



Abstract

Contact Centers in a Post-Pandemic World

A Strategic and Tactical Guide to the Future



Leaders across industries are in agreement that changes in our world are driving a technology revolution. The contact center included. While living through a pandemic has certainly impacted business, it's not the sole reason the changes have occurred. Change happens, technology innovates and businesses experience shifts even without a pandemic. New solutions, respective market trends, customer behavior and the cloud, drive change. This pandemic just sped up the change process, which we've seen in contact centers around the globe.

Over the last year, contact centers were forced to change how they operate because of COVID-19. Entire companies found themselves working from home as a direct result of the pandemic. Other twists and turns in the contact center industry have inherently led us where we are now, but without the pandemic, we likely would not have seen many of these things come to fruition for years. The pandemic simply accelerated that timeline by two to six years.



The most incredible thing is not the changes we have seen in the contact center, rather the professionalism and grace exhibited by the people working in these departments. While our contact centers have always been the first line of communication between businesses and customers, the role became even more critical when customers couldn't reach other departments. Contact centers demonstrated a tremendous ability to adapt and set a

notable example for agility. Navigating contact centers through COVID-19 allowed industry professionals to demonstrate leadership by guiding others in how to keep moving forward. A roadmap for future contact centers emerged.

Can change complicate things? Sure. But what we learned from watching the transition in contact centers, is that change is inevitable and we need to be ready to go

with it at any time. It needs to be embraced and used as an impetus to foster innovation, enhancements and growth. You can't always control the timing and details of change, but you can prepare your department and employees to meet it confidently. Watching contact center employees show flexibility and agility during recent and rapid changes to their daily logistics, reflected their commitment and work ethic. This research report details how contact centers should

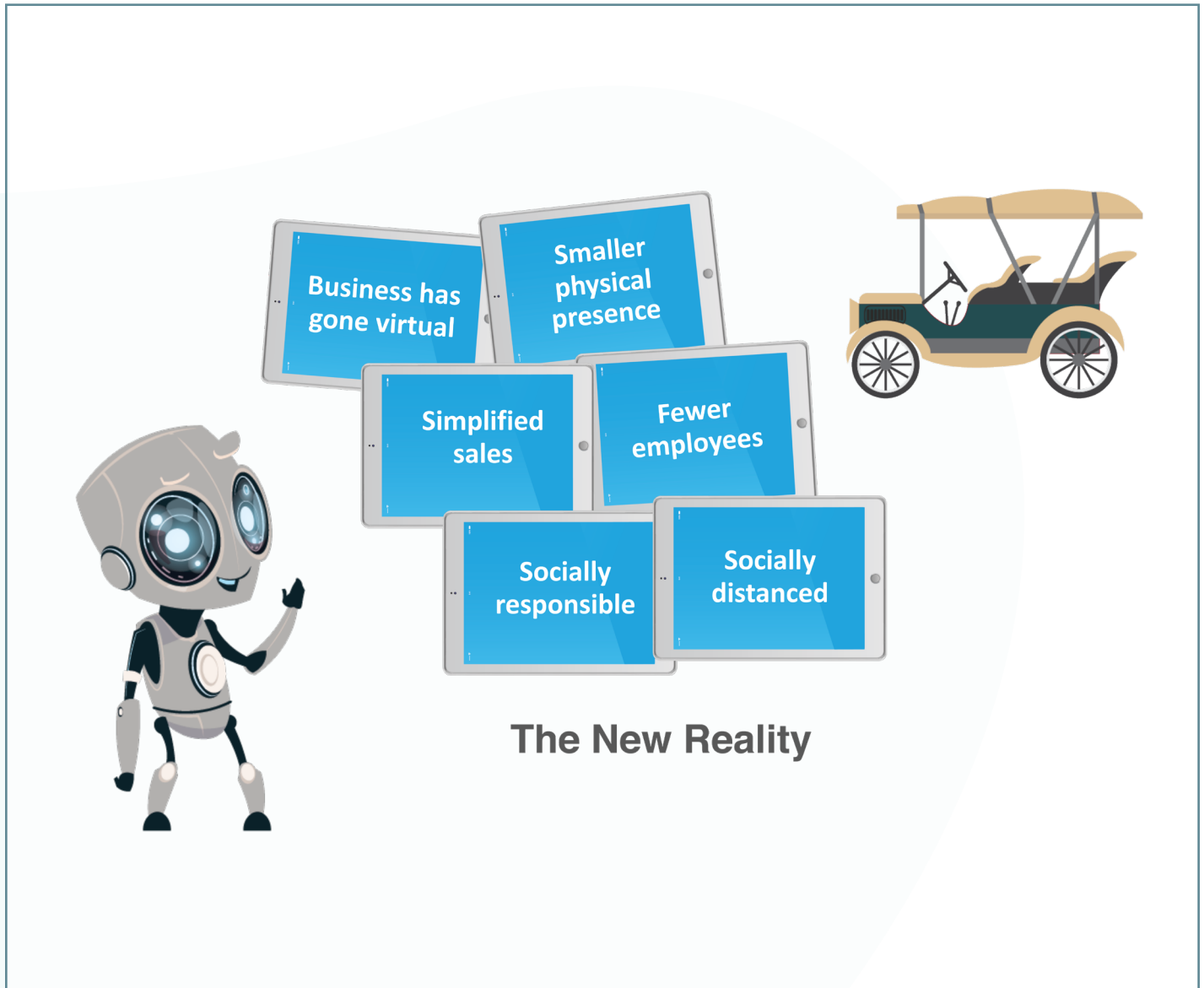


address necessary change, expected or sudden, and what they need to do to keep the momentum going. We are in the midst of finding a new normal. If we don't take advantage of the path laid out by extraordinary employees who have set the bar for today's contact centers, we are sacrificing an amazing opportunity.

This Report is a playbook of sorts. A guide showing organizations how contact centers should flex their adaptability muscles and make changes to strengthen them. It's a valuable collection of best practices, innovative technology, agile management practices, work-at-home policies and more.

We talk about digital transformation and the adoption of cloud-based systems. They are happening today and there is every indication that both trends will pick up momentum as change and technology are perpetually doing that dance where they try to keep pace with each other. We have experienced how a pandemic impacts digital transformation and pushes it to new levels. We know that more change is imminent and the better prepared our contact centers are to embrace it, the more beneficial the change becomes. Contact centers should always be on the verge of a new and better reality and that means constantly managing through changing business models.

Figure 1: Changing Business Models



Source: DMG Consulting LLC, January 2021

If you take one thing away from this report, let it be that the digital transformation is happening. It's unstoppable and will drive improvements in the customer experience, agent engagement and company profitability. We are fortunate that the performance of our contact centers in the face of a pandemic has been overwhelmingly positive and has provided

us with a powerful guide on how to maximize the constructive changes needed to build contact centers of the future. This guide will help managers with strategies and tactics to keep up the momentum of digital transformation and continue moving the contact center forward. It will enable them to better deliver on their classic objective of delivering a stellar customer experience.



Here's what you can expect in this report:

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