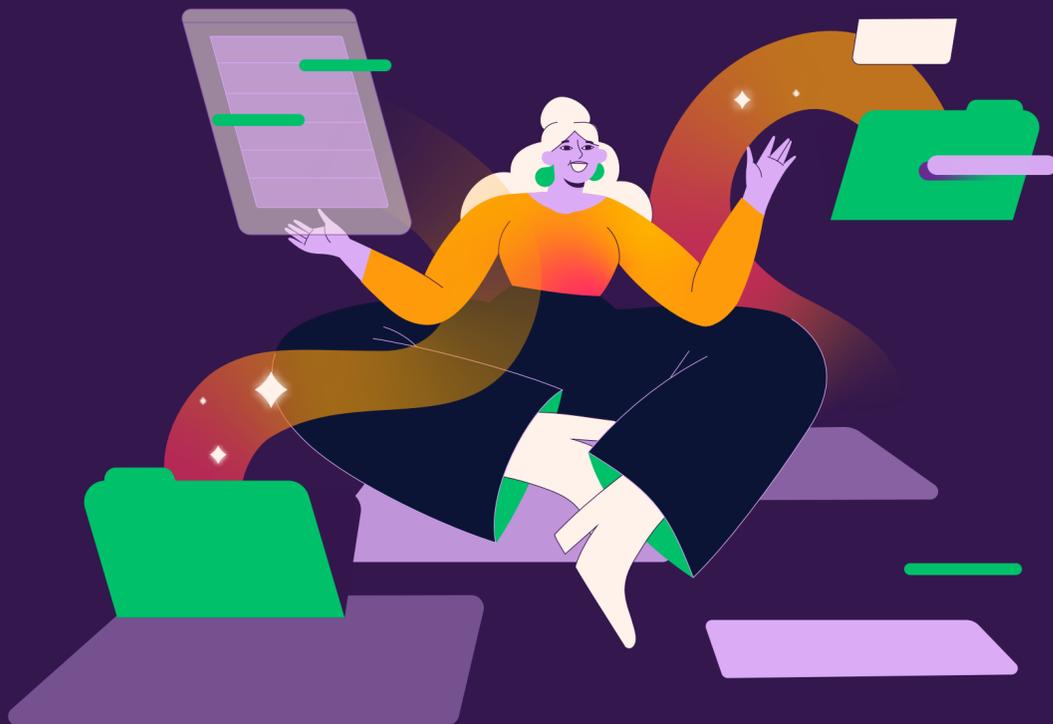
saved annually on manual admin

✓ **25%**

Reduction in contact centre costs

TREND 5

Agents under strain, but AI seen as part of the solution



Behind every customer interaction is an agent balancing speed, empathy, and technology. Agent pressure isn't new — it's one of the most persistent challenges contact centres face. As customer expectations climb and service becomes more complex, agents continue to juggle high workloads, demanding conversations, and an expanding range of tools and channels.

Our survey reveals the main pressure points: **nearly half (46%)** of CX leaders cite heavy workloads, 34% emotional stress, and 31% repetitive tasks as the biggest factors affecting agent experience. Many also struggle with accessing information quickly (30%) and a lack of coaching and development (26%). Together, these pressures are not only affecting performance but also contributing to burnout and turnover across teams.

Across regions, the picture is consistent, though the intensity of challenges varies. In the UK, workloads and stress are felt most acutely: 52% cite high volumes and 39% emotional strain. In the Nordics, 47% highlight workload and 33% repetitive tasks. Dutch leaders report slightly lower but still significant levels, with 38% citing workload and 28% outdated tools as key barriers. Despite these nuances, one message is clear: supporting agents is now seen as central to improving both service quality and satisfaction.

As pressure on agents grows, AI is increasingly seen as part of the solution, not the problem. **Improving agent productivity and support has become the second-biggest priority for AI investment in the year ahead**, signalling a clear shift from automation to enablement. For many CX leaders, the goal is no longer to automate people out of the process, but to help them perform at their best.

That focus on enablement is reflected in where leaders are investing their efforts. 41% say better tools to reduce repetitive tasks would improve agent experience most, followed by 38% who cite easier access to knowledge and 33% who prioritise flexible scheduling. Recognition, autonomy, and personalised coaching also rank highly.

What are the biggest challenges impacting your agents today?

High workload or call volume	46%
Emotional stress from customer interactions	34%
Repetitive tasks or low variety	31%
Difficulty accessing information quickly	30%
Lack of coaching or development	26%
Outdated or inefficient tools	24%

From onboarding to ongoing development:

AI's role in enablement



Onboarding speeds are improving. Nearly half (47%) of leaders say new agents reach confidence within 2–4 weeks, showing how far training efficiency has come. In the Netherlands, onboarding averages 4.4 weeks, while Norway leads in efficiency, with 31% saying new hires reach readiness in under two weeks.

But while onboarding is getting faster, training doesn't stop there. **Nearly nine in ten (89%)** CX leaders believe AI will help shorten onboarding and strengthen ongoing development – a figure that rises to 94% in the UK. By guiding agents in real time and surfacing relevant knowledge when it's needed most, AI helps

89%

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new hires gain confidence faster while freeing managers to focus on coaching and development.

With high staff volumes and constant change, leaders are increasingly turning to AI-driven guidance, real-time coaching, and agent-assist tools to help agents stay confident and perform at their best long after day one. These solutions provide real-time support during live interactions, helping agents respond faster, find information more easily, and deliver service with greater consistency.

Which of the following would most improve agent experience in your contact centre?

Better tools to reduce repetitive tasks	41%
Easier access to knowledge or support	38%
More flexible scheduling or hybrid options	33%
Greater recognition for great service	32%
More personalised coaching or feedback	32%
More autonomy in handling customer issues	31%
Clearer performance expectations	25%

Copilots are giving agents the backup they've been waiting for

AI copilots are quickly becoming one of the most transformative additions to contact centres. These intelligent assistants work with agents, not instead of them, surfacing knowledge, suggesting responses, summarising conversations, and automating admin in real time.

The appeal is clear: **more than nine in ten (91%) CX leaders believe agent-assist tools and AI copilots will be valuable in supporting agents over the next two years**, with nearly half (49%) describing them as very valuable. That's up from 65% last year, when leaders agreed that AI assistants could reduce burnout and boost performance.

Adoption is well underway. Three in ten (30%) contact centres have deployed agent-assist or copilot tools, and another 29% plan to invest in or expand the use of these tools in the upcoming year. This rises to 37% in the UK.

This momentum is being driven by clear operational needs. A third of CX leaders (30%) say agents struggle to access information quickly, while 38% identify easier access to knowledge or support as one of the top ways to improve agent experience. Copilots directly address both challenges – surfacing the right information in real time and cutting the time spent searching for answers.

It's no surprise, then, that real-time guidance and support for agents ranks among the top three areas where leaders see the biggest opportunity for more AI and automation. For many, copilots represent the bridge between today's agent assist tools and tomorrow's autonomous, proactive systems.

91%

CX leaders believe agent-assist tools and AI copilots will be valuable in supporting agents over the next two years



“Providing contextual support in real time, like copilots, is an absolute game changer. It’s a fantastic way to surface knowledge when it’s needed and empower advisors to use it effectively. I only wish it was around when I was an agent!”



Dan Allen,
Deputy Director – Member Services,
at NRLA



Related read: [What is a copilot?](#)

Here's how AI copilots are helping contact centre agents:



Smarter support:

Real-time guidance helps agents respond faster and with more confidence, improving both accuracy and customer satisfaction.



Less admin, more focus:

By automating post-call work like tagging or summarisation, copilots reduce manual effort and free agents to handle more meaningful interactions.



Faster onboarding:

New hires ramp up quicker when copilots assist with live recommendations and knowledge retrieval.



Consistent quality:

Copilots help maintain service standards by ensuring every agent has access to the same guidance and best practices in real time.

Copilots pull key data from multiple systems, provide real-time prompts during calls, and summarise interactions instantly, saving time and improving accuracy. Because they operate in the background, they let agents focus on what matters most: delivering empathetic, effective service.



“Agent-assist tools are becoming the backbone of modern customer service. Copilots support agents naturally in the flow of conversations, surfacing guidance and summaries automatically to make service smoother for both agents and customers.”



Matt Hughes,
Head of Product at Puzzel



Engineering empathy into AI-assisted service.



As AI takes on a larger role in customer service, one thing is clear: human connection still matters most. Even as automation expands, leaders recognise that empathy and authenticity remain the foundations of great customer experiences. While automation handles more interactions, teams are building checks and balances to ensure service still feels human.

Our survey shows that 42% of contact centres train agents to show empathy in AI-assisted conversations and 40% give agents flexibility to personalise beyond scripts. The same share maintain a human-in-the-loop for complex cases, while 36% review AI outputs for tone and 24% collect customer feedback on AI-led interactions.

Leaders also recognise where empathy risks slipping: 38% point to chatbot or voicebot interactions, 32% to scripted conversations, and 28% to digital-only channels. The direction is clear: contact centres are

moving from talking about empathy to engineering it – training, governance and design choices that make AI-assisted service feel more human.

Across regions, leaders are aligned in their determination to balance efficiency with empathy, though their focus differs slightly. In the Netherlands, nearly half (48%) are prioritising empathy training for agents working alongside AI. In the UK, the emphasis is on maintaining human oversight, with 46% keeping people in the loop for escalations and complex interactions. In the Nordics, human oversight also tops the list (46%), though empathy training is somewhat lower (34%) than in other markets.

Rather than treating “the human touch” as something to defend, contact centres are beginning to engineer it into every AI-supported journey – ensuring that when automation scales, authenticity scales with it.



THE FUTURE OF CX:

Future investment is shifting towards generative and agentic AI

Many contact centres have already built the foundation for AI and are now preparing for the next phase — one defined by greater intelligence, autonomy, and deeper integration across operations.

Our survey shows that investment priorities are moving well beyond basic automation. While 35% of CX leaders still plan to expand their use of chatbots and virtual agents, the focus is shifting toward more advanced capabilities. Among those yet to implement these technologies, 31% plan to invest or expand the use of **generative AI**, tools that can create content, summaries, and responses in real time. Almost as many are exploring **AI copilots (29%)** and **agentic AI (27%)**, where autonomous systems act proactively on behalf of humans.

However, these figures likely understate the true level of adoption. Many contact centres have already embedded generative AI within existing

solutions, such as copilots, email automation, or conversational intelligence — meaning that “planned” investment may represent expansion rather than first-time use.

Across regions, ambition levels vary. In the UK, intent is strongest, with 35% planning to adopt generative AI, 37% exploring copilots, and 33% eyeing agentic AI. In the Nordics, 32% plan for generative AI, 28% for copilots, and 25% for agentic AI. In the Netherlands, adoption is more cautious but steadily rising, with 26% planning for generative AI, 22% for agentic AI, and 19% for copilots.

Taken together, these figures show clear momentum. With around a third of CX leaders planning investments in generative, copilot, or agentic AI, advanced capabilities are quickly moving from pilot projects to everyday use across contact centres.

Agentic AI: The next leap for customer service

The next generation of AI won't just respond but it will anticipate. In customer service, agentic AI takes automation a step further by acting on its own initiative. It can spot patterns, prioritise tasks, and resolve simple requests before they reach an agent, shifting AI from reactive support to proactive action.

This proactive capability is what makes agentic AI an exciting next-step in customer service. [Gartner](#) predicts that by 2029, it will autonomously resolve 80% of common customer service issues, driving a 30% reduction in operational costs, while [Deloitte](#) expects that by 2027, half of enterprises will be using agentic AI assistants in frontline roles.

Agentic AI is still in its early stages, but progress is moving quickly. This is the moment for CX leaders to start laying the groundwork, strengthening data foundations, piloting proactive AI use cases, and preparing people to work confidently alongside intelligent systems.

Relevant read: [Agentic AI explained: What it means for your customer service](#)

Conclusion

What this means for CX leaders in 2026

This year's findings point to a clear direction. CX leaders are consolidating technology stacks, shifting from experimental pilots to proven AI applications, and investing where it matters most: real-time guidance, better insights, and smarter agent support. The impact is already visible: higher self-service resolution, faster response times, and measurable improvements in productivity and customer satisfaction. Still, the opportunity ahead holds even greater potential.

Across regions, intent is high. What separates the front-runners is disciplined execution: a simple AI strategy, clear ownership, and a focus on a few high-impact use cases that can scale. The strongest programmes pair automation with empathy, using copilots and conversational intelligence to remove friction while keeping people at the centre of service.

If there's a single takeaway, it's this: the future of great service will depend on how effectively humans and AI work together.

The contact centres that lead in 2026 will use AI to reduce repetitive work, surface knowledge in real-time and turn conversations into decisions — all while preserving the human touch that builds lasting connections.



Set your contact centre up for success. How Puzzel can help.

The findings in this report show a clear path forward: simplify your tech stack, support your agents, and use AI where it adds real value. That's exactly what Puzzel's AI-native CX ecosystem is designed to do.

With more than 25 years of contact centre innovation, Puzzel brings together every channel, insight, and capability in one connected platform – helping teams deliver faster, more human service at scale.

Puzzel's AI-native CX ecosystem

Bring together the best of human and artificial intelligence. Puzzel's platform unites contact centre, workforce, and conversational solutions in one place, reducing complexity, improving efficiency, and giving agents and leaders real-time insight into every interaction.

Puzzel Co-Pilot and Live Summary

Give every agent an AI assistant that listens, learns, and supports in the moment. Co-Pilot surfaces knowledge and next – best actions during live interactions, while Live Summary automatically generates accurate, structured call summaries, saving hours in admin and accelerating onboarding.

Puzzel Conversational Intelligence

Turn every conversation into insight. With advanced analytics and AI-powered tagging, you can uncover trends, monitor quality, and improve training without manual effort. Conversational Intelligence helps you understand what customers really say, and what they really need.

Why leading organisations choose Puzzel

278%

ROI over three years

400+

hours saved each month on manual admin

86%

faster response times across channels

278%

higher customer satisfaction

→ Learn more at puzzel.com