



**ROGER365.io**

# How to futureproof your Teams Calling Contact Center: 5 tips

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## Introduction

Regardless of what industry, sector or sphere you operate in, every business needs to handle contact with customers from time to time – and often more frequently.

However, this *need* is too often an afterthought – becoming a neglected and under-invested part of the overall business-model, despite the multi-level benefits that good-quality customer interactions bring. While the customer directly benefits from having their queries answered, orders updated or problems resolved, the business itself can benefit immensely from these touchpoints if it's in a position to utilize them. Each and every point of contact with the customer is *an opportunity*; to understand them better, to add to company knowledge, and, ultimately, to better serve their needs.

Accessing these opportunities, however, is not easy. The management of a customer contact center faces multi-level challenges which include handling a complex intersection of different technologies and processes, maintaining a sufficient skill-base among staff, handling day-to-day personnel management, and, of course, keeping the customer happy throughout each interaction.

## Achieving that important 'customer focus'

Unfortunately, customer satisfaction has never been more important or *harder to achieve*; the negative consequences of a bad customer experience can be far out of proportion with the actual 'problem' in question. Today's customers have come to expect instant answers, for you to anticipate their needs, and the ability for them to contact you at practically any time, by whatever means they prefer. This last point is becoming increasingly critical in our age of hyperconnectivity, and it can vary immensely across demographic and national borders.

While contact *by phone* is still a norm across countries in Europe and North America, this is slowly changing and the global picture is quite different. WhatsApp and similar messaging services are now a *preferred contact method* for customers in many parts of the world – most especially where economies are growing more quickly than traditional telephone infrastructure. To meet customer expectations, we need to offer contact possibilities that match their preference – whatever it is today. For this reason, customer contact centers need to have the ability and agility to integrate seamlessly with a wide variety of messaging and communications platforms, while providing the exceptional level of customer experience that we're expected to deliver.

## Powerful, elegant and simple: A Microsoft Teams-powered contact center

The challenges and pressures of managing a contact center are largely under-recognized, and contact center managers are often in a position of needing to stretch their resources to match ambitions from higher management and different parts of the business. While larger firms often choose to outsource or serve this need with a dedicated call-center, medium and growing companies must find a solution within their budget that fits their needs for greater flexibility and breadth of support.

Whatever system is chosen, it must satisfy concerns about the technical aspects implementing and maintaining the system, as well as concerns about the operational management of the system and the workers who use it. It must also support the data-rich interactions that are required by the customer and business alike. For this reason, Microsoft Teams Calling should be strongly considered as a fundamental technology for empowering the modern contact center.

Technology can be a powerful catalyst for positive change, as seen when firms migrate from a legacy PBX system to a more agile VoIP-based infrastructure. These alone *can* make communications much more streamlined, easier to scale-up, and give the ability to offer more data-rich interactions with the customer. However, much depends on the execution. When companies take the time to investigate the options and choose the right solution, it can become a fundamental driver for greater efficiencies and synergies. Conversely, if they choose unwisely, they may be implementing something that is needlessly complex, unstable, and hobbles future growth due to a lack of built-in forward-compatibility.

**What a suitable contact-center solution for a medium sized or growing enterprise should provide:**

- **Usability** that reduces training burden
- **Scalability** as the firm adapts and grows
- **Agility** to handle remote working
- **Compliance** regarding data processing
- **Security and stability** of different technologies
- **Future-proofing** as new demands emerge

As we'll explore in this Whitepaper, *Microsoft Teams Calling* can make an intriguing solution, as it can offer all of these features within a familiar working environment that most companies already use.

Microsoft Teams is a robust system that can enable medium-sized and growing companies the ability to offer a professional level of service without requiring a dedicated call center. It offers the basic, necessary framework for meeting customer expectations, wherever, whenever and however they want to contact you. Although there is no native contact center functionality in Teams Calling, it does have some basic queueing and auto attendant functionalities. For many companies, however, this just isn't enough.

To 'fill the gap', the things required are an agent & supervisor app, CRM integration and advanced reporting. Additionally, it requires the capability to integrate with the multitude of communication streams that customers prefer to use, including WhatsApp, Webchat, SMS, Facebook messenger, or Social Messaging in Teams. This might seem like a lot, but there are numerous software packages that provide these missing pieces. It should be noted however, that they can *vary considerably* in terms of provision, security and stability.

## Planning for success: building a world-class contact experience from the bottom-up

Running a contact center for a medium-sized enterprise is a real juggling-act; one that requires a careful allocation of resources. By examining trends at larger-scale call centers and contact centers, we can gain an understanding of potential constraints, road-blocks and inefficiencies. We can then use these insights to ensure that, as a company grows, it has an optimized system, by design, from the outset.

## Retaining your Human capital

Training is a costly part of the business, so it's important to retain skilled workers for as long as possible. Staff turnover in this sector is high, however. The Call Center Management Association reports that [call centers in the UK](#) experience a 26% annual staff turnover rate, which is nearly double the UK national average of 15%. This will come as no great surprise, as contact centers can be stressful places to work; there are stringent targets to meet, and frequently unoptimized or inefficient processes which make it harder for the workers to meet these targets.

Some time ago, an [ICMI report](#) revealed that more than two-thirds of call center staff found that needing to flip between screens, windows and interfaces was a significant drain on productivity. In addition, nearly one-half had to ask *each caller* for basic information because it wasn't readily available. Although this was a few

years ago, these are sadly still familiar challenges today for smaller and medium-sized firms. Not only is this frustrating for staff, but it also causes systemic pressures, with 22% of call centers possessing duplicate entries in their CRMs – leading to confusion, errors, and cost.

The obvious solution to this problem is to ensure that the entire interaction can be handled within a single dashboard or interface, including the CRM, so that all relevant information is immediately to hand. This has a dual benefit of creating a more tranquil and streamlined working environment for valued contact center workers, while also providing the customer with an experience that feels more personalized and attentive. While it doesn't eliminate stress *entirely* from this demanding role, it certainly helps workers to meet their targets.

### Automation as a driver for efficiencies and better customer experiences

The rise of automation in the customer contact sphere has been crucial in gaining efficiencies at a time when customers want to have longer and more in-depth conversations – without wanting to wait. Research from ContactBabel has demonstrated that automation has grown in importance considerably over the last decade. It has a clear utility for fielding the most common and basic enquiries, which drives down the cost of the service burden. Artificial Intelligence (AI) or 'chatbot' involvement in webchats has grown from just 5% in 2015 to 22% in 2020. It is currently estimated that 33% of webchats in the UK and 28% in the US are handled by chatbots, leading to less encumbered contact center staff and happier customers who get quicker answers.

The role of AI and chatbots in customer contact is here to stay, however it will never replace the value provided by human workers, who have a greater capability for handling complex queries and finding innovative solutions. Chatbots can provide strong value by solving common customer problems and queries without an associated labor cost, and they can route more complex queries to skilled human workers, who provide your company with the human voice and meaningful interaction that customers desire. For these reasons, automated webchats should be a core part of the customer contact strategy, and integrated with the contact center as a whole.

## Five ways you can use Microsoft Teams Calling to optimize and future-proof contact center operations

Microsoft Teams and Teams Calling are already familiar to many. It has a well-maintained security infrastructure that helps companies to meet their obligations regarding cybersecurity and global data handling compliance requirements. However, Microsoft does not offer the 'complete package' that contact centers require, meaning that third-party software is needed to extend the functionality. When the functionality of Teams is extended with Microsoft-certified software, the system it creates retains all of the security and stability you would expect from an enterprise-grade solution.

Using Microsoft Teams as the stable hub for your contact center has multiple stacked values, including the fact that intensive training is not needed. The simple interface and processes will already be relatively familiar to most contact center personnel. Additionally a fully-integrated, certified software solution (developed under the umbrella of Microsoft's Certified Partnership program) will have the full range of support and resources available to ensure that it offers stable operation while meeting the same stringent standards as Microsoft Teams itself. A 'Windows-compatible' plugin does not offer this kind of assurance.

There are five ways that you can help to future-proof and optimize your contact center, using a certified, enterprise-grade Microsoft Teams-based solution, as detailed further below.

### *Five ways to future-proof a contact center with Microsoft Teams:*

1. Integration
2. Streamlining
3. Customer Focus
4. Limiting operational risk
5. Using automation

### 1. Integration

Teams Calling is already a good telephony solution for a VoIP-powered contact center. What it *lacks* is the ability to handle the multitude of tasks and data-flows that are needed for each business. A well-supported solution like ROGER365.io provides a comprehensive package that integrates Microsoft Teams Calling with Social Messaging apps (like WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger), Webchats (including those forwarded by chatbots), and 'regular' phone calls. It offers

integrated queuing, performance indicators, advanced analytics and reports. ROGER365.io also integrates with the CRM, so you can see who's calling and any relevant information that can help make the interaction productive and pleasant. You can also update the CRM in real-time. The best part of integrating with a Microsoft-certified solution like this is that all these features and functions are available from a single window and app.

## 2. Streamlining

With all the processes and functionalities under one roof, there is an instantaneous improvement in service provision. Customers and contact center staff both appreciate a more fluid and streamlined interaction without fumbling for the right file, app or window. These efficiencies are further optimized using insights from the advanced analytics that ROGER365.io offers, as these can identify process bottlenecks as well as opportunities for other improvements. It also has built-in AI capabilities that automate time-consuming or repetitive processes, and an on-screen display of vital statistics that helps staff to provide better standards of service by gauging their performance in real-time. Another strong value-source comes from the ability to offer skills-based routing, to ensure that queries are dealt with by the staff with the right knowledge and expertise. All of these assist in providing a better, more streamlined service, and also contribute towards achieving a customer focus (as below).

## 3. Customer Focus

To some extent, simply having an in-window integration with your CRM will improve customer focus. You have an instant snapshot of the customer without needing to ask any details from them, and this will already help them feel that you understand their needs. Better yet, it is easier to actually accomplish this depth of understanding by creating a single source of truth, accessed via a single piece of software. This helps a company to gain the 360-degree view of the customer, with a total overview of their journey available the moment the call is answered. Insights can also be leveraged to deliver complex campaigns and tailored solutions, leveraging a laser-like focus on the individual customer and their specific demands. For the customer, they experience a more positive interaction that is not only data-rich and customized, but also more efficient and pleasant. Achieving this kind of positive interaction is the best kind of customer focus a contact center can provide, because it makes the whole experience *easy for them*.



#### 4. Limiting operational risk

Choosing the right solution is of critical importance to achieving this value stream, and for this reason it is, once again, recommended to only use an enterprise-grade solution from a Microsoft-certified partner, and which is built to the standards required to stable and secure operation.

Provided this standard is met, your solution can help de-risk the company in terms of operational aspects like compliance and security. With all information handled from a single, secure interface and App, the security and integrity of sensitive information can be safeguarded. Information that requires privileged access can be easily restricted within ROGER365.io to certain users, and because it is handled within the Microsoft framework it retains a high degree of security against bad actors or external attack.

#### 5. Using automation

As discussed above, automation has demonstrable benefits for optimizing the customer experience, as well as the efficiency of contact center operations. For this reason, you should have an ongoing plan to identify possible candidates for automation. The natural choice, of course, is the use of chatbots that can answer the most common questions that otherwise burden human staff. However, there are also numerous repetitive processes which can be automated using the capabilities of a complete suite like ROGER365.io.

**Note:** For the above, we have used ROGER365.io as the example solution because it offers the highest quality experience from a global Microsoft partner, and it has been developed with the support required to ensure a totally seamless integration with Microsoft Teams. As a result it can be easily deployed – enjoying the maximum benefits without creating a security hole or system instability.

## Summary

If your company is already using Teams calling as a phone contact solution, then it has already taken the first step in creating a more capable and efficient contact center. The next step is to add the functionality and streamlining that a solution like ROGER365.io can offer.

Integrating your contact center with the omnichannel experiences that customers demand, and enriching it with data that provides a customized experience will go a long way to ensuring that your contact operations remain future-proof.

Microsoft Teams is a well-developed, well-supported and modern solution to the demands of the contact center today. It can ensure the agility and scalability a growing company needs to manage changing demands and market conditions – something clearly evident in the past few years.

Customers also benefit from the positive contact experiences that arise when their queries are dealt with quickly, efficiently and effectively by contact personnel who are able to use the full range of communication options (including chatbots and social messaging), and who are armed with the 360-degree total vision of the customer needed to provide world-class customer service.

## Contact us

You can always send an email to [info@roger365.com](mailto:info@roger365.com) or check out our website: [www.roger365.io/contact-us](http://www.roger365.io/contact-us)



**Send a WhatsApp message to: +31 88 365 1000 to start the conversation right away!**

## More information

YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCS04VFtYiGF\\_n4\\_2x17t0qw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCS04VFtYiGF_n4_2x17t0qw)

Website: <https://www.roger365.io> or <https://www.roger365.io/social-messaging/whatsapp-for-business>

Documentation: <https://doc.roger365.io>