



# Ready to modernize your contact center? Assess trends with care

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'Tis the season for contact center trends, predictions, and “must-watch” lists.

Many analyst firms provide reports that explain and prioritize the relevance or importance of these trends, but on [LIVE CHAT](#) succinct summaries to put contact center trends into perspective is the **Gartner**

drive-the-gartner-hype-cycle-for-customer-service-and-support-technologies-2020/1.

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The Gartner Hype Cycle summarizes the latest industry innovations and places them on a scale of “innovation trigger,” “peak of inflated expectations,” “trough of disillusionment,” “slope of enlightenment,” and “plateau of productivity.” Gartner ranks trends such as digital experience platforms, Internet of things for customer service, natural language processing, 360-degree view of customers, chatbots, robotic process automation, etc. according to how hyped or mature the technologies are.

An alternate, or supplemental, way of looking at technology adoption and maturity in the contact center involves **Rogers' stages of diffusion of innovation** [[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diffusion\\_of\\_innovations#CITEREFRogers1962\\_5th\\_ed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diffusion_of_innovations#CITEREFRogers1962_5th_ed)]. Many companies have consciously or subconsciously decided where, generally, they like to sit along this technology innovation and adoption spectrum – that is, bleeding edge, early adopter, mainstream, late adopter, or laggard.

Knowing where the organization sits on the adoption spectrum while reviewing Gartner's Hype Cycle of contact center trends may provide insight as to whether new technologies may optimize performance. Another method is to consult with contact center teams that have actually had experience with these new technologies.

### **Sifting through the latest contact center trends: One client's story**

A financial services company in the Caribbean  
[<https://www.teamhgs.com/results/regional-bank-realigns-growth->

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bricks-and-mortar, online banking, and nearly 400 HGS contact center agents. The client has long delivered personalized, traditional banking and customer service; in this region, face-to-face transactions have taken priority over digital ones.

When it comes to technology, the client appears to fall within the late adopter category, but wants to change that to compete on a more global scale, to align with customer preferences, and to optimize the customer experience and contact center performance.

In early 2020, just after the last trends-list cycle, the financial services client engaged HGS to help the client's cross-functional team of approximately 20 decision-makers to:

- Evaluate the current state of their contact center operations
- Facilitate a goals and needs analysis discussion with all key stakeholders
- Educate team members on the advantages and disadvantages of the latest contact center trends and tools that could help meet those needs
- Prioritize the changes and create a roadmap for those priorities, tools, and process changes
- Estimate timelines, resources, and next steps and create an actionable plan for the company

The client needs a full digital transformation to control labor costs, reduce customer reliance on bricks-and-mortar, offer more self-service, and turn the contact center from an *agent* to a *resolution hub*.

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education — all done virtually due to COVID-19 — the work was organized for the client into three main workstreams: analytics, process reengineering, and knowledge management.

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The three workstreams included building out the foundational data and technology layers with reliable, appropriate, on-trend tools such as speech analytics, text mining and natural language processing, bot-driven self-service capability, new social care channels, and a sophisticated knowledge management system.

Recommendations, of course, were also mapped to client goals, cross-departmental needs, budgets, and cadence preferences.

In this case, the client was able to turn its questions about the value of trends and new technologies into action with the help of consultants. By sifting through the options, buzzwords, and trends in some detail, this client developed a sound plan to take the leap from late-adopter to early-adopter and to optimize the customer experience.

In reading the annual trends and prediction lists, it's easy to succumb to feelings of imposter syndrome. Is my contact center up to date? Are we as efficient as we could be? Are my customers really happy? Which trend should we embrace? In some ways, these trends lists are designed to make you feel that way, so you act on that fear of missing out (FOMO) and invest in those technologies without much thought.

Objectively evaluating the state of affairs through a cross-functional, performance-based needs analysis; identifying where you stand on the diffusion of innovations/technology adoption; and then prioritizing and chunking the changes that need to be made may be

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organization and for creating a modernization roadmap.

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