

Looking for an agent services provider?

Use these tips to find your perfect match.



In the digital age, human connection is more important than ever. That's why the right support agents are vital to any customer-centric company. But with so many vendors in the market, knowing which one will perform best for your business can be a challenge. Whether you're looking to extend or outsource your contact center, here's what you need to keep in mind when looking for an agent services provider.

- Better agents = better outcomes
- Training is vital—
at the outset, and ongoing
- Prepare for the digital future

- To build value, agents need to understand your brand DNA
- How are agents matched to your brand?
- Multi-variant matching delivers the best results:
 - Channel
 - Complexity
 - Process
 - Industry

- Repeat contacts and customer churn will cost you
- Focus on lowering cost-per-transaction and cost-per-conversion
- Aligning agents to your brand also improves resolution

1 Give customers what they want

Not all contact centers are created equal. Start by asking how a provider recruits and hires agents, and what training they provide. In addition to hard skills such as being tech-savvy and digitally fluent, agents need soft skills like emotional intelligence and the ability to empathize with customers. And with automation handling the simple stuff, they need to be able to handle more complex inquiries—without calling a supervisor.

2 Aligning agents to your brand

To help your customers get things done quickly and create the human connection that makes for a memorable customer experience (CX), agents need to understand your brand. That means not just knowing what you do, but what's important to you and what kind of experience you want your customers to have.

3 Getting the results you want

The primary aim for most companies looking to outsource a contact center is optimizing costs while maintaining CSAT goals. Adding digital channels and automation can deflect many contacts to less expensive channels, but if that option fails or for more complex issues, customers will turn to more costly channels such as live chat or phone.

When considering cost reduction, it's important to look at the big picture. Marginally lower per-agent or per-hour costs may seem like the best option, but if your customers are having negative experiences or need to call or chat again to get things done, that upfront savings is going to cost you more in the long run.

- Do you need cross-channel, omnichannel, or unified-channel service?
- Find a framework to match your needs
- Ask about key agent skills:
 - Written communication expertise
 - Multi-tasker
 - Sense of intuition
 - Media savvy
 - Familiar with technology
 - Domain expertise

- AI is a game-changer for CX—even with live agents
- Automated channels should escalate to live agents without losing context
- Understanding context, intent, and propensity are key to fast resolution
- Agents that work alongside AI can serve customers better

- How do they measure agent performance?
- What happens if agents aren't meeting your goals?
- High agent churn can lead to low customer satisfaction

- Flexibility is important for seasonal or fluctuating demand
- Ability to tame the digital future including new channels
- Thought leadership paves the way forward

4 Understanding channel nuance

Consumers interact differently on each channel. Just as voice agents need to be trained in conversational skills, digital agents need to understand textual nuance, read between the lines, and multi-task. And if your customer service strategy includes cross-channel or omnichannel support, you need agents with skills to match.

5 Tag teaming with technology

Automation isn't just for customers. The right technology can help agents simplify conversations to boost customer satisfaction (CSAT), and streamline operations to lower average handle time (AHT). An intelligent platform can also arm agents with context and intent information when a customer escalates from a self-service channel, saving time and frustration.

6 Tracking agent performance

With agent success so closely tied to brand and CX success, it's important to understand how a provider will track and measure agent performance, and how you'll access that information. Agent satisfaction can also impact results. Taking a more human approach, such as allowing agents to try again after failing to meet performance goals, can lead to happier agents, and better service.

7 Preparing for the future

We live in a time of rapid change, where keeping up with technology and customer expectations is a full-time job. That's why you need a provider that's prepared for the digital future, with digital-native agents trained for advanced environments and forward-thinking leadership that will help you stay one step ahead.

To learn more about how [24]7 Agent Services can help you boost customer satisfaction and lower overall costs, [visit us online.](#)

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