



# Quality & Recording

Excerpt from the ContactBabel  
**US Contact Centre**  
**2026 Decision-Makers' Guide**  
(18<sup>th</sup> edition)

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Extract from "The 2026 US Contact Center Decision-Makers' Guide (18<sup>th</sup> edition)"

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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.

Enghouse Interactive's core values – Reliability and Choice – are key differentiators in the global marketplace. Reliability speaks to EI's reputation for consistently honoring its commitments to its customers, staff, partners and investors. Choice is reflected in the unparalleled breadth of its CX portfolio, which enables customers to choose from a wide array of solutions, whether deployed on-premise, in the cloud or via a hybrid approach. By leveraging a broad range of technologies and capabilities based on open standards, Enghouse Interactive simplifies the advanced integrations customers require.

Respecting local regulatory requirements, and supporting any telephony technology, Enghouse Interactive ensures that its customers can be reached by their customers – anytime, anywhere, and via any channel.

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## ABOUT THE US CONTACT CENTER DECISION-MAKERS' GUIDE

The "US Contact Center Decision-Makers' Guide (2026 – 18<sup>th</sup> edition)" is the major annual report studying the performance, operations, technology and HR aspects of US contact center operations.

Taking a random sample of the industry, a detailed structured questionnaire was answered by 207 contact center managers and directors between November 2025 and February 2026.

The result is the 18<sup>th</sup> edition of the largest and most comprehensive study of all aspects of the US contact center industry.

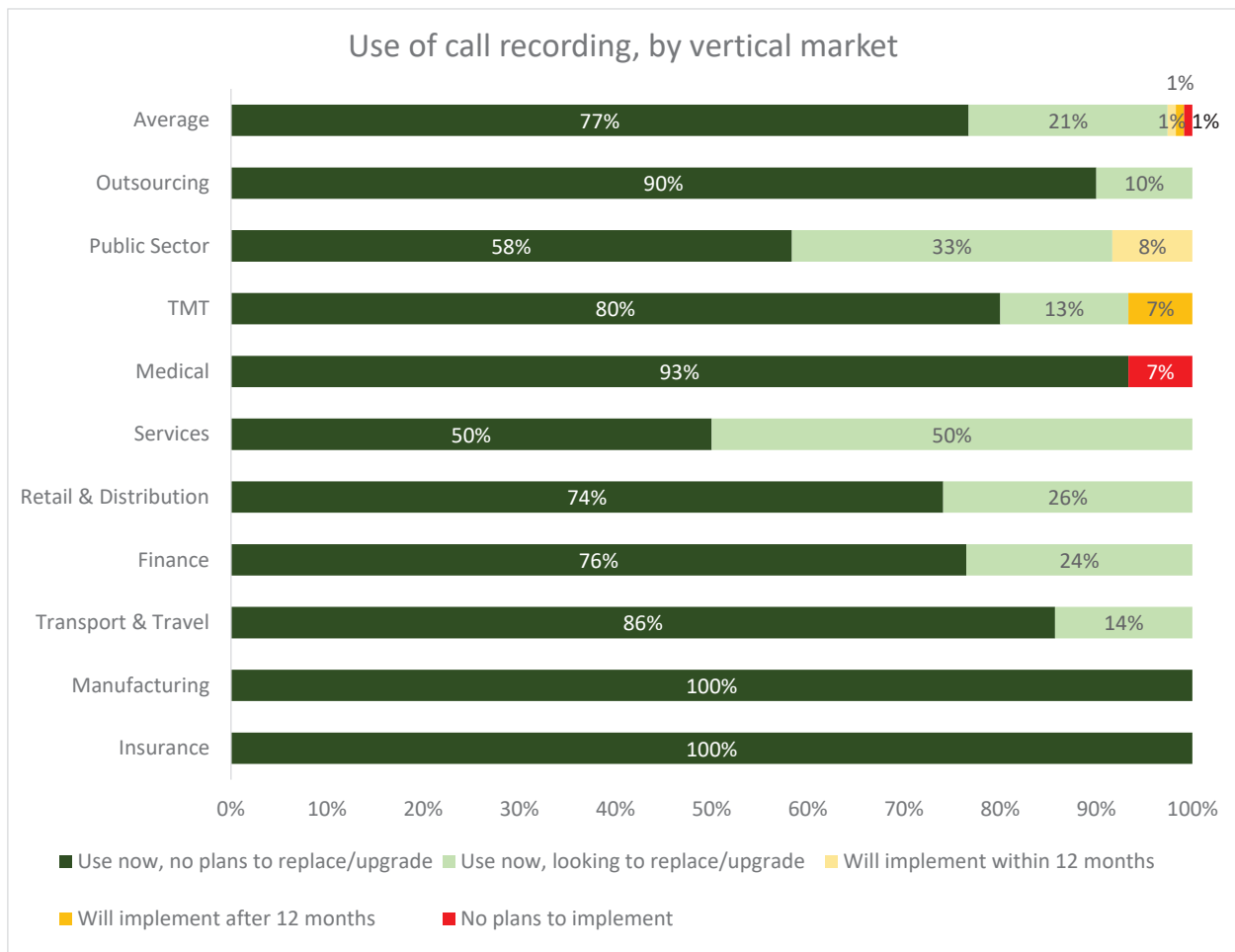
This White Paper is taken from the "Quality & Call Recording" chapter of the report, sponsored by Enghouse Interactive.

## QUALITY & CALL RECORDING

### CURRENT & FUTURE USE OF CALL RECORDING

Consistently one of the most widely-used contact center technologies, call recording is used by 96% of this year’s respondents, of whom 19% state that they wish to replace or upgrade their current system. Only 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 services, public sector, retail and finance 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.



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## Stop Bolting AI onto Broken CX Platforms

If your contact center AI sits in a separate dashboard, if it requires weeks of tuning, if it can't prove measurable operational impact...

**It's not Practical AI**

**CxEngage** and **Practical AI** from **Enghouse Interactive** delivers connected, omnichannel CX with intelligence embedded from the start.

**CxEngage** unifies voice, digital, messaging, and native video in a true cloud architecture designed for enterprise control and scale

Extensive AI capabilities — including transcription, call summarization, AI-powered quality assurance, **Voice of the Customer** (VoC) insights, and agent assistance, reduce manual effort while improving interaction consistency and accelerating customer issue resolution.

**Layered with certified call recording and automated quality management, you gain:**

- 100% interaction capture
- Real-time sentiment and issue detection
- Faster, defensible dispute resolution
- Reduced repeat contacts and unnecessary escalations

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### The outcome:

Higher CSAT and FCR, lower costs, stronger compliance.

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No AI theatre

| No platform sprawl

| No roadmap promises

# Just measurable CX performance.

Schedule a Practical AI Assessment or Proof-of-Value Trial.

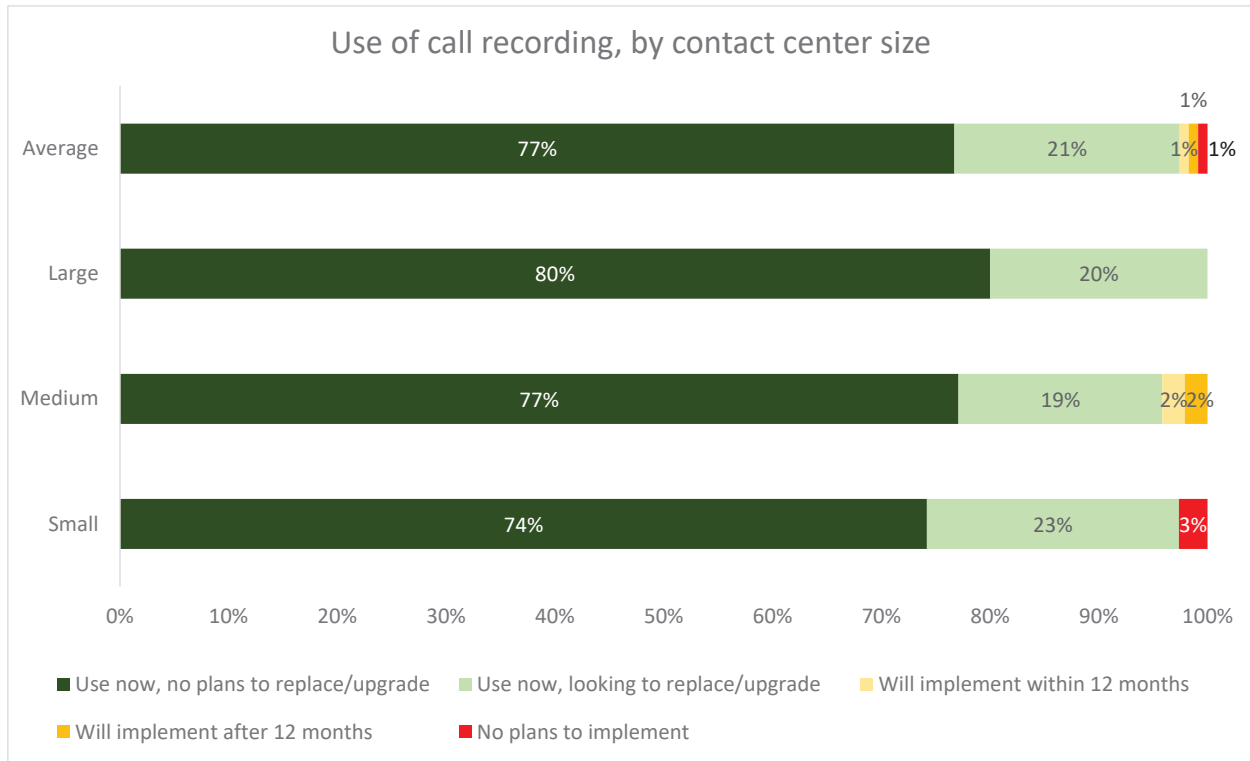
Cx**Engage**

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The current 97% penetration rate in respondents from small operations shows that vendors have been able to offer solutions successfully at various price points to smaller operations, through cloud-based deployments.

89% of call recording users report that they have cloud-based deployments, with the remainder planning to move to cloud within two years.

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



## 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 customized to support agent-initiated call recording through a desktop interface, or automated through call recording triggers sent from third-party software.

72% of respondents that use call recording do so for all calls, with 28% taking the option to record only a part of their overall voice interactions.

67% 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 38% will do so based on the inbound number called.

30% identify the inbound caller's number and decide whether to record or not based on that.

**Figure 3: 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.)	67%
Based on DNIS (dialed number identification service), i.e. the number being called)	38%
Based on ANI (automated number identification), i.e. the number calling in)	30%

As with any form of recorded and potentially sensitive customer data, the secure storage of recorded calls must be taken into account.

80% 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 synchronizes 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 center into play, supporting agent best practice and improvement, ensuring compliance with regulations and improving the organization's insight into the customer experience through supporting analytics.

Large and medium operations are likely to have coaches evaluating calls as well as a dedicated QA team, which will also feed into the process of understanding each individual's need for specific improvement, as well as developing the wider training program.

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

Most 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 center 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 analyzed, a complete performance management program may be put in place. Agent performance can be viewed by supervisors, team performances can be analyzed by the operational manager, and contact center performance can be evaluated by executives.

Analysis of interactions is also vital as part of a wider process optimization 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 centers 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 center is performing, but also how the wider business can be improved.

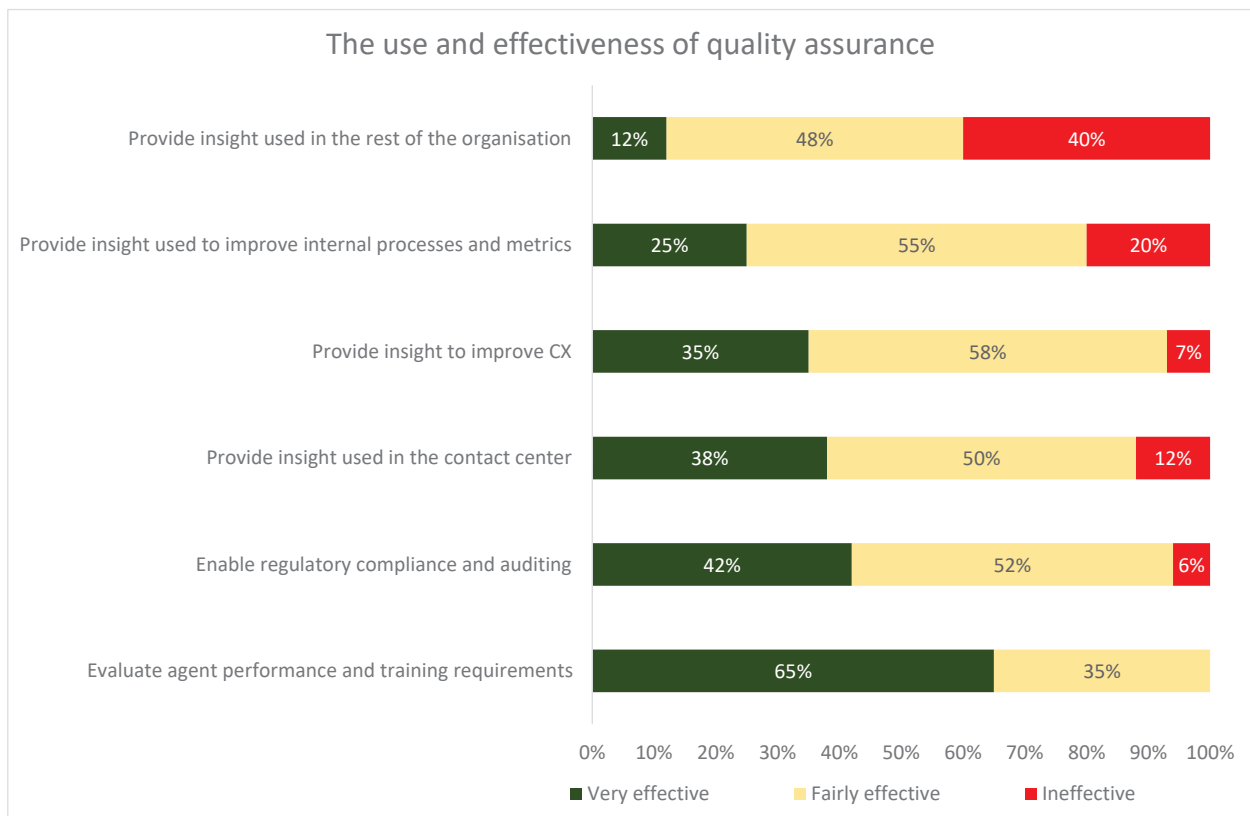
## EFFECTIVENESS OF QA

When respondents were asked about how effective their QA processes are and what they are used for, it is noticeable that more of these respondents are lukewarm about the results of their QA processes than are actively enthusiastic: only “Evaluating agent performance and training requirements” had more respondents judging the QA process as ‘very effective’ rather than merely ‘fairly effective’ for this purpose, showing that there is still a need for improved functionality.

35% feel that QA drives customer experience improvements significantly, however, customer insight gained from the quality assurance process stands a very significant risk of not being used effectively within the wider organization, 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 agent productivity and skills, rather than as input into strategic business improvements, and it is fair to say it is not yet being used at its full potential.

**Figure 4: Effectiveness of quality assurance**



Survey respondents were asked their opinion on how effective they felt their quality evaluation was for specific contact center 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 40% of respondents stated that it was very effective. Evaluation of outbound calling was less positive, with 35% of respondents **that used** outbound calling feeling that it was ineffective and 30% very effective.

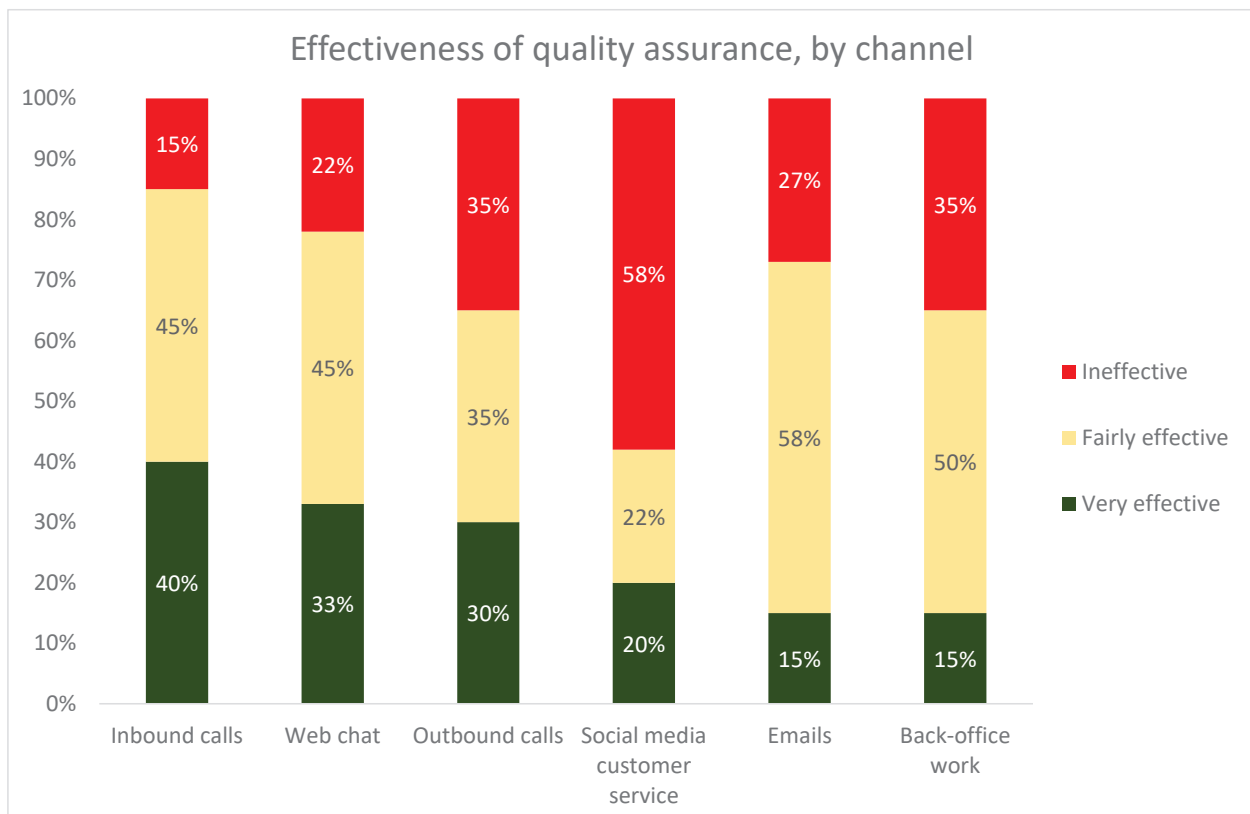
For back-office work evaluation, more than twice as many respondents believed their QA to be ineffective as did very effective. As workforce optimization solutions continue to evolve, and processes get tracked throughout the enterprise – not just in the contact center – the back office will have considerably more attention drawn to it.

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

Only 15% of respondents using email stated that quality evaluation on emails was very effective, with 27% believing 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, although web chat QA again showed a net positive outcome this year.

**Figure 5: Effectiveness of quality assurance, by channel**



## CHALLENGES TO EFFECTIVE QA

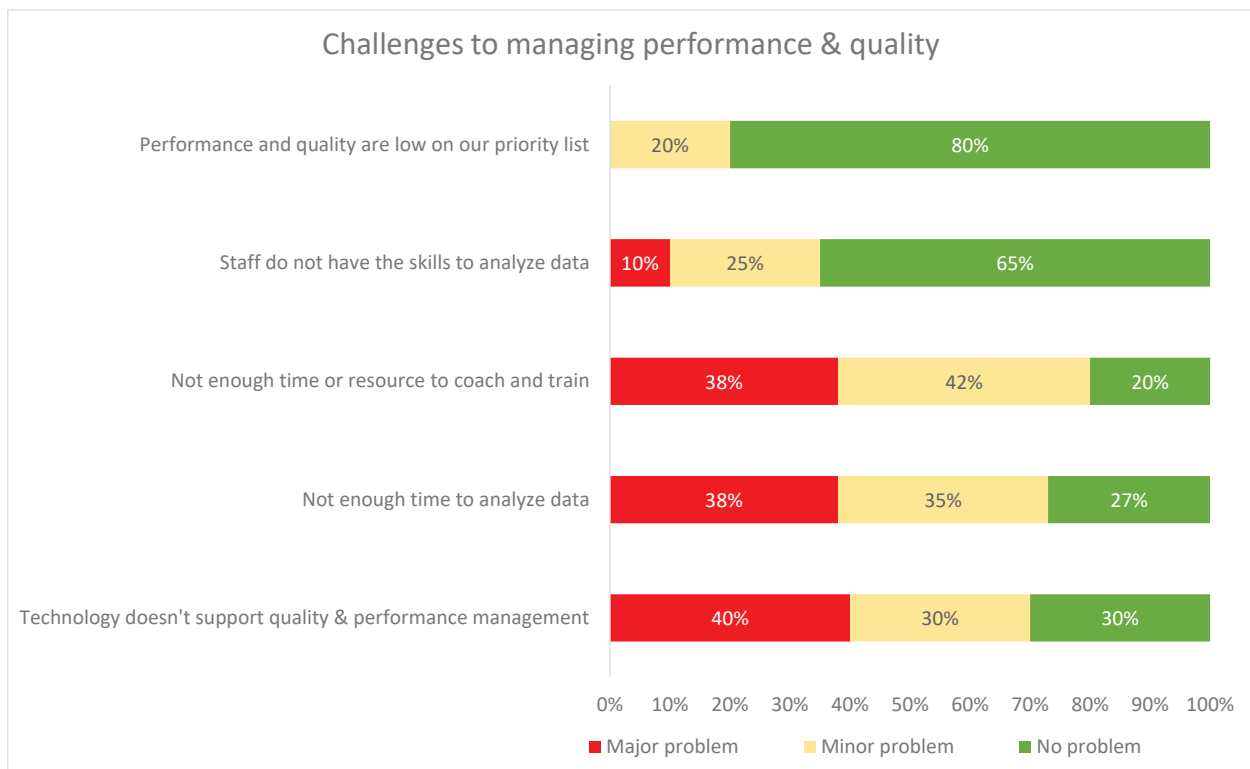
One of the greatest challenges to managing performance and quality is reported to be caused by not having sufficient time to analyze and use data, with 73% of respondents stating that this was a problem in some form, and 38% stating that it is a major problem for them.

However, very few of respondents believe that performance and quality is low on the priority list: just that their systems and personnel are having difficulty achieving their goals.

Not having enough time or resources to coach and train was seen as a similar-sized issue. Only 10% of respondents also 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.

This suggests a greater level of automated analysis and insight is required from quality and performance solutions, a hypothesis which may be seen to be further supported by noting that 40% of respondents strongly believe that that their current technology simply does not support what they would like to do.

**Figure 6: Challenges to managing performance & quality**



The challenge of greatest concern to mid-sized operations 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.

Once again, increased automation could be the answer here: 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.

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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 center 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 organization in a quality-focused 'Voice of the Customer' program.

There are also some clear critical success factors:

- Organizations 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
- Organizations 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 center management to identify required agent behaviors and characteristics that are most closely aligned to the operational requirements of the contact center, which should themselves be driven by the strategic requirements of the entire organization.

Voice of the Customer (VoC) programs 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 centers still measure and reward agents based upon metrics and behaviors 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 organization's aims, rather than seeing the contact center 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 center, there should be regular re-checks of calls already scored by other supervisors or QA staff.

As the focus of contact center'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 center 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 centers 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 centers will come from the continued growth in the use of AI-enabled analytics, which allows organizations 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 QM/QA experts.

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

We help contact centers compare themselves to their closest competitors so they can understand what they are doing well, what needs to improve and how they can do this.

The coverage provided by our massive and ongoing primary research projects is matched by our experience analyzing the contact center industry. We understand how technology, people and process best fit together, and how they will work collectively in the future.

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