



# Quality & Call Recording

Excerpt from the ContactBabel  
**UK Contact Centre**  
**2026 Decision-Makers' Guide**  
(23<sup>rd</sup> edition)

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Extract from “The 2026 UK Contact Centre Decision-Makers’ Guide (23<sup>rd</sup> edition)”

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## ABOUT THE UK CONTACT CENTRE DECISION-MAKERS' GUIDE

The "UK Contact Centre Decision-Makers' Guide (2026 – 23<sup>rd</sup> edition)" is the major annual report studying the performance, operations, technology and HR aspects of UK contact centre operations.

Taking a random sample of the industry, a detailed structured questionnaire was answered by 215 contact centre managers and directors between January and February 2026. Analysis of the results was carried out in February 2026. The result is the 23<sup>rd</sup> edition of the largest and most comprehensive study of all aspects of the UK contact centre industry.

This White Paper is taken from the "Quality & Call Recording" chapter of the report, sponsored by Enghouse Interactive.

The whole report is available free of charge from [ContactBabel](#).



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**Enghouse Interactive** (EI), a subsidiary of **Enghouse Systems Limited** (TSX: ENGH), is a leading global provider of contact center software, services and video solutions, serving thousands of customers for over 40 years. EI solutions enable customers to deliver winning customer experiences by transforming the contact centre from a cost center into a powerful growth engine.

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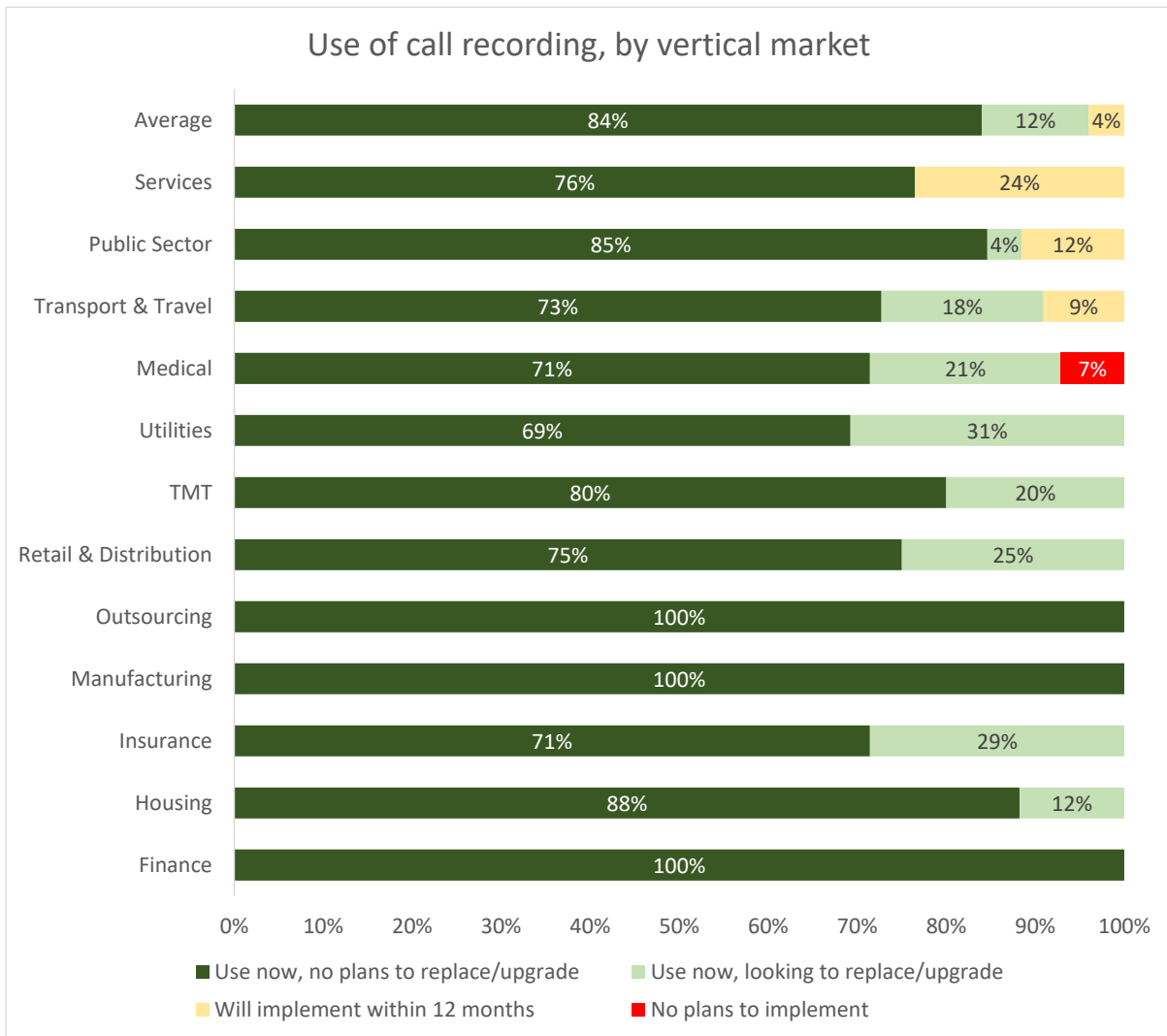


## QUALITY & CALL RECORDING

### CURRENT & FUTURE USE OF CALL RECORDING

Consistently one of the most widely-used contact centre technologies, call recording is used by 96% of this year’s respondents, of whom 13% state that they wish to replace or upgrade their current system. Less than 1% of respondents have no intention of using call recording.

**Figure 1: Use of call recording, by vertical market**

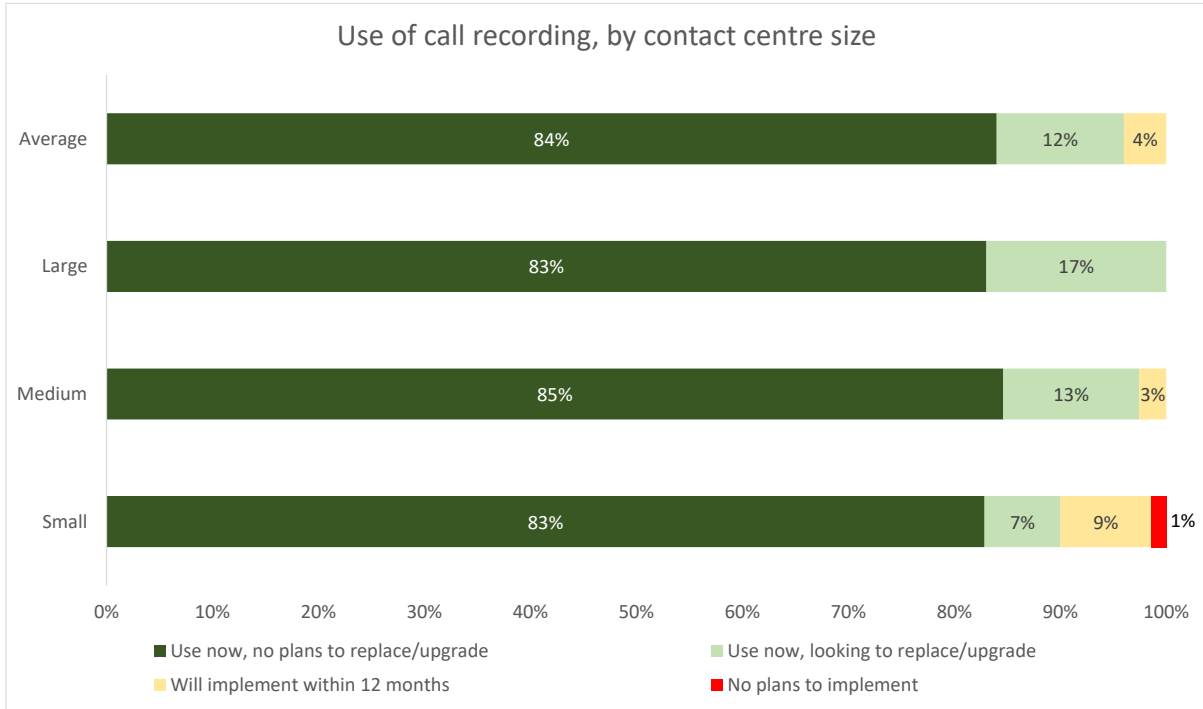


A considerable proportion of respondents in the utilities, insurance and retail sectors report that they are looking to update their call recording solutions.

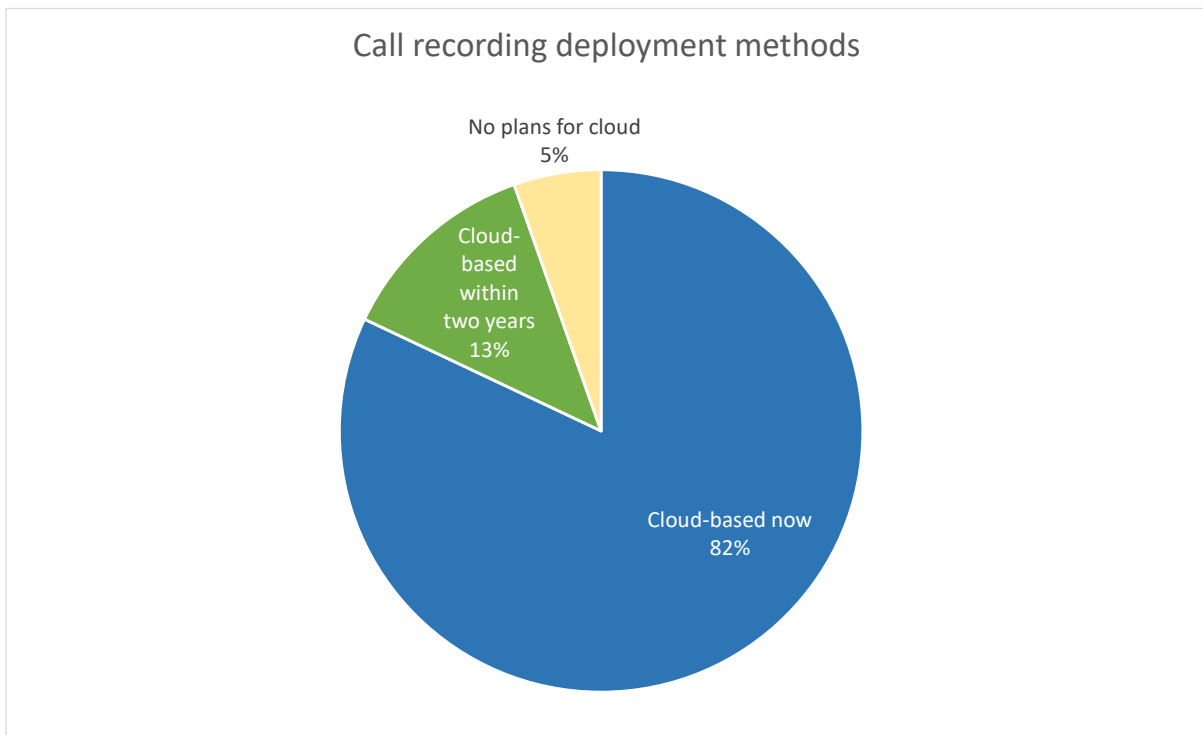
Taken in the context of data from elsewhere in this report, this is almost certainly connected with adding AI-enabled speech analytics capabilities to the recording functionality in order to improve the QA process, increase compliance and gather new business insight from their customer interaction records.

In the past, the use of call recording has been strongly influenced by the size of the contact centre operation. The current 90% penetration rate in survey respondents from small operations shows that vendors have been able to offer solutions successfully at various price points through cloud-based deployments as the second chart below shows.

**Figure 2: Use of call recording, by contact centre size**



**Figure 3: Call recording deployment methods**



## SITUATIONAL CALL RECORDING

Call recording may be used in three modes:

- 100% call recording: often used for compliance, recording the entirety of every call
- Random / Scheduled Call Recording: priority-based call recording schedules can be defined based on business rules, using multiple criteria on each schedule
- On-Demand Call Recording: on-demand recording can be customised to support agent-initiated call recording through a desktop interface, or automated through call recording triggers sent from third-party software.

67% of respondents that use call recording do so for all calls, with 33% taking the option to record only a part of their overall voice interactions.

68% of these respondents state that they can choose to record based on the call profile (i.e. business rules based on the nature of the call), and 40% will do so based on the inbound number called. 28% identify the inbound caller's number and decide whether to record or not based on that.

**Figure 4: Situational recording choices**

Situation	% respondents choosing to record or not record
Call profile (e.g. do not record calls made to HR; outbound calls to states with 2-party recording regulations; etc.)	68%
Based on DNIS (dialled number identification service, i.e. the number being called)	40%
Based on CLI (calling-line identity, i.e. the number calling in)	28%

As with any form of recorded and potentially sensitive customer data, the secure storage of recorded calls must be taken into account. More than half of respondents choose to store their recorded calls offsite, either as part of a cloud-based call recording solution, or through a dedicated backup facility as part of a wider disaster recovery plan, a figure that grows each year.

The majority of respondents in all sizes of operation state that they have dedicated secure hardware on-site in which to store their call recordings, and some choose both on-site and offsite duplication of storage. A small proportion of respondents from smaller operations state that the call recordings are stored onsite on standard hardware (e.g. in hardware that is also be used for other purposes).

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## HOW IS RECORDING USED BY THE BUSINESS?

Recording solutions have moved on from the days of simple bulk recording, and the phrase 'call recording' is no longer an accurate description of the solution.

Interaction recording captures and synchronises what is happening on the agent's screen with what is happening in the audio channel, and allows recording of after-call work, email and web chat, and can be used to identify areas of improvement. The new generation of interaction recording solutions brings the whole contact centre into play, supporting agent best practice and improvement, ensuring compliance with regulations and improving the organisation's insight into the customer experience through supporting analytics.

The large majority of UK contact centres have team leaders and managers involved in evaluating agent calls, with 78% of respondents from large operations having a specific, dedicated quality team involved as well.

Large and medium operations are also quite likely to have coaches evaluating calls, which will also feed into the process of understanding each individuals' need for specific improvement, as well as developing the wider training programme.

A minority of operations have the contact centre manager involved in evaluating calls as well, although especially in the case of larger contact centres, these may well have gone through an initial process of identifying calls relevant to the specific business or operational issue.

64% of respondents from large operations have a compliance team evaluating calls, and are much more likely to use a business process improvement team as well to learn from the QA output.

The traditional user of interaction recording solutions has been the contact centre supervisor or team leader. The **supervisor** deals heavily with quality monitoring at the agent and team level, using the recording facility along with data about the call (e.g. call outcome) to provide examples of best practice to other team members. This means the supervisor does not have to listen in live to the call, but can choose which to listen to, considerably reducing cost and improving focus.

The challenge has been that it is impossible to listen to every call, so many operations now use interaction analytics which transcribes and analyses all call recordings consistently and objectively. Based on KPIs established by the company, supervisors and QA managers can search for calls that meet a certain criteria and listen to only those that have significant coaching value. This helps improve agent performance as well as reducing time and cost.

The supervisor may also be responsible for the initial stages of customer dispute resolution, and can find out exactly what has been said by customer and agent in order to deal with the matter accurately. In industries where recording may be a legal requirement – an increasing trend – businesses may have compliance officers to deal with disputes. Even in areas which do not require bulk recording, many companies look upon this solution as a tool to protect against litigation.

Using more sophisticated interaction recording solutions means that the supervisor can move into a more analytical role, understanding not only what has happened, but the reasons for it as well.

Taking a top-level view of team performance, a supervisor may see that certain types of call have been dealt with very quickly by a specific agent. Standard management information systems may show this as a positive situation, but the use of interaction recording capabilities may find that the agent is unable to help the customers and is simply passing the calls through to colleagues, giving the supervisor the chance to improve the situation, rather than missing the problem altogether.

**Agents** can add to the value which interaction recording can provide. By using agent-initiated tagging of calls, the front-line team can add to the store of useful information which can be acted upon by the company as a whole. For example, if customers talk about the competition and what they are offering specifically, these agent-tagged calls can be reviewed for possible action by a business's commercial team. This has the added benefit of making agents feel a key part of the overall business, although this is increasingly done automatically through the use of analytics.

A strategic use of call recording may occur at the **management or executive** level. When all interactions are recorded and analysed, a complete performance management programme may be put in place. Agent performance can be viewed by supervisors, team performances can be analysed by the operational manager, and contact centre performance can be evaluated by executives.

Analysis of interactions is also vital as part of a wider process optimisation strategy, to identify good and bad business practices and business process bottle-necks. Analysis of interaction recording is also vital to gaining a thorough understanding of the customer experience across channels and interactions, as part of a customer journey / Voice of the Customer project.

Of those contact centres which use interaction recording, the majority use it for both quality assurance and training purposes, so that the supervisor and the agent can both learn from it. Compliance has also been a major reason to implement call recording, but moving forward, the real benefits of interaction recording will be through detailed analysis of every interaction to understand not only how the contact centre is performing, but also how the wider business can be improved.

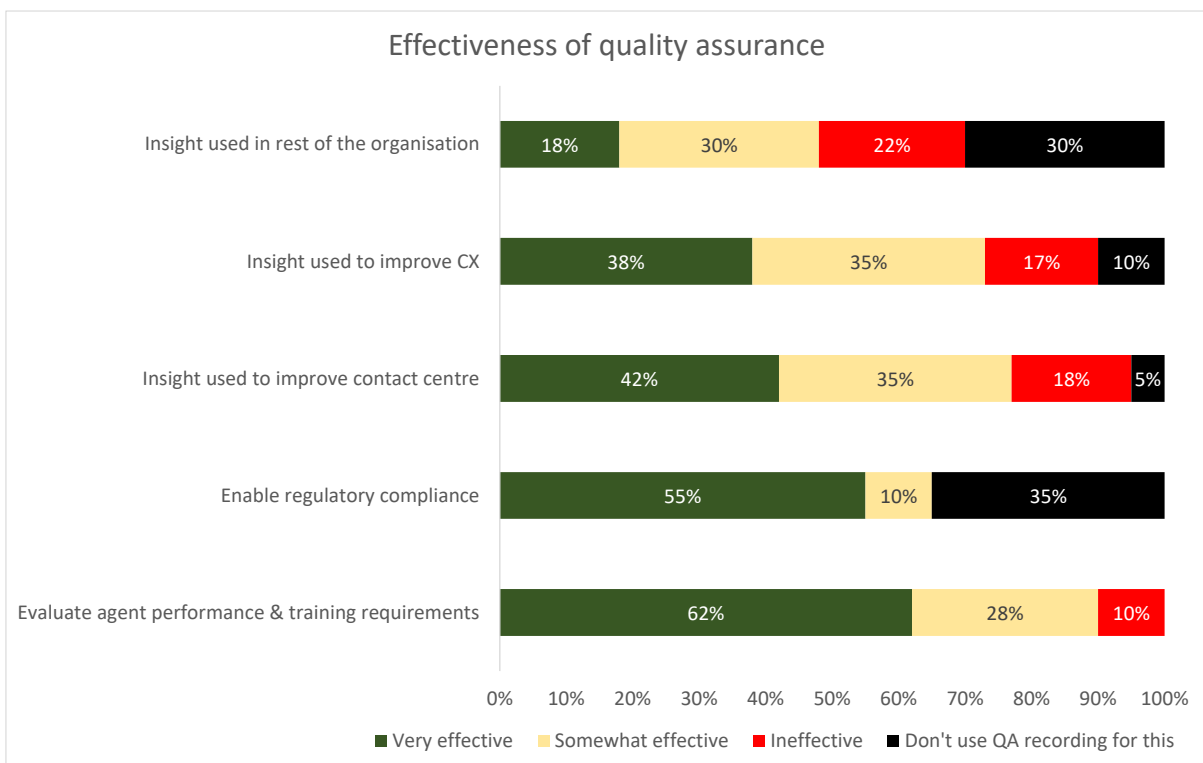
## EFFECTIVENESS OF QA

When respondents were asked about how effective their QA processes are, the results are far more positive than they have been in the past, with “enabling regulatory compliance and auditing” and “evaluating agent performance & training requirements” being particularly well thought of.

42% of those that use QA for this purpose feel that QA drives customer experience improvements significantly, which is a major improvement. However, customer insight gained from the quality assurance process stands a very significant risk of not being used effectively within the wider organisation (or indeed, at all), although the feeling is that it does generally help the outcome at agent level.

As such, it seems fair to comment that QA is currently used far more effectively and widely as a tool for improving compliance, agent productivity and skills, rather than as input into strategic business improvements, although there has been significant improvement in this recently.

**Figure 5: Effectiveness of quality assurance**



Survey respondents were asked their opinion on how effective they felt their quality evaluation was for specific contact centre activities, including inbound and outbound activity, and multichannel work.

As might be expected, inbound telephony is judged to have the most effective quality evaluation, although only 42% of respondents stated that it was very effective.

Evaluation of outbound calling was less positive, with 15% of respondents **that used and evaluated** outbound calling feeling that it was ineffective and 29% very effective.

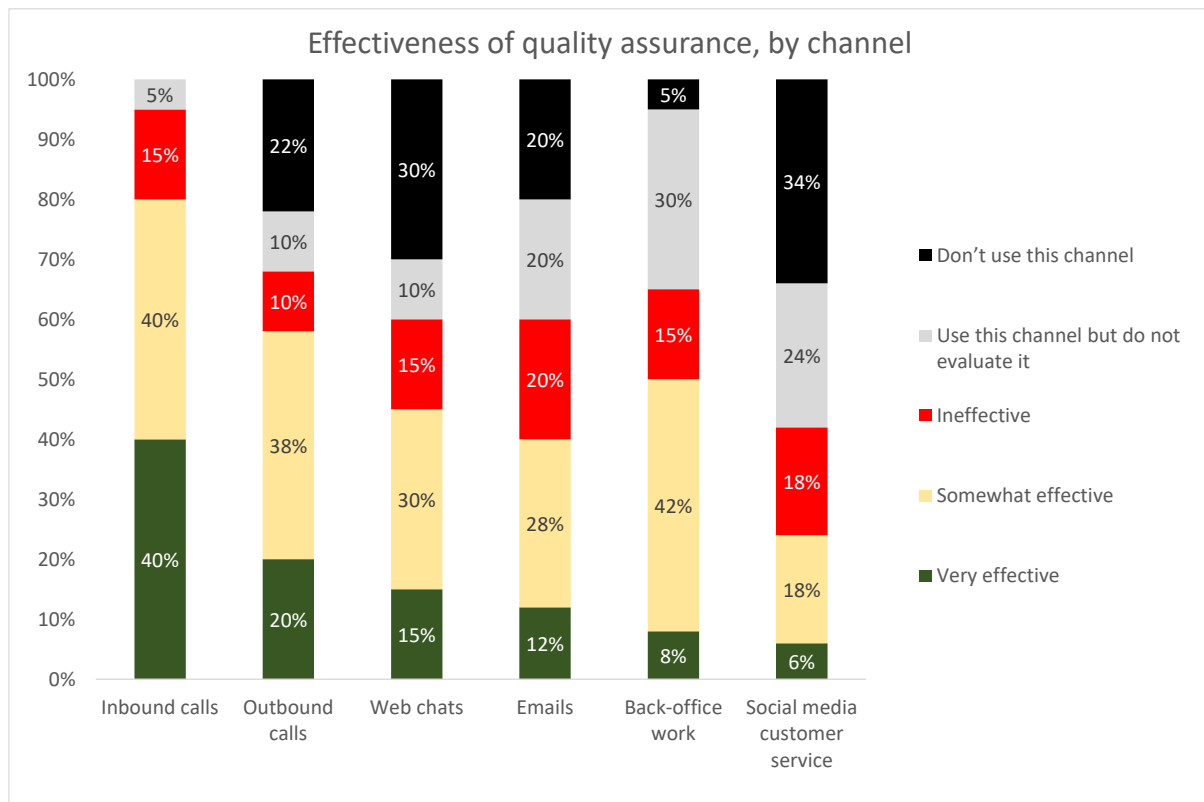
For back-office work evaluation, fewer respondents believed their QA to be very effective as did ineffective, although 30% did not use quality evaluation for back office processes. As workforce optimisation solutions continue to evolve, and processes get tracked throughout the enterprise – not just in the contact centre – the back office will have considerably more attention drawn to it.

Multichannel quality evaluation still has some way to go to reach the standard of telephony QA.

While 20% of respondents using and evaluating email stated that quality evaluation on emails was very effective, 33% believed it ineffective. For a channel that has been offered to customers for well over a decade by most businesses, this is not very impressive.

The social media channel had even worse result, and web chat QA showed only a net neutral outcome this year.

**Figure 6: Effectiveness of quality assurance, by channel**



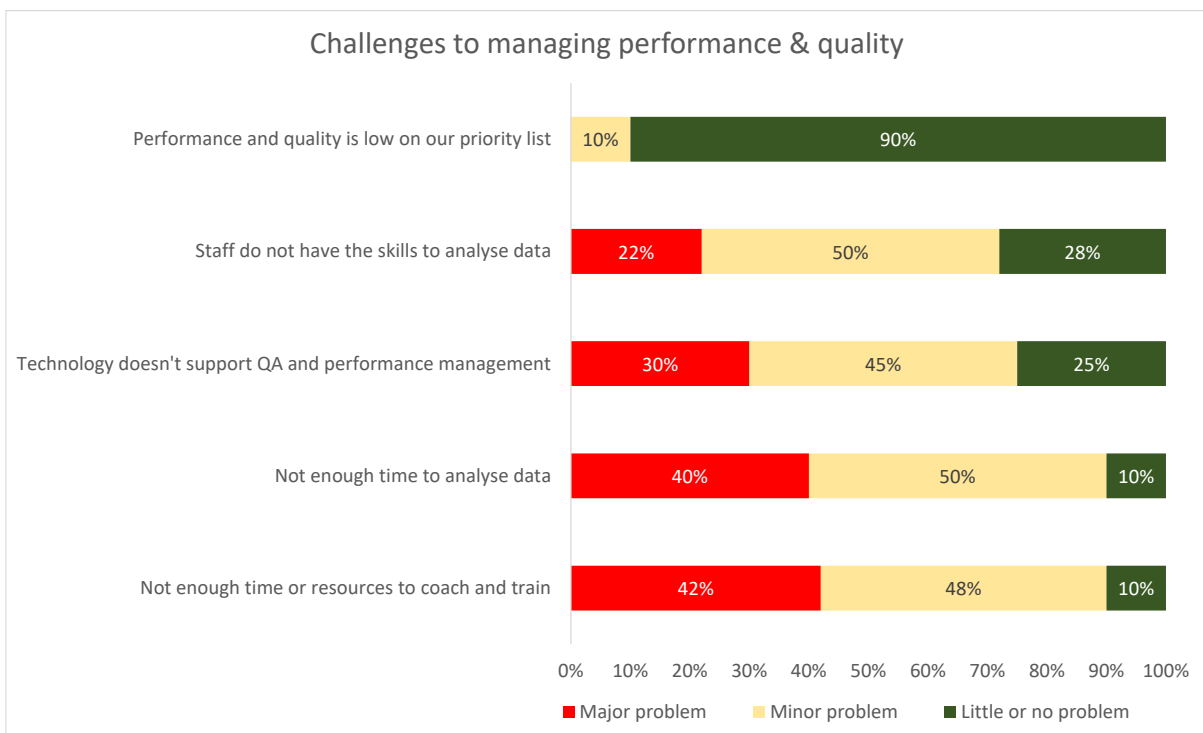
## CHALLENGES TO EFFECTIVE QA

One of the greatest challenges to managing performance and quality is reported to be caused by not having sufficient time to analyse and use data, with 90% of respondents stating that this was a problem in some form, and 42% stating that it is a major problem for them.

22% of respondents stated that it was a major problem for them that staff using the QA solution did not have the necessary skills to get the most out of the solution.

A greater level of automated analysis and insight is required from quality and performance solutions, although it should be noted that only 30% of respondents strongly believe that that their current performance and quality technology simply does not support what they would like to do, which is a significant drop on historical findings.

**Figure 7: Challenges to managing performance & quality**



Another challenge of concern is also related to training and coaching: a lack of personnel to deliver this, even assuming that the QA process has successfully identified training requirements at an individual level. Increased automation could help: e-learning has grown greatly in importance and popularity over the years, and in many cases has taken over from the traditional lecture-based forms of mass coaching, without requiring the one-to-one dedicated time and effort which places even greater strain on resources.

It is positive to say that very few of our respondents believe that performance and quality is low on the priority list: just that their systems and personnel are having difficulty achieving their goals.



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## KEY ISSUES IN QUALITY ASSURANCE & MANAGEMENT

Operations driving their performance and quality forward often carry out many of the same types of improvement:

- Assessment: changing QA assessment frameworks (the scorecard), not just in the contact centre but in some cases across back office functions as well as for emails and other contact types
- Freedom: giving advisors the freedom to do what is needed to meet the customers' needs; stepping away from the standard process where this is not appropriate and taking steps to improve processes for the future
- Development: creating a cultural change supported by a new coaching and development framework – for example, how the evaluation process is used for performance management and enabling the advisors to make suggestions for improvement
- Learning: linking quality into a wider continuous improvement framework, gaining insight about the drivers for customer satisfaction and loyalty which can be shared throughout the organisation in a quality-focused 'Voice of the Customer' programme.

There are also some clear critical success factors:

- Organisations need to distinguish compliance from customer satisfaction. Adherence to process and risk management are vital in most industry sectors but they don't necessarily drive customer satisfaction, so there has to be a balance that doesn't impact the customer negatively
- Organisations have to put the customer first: learning from customer feedback mechanisms is essential to driving success
- There has to be a strategic use of quality – aligning QA to strategic goals is extremely important, if businesses are measuring something that doesn't impact upon their strategic aims, then it's a pointless exercise that takes focus away from what's really important.

The process of quality management - which includes quality assurance and quality monitoring (QA/QM) - tends to look at several specific steps in an iterative cycle:

1. interaction recording
2. monitoring and scoring interactions, whether through manual or automated analytical processes
3. identification of issues and subsequent feedback, coaching, training and e-learning
4. reporting at an integrated level
5. identification of areas for improvement, which are then acted upon and measured.

It is the responsibility of contact centre management to identify required agent behaviours and characteristics that are most closely aligned to the operational requirements of the contact centre, which should themselves be driven by the strategic requirements of the entire organisation.

Voice of the Customer (VoC) programmes help to identify the characteristics and outcomes of interactions that customers most value, rather than simply ensuring compliance. ContactBabel research has consistently found that first-contact resolution is most highly prized by the majority of customers, yet many contact centres still measure and reward agents based upon metrics and behaviours that are not aligned with the more modern customer-centric outlook.

Quality scoring tools and processes must be flexible enough to encourage and reward the agent characteristics and skills that support the overall organisation's aims, rather than seeing the contact centre existing in a vacuum where productivity is all that counts. The scoring criteria should be re-evaluated a regular basis, and to make sure that scores are fair and consistent across the contact centre, there should be regular re-checks of calls already scored by other supervisors or QA staff.

As the focus of contact centre's success moves away from the individual interaction, and more into understanding the entire customer journey, no matter how long that takes, quality management should look to do the same. Many customer interactions require more than a single interaction or channel, and to understand quality from the customer's viewpoint, all of the interactions between the customer and business should be monitored and understood.

In operations which are using manual quality processes, listening to 100% of calls is clearly impossible. The majority of benefits from quality monitoring come from understanding the best and the worst calls, so as to propagate best practice and to retrain agents where needed.

However, listening to a small random sample of calls is unlikely to show either the highs or the lows, so this is an opportunity missed for many operations. The use of speech analytics for quality purposes has taken off significantly, especially in larger operations. This allows the analysis of all calls, allowing supervisors and QA teams to focus upon the areas in most urgent need of attention, and to provide training and coaching to those agents in greatest need. The next chapter considers analytics in more depth.

Quality management outputs can be used by the HR division in order to track the success or otherwise of recruits, and feed this back into their recruitment practices so as to attract more candidates with the skills that prove successful in the contact centre environment. The training department can see where the greatest needs for improved training courses are: for example, if a large proportion of new agents receive low scores for similar attributes or characteristics, improvements to the induction course should be considered.

As quality-focused call recording is used by the vast majority of the industry, contact centres have a clear understanding of what works for them and what doesn't.

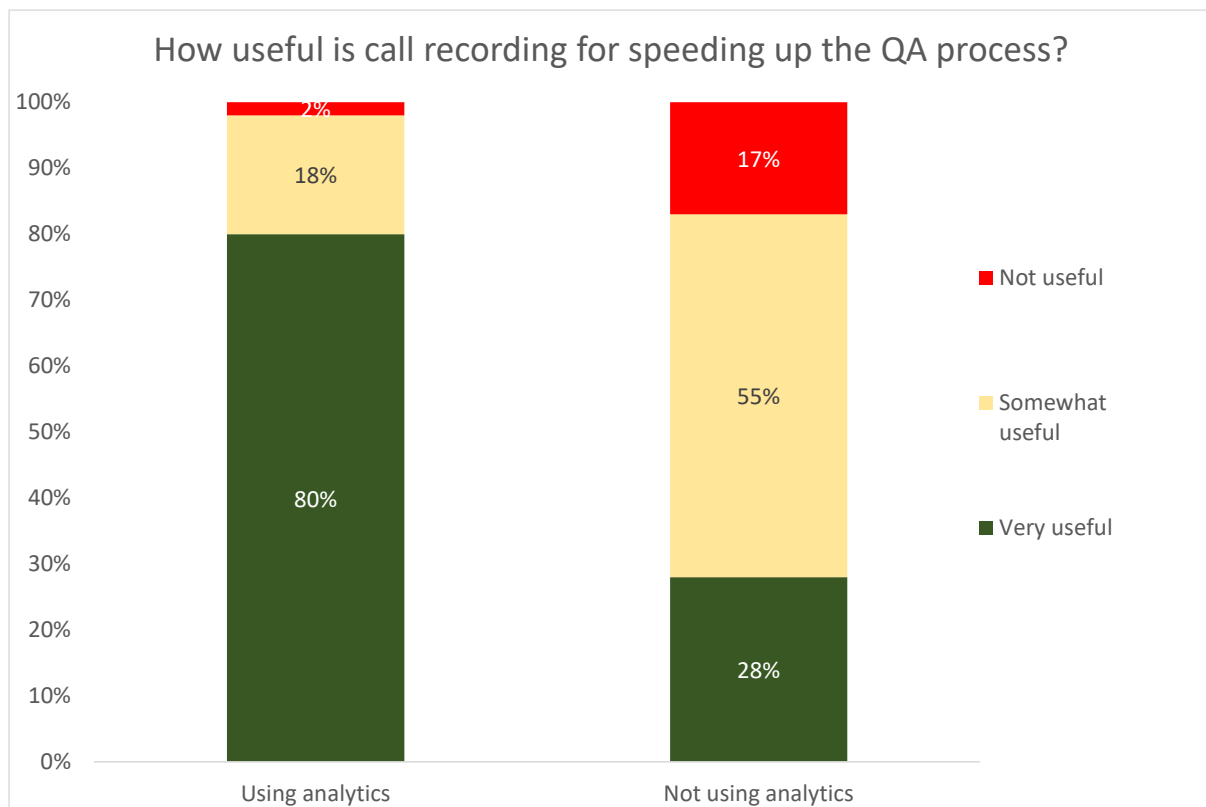
Respondents to recent ContactBabel surveys were asked which interaction recording functionality they would most like to add or improve, and three elements stood out as the most popular:

1. provide better data management information systems and reporting
2. add and improve multichannel capabilities.
3. improve the ease of use for supervisors and trainers.

The most frequently stated addition to recording functionality is a demand for higher quality of data to feed into the management information and reporting process (and also into the supporting wider analytical processes). Many respondents point out that recording has moved out of the voice-only territory and needs to be able to handle multichannel with similarly rich functionality, but as shown earlier, QA effectiveness is different across channels.

The major change to quality management in contact centres will come from the continued growth in the use of AI-enabled analytics, which allows organisations to take 100% of calls and interactions into account within the quality process. This quickly identifies the outliers – both good and bad – as well as being able to provide analysis of all of an agent’s calls so as to assess them more accurately. Currently, analytics is a useful tool for identifying where to look, but often still requires the knowledge and experience of quality management professionals. The chart below shows the difference in usefulness of call recording for QA when it is used in conjunction with analytics.

**Figure 8: How useful is call recording for speeding up the QA process?**



Based on results from quality management professionals who state that they do not have sufficient time to do everything that they would like to, we would also expect future quality management tools to focus on further automating manual processes.

Furthermore, significant proportions of survey respondents indicate that outside the traditional practice of ensuring the quality of inbound calls, QA is far less effective in handling digital channels. As the relative and absolute importance of non-voice interactions will continue to grow throughout the industry, this is a challenge to which solution providers must rise.

## ABOUT CONTACTBABEL

ContactBabel is the contact centre industry expert. If you have a question about how the industry works, or where it's heading, the chances are we have the answer.

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