Forward-thinking leaders recognize the opportunities—and challenges—ahead. They are harnessing technologies that support their mission and goals, building customer-focused organizations, and focusing on strategic value. In short, they are moving forward with vision and optimism and creating cultures in which positive change can thrive.

Chapter 15: Enabling Technologies, New Possibilities

"You've got to start with the customer experience and work backwards to the technology."
STEVE JOBS

This is an exciting and important time of technological development. But given the many technologies that support contact centers and the multitude of decisions to be made around suppliers and solutions, some customer service leaders throw up their hands and say, "Hey, our IT Department figures all that out for us."

That's a mistake. Don't get me wrong (and if you're in IT, stay with me on this); you'll need every bit of IT help and support possible as you chart a path forward. But let me jump right to the main point of this chapter: ensuring that you have and smartly use the right technologies for your contact center is a team effort. It requires leadership that puts the customer experience front and center.

Some of the best technology leadership I've seen comes from those who are, by their own admission, NOT technology experts. But they're asking the right questions: How can we make things easier for our customers? Our agents? What's driving this work? What can we learn from it? How can we do it better?

But more on that soon. Let's first summarize key technology developments that are empowering customer service. We'll identify areas of innovation that are having the biggest