



The US Contact Center HR & Operational Benchmarking Report 2021

7th edition

How do you compare to your competitors?



HR Benchmarking: Salary, bonuses, attrition, absence, recruitment

Operational Benchmarking: speed to answer, cost per call / email / web chat, first-call resolution, call abandonment, call duration, call transfer rate, agent activity

Segmented by: 9 vertical markets, 3 size bands, sales / service and inbound / outbound

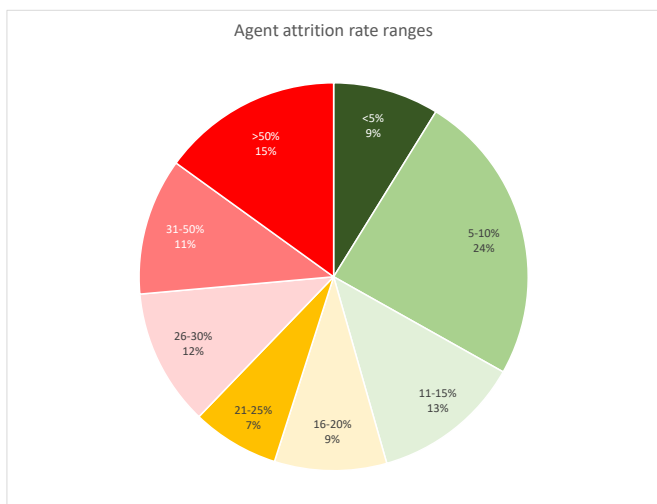
Historical annual data from 2007 onwards; projected figures in 2023

Based on 214 interviews with US contact centers in Q4 2020

Published January 2021

Key findings: HR

Median agent attrition in large (200+ seat) operations is more than twice that of small (<50 seat) contact centers.



The historical difference between inbound and outbound attrition rates has disappeared.

New hire attrition rates are demonstrably influenced by starting salaries:

Agent attrition rate within first 6 months of job	Mean new agent starting salary
0-10%	\$33,704
11-25%	\$30,281
Over 25%	\$26,583

Public sector contact centers' absence rates are the highest of any vertical market studied.

The top 3 most-valued attributes of a contact center agent are:

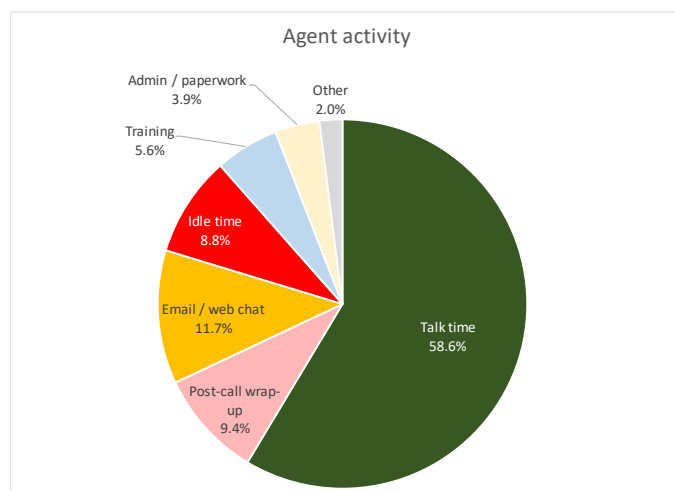
1. Empathy / listening skills
2. Ability to understand complex issues
3. Reliability

Technology/media/telecoms contact centers pay the highest agent starting salaries.

Average contact center management salaries are predicted to hit \$76,500 in 2023.

Key findings: Performance

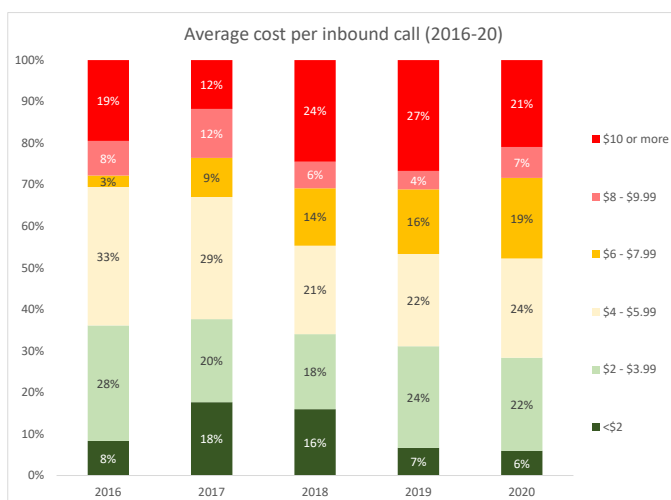
Customer satisfaction ratings & NPS are said to be the most important contact center metrics.



Mean call duration is over 6½ minutes for a service call, and over 7½ minutes for a sales call.

Call abandonment rates are highest in the finance sector.

Mean average speed to answer is 75 seconds, more than 150% what it was in 2009.



Mean average cost per inbound call is \$7.46.

69% of US contact centers surveyed expect to increase agent numbers in 2021, with only 13% expecting a decline.

Report contents:

- 81 charts and data tables show the industry's operational performance and HR benchmarks
- Based on ongoing annual primary research surveys with hundreds of US contact centers
- Unique historical data patterns, beginning in 2007 with forecasts to 2023

Vertical markets covered for market sizing:

- Finance
- Insurance
- Manufacturing
- Medical
- Outsourcing
- Public Sector
- Retail & Distribution
- Services
- Technology, Media and Telecoms (TMT)

Size bands:

- Under 50 seats (small)
- 50-200 seats (medium)
- Over 200 seats (large)

Activity types

- Inbound / Mixed / Outbound
- Sales / Mixed / Service

The report is divided into five sections

Agent Attrition

- By vertical market
- By contact center size
- By activity type (sales / service)
- By inbound / outbound
- Causes of staff attrition
- Methods of engaging new agents
- Includes historical data and future trends

Agent Absence

- By vertical market
- By contact center size
- By activity type (sales / service)
- By inbound / outbound
- By short-term & long-term absence

Salaries & Bonuses

- Mean and median average salaries for
 - New agents
 - Experienced agents
 - Team Leaders / Supervisors
 - Contact Center Managers

Segmented by:

- contact center size bands
- vertical market
- activity type
- inbound/outbound

- Typical agent bonuses
- Agent incentive methods used
- Historical trends included

Recruitment

- The cost of recruitment
 - By vertical market
 - By contact center size
 - By contact center activity
- Most effective recruitment methods
- Key agent attributes
- Agent profile by age

Operational Performance Benchmarking

- Use & importance of performance metrics
- Average speed to answer
- Call abandonment rates
- First-contact resolution rates & measurement methods
- Service and sales call durations
- Call transfer rate
- Agent activity (talk-time / idle / wrap-up)
- Cost per inbound / outbound call
- Cost per email, social media interaction & web chat

Segmented by:

- Vertical market
- Contact center size
- Contact center activity type

- **Historical data and future trends to 2023**

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