

## Balancing priorities in a new era of contact center transformation

**RESEARCH SHOWS HOW GENERATIVE AI, CHANNEL ORCHESTRATION AND TEAM COLLABORATION ARE IMPROVING SERVICE OUTCOMES**

May 2024



As economic growth slows<sup>1</sup> and consumer confidence hovers near historic lows globally,<sup>2</sup> efficiency and cost-control have gained new urgency for contact center leaders in early 2024—this, after more than a decade during which most leaders primarily focused on improving customer experiences (CX). That's one of several key findings in our latest international survey of contact center leaders.<sup>3</sup>

Service channel proliferation and a persistently tight talent market<sup>4</sup> have introduced their own challenges. Time-pressed customers chat *and* call, thwarting efforts to reduce or deflect contact volume. In-demand agents come and go, thwarting efforts to reduce hiring and training costs.

**Today's most effective and efficient organizations—we call them service innovators—are meeting today's new realities with tomorrow's solutions.** They're orchestrating more efficient and effective connections across channels. They're working with other areas of the business to prevent issues that cause customers to reach out in the first place. They're embracing and implementing Generative AI (GenAI)—recognizing its transformative potential across multiple areas of the business. And most important, they're serving up enterprise value.

### AS CONTACT CENTER LEADERS PURSUE A BALANCED STRATEGY ...

**No. 1** priority: Improving **CX** | Improving **efficiency** (tied)

**MANY STRUGGLE TO ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS ...**

**55%** of strategic **goals were met** in 2023 (avg.)

**DUE TO CONTACT VOLUME, SERVICE COMPLEXITY AND HIGH AGENT TURNOVER.**

**27%**

say channel expansion has **increased service inquiries**

**76%**

say **agents are overwhelmed** by systems & information

**52%**

annual **agent attrition** in 2023 (avg.)

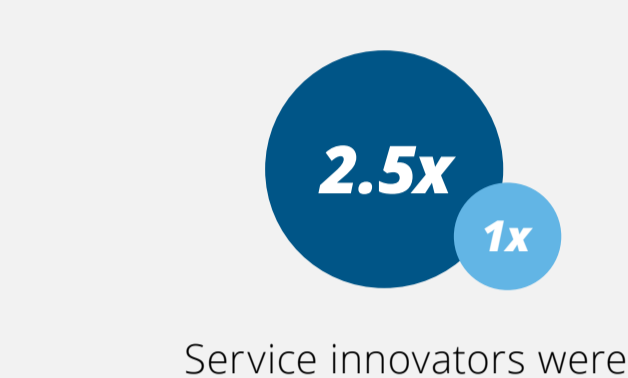
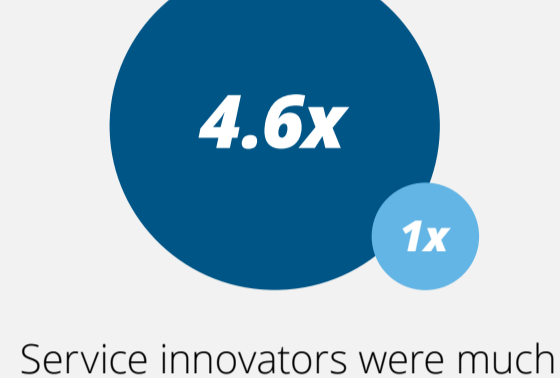
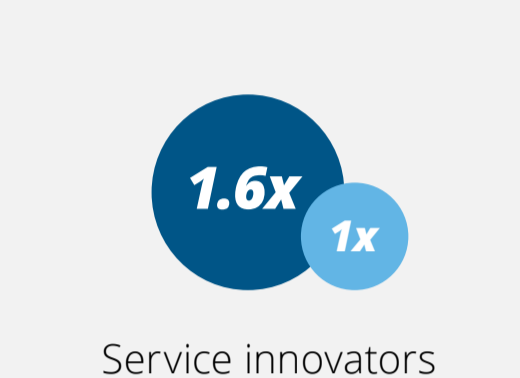


## Service innovators meet the moment—and beat expectations

Not all service organizations are struggling. In fact, some are flourishing. Service innovators—those organizations with the most advanced capabilities in service delivery, quality assurance automation, personalization and employee retention—leveraged their strengths to drive outsized performance against a range of key goals.

### COMPARED TO SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS WITH LESS ADVANCED CAPABILITIES ...

● Service innovators ● Less advanced organizations



**11.7%** Amount by which service innovators exceeded their 2023 **financial goals**—compared to 0.0% for those with less advanced capabilities.

### HERE'S WHAT THEY'RE GETTING RIGHT

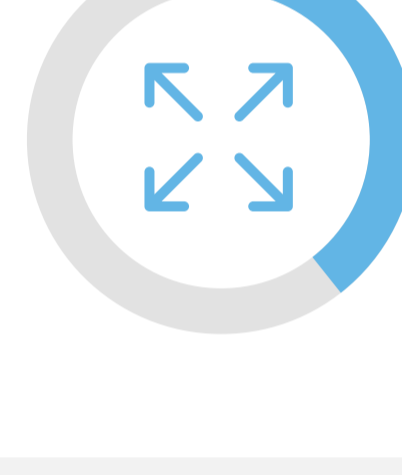
## Making the right connections

Contact center leaders have long worked to reduce the number and length of service inquiries requiring agent intervention. But even as lower-cost channels and more intelligent technologies emerged, many customers resisted due to poor experiences or unsatisfactory outcomes.

That's now changing. New tools and approaches are enabling service organizations to provide *efficient and effective* digital service solutions—and to connect experiences and information across channels in ways that improve both customer experiences and agent productivity. Central to success is a defined strategy to drive customer adoption of self-service channels for low-complexity needs and help customers efficiently connect with service professionals at the moments that matter most.

**4 in 5** have activated a **channel steering strategy**

**AMONG THOSE ...**



**1 in 3** companies have **omnichannel integration tools**

**RESULTING IN ...**



### THE NEXT FRONTIER OF OMNICHANNEL ORCHESTRATION.

Most contact centers have deployed routing tools for agent-assisted chat (74%) and phone calls (51%). But those capabilities can't effectively help connect customers and experiences across channels. What's needed is a dedicated, omnichannel routing tool to connect customers to the right agent quickly—regardless of channel.

Companies that have adopted such tools are achieving outside results.

**25%** have implemented an **omnichannel routing engine**

## From self-service to self-improvement

When a customer reaches out about a delayed shipment, the contact center must absorb the cost of fixing an issue that may have been caused by the company's logistics organization. When a customer complains about an incorrect cash-back credit on a rewards credit card, the contact center has to fix a mistake made by tools managed in the commerce department. These real costs to the business are compounded by the customer's loss of trust—which itself is compounded when self-service options can't solve the issues quickly and easily.

This has long been the nature of customer service—but that nature is evolving fast. By leveraging insights gleaned through advanced analytics and by improving collaboration with web and mobile teams, contact center leaders are working to improve self-service tools and resources—while also using those same insights to collaboratively improve product and service quality across the business.



**1 in 4**

companies now have a well-defined, **cross-functional strategy** to improve self-service.

**20%**

are **currently investing** in better self-service capabilities—with an additional 64% investing by the end of 2025.

**2.7x**

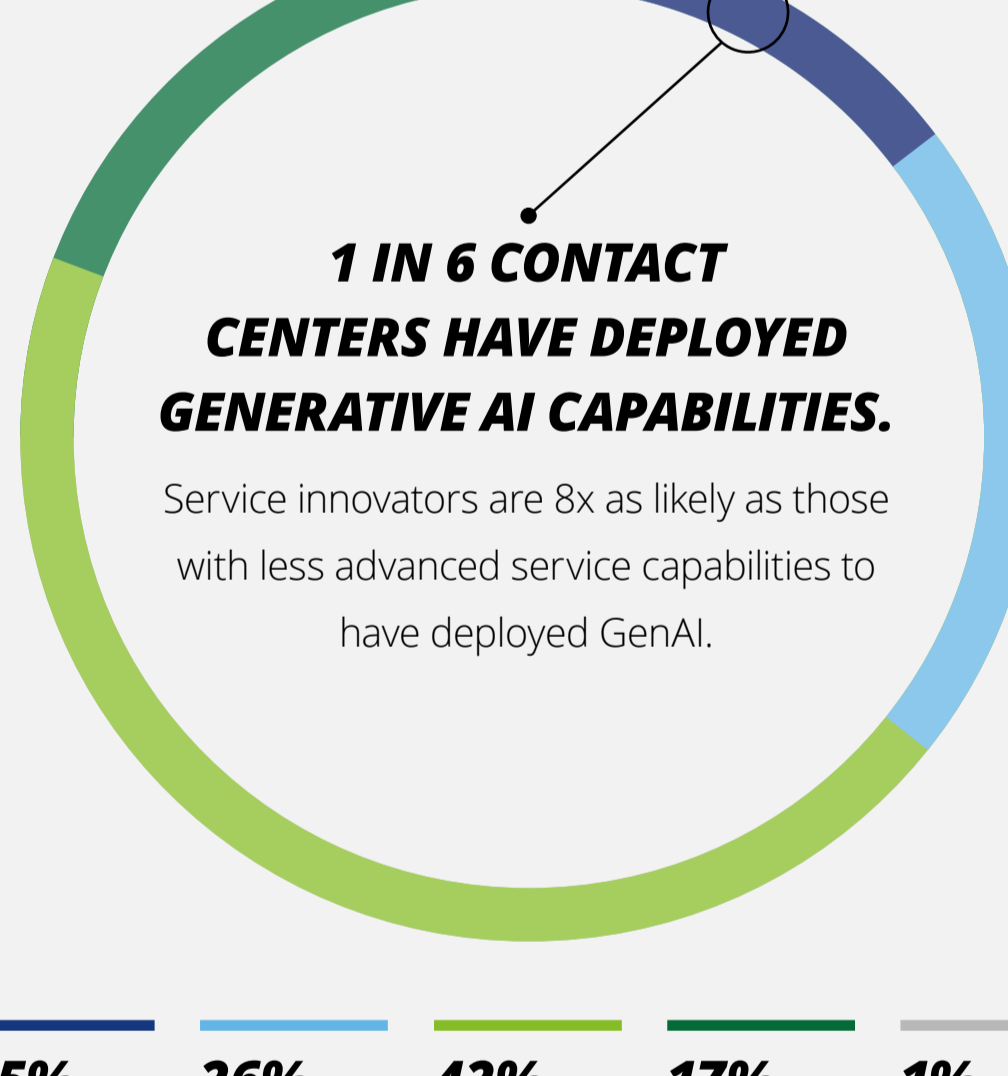
Service innovators are much more likely to be **investing in analytics and insights**, compared to organizations with less advanced capabilities.

## Generating service efficiency through GenAI

According to Deloitte's Q2 2024 State of Generative AI in the Enterprise report, efficiency and productivity improvements are the No. 1 anticipated benefit of GenAI.<sup>5</sup> Few areas of the enterprise show more potential for these improvements than customer service.

Consider a typical customer support call. At the front end, GenAI-enabled pre-call center can drive faster authentication for the customer while providing pre-interaction journey summarization to the agent. During the call, GenAI can help summarize and simplify customer information and solution options. Post-call, GenAI can provide automated call summaries and follow-up recommendations. Similar benefits are possible across a range of channels and support technologies.

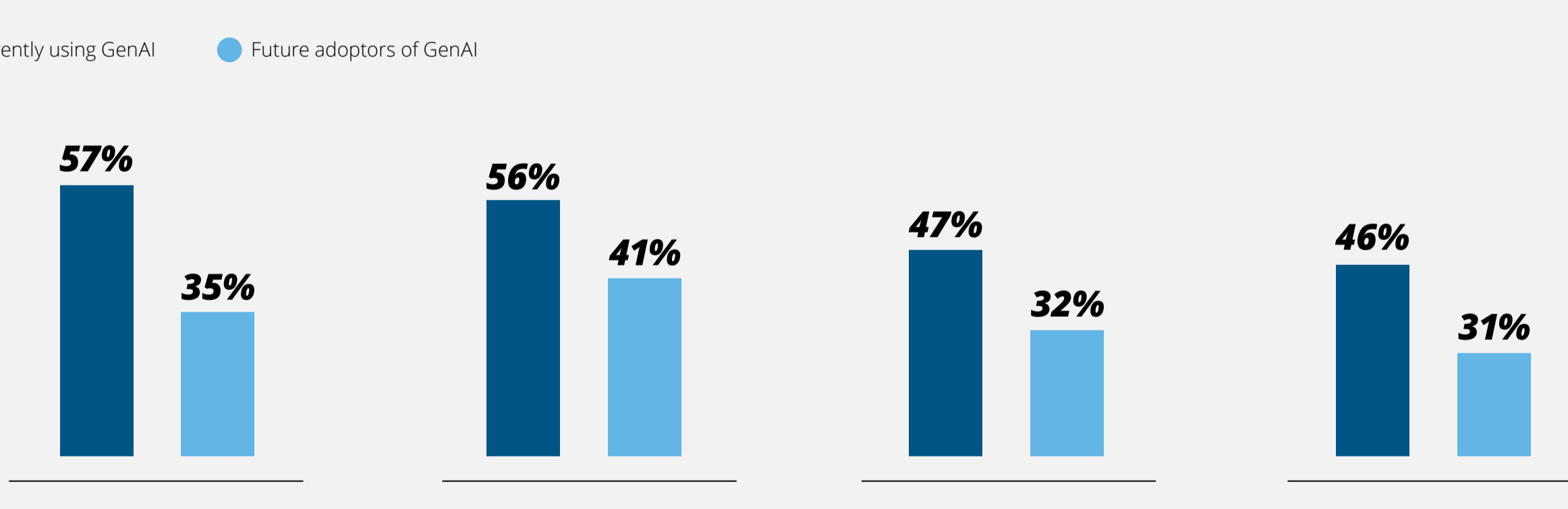
These and other benefits are already accruing for a growing number of companies.



**15%** Currently using GenAI  
**26%** Plan to use in 2024  
**42%** Plan to use in 2025  
**17%** Plan to use in 2026 or later  
**1%** No plans to use

### GENERATIVE AI'S EARLY ADOPTERS EXPERIENCE GREATER IMPACT THAN FUTURE ADOPTERS ANTICIPATE

● Currently using GenAI ● Future adopters of GenAI



**81% vs. 53%** Companies currently using GenAI are **35% less likely to report agents are overwhelmed** by the information in front of them during calls.

## Channeling new efficiencies, generating better outcomes

Today's service innovators are rewriting the rules of efficiency by combining the transformational power of GenAI with best-fit channels and tools for every customer need. They're enabling greater service effectiveness by providing just-in-time, just-enough information to agents. And they're rooting out and addressing the causes of common service issues in ways that preserve customer trust and prevent future costs.



### AS YOU WORK TO STRIKE THE RIGHT BALANCE FOR YOUR OWN ORGANIZATION, HERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF:

- 01 How are you making servicing easier and more effective for your clients and agents?
- 02 How are you preparing for the workforce of the future?
- 03 How should you work with your business partners to identify and resolve the root causes of issues that drive low-value or high-volume service inquiries?
- 04 What is your plan to meet customers in their channels of choice while reducing the cost to serve?
- 05 Where will you start with GenAI?

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2. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), "Consumer Confidence Index," global data, April 2024, doi: 10.1787/46434d78-en, <https://data.oecd.org/leadind/consumer-confidence-index-cci.htm>. Accessed April 25, 2024; data updated monthly.
3. Methodology: Statistics cited in this report are based on a blind survey conducted by Lawless Research on behalf of Deloitte Digital in March 2024. Respondents included 600 leaders responsible for contact center strategy at midsize and large business-to-consumer and business-to-business companies based in the United States, Australia, Canada, Japan and the United Kingdom. An organizational maturity model was developed that identified the most effective 25% of companies based on service delivery, quality assurance automation, personalization and employee attrition rate. In this document we refer to those high-maturity companies as "service innovators."
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