



## Is it Time to Replace or Upgrade Your Contact Center Technology?

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Contact center technology projects demand resources that have to be prioritized with other needs and requests. A “functioning” system is often reason enough to delay replacement or upgrade when other technologies are missing or ineffective. Before you know it, your legacy technology falls woefully short of operational needs and requires a king’s ransom to upgrade. And if your back is against the wall on a business basis, you may feel pressured to pay it. Here’s a handful of expert advice to help you avoid that unfortunate circumstance.

**Keep an open dialog with your current vendor.** Their product and capability roadmap will help you understand what operational improvements are possible through effective use of technology. You’ll also stay current on their development plans for your system and their timetable for retiring that product line. Even if you don’t meet formally to review product plans, follow your vendor’s marketing messages to pick up clues on sea changes in their product offerings and support plans.

**Take stock of your operational requirements to identify what you need technology to enable.** Are you increasing customization and workarounds, or compromising your requirements to fit your current technology? Are you suffering from a lack of reliability and experiencing extended time to repair? Is your vendor’s standard response to solving your business requirements, “Version X does that”? If so, it may be time for a change.

**Be open to presentations and bids from multiple vendors.** Single sourcing may seem like the “easy” path – especially when the source is the incumbent – but it leaves the vendor in control. A competitive analysis provides the opportunity to learn about possibilities from multiple vendors. For example, some “all in one” vendors may require lower investments than your vendor’s “upgrade.” Some vendors might offer key functionality more cost effectively than your current vendor. Other vendors might be a better fit based on their product roadmaps and your technology strategy, especially when considering innovations such as presence, multi-media routing and reporting, or performance tools such as speech analytics, text analytics, or new approaches to voice of the customer surveys. At a minimum, you should create the space to secure the best solution and price from the victor – even if it’s the vendor with whom you have an established relationship.

**Consider adding contact center components to your enterprise telephony infrastructure.** Many of us have lived on our contact center technology “islands” for so long that we don’t think about available tools and technologies on the enterprise side of the house. It may be cheaper and easier to add contact center functionality to that infrastructure and/or leverage hosted options to fill specific needs. The latter takes advantage of enterprise technology for “dial tone” while freeing it of the demands of contact center-specific functionality. Moreover, adding hosted components to fill technology gaps may get you farther, faster, with less dependency on IT, while reducing your capital demands.

**Recognize that upgrades and replacements create opportunities for performance improvement.** Though we’d like to think that upgrades are the path of least resistance, they can drive as much process change as completely new technology. For instance, changes in core contact center technology can drive



routing and reporting process change. Changes in contact center applications can drive new desktop and administrative interfaces. Changes in performance tools can drive WFM and QM process changes.

The bottom line is this: Stay proactively engaged in technology management and planning to ensure your solutions meet business needs at a reasonable price, and are there when you need them.