



Better Together: Why Unified Communications + Contact Center Drive Improved Business Outcomes





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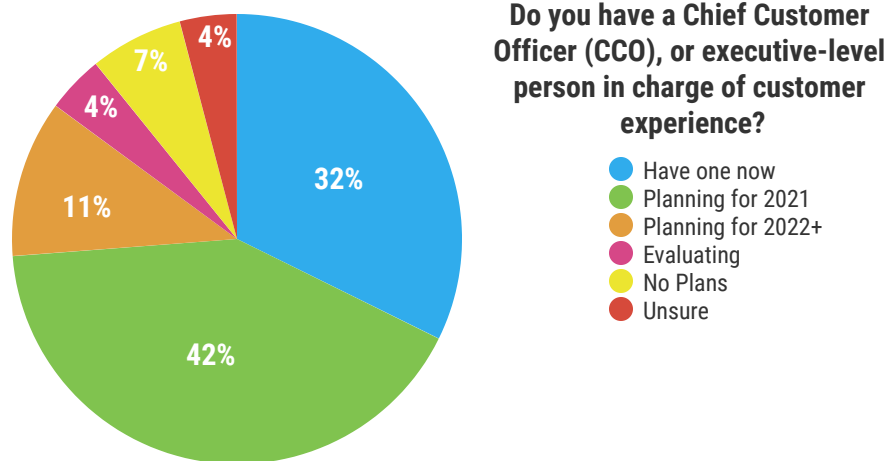
How Important is CX? Very

Regardless of the metric, delivering an excellent customer experience is at the top of business leaders' priority lists.

When asked for their top three business priorities, a late 2020 Metrigy study of 700 IT, CX, and business leaders globally placed "customer satisfaction" at the top of the list, ahead of product and service quality, information security, and generating revenue, among other priorities.

Further underscoring business focus on customer experience, nearly three-quarters of companies have hired or are planning to hire a Chief Customer Officer (CCO). When companies have a CCO, they leverage technology and measure its success on revenue, customer satisfaction, employee efficiency, and operational costs. Those with CCOs report better success metrics across the board.

Chief Customer Officer Status



CCO Definition:

Executive-level individual with ultimate responsibility for **all customer-facing activities and strategy** to maximize customer acquisition, retention, and satisfaction.

Often works closely with CMO and head of sales. Creates "**customer-first**" mentality across the organization, in large part through **analyzing data** of customer ratings, sales through digital channels, etc.

CX Transformations Add Technology – and Budget

The aforementioned importance of CX explains why companies are spending an average of **3% of their revenue** on CX technologies. By investing in technology, organizations improve agent and customer experiences through emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, automation and analytics, as well as through new customer interaction channels.

More than 45% of companies completed a CX transformation initiative in 2021, and an additional 32% are planning for a project in 2022 – led by small businesses both in 2022 and 2023. This recognizes the need for technology to level the playing field against larger companies.

When asked about CX transformation projects, some key trends emerged:

Application performance is key



51%

added more tools to improve voice, video, and network performance

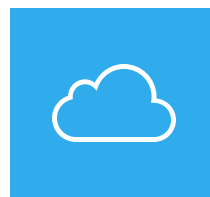
Remote workers need reliable technology



45%

established a high-performance work-from-home environment

Cloud rules



43%

added cloud-based apps, and 34% moved their contact center platform to the cloud

Live agents need help



35%

added conversational AI

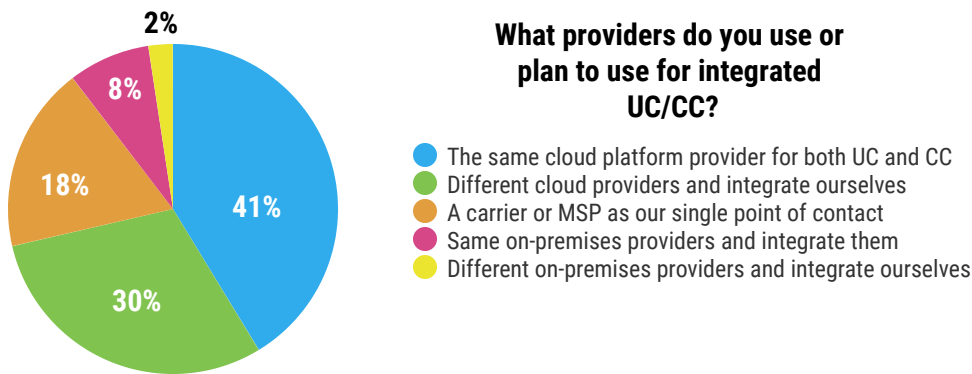
The technology transformation focus is imperative to the success of the new workplace, particularly given 73% of organizations plan to continue with a work-from-home model indefinitely for their contact center agents and supervisors (another 21% are still deciding, leaving only 6% with definite plans to fully return to the office).

UC/Contact Center Integration Bridges Gaps

As organizations prioritize CX investment, leadership, and transformation projects, they also are evaluating projects to reduce friction. One area of focus is the integration of Unified Communications platforms and contact center platforms. Siloed communications introduce friction, whether within customer or employee interaction channels.

Integrating UC with an omnichannel contact center delivers significant benefits, including the ability to integrate video into customer service portals; use a common communications platform for all employees; and include contact center experts in team workspaces to collaborate on product development or marketing plans.

Types of Providers for Integrated UC/CC



Not all use the same cloud platform provider for both UC and contact center, but it is the most common approach (52% are doing this). The value it delivers includes:



Cost savings through bundled licensing



Employee productivity improvements with a common user interface



Ease of application integration if the provider uses the same back-end for both platforms

Plenty of Ways to Integrate Platforms

As companies integrate UC and contact centers, there are many components to examine. Essentially, integration means something different to each organization. Should the user interface be the same? Can UC apps be added to contact center licenses, and vice versa? Should speech analytics and recordings be available to all employees, or just contact center agents?

Our study of 355 North American companies shows that IT and CX leaders view "Integrated User Interfaces" as the top UC/CC integration need.

| Item | Must Have | Nice to Have | Not Needed |
|---|-----------|--------------|------------|
| Integrated User Interfaces | 75% | 25% | 0.3% |
| Both Cloud-Based | 56% | 39% | 5% |
| Same Enterprise Directory | 51% | 44% | 5% |
| All Can Use Speech Analytics & Recordings | 51% | 44% | 5% |
| Same Team Collaboration Tools | 51% | 45% | 5% |
| Consistent Analytics | 49% | 49% | 2% |
| Can Add UC Apps to CC License, Vice Versa | 49% | 46% | 5% |
| Single Set of SLAs | 48% | 43% | 8% |
| Same Call Control | 46% | 53% | 1% |
| Same Billing System | 46% | 29% | 5% |
| Same AI Engine | 45% | 49% | 6% |

Integrated Platforms Drive Better Business Metrics

As with any technology, there should be measurable business success to validate the decision. After all, deploying technology just because it's "cool" won't help customer satisfaction – or the bottom line. We asked IT, business, and CX leaders how their key business metrics changed before and after integrating the platforms. Metrics evaluated include:

- **Agent productivity** – Productivity rises with the ability to use collaboration tools and presence status to reach non-contact-center experts to help resolve an issue more quickly.
- **Customer ratings** – Satisfaction improves with the ability to escalate to a video or screen-sharing call, or to speak to an expert who the agent quickly loops into a call using the integrated platforms.
- **Sales** – Reaching an expert to address a crucial question closes more sales; what's more, when customers are happy with their interaction, companies see more referrals and repeat business.
- **Operational costs** – Integrated platforms, particularly with the same provider, generate cost reduction through bundled licenses and reduced training costs. (Integrated platforms with separate providers also can generate savings by not having to change providers, while still realizing the benefits of integration).

Benefits of Integrated Platforms



42%

Boost in Agent Productivity



36%

Improvement in Customer Ratings



36%

Increase in Annual Sales



29%

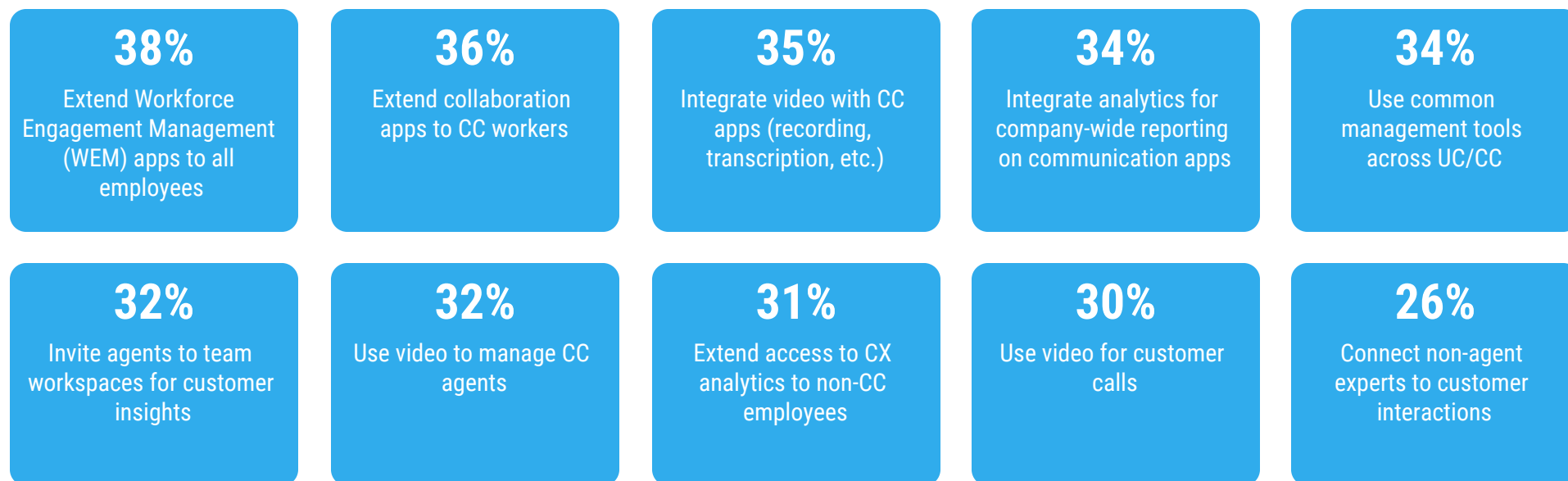
Reduction in Operational Costs

Functional Value of Integrated Platforms is Far-Reaching

CX leaders see significant – and varied – ways to utilize their integrated platforms. One common benefit to platform integration relates to the use of video. When asked how North American companies will use the integrated platform:

- **35% said they integrated video with their contact center applications** for functions including recording and transcriptions. Just because they switch from webchat to voice to video, they still should be able to record and transcribe the conversation; when they use an unintegrated video platform, contact center apps don't necessarily apply.
- **32% use video to manage contact center agents.** This became extremely important as agents were moved to home offices at the start of the pandemic. The agent workforce is generally used for face-to-face meetings with supervisors to get coaching.
- **30% use integrated video for customer calls.** Globally, 57% use some type of video for customer calls, but that video is often unintegrated with contact center platforms.

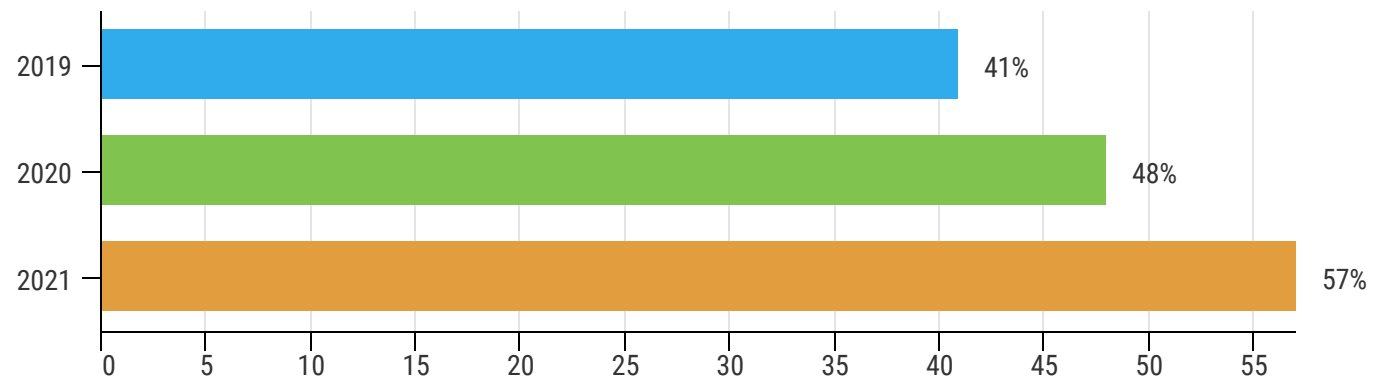
How do you or will you use your integrated UC/CC platform?



Interaction Channels Growing; Video Growing Rapidly

CX leaders are adding interaction channels to reach customers where they are at any given time and to match generational preferences. Voice and email remain prevalent channels, but the number of companies using them is declining. Real-time interactions are rapidly moving to channels that provide some visual engagement, including screen-sharing, co-browsing, and video. **Video**, for example, **grew from 48% to 57% of companies using it for customer interactions from 2020 to 2021.**

Customer Interaction Channel Adoption Over Time - Video



Companies also are adding more digital channels, including mobile business messaging services, such as Facebook Messenger, WeChat, Apple Business Chat, etc.; in-app messaging for customers visiting business apps from their mobile devices; and webchat for text interactions while visiting a business website. And finally, they are adding conversational AI and self-service capabilities for those who can solve their issue without the need for a live agent.

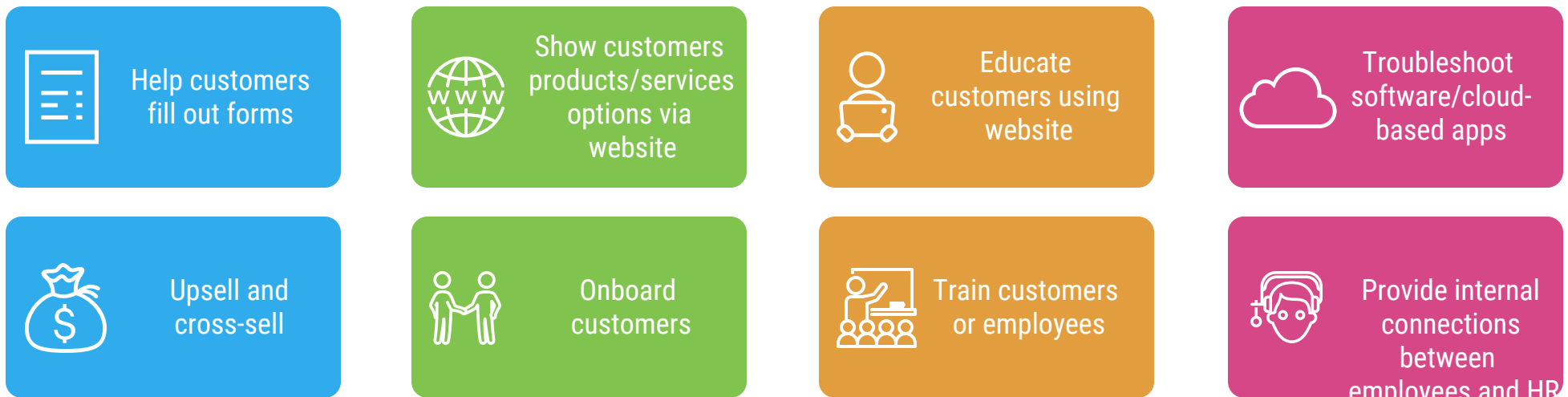
Visual Engagement Improves Customer Interactions

Even prior to the pandemic, visual engagement had been growing – both for customer and employee communications. Customers see value in being able to “show” the agent what the problem is—whether it’s a computer app, a problem with an appliance installation, or the damage from a car accident. During a discussion about investments or healthcare, for example, customers have a level of comfort being able to see the person with whom they are discussing sensitive issues.

By the end of 2022, **65% of organizations will be using visual engagement applications (with video the most widely used of the visual apps) to communicate with customers**, according to Metrigy’s CX MetriCast 2022 study of 1,846 organizations globally. When it comes to video, specifically, 65% of organizations use their internal video or team collaboration solutions; most would prefer to have video integrated into their contact center platform.

Visual engagement also reduces time spent on calls, ranging from 34% to 42%, depending on company size.

How Companies Use Visual Engagement



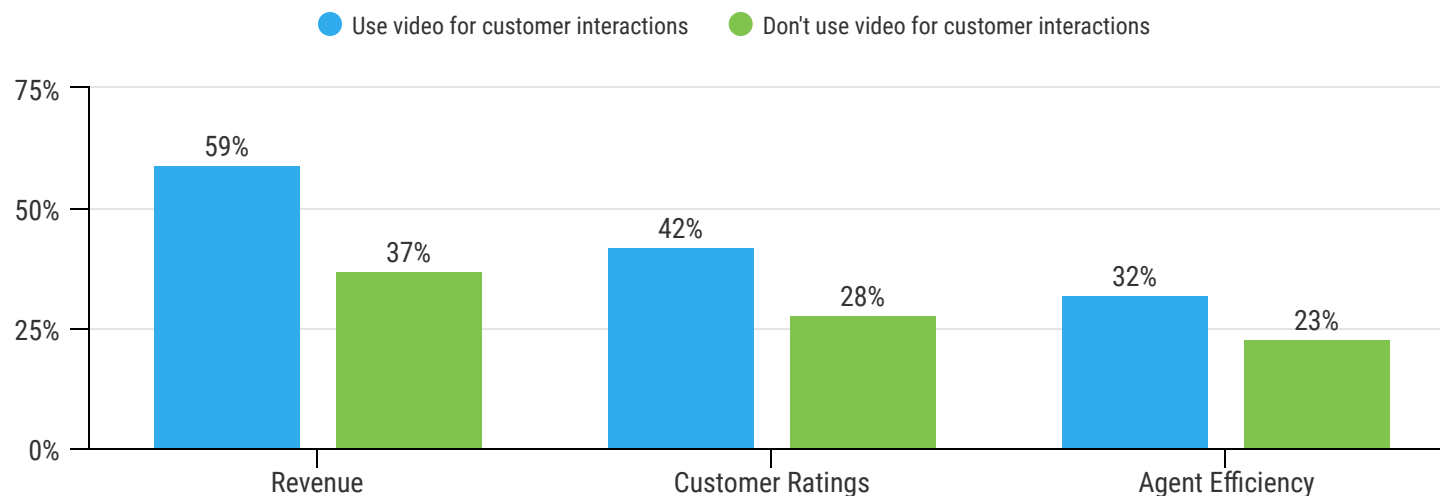
Video Helps Customer Interactions Succeed

CX leaders say video helps companies to create successful interactions with their customers in several ways:



Companies have documented compelling improvements in business metrics in their CX transformation projects, with or without video being used in customer interactions.

Success Metrics With/Without Video Usage in CX Transformation Project





What Should You Do Next?

1

If you haven't integrated UC and contact center platforms, evaluate what your current provider(s) can do, how much money you may save with bundled licenses, and how well their product roadmap aligns to yours. New services are emerging – contact center capabilities from traditional UC providers and vice versa.

2

Evaluate the needs of your organization. Companies are finding technical and operational benefits with UC/CC integration. How do the benefits they're reporting align with your needs?

3

Integrated platforms help contact center agents, all other employees, and customers. One of the biggest benefits comes from the addition of video and screen-sharing. Evaluate how these applications – integrated with the AI, analytics, and automation capabilities that can greatly improve CX – will help improve your strategy.

4

Measure success! Gather your baseline figures prior to new integrations and measure to see how much it improves revenue, customer ratings, employee efficiency, and operational costs.