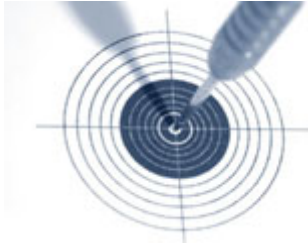


## Contact centres rate call efficiency over customer service



Results have been revealed of a new survey into how UK companies judge and direct the performance of their contact centres.

The survey of 54 contact centres found that while internal efficiency measures were well monitored through multiple metrics, external effectiveness in terms of customer service received less focus. In particular, despite 65% of contact centre staff saying that 'first call resolution' (FCR) is what customers want, only 35% both measure and then report the figure to their Board.

"Customers want to be connected quickly to an agent able to resolve their query right away," said Oke Eleazu, managing director of think outside in and vice-president of the Institute of Customer Service. "Companies that want their contact centres to deliver a good customer experience, must measure first contact resolution rates. Those companies that do not measure it could lose touch with customer perceptions, damaging their brand."

Whilst 81% of contact centres said they do ask customers whether they are satisfied, this is much too broad a measurement, says Eleazu.

"Measuring customer satisfaction is great, but many traditional measures are nebulous and imprecise and can make it difficult to know what to focus improvement initiatives on," he said. "With first contact resolution you have an actionable measure – you can work on people, process and technology to improve the situation. You can very quickly and accurately observe and report on the effectiveness of those actions."



Oke Eleazu

Improving FCR is becoming increasingly challenging. As companies introduce self-service solutions for answering customers' simple questions, the queries that reach customer service representatives become more complex. But customers still want their queries answered correctly, in the first contact.

“With contact centres consolidating, they require agents to have a broad knowledge base. But agents cannot be experts in every product and service and can struggle to resolve complex customer enquiries in the crucial first contact,” said David Frenkel, CEO of Panviva. “Agents need easy real-time access to detailed knowledge, often hidden in existing system investments.”