



2024 - 2025 Customer Contact Benchmarking Report

by CMP Research Team
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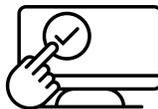
Summary



Creating a frictionless customer experience, increasing adoption of self-service and integrating generative AI technologies are the top, most urgent priorities for customer contact leaders in 2024-2025 – the most important and most difficult for leaders to achieve.



Upgrading legacy systems and processes is the fourth most urgent priority.



Increasing adoption of self-service is a higher priority relative to last year's rankings,¹ while retaining talent, the #1 priority two years ago, has dropped six spots to #8.



Due to increasing customer demand for self-service and increasing cost pressure on customer contact and CX functions, **executives are setting aggressive targets for self-service containment by 2025.**



The **increased adoption of self-service can have both positive and negative impacts on the frontline employee** as it relates to their productivity, training and development, and satisfaction.

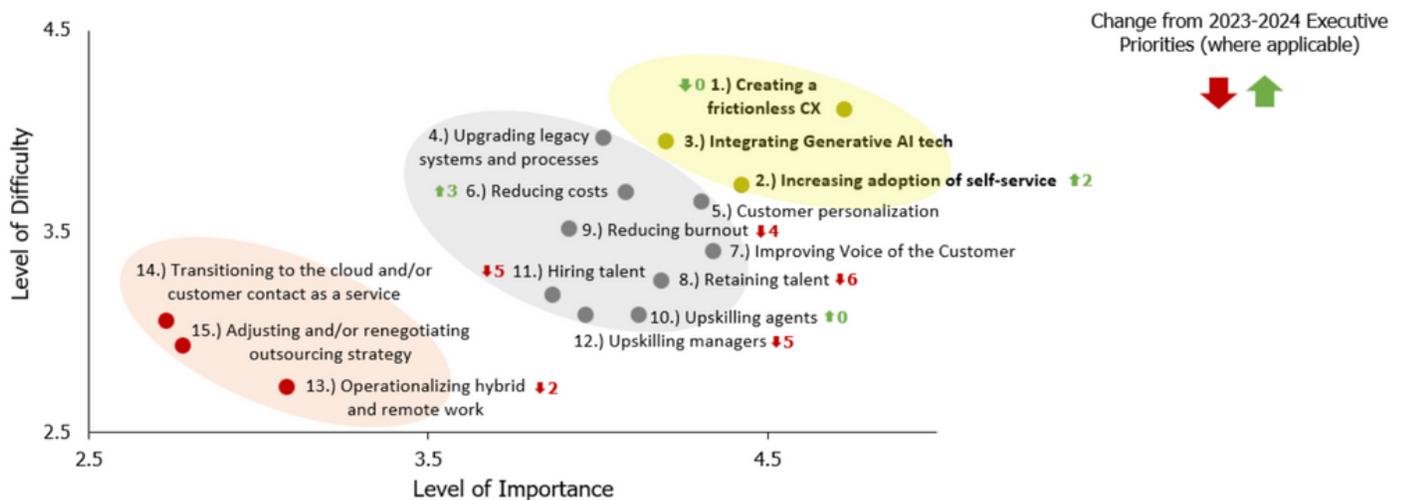
Introduction

An annual survey of global customer contact and CX leaders identified top challenges and priorities in 2024 and ahead to 2025. As budgeting and strategic planning for 2025 begins, it is critical for leaders to compare their priority list with peers. Importance and difficulty dictate where customer contact leaders will invest time, resources, and capital.

From a list of 15 customer contact and CX priorities, **creating a frictionless customer experience, increasing adoption of self-service, and integrating generative AI technologies** were identified as the top three priorities, with the highest average importance and difficulty scores (see Figure 1).

Upgrading legacy systems and processes is the fourth key priority, followed by increasing customer personalization, reducing costs, and improving the Voice of the Customer. Operationalizing hybrid and remote work for agents, transitioning to the cloud and adjusting and/or renegotiating outsourcing strategy were the least critical priorities.

Figure 1: Customer Contact Executive Leadership Priorities in 2024-2025
Average Score



n = 53-55 customer contact leaders
Source: CMP Research, 2024 Priorities in Customer Contact Survey

In comparison to last year, leaders' top priorities have shifted significantly towards technology improvements and away from talent management. Most notably, increasing adoption of self-service has increased from the #4 priority in 2023 to the #2 priority today while retaining talent, the #1 priority two years ago, has dropped six spots to #8.

The Increasing Demand for Self-Service

The rapid acceleration of digital transformation over the last three years has resulted in an evolved customer today, one that places a higher premium on their own time, is increasingly digitally dexterous, and accustomed to being self-sufficient. Executives have taken note of this new customer and their increased demand for self-service (See figure 2).

Almost three-quarters of executives agree that customer demand for self-service has increased in the last three years.² Executives also understand the cost savings implication that comes with a higher adoption of self-service, especially among the 45% of customer contact and CX functions under increased cost pressure this year.²

The majority of executives (59%) agree that increasing customer adoption of self-service is a key cost reduction measure.²

Figure 2: Customer Demand for Self-Service
Percent



n = 78 companies, n = 4,335 customers
Source: CMP Research analysis, 2023 Self-Service Executive Survey

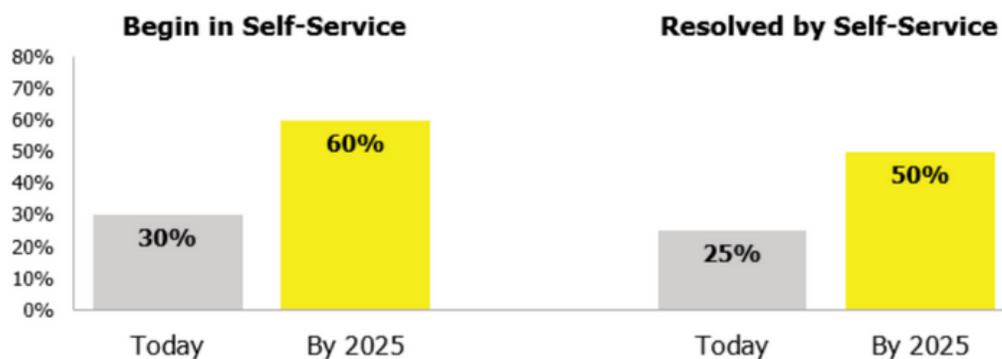
The Outlook on Self-Service Resolution is Ambitious

Due to increasing customer demand for self-service and increasing cost pressure on customer contact and CX functions, executives are setting aggressive targets for self-service containment by 2025. Among organizations that are currently offering self-service, the **average percent of customers that are starting in self-service is currently 30% and the average percent that are resolved by self-service is 25%.** (See Figure 3).

Both those figures are expected to double by 2025. In today’s average customer contact and CX function, three self-service methods are being offered to customers.

By 2025, the average customer contact and CX function will be offering five self-service channels.² Customers are going to be accustomed to having many self-service methods available to them across the various brands they interact with, and customer contact and CX functions that are not planning to increase their efforts in self-service will be left behind.

Figure 3: Contacts That Begin vs. Resolve in Self-Service
Average Percentage of Companies Today vs. 2025 Estimate



n = 71 companies
Source: CMP Research analysis, 2023 Self-Service Executive Survey

How AI will Impact Self-Service

With ChatGPT’s public launching late 2022, generative AI has since gone from the new buzzword to serious business value. Currently, **88% of customer contact and CX functions are exploring the use of generative AI** to improve the customer or frontline employee experience. About half (48%) of organizations have incorporated generative AI in their self-service channels, the most common being agent knowledge bases (23%), customer chat (22%) and conversational IVR (22%).

By 2025, 59%, only an increase of 11 percentage points, plan to incorporate generative AI in any one of their self-service offerings.² Early adopters of generative AI are leading the charge while those who have not currently incorporated generative AI plan to continue to sit on the sidelines.

Self-Service's Impact on Frontline Employees

With most executives focusing on improving the adoption of self-service and how to integrate generative AI into their business, the impact on the front-line employee experience will have both positive and negative impacts:

1

Productivity

Burnout is a common challenge facing customer contact and CX functions. While increased adoption of self-service will initially reduce volume-induced burnout, front-line agents will be left with the more challenging customer requests and more frustrated customers that self-service can't resolve. Frustrated customers and more complex cases can result in increased stress among frontline agents. Increased stress leads to lower employee satisfaction and ultimately causes lower productivity.³ In today's customer contact and CX function, upskilling frontline agents with the right competencies will ensure they can handle today's more challenging customer interactions, but it is also critical to upskill frontline managers so they can mitigate agent burnout before it becomes a serious issue. (See [Proactive Measures to Mitigate Agent Burnout](#) for further guidance.)

2

Onboarding and Training

Employee-facing self-service technology can reduce training time and increase time to proficiency. Agent knowledge bases that leverage AI can help agents get the answers to common customer challenges much quicker and give them the confidence to handle real situations shortly after training. However, the reliance on employee-oriented self-service tools can create silos, especially in a distributed work environment. Agents may avoid reaching out to their manager or fellow frontline agents to get answers.

3

Employee Experience

The top three drivers of agent experience are: manager dynamic, flexibility and career development. Factors within career development that drive agent satisfaction include "variety of work" and "utilization of skills and ability." With self-service taking away more monotonous tasks, this allows frontline agents to do more valuable work. This is important for increasing retention of the frontline agents and driving career growth within the organization. To learn more, check out the [Employee Experience Playbook for Customer Contact](#).

Endnotes:

¹ 2023-2024 Customer Contact Executive Priorities, CMP Research

² CMP Research analysis, 2023 Self-Service Executive Survey

³ Proactive Measures to Mitigate Agent Burnout, CMP Research