



Strategic Planning Guide:

How To Resolve Customer Requests End-to-End With AI

Create a transformational automation strategy built to resolve calls, improve CX and lower costs

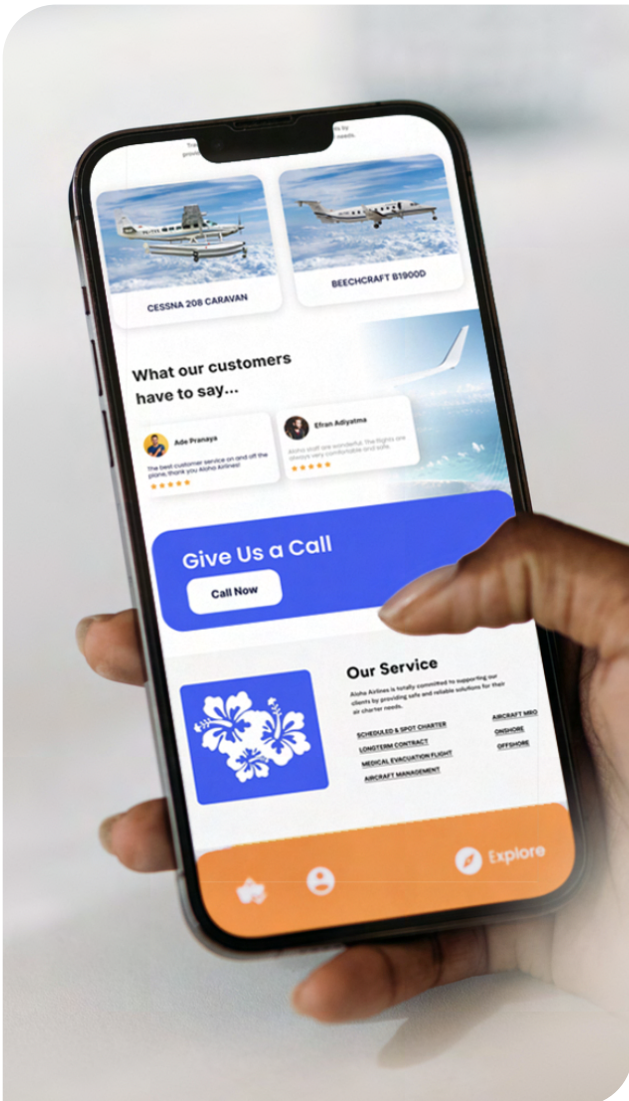


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AI Has Changed the Automation Game

The contact center of the future looks much different today than it did a few years ago.

Whereas “automation” used to be a vague term referring to solutions like IVRs, chatbots and agent assist tools, today it means something fundamentally different.

Thanks to generative AI, automation can finally deliver contact centers the kind of transformational value that ATM machines once brought to banking: end-to-end assistance for common customer requests.

And it’s already happening. Gartner projects that 80% of customer service organizations will [apply generative AI](#) to improve customer experience by 2025, resulting in a 20% to 30% [reduction](#) of customer support agents and the creation of new jobs to enable generative AI in customer service.

In 2024, service leaders must prepare their organizations for a seismic shift in their operating model.

A future-fit automation strategy not only delivers better customer experiences but also ensures contact centers can capture the breadth of benefits that AI-powered automation offers:

- Decrease operational costs by up to 50%
- Fully resolve common customer issues without agent involvement
- Reduce the impact of seasonal and unpredictable call spikes
- Deliver customers an automated experience on par with agents
- Refocus agents on more engaging calls and reducing attrition rates

This guide will help customer service leaders reframe their understanding of automation, evaluate the growing market of AI solutions and take action to begin resolving customer service requests at scale with automation.

Resolution: The New Golden Metric for Automation

Past automation solutions have failed to meet enough criteria to significantly impact contact centers' most pressing pain points.

Solutions that only partially resolve customer calls lead to increased costs and lower customer satisfaction. AI-powered solutions that lack the sophistication needed to resolve complex voice requests end up becoming “speed bumps” between callers and agents. And build-it-yourself solutions require huge in-house resource commitments to build and maintain a reliable, world-class solution.

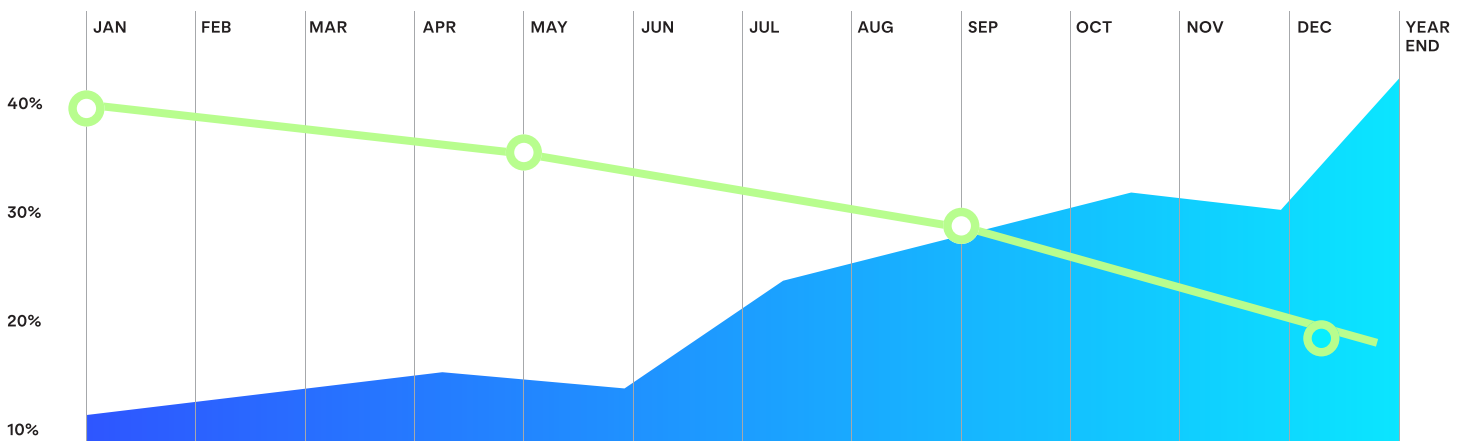
As a result, automation “success” has traditionally been measured by deflection or routing success, which limits contact centers to experiencing only incremental growth, not transformational change.

Generative AI has unlocked a slew of new capabilities and use cases for contact centers, allowing customer service leaders to shift their focus to **resolution** as the primary success metric for automation.

By focusing on achieving a high resolution rate, contact centers move toward automation that completes calls just as your best agents would while unlocking higher net savings, higher customer satisfaction, and lower agent attrition.

When automation resolves, costs go down

- Cost Per Contact
- Percentage of Calls Resolved by Automation



Rather than seeking marginal gains in areas like average hold time, agent productivity and containment rate, resolution-based automation simplifies the path to transformational outcomes:

A High Resolution Rate:

Decreases average handle time

Increases customer satisfaction

Reduces agent call volumes

Decreases cost per contact

Increases net savings

A Low Resolution Rate:

Increases agent escalations

Frustrates customers

Doesn't alleviate agent capacity challenges

Increases cost per contact

Decreases net savings

Resolving more customer request types at a higher clip enables contact centers to hit key business objectives faster and more efficiently.

In order to get there, it's important that leaders come to the table with a robust and agile strategy built on a practical understanding of AI.



The “How” and “Why” Behind Resolution

It’s not uncommon for customer service leaders to feel out of their depth in a rapidly changing generative AI market.

But fear not. Building an automation strategy that resolves customer service requests at scale does not require you to master the intricacies of AI.

It does, however, require a practical understanding of the elements that enable a solution to deliver peak resolution rates and improve customer satisfaction.

To put things in context, past automation solutions have overlooked resolution as a success metric because they weren’t designed to include resolution-focused features in the first place.

There are four overarching elements to keep in mind when evaluating automation through the lens of resolution:

1. Contextual disambiguation

There are an infinite number of ways customers can say the same thing. If a solution can’t accurately detect the intent behind every possible phrase a customer might say, customers end up having to repeat themselves, grow frustrated, and escalate to an agent.

2. Data collection

Collecting long strings of numbers and letters, like a member ID, email or address, is one of the most common, yet difficult, tasks for automation. With a high chance of inaccuracy or miscommunication, an inability to collect alphanumerics greatly reduces a solution’s resolution rate.

3. Complex requests

While it’s relatively easy to “resolve” simple flows like routing and authentication, requests like food ordering or roadside assistance are significantly more complex.

Complex requests require a solution that can handle and repair multi-turn interactions and integrate with your unique business logic and tech stack.

4. AI Guardrails

When LLMs and generative AI go off the rails, they harm more than just your resolution rate. To avoid both the contact center and brand fallout that can result from hallucinations, automation must have a layer of safeguards to guarantee AI follows your prescribed workflows and scripts, just as you'd expect your agents to do.

It is extremely difficult to design the above capabilities in a manner that doesn't harm CSAT, but improves it through natural conversations.

To achieve success in these three areas, and in turn unlock high resolution rates, automation must combine a robust platform with a customer-centric approach.



Insufficient AI Guardrails Put Your Business at Risk

In February 2024, Canada's Civil Resolution Tribunal ruled that Air Canada must fulfill a reimbursement to a customer that was erroneously promised by the airline's [AI chatbot](#).

Despite the fact that the information sent by the chatbot was incorrect, the Tribunal determined that it's incumbent upon the company "to take reasonable care to ensure their representations are accurate and not misleading" and that Air Canada failed to do so.

Solutions that rush to resolve without first implementing the proper guardrails put businesses at risk.

Key Platform Elements for Resolution:



Multi-model architecture

A multi-model approach means a platform combines proprietary machine learning models with the best available large language models and speech recognition tools to enable natural conversations and unlock success in historically difficult tasks like contextual disambiguation, alphanumeric collection and multi-turn conversations.



Flexibility and customization

The ability to add business logic and customization to every conversation allows an automation platform to support a wider variety of complex use cases, further expanding the call types that a contact center can save costs on with automation.



Scalability and reliability

Resolving calls is only possible with a reliable system. Your automation platform must be impervious to telephony incidents so that thousands of calls can run concurrently, and uphold global compliance standards such as GDPR, HIPAA and PCI-DSS.

Key Approach Elements for Resolution:



Purpose-built for voice

Resolving customer requests over the phone is historically the hardest channel to automate. A voice-first approach means a solution can speak in any language, offer several human-like voices, and allow customers to speak naturally.



Conversation design

Conversation design enables automation to handle the infinite number of ways that customers can say the same thing while navigating and repairing multi-turn interactions quickly. Effective design is a leading indicator of a solution that significantly reduces agent escalations and lowers average handle times for every call type.



Dedicated support

Designing, building, and scaling automation to resolve complex use cases requires project engineering, telephony expertise, and A/B testing. Without dedicated ongoing support, solutions will plateau and fail to capitalize on the rapid advancements taking place in AI.

To resolve calls at scale, automation must combine many layers of AI, integrations, telephony and human design to achieve resolution rates far beyond what was possible five years ago.

While it's not necessary for customer service leaders themselves to drive success in each of these layers, it's imperative that your automation strategy includes demonstrated success across these areas if you expect your solution to return high resolution rates and improve customer satisfaction.

Case Studies of Resolution in Action

Enterprise contact centers are quickly finding that resolution-focused automation benefits agents, customers, and operating costs like no solution has before. Case studies from leading-edge organizations demonstrate why Gartner predicts AI will reduce contact center costs by more than [\\$80 billion](#) by 2026.



CAA doubles automation success and improves member satisfaction

The Canadian Automobile Association had been using automation to alleviate spikes in roadside assistance calls during extreme weather events, but their solution struggled to complete a majority of requests. After switching to a resolution-based approach, their success rate for providing drivers with timely service doubled, agents could handle emergency calls faster and member satisfaction increased.

2x

Resolution rate vs. previous solution

84

Net Promoter Score (+13 increase)

“We never got positive comments about our bots with our previous solution in our NPS surveys. I fell off my chair when I heard people leaving compliments for our new solution.”

Tanya Weigelt, Director of Operations

Love's saves over \$1M while reducing agent turnover



Love's, a nationwide travel stop and convenience store brand, implemented automation to account for nearly twice the call volume they were expecting due to rapid growth. By shifting to a resolution-based solution for their most common request types, they were able to meet customer demand without increasing labor costs. They experienced transformational gains in savings, agent experience and customer satisfaction.

“We have resolved over 125K calls, we've lowered our agent attrition rate by half and over 90% of customers have given a favorable rating.”

Brien Mikkel,
Director of Customer
Engagement

\$1.2 M

Net savings
in two years*

50 %

Reduction in
agent turnover

*(+\$200K net new savings per month!)

DoorDash meets customer demand no matter the call volume



With over 450,000 merchants in the DoorDash network, thousands of food orders are processed daily with a portion of merchants preferring to receive order details over the phone. As DoorDash received higher order volumes at peak times, they struggled to capture revenue with an inefficient and costly BPO. After implementing automation to resolve outbound food orders, they saw a massive increase in their resolution rate.

“Our goal was to find a high quality solution to handle the erratic demand of our phone order traffic, while minimizing escalations and continuing to lower the costs.”

George McConnell,
Global Operations Manager

87 %

Total order
completion rate

35 K

Calls automated
per day

3 Strategic Actions to Drive Your Resolution Roadmap

To build a sustainable strategy that captures the breadth of benefits automation can bring to contact centers, customer service leaders must define a roadmap for executing key actions.

Now that you have an understanding of resolution-based automation, and practical knowledge of AI, you can create a clear plan that communicates where your contact center currently is, where it needs to be, how to get there, and how you will measure progress.



Build a clear, measurable plan aligned to your organizational goals

A resolution roadmap begins with defining the [readiness factors](#) that show why and how your contact center will benefit from automation. These factors include your organization's immediate customer service challenges, stakeholders that must buy-in, which integrations your tech stack will need, and target use cases. One of the primary advantages of buying a solution from a trusted partner is mitigating risk in your plan. Experienced partners have well-established, pre-built solutions that can be quickly integrated into your existing infrastructure with proven resolution rates.



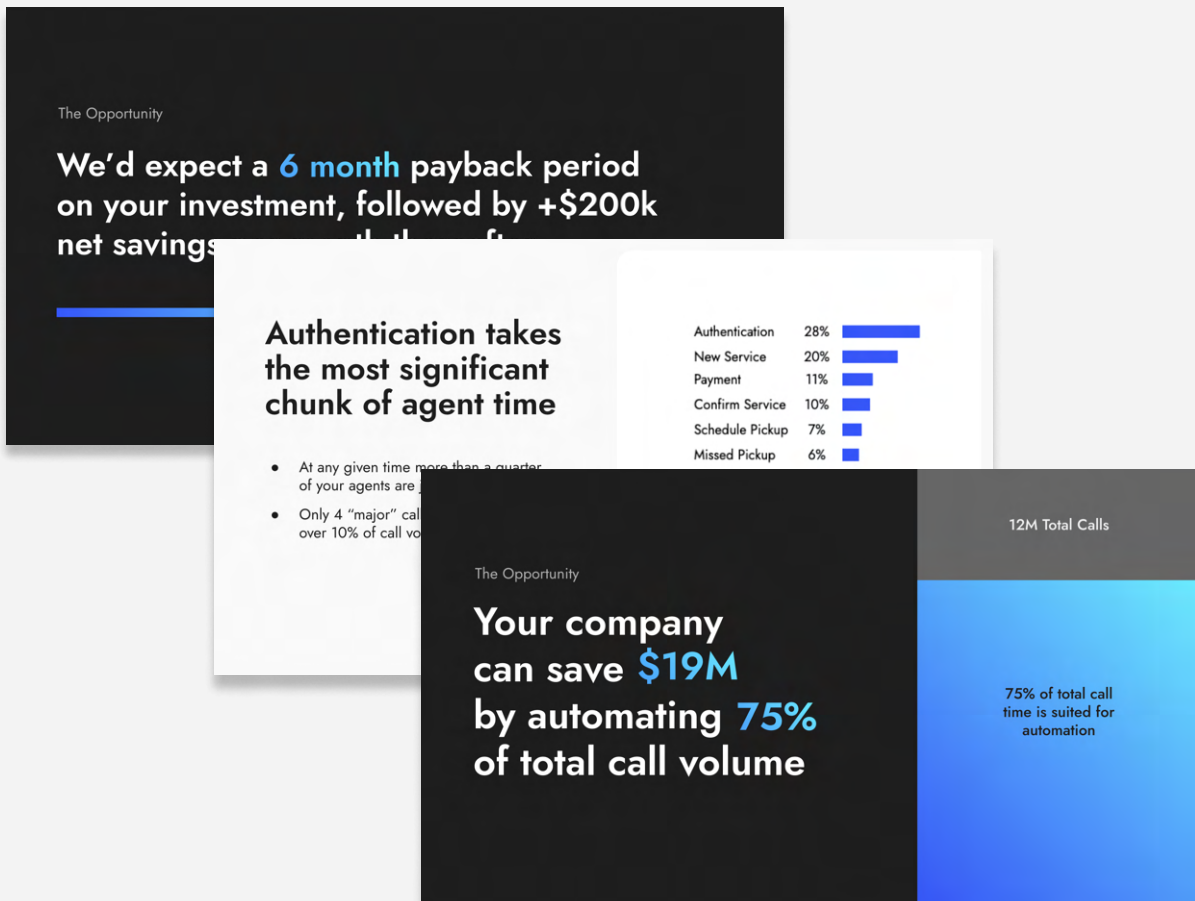
Combat costly planning mistakes to develop a robust strategy

Two of the most common pitfalls organizations run into are purchasing an add-on solution that ends up having limited capabilities or attempting to build a solution in-house. While solutions like CCaaS add-ons may allow you to configure AI on your own, they are limited in their conversation accuracy and flexibility. Organizations will face limitations when attempting to resolve increasingly complex use cases and will receive a lower level of ongoing support and expertise compared to a partnered solution. Meanwhile, organizations that attempt to build a solution on their own often underestimate the complexity of the project, leading to cost overruns and ongoing, resource-heavy maintenance.



Capture and communicate value with a thorough Call Assessment

Every roadmap should start with an analysis of your contact center’s most automation-ready calls. By identifying high-volume use cases, leaders can clearly communicate the value of resolution to stakeholders by tying impact directly to their respective goals. ROI and net hiring savings, for example, are always top of mind for finance and operations, whereas CSAT and SLAs may matter most to CX leaders. A Call Assessment is a visually impactful custom report that uses a sample of your calls to identify the call drivers agents spend the most time on. It lays out the short-and long-term cost savings you’d see by resolving them with automation.



[Get a Free Call Assessment](#)

Conclusion

The customer service vision in 2024 is all about what's next.

Every contact center leader is now armed with examples of an AI-powered future where automation resolves the routine and agents focus on the complex.

Enough data has been collected to show how this model shifts the contact center paradigm to dramatically cut costs, increase efficiency and improve the agent and customer experience.

And most importantly, there is no shortage of case studies to demonstrate how your business can implement a resolution-based automation strategy that simplifies the path to success and mitigates costly risks.

The future of customer service is here. Now, transforming your contact center into a growth engine for your enterprise begins with taking action.

Discover more resources for building an automation strategy that resolves calls and reduces costs.

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