

3 key considerations for assessing contact centre technology investments

By [Gerrit de Villiers](#)

2 Nov 2020

Investing technology into cloud, contact centres and processes are now important to business success. They allow organisations to improve the way they interact with customers, improve experiences, and proactively manage processes and systems. Even though traditional purchasing and evaluation metrics can't fully capture their value, they are essential parts of a business. These investments go beyond budgets and standard department requirements into sustainable and strategic technologies that offer long-term flexibility.



Gerrit de Villiers, presales manager at Inovo

Not all contact centre investments are created equal though and not all succeed in achieving their goals. Contact centre investment should include three important considerations to ensure long-term success.

It's important to consider best practice when investing in contact centre solutions to ensure that the spend is relevant and that the results are what the business expects. The first thing to consider is the underlying drivers for the decision-making process – who is making the decisions and what are their goals? The second is the platform selection, and the third step encompasses considerations around using cloud.

Drivers for decision-making

Budget is one of the biggest underlying drivers. Organisations have a few guidelines around what their investment needs to achieve when it comes to performance and success criteria, but often don't balance these against the actual needs of the company as a whole. Budget and saving money can easily dominate the decision-making process and can impact purchasing – this can lead to cheaper, easier or less strategic choices. It's critical to select a product based on what is

best for the business.

Instead of simply looking at price, you need to look at the return on investment (ROI) and gain a holistic view of the total cost of ownership (TCO). This can make a significant difference in terms of investment deliverables over the long term. The challenge is incentivising the team in the right way so that all decisions positively impact the business in the long term.

ROI equals real results

While every contact centre solution is different, it's possible to get up to ten times the ROI if the investment is savvy and factors such as TCO, skills and structure are taken into consideration. Companies should challenge vendors to provide a ROI and then do a proof of concept that showcases how the solutions meet these promises.

This will not only streamline decision-making, but it will clearly show the benefits of the system against expenditure. Most importantly, you get the chance to work with the vendor and see if they are capable of adding value beyond handling escalations.

Platform considerations

When it comes to selecting the right platform for your organisation, it's important to not just look at the top right-hand corner of the Gartner quadrant. These solutions may not be the right fit for your business, even though they come with all the proverbial bells and whistles. Too often the business has all the right tools but cannot show the results in line with the monthly cost. In the end, it's the personalised support and collaboration that drives change together with the platform, never the platform in itself.

Ask if your business has the in-house capability required to run it and if your IT team is capable of extracting the value that the platform promises. Unpack how these features will really work within the constraints of your own company and establish their value within this very precise context. It's very likely that a more open and integrated platform will deliver a better return, especially if it comes hand-in-hand with a highly skilled service provider.

You can be disappointed in an exclusive, high-end platform if you can't get the information you need to do more and achieve more," says de Villiers. If the roadmap outlined by the platform is too rigid or prescribed, it may not cater to your unique requirements.

Best practice comes down to selecting a platform and partner that fit your business and that is futureproofed, scalable and flexible. A platform that's capable of adapting to change and the market is of immense value right now.

Why collaboration is the right normal

Finally, the third factor to consider is cloud. Already it has transformed the potential of the contact centre by providing companies with greater flexibility, reach and scale. It has allowed for multiple organisations to gracefully leap into home

working during the pandemic and to stay on top of customer and market demand. That said, cloud can fail. In spite of its potential, cloud can miss the boat and the ROI can leave an organisation hanging.

The problems experienced by many companies are not cloud's fault, it's the solution and the promises made. To truly experience the value of cloud, you need to work with a service provider that will ensure investment follows an incremental, phased exposure to avoid hitting pricing walls and causing unnecessary complexity.

You need time to build the skills and you need proof that the solution is a fit for your organisation. In today's landscape, it's often a combination of cloud and privately hosted solutions that win, not just cloud deployment

Contact centres remain the lifeblood of the organisation looking to connect with diverse customers and markets.

Technology offers far more value and depth than ever before, but results will depend on intelligent investment into the right platform with a partner that takes the time to understand your business. With these considerations kept top of mind throughout, investment evaluation will reveal a solution that fits the company and gets results.

ABOUT GERRIT DE VILLIERS

Gerrit de Villiers completed his Bachelors in electronic engineering at the University of Pretoria and continued his studies with a Master's degree in engineering, specialising in optical sensors for nuclear environments. He then managed several turnkey products for Keystone and Azoteq with a focus on consumer electronics. He has since completed his MBA at the University of Stellenbosch.

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