

A photograph of three call center agents in profile, wearing headsets. The woman on the right is smiling and looking out a window. The background is a blurred office environment with large windows.

REPORT | 2017

CONTACT CENTER SATISFACTION INDEX



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
CONTACT CENTER SATISFACTION INDEX	4
1. PRE-CONTACT <i>Improve Online Self-Service</i>	9
2. CONTACT <i>Empower Frontline Representatives</i>	12
3. POST-CONTACT <i>Engage Customers on Social Media</i>	18
CONCLUSION	22
ABOUT THE APPROACH	22

INTRODUCTION

The global contact center market is projected to hit \$9.7 billion by 2019, with CAGR of over 9%.¹ For the US, there are roughly 3 million contact center workers, and almost 7,000 call center facilities of 25 or more employees.² The industry is bolstered by ongoing innovations in technology and systems available to contact center managers that enables multi-channel service and support to customers.

Despite these advances, the primary driver of customer satisfaction with contact centers continues to be the personal interaction with a professional representative. To be effective, technology must work to enhance the rep's ability to solve the customer's problem, not to replace that 1:1 interaction customers demand.

The CFI Group Contact Center Satisfaction Index 2017 shows that customer satisfaction with the contact center experience has remained low since 2014. Analysis from a panel of 1,528 customers who recently contacted customer service highlights how companies can boost customer satisfaction by managing before, during, and after the contact experience:

1. PRE-CONTACT

Improve Online Self-Service

2. CONTACT

Empower Frontline Representatives

3. POST-CONTACT

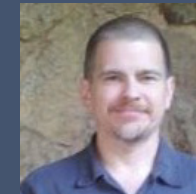
Engage Customers on Social Media

Companies that can manage all three phases of the contact experience can boost overall customer satisfaction.

CFI GROUP SOLUTIONS FOR CONTACT CENTERS



SHERI PETRAS
CEO



RODGER PARK
Director of Customer Analytics



DAVE HAM
Program Director



STEFANIE MORRISON
Senior Consultant

1 - <http://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20160329005128/en/Global-Contact-Center-Market-Exceed-USD-9.7>

2 - <https://info.siteselectiongroup.com/blog/how-big-is-the-us-call-center-industry-compared-to-india-and-philippines>

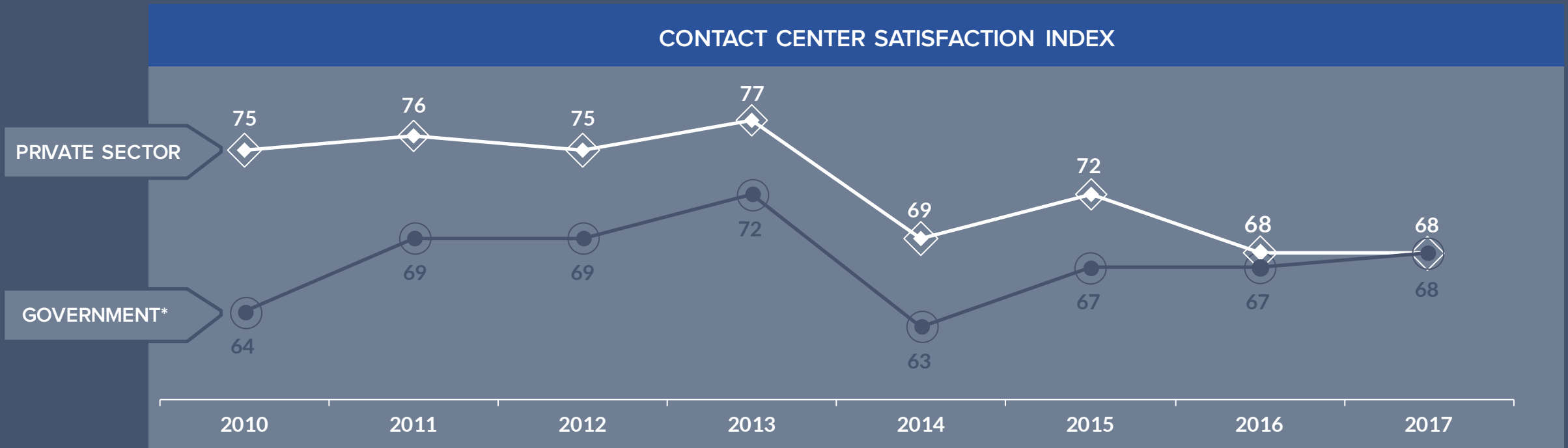


CONTACT CENTER SATISFACTION INDEX

CONTACT CENTER SATISFACTION REMAINS LOW

The Contact Center Satisfaction Index (CCSI) is 68, as measured on a 0-100 scale. It holds steady from 2016, but remains at a low point since 2010. This study involved a panel of 1,528 respondents who had contacted customer service in the prior 30 days.

Private sector CCSI historically has run a few points higher than the public sector.* For 2017, both indexes sit at 68, suggesting that the private sector and government sector face challenges in delivering a contact center experience on par with previous years. This report looks at factors that influence the satisfaction of those contacting the customer service and provides executives with insights into where to invest those improvement efforts.

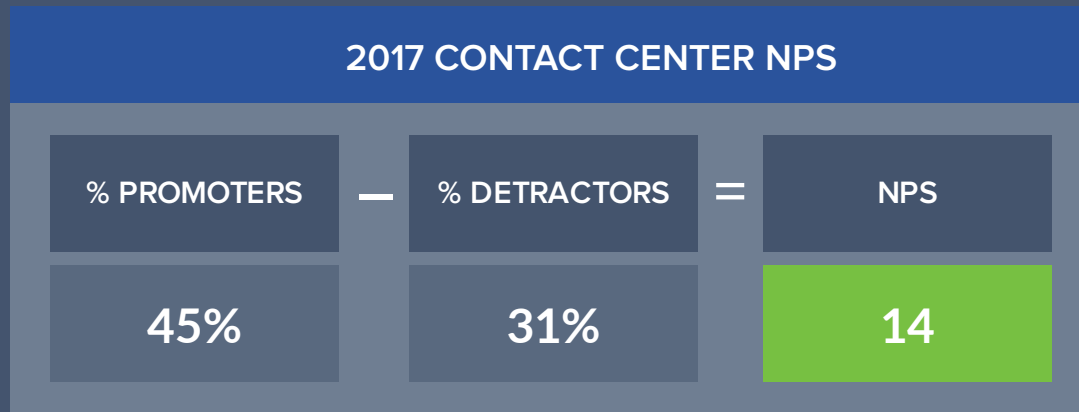


* See full GCCSI Report at <https://cfigroup.com/resource-item/gccsi-2017/>

THE POWER OF WORD-OF-MOUTH – NET PROMOTER SCORE (NPS)

Net Promoter Score (NPS) is derived from a customer's likelihood to recommend a company based on their experience with the company. NPS is simply the percent of Promoters (people who give a 9 or 10 for the likelihood to recommend the company) minus the percent of Detractors (people who give 6 or less). Contact Center NPS for 2017 is 14, which is a generally low score.

Contact Center NPS varies considerably by industry, with Banks/Credit Unions and Property & Casualty Insurance at the top at 33.



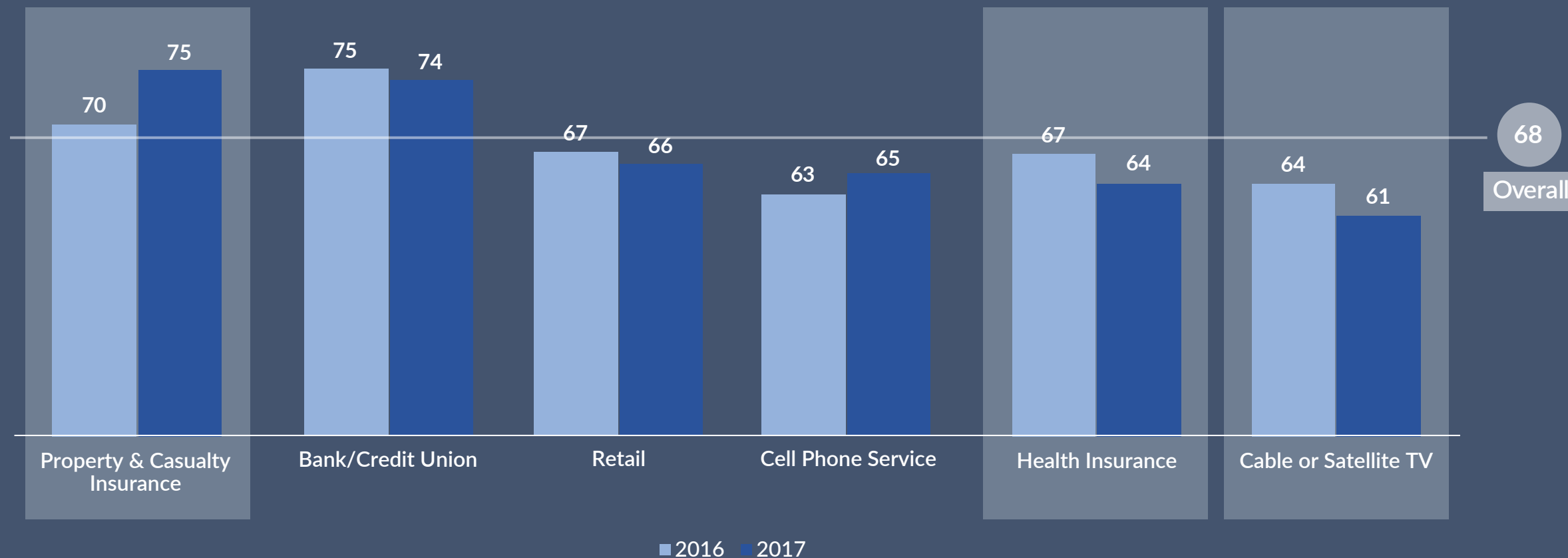
INDUSTRY	CONTACT CENTER NPS
Property & Casualty Insurance	33
Bank/Credit Union	33
Retail	16
Cell Phone Service	9
Cable or Satellite TV	-1
Health Insurance	-4

PROPERTY & CASUALTY INSURANCE IS UP

PROPERTY & CASUALTY INSURANCE: Property & Casualty Insurance saw a bump in CCSI from 2016 to 2017, driven by considerable score increases for the key areas of Rep Effectiveness (+5) and Rep Empowerment (+5). A full 51% of callers in 2017 reached a live representative directly, compared to only 40% in 2016. This direct connection to a live rep improves CCSI.

HEALTH INSURANCE: CCSI for the Health Insurance industry, meanwhile, is down 3 points. Rep Empowerment is down 2 points and Rep Effectiveness stays even with 2016 levels.

CABLE OR SATELLITE TV: CCSI also dipped 3 points for Cable or Satellite TV.



REP EXPERIENCE EDGES UP, WHILE IVR EXPERIENCE DIPS

CFI Group models the contact center experience using our patented cause and effect methodology. Applying this modeling approach, we identify seven customer satisfaction drivers that make up the contact center experience.

Consistent with CCSI scores, most drivers are relatively unchanged from last year. Scores for aspects of the rep experience are all up 1 point: effectiveness, empowerment, knowledge, demeanor, and understanding. Conversely, the two lowest drivers that measure IVR interaction fell to even lower levels. But as we will see in this report, IVR scores do not drive contact center customer satisfaction.

YEAR-OVER-YEAR CHANGES				
			Δ	2017
CCSI OVERALL			–	68
DRIVERS	REP EFFECTIVENESS	72	+1	73
	REP EMPOWERMENT	70	+1	71
	REP KNOWLEDGE	72	+1	73
	REP DEMEANOR	81	+1	82
	REP EASE OF UNDERSTANDING	78	+1	79
	IVR	56	-2	54
	IVR VOICE RECOGNITION	58	-4	54

A man with a beard, wearing a dark polo shirt, is sitting on a green armchair in a modern living room. He is looking down at a silver laptop on his lap. The room has a brick wall on the left, a large window in the background, and a yellow cushion on the right. A semi-transparent grey box is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing text. The bottom of the image has an orange gradient overlay.

63%

Try to resolve their issue
online before contacting
customer service

1. PRE-CONTACT

Improve Online Self-Service

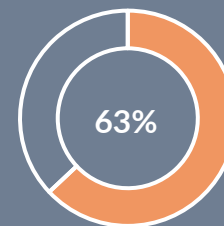
MOST TRY SELF-SERVE BEFORE REACHING OUT TO CUSTOMER SERVICE

Of all customers who contact customer service, 63% try to resolve their issue prior to contacting customer service. If these customers could address their issues online, they would not need to contact customer service, boosting customer satisfaction and reducing operational costs.

Online resources are explored by 59% of all customers prior to reaching out to customer service. There are 11% who actually try the company mobile app first before contacting customer service.

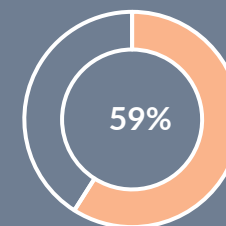
The good news is that people are finding help from online tools; customers are increasingly comfortable going online to find answers to their questions.

The implication of this growing use of online self-service is that those who contact customer service increasingly tend to have more complex issues that cannot be easily handled online or through the app, making the average customer service contact more difficult to handle.

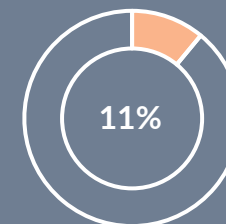


Try to resolve their issue before contacting customer service

PERCENT OF CUSTOMERS WHO TRY TO RESOLVE ISSUE ONLINE OR THROUGH A MOBILE APP BEFORE CONTACTING CUSTOMER SERVICE



Online



Mobile App

* Multiple responses allowed

SOME REASONS FOR CONTACTING SUPPORT CAN BE ADDRESSED ONLINE

A good number of the reasons customers contact customer service can be easily handled through self-service online tools. Placing an order or checking the status of an order should be simple to do online. And tools are readily available for up-to-the-hour tracking for a variety of common shipping methods.

The challenge is not with making the tools available; it is with making access to those tools effortless and simple for the customer. Many of the 15% who tried to place an order, or the 16% who tried to check on the status of an order, were simply not able to figure out how to do it online.





80%

Call on the phone
when contacting
customer service

2. CONTACT

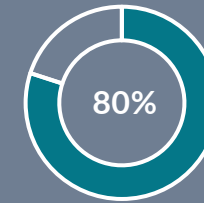
Empower Frontline Representatives

PHONE CALLS ARE STILL THE PREFERRED CUSTOMER SERVICE CHANNEL

Despite the continued growth of multi-channel enabled contact centers, a voice phone call still dominates as the customer's channel of choice. A full 80% contact customer service over the phone.

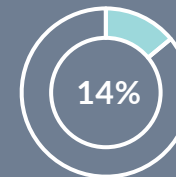
The dominance of the phone channel does not mean that contact centers should neglect other channels. There are 14% who use email, with ever-increasing expectations on reply times, and 9% who use chat, a number that we expect to grow in 2017.

Social media is even becoming a channel viewed as a mechanism for interacting with customer service. A notable 3% of customers who contact customer service actually reach out through Facebook, while 1% even give Twitter a try. We expect these channels to grow as well as they become more familiar to less tech-saavy customers.

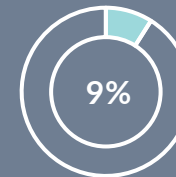


Contact Customer Service
by Calling on the Phone

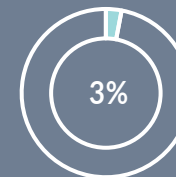
PERCENT OF CUSTOMERS WHO USE OTHER METHODS WHEN CONTACTING CUSTOMER SERVICE



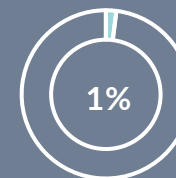
Email



Interactive (Online) Chat



Facebook



Twitter

*Multiple responses allowed

PEOPLE DON'T WANT SELF SERVICE WHEN CALLING CUSTOMER SERVICE

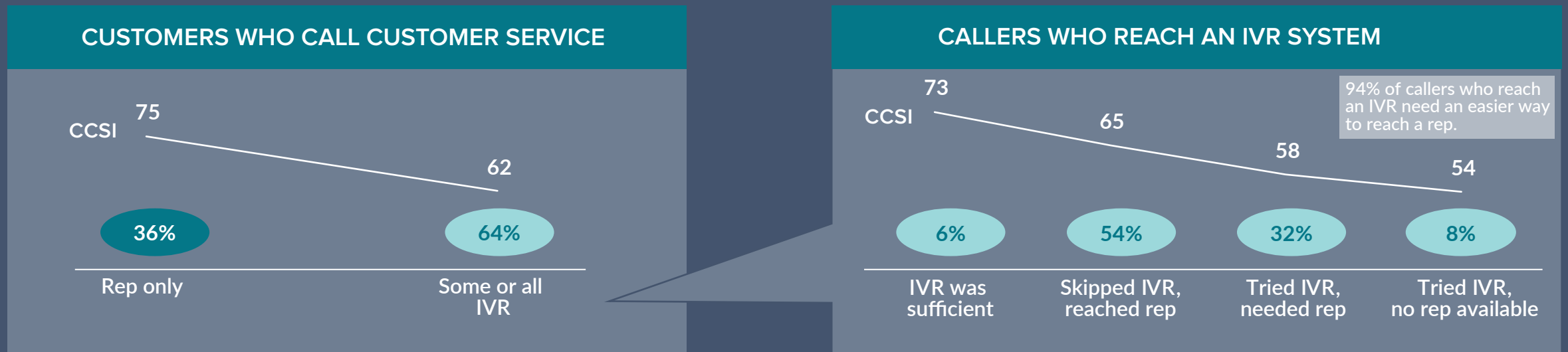
By the time customers call customer service, most have already tried self-service. They now want to speak with a live rep who can help them quickly.

CCSI is 75 for the 36% of the callers who get connected directly to a live rep. For the 64% who reach an IVR, CCSI is a much lower (62), due in part to the effort required to get past the IVR and get to a live person who can help.

For the select few callers who reach an IVR and say the IVR alone was sufficient to answer their issue, CCSI is 73. Unfortunately, this high score only applies to just 6% of all callers who reach an IVR. The other 94% of those who reach an IVR need an easier way to reach a rep.

Of all callers who reach an IVR, 54% just skip right past it making no attempt to use it. The CCSI for this group is 65, well above the 58 for 32% who try to navigate the IVR but have to speak to a rep to resolve the issue.

Recall that many of these callers are unable to solve their problems online. By the time customers call customer service, they simply need an easy way to reach a rep.



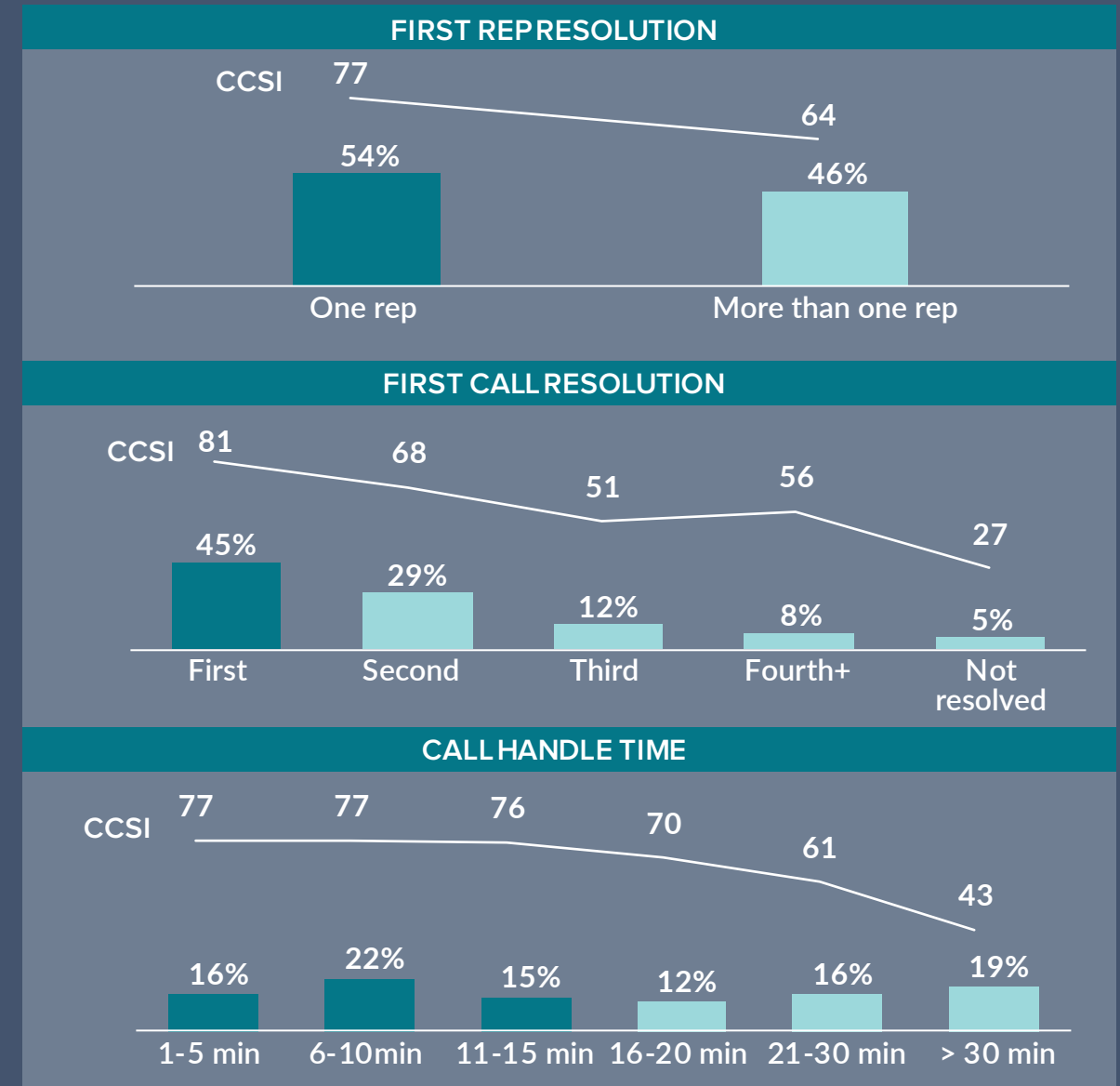
PROFESSIONAL CALL HANDLING BY REPS LEADS TO GREAT EXPERIENCE

Contact professionals who can deliver first rep resolution, first call resolution, and low call handle time are critical for ensuring a great contact center experience.

FIRST REP RESOLUTION: Just 54% of callers say the issue is resolved with the first representative, resulting in a CCSI of 77. CCSI falls as the number of reps needed to resolve the issue increases.

FIRST CALL RESOLUTION: Only 45% of callers say that the issue is resolved the first time, with an average CCSI of a high 81. CCSI dips as the issue requires multiple contacts.

CALL HANDLE TIME: A modest 16% of callers say the contact was handled in 5 minutes or less, and 53% of all calls are handled within 15 minutes, with CCSI between 77 and 76. After 15 minutes, however, CCSI drops sharply.



COMPANIES SHOULD EMPOWER REPS TO BOOST CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

CFI Group's ACSI-powered technology calculates the relative impacts of the drivers of satisfaction. Our modeling shows that the top two drivers for contact centers are the overall effectiveness of the rep and the degree of empowerment of the reps to address the issue.

RANK		SATISFACTION DRIVERS
HIGH IMPACT	1	REP EFFECTIVENESS
	2	REP EMPOWERMENT
MEDIUM IMPACT	3	REP KNOWLEDGE
	4	REP DEemeanor
LOW IMPACT	5	IVR VOICE RECOGNITION
	6	IVR
	7	REP EASE OF UNDERSTANDING

REP DEemeanor AND EASE OF UNDERSTANDING: Because the demeanor of the rep and the ease with which the customer understands the rep have high scores, there is little need to invest in improving these aspects of the customer experience.

REP EFFECTIVENESS

Explaining the process to address your issue

Helping you find the information you need

Successfully completing your interaction

Total time required to address your issue

REP EMPOWERMENT

Being empowered to address your issue

Ability to offer information or solution tailored to your situation

Policies that make sense

INVESTMENT IN IVR TECHNOLOGY COULD HAVE LIMITED ROI

IVR AND IVR VOICE RECOGNITION: Despite IVR interaction receiving low scores, IVR improvement is, for the most part, not a priority. Customers have already tried self-service through a more efficient channel (digital). By the time they contact customer service, they are generally not interested in IVR self-service.

USE CAUTION



IMPROVEMENT IN YOUR IVR SYSTEM WILL LIKELY HAVE NOMINAL EFFECT ON CONTACT CENTER CUSTOMER SATISFACTION.

Because most customers have already attempted self-service, by the time they place a call to customer service they are looking to speak to a live representative. They are no longer looking for self-service at that point. Consequently, investment in IVR technologies to encourage customer self-service will likely have limited ROI.



41%

Share their customer
service experience
with others

3. POST-CONTACT

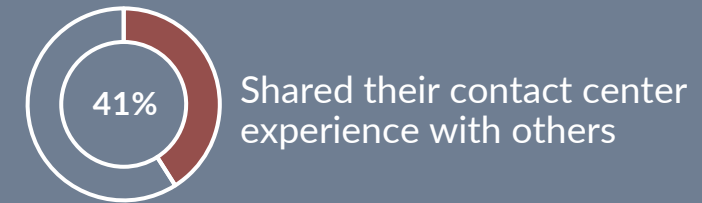
Engage Customers on Social Media

A PORTION OF CUSTOMERS SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

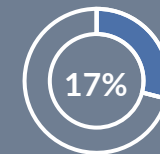
Customers who contact a customer service tend to share their experience. Surprisingly, 41% say they shared their most recent contact center experience with others.

Facebook stands out as the most dominant social media channel where people share customer experience stories. A full 17% of all who contact customer service share that experience on Facebook.

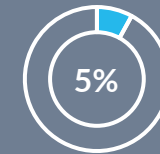
Facebook is not the only social media channel. Twitter (5%), YouTube (5%), and Google+ (4%) all have some customer experience sharing activity. While not as frequently used as Facebook, the sharing on these other channels can have an impact on the general perception of a company's brand experience.



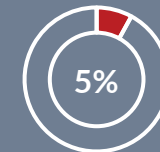
PERCENT OF CUSTOMERS WHO SHARE THEIR CONTACT CENTER EXPERIENCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA



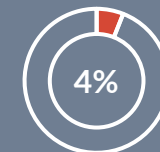
Facebook



Twitter



YouTube



Google Plus

*Multiple responses allowed

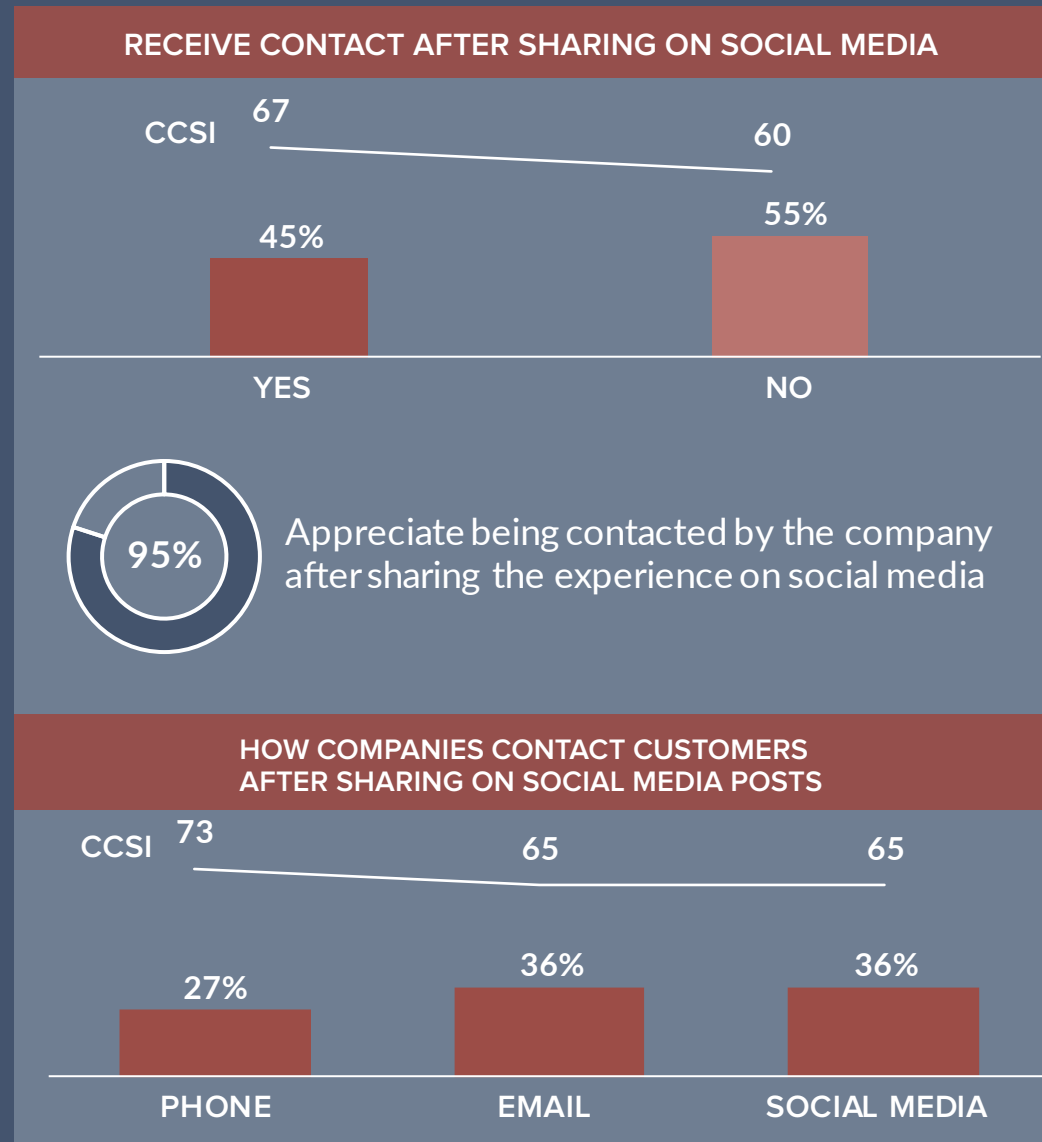
EFFECTIVE COMPANIES RESPOND TO CUSTOMER SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Companies with best-in-class contact practices effectively engage customers who post on social media about their contact center experience.

A sizeable 45% of customers say they receive contact from the company after sharing the experience on social media. CCSI is 67 for those contacted by the company, compared to just 60 where the company did not follow up. And customers like being contacted: 95% say that they appreciate being contacted by the company.

Calling the customer is the most effective way to respond to a social media post. A phone call may not be the most economical channel, but phone contact after a social media post generates a CCSI of 73, compared to CCSI of 65 for email or social media.

Representatives should be empowered to act even after the contact experience is considered completed. Reps empowered to take ownership of connecting with the customers to ensure issues are resolved will have a positive impact on overall satisfaction with the contact center experience.





CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

Executives responsible for a contact center have a clear takeaway for each of the three phases of a contact: improve customer online self-service before the contact, empower frontline representatives during the contact, and engage customers on social media after the contact.

Contact center executives must resist the urge to think of the contact center as a self-service channel and embrace the role of the contact center as a 'last resort.' By the time they contact customer service, most customers have already tried self-service. Making it easier for customers to reach a human is paramount to satisfaction.

Cost control guidance for contact centers often focuses on four cost drivers: contact volume, handle time, labor costs, and telecom costs. But only cutting costs may create greater dissatisfaction for those contacting support. If the customer experience with the contact center is not measured with a view of customer satisfaction and customer lifetime value, the drawbacks of cost-cutting are more difficult to see and manage. Without a focus on customers and the problems they are trying to solve, a contact center can miss the point entirely.

ABOUT THE APPROACH

This is the ninth year CFI Group has conducted an extensive study of customer satisfaction with contact centers using the proven technology powered by our patented customization of the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI). All survey panel respondents had contact with customer service within the previous 30 days. This report analyzes the aggregate set of respondents across the mix of industries measured.

The purpose of this study is to provide managers with a better understanding of how to meet the needs of their contact center customers.

Contact centers play a vital role in supporting and delivering a products and services offered by a company. CFI Group focused its contact center study on six primary industries:

- Bank/Credit Union
- Cable or Satellite TV
- Cell Phone Service
- Property and Casualty Insurance
- Health Insurance
- Retail

Within this select group, the range of functions the contact center must perform is far-reaching. Contact centers must provide technical support, give policy information, handle complaints, and potentially play countless other roles.

This year's CCSI study continues the exploration of how well contact centers are delivering services and resolving their issues. It examines trends and offers recommendations to improve satisfaction with the contact center experience.

ABOUT US



Since 1988, CFI Group has delivered customer experience measurement and business insights from its Ann Arbor, Michigan headquarters and a network of global offices. As founding partner of the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), CFI Group is the only company within the United States licensed to apply customized ACSI methodology in both the private and public sectors. Using patented technology and top research experts, CFI Group uncovers the business drivers and financial impact of customer experience.

CFI Group
625 Avis Drive
Ann Arbor, MI
48108
Tel: 734.930.9090
Email: AskUs@cfgroup.com