



**DRIVING SUPERIOR EXPERIENCES**

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**THE BIGGEST TRENDS TRANSFORMING  
CUSTOMER CONTACT IN 2020 & BEYOND**

# There used to be a time when speed is the most significant metric of any customer service interaction.



Operating on a purely transactional basis, speed and turnaround time has been the key focus of many organisations when it comes to dealing with customers. Today, things are very much different. While fast service is still one of the key indicators of success, customer centricity has gone beyond the usual transactional model. Customer centricity is all about fostering an amazing experience at every stage of the customer journey.

As technology continues to progress, the expectations of customers for greater

attention has also increased manifold. And companies that truly 'get it' are being rewarded handsomely for it. The customer contact community increasingly understands this reality, which is why organisations across Asia Pacific are working hard to transform their contact centres.

We now see a shift in the industry with contact centres emerging as a key customer touchpoint that works strategically with support functions to inform broader organisational objectives and drive customer contact strategy.



What is the modern customer looking for from their goods and services provider, and what strategies and innovations are the wisest investments to drive customer experience?

To answer these questions and help you understand the strategies and best practices around delivering superior customer contact experiences, we have compiled our most comprehensive and insightful report yet. With over 100 responses from leading contact centres across the APAC region, we've explored some of the biggest themes in customer centricity including:

- WORKPLACE CULTURE
- SELF-SERVICE & AUTOMATION
- OMNI-CHANNEL & SEAMLESS EXPERIENCES
- THE NEXT GENERATION WORKFORCE

The lifeblood of any business is its customers. With so much disruption happening in the market, being customer-obsessed is one strategy that will never falter. Take the journey to drive superior experiences. We hope you enjoy the research.

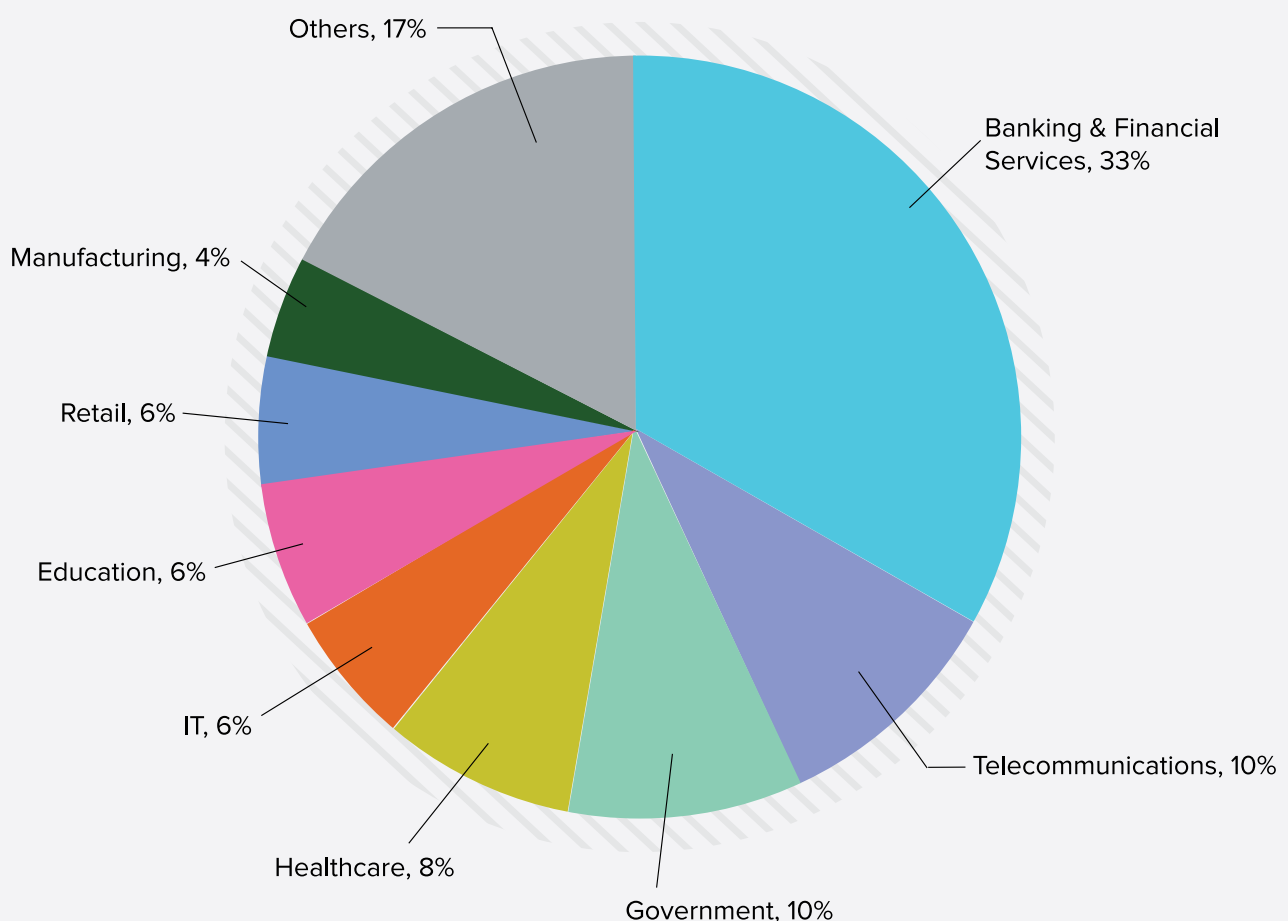
The Team at CCW 2020



# ABOUT THE RESPONDENTS

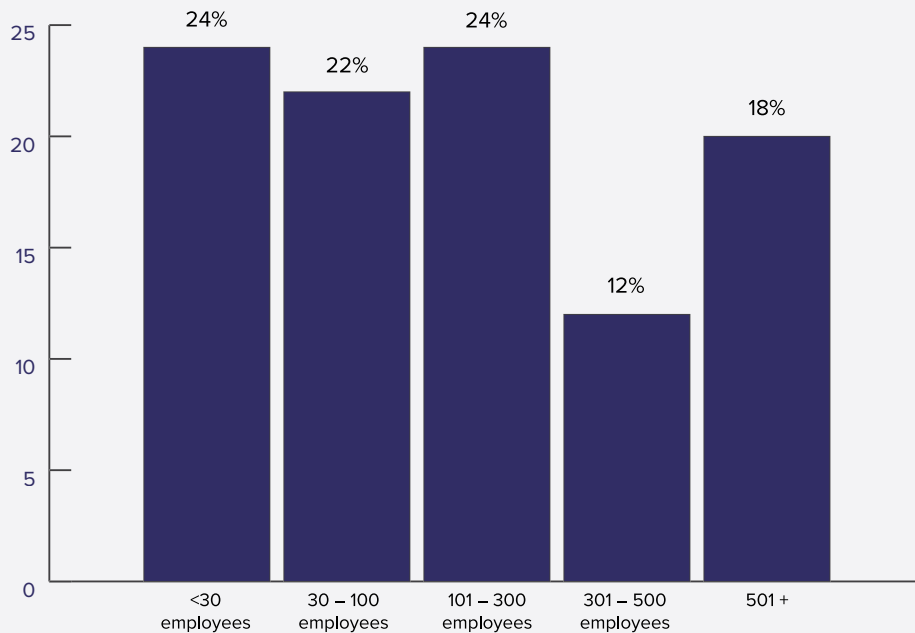
Representing a diverse cross-section of industries which include Banking (33%), Telecommunications (10%), Government (10%), Healthcare (8%), Manufacturing (4%) and others (17%), our respondents presented fascinating insight into the key issues and trends concerning customer contact.

Figure 1: What Sector do you Currently Work in?



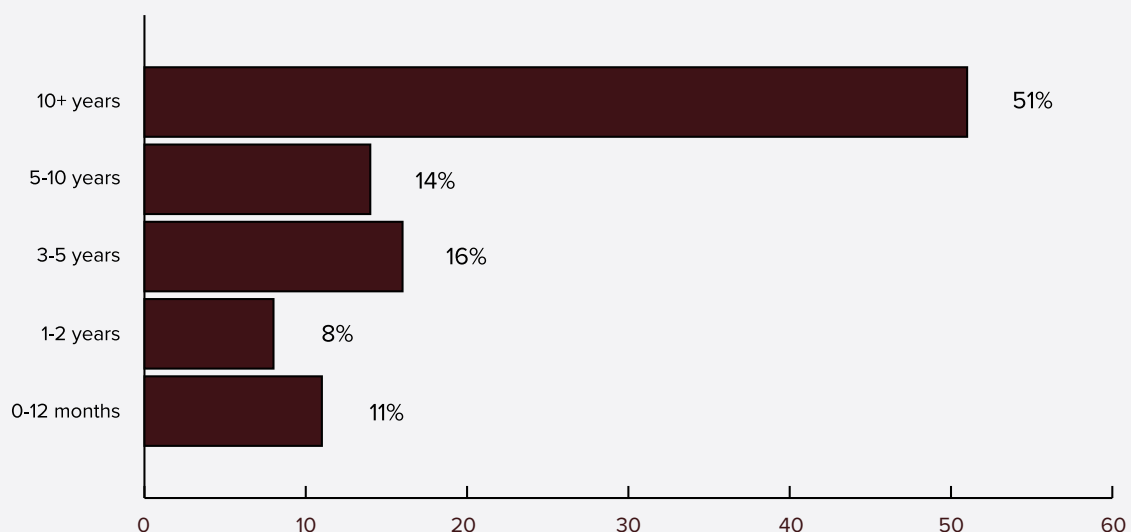
In addition, various organisational sizes were almost equally represented, providing a full spectrum viewpoint of the unique challenges and opportunities you are expected to face in your own journey, regardless of the size of your organisation.

Figure 2: How Large is Your Contact Centre?



A great majority (51%) of our respondents have more than 10 years of experience in contact centre, which allows them to have a unique perspective on the fundamental elements affecting a contact centre environment. The other half of the respondents provided a good balance as their viewpoint comes from a different lens and with a fresher take on things.

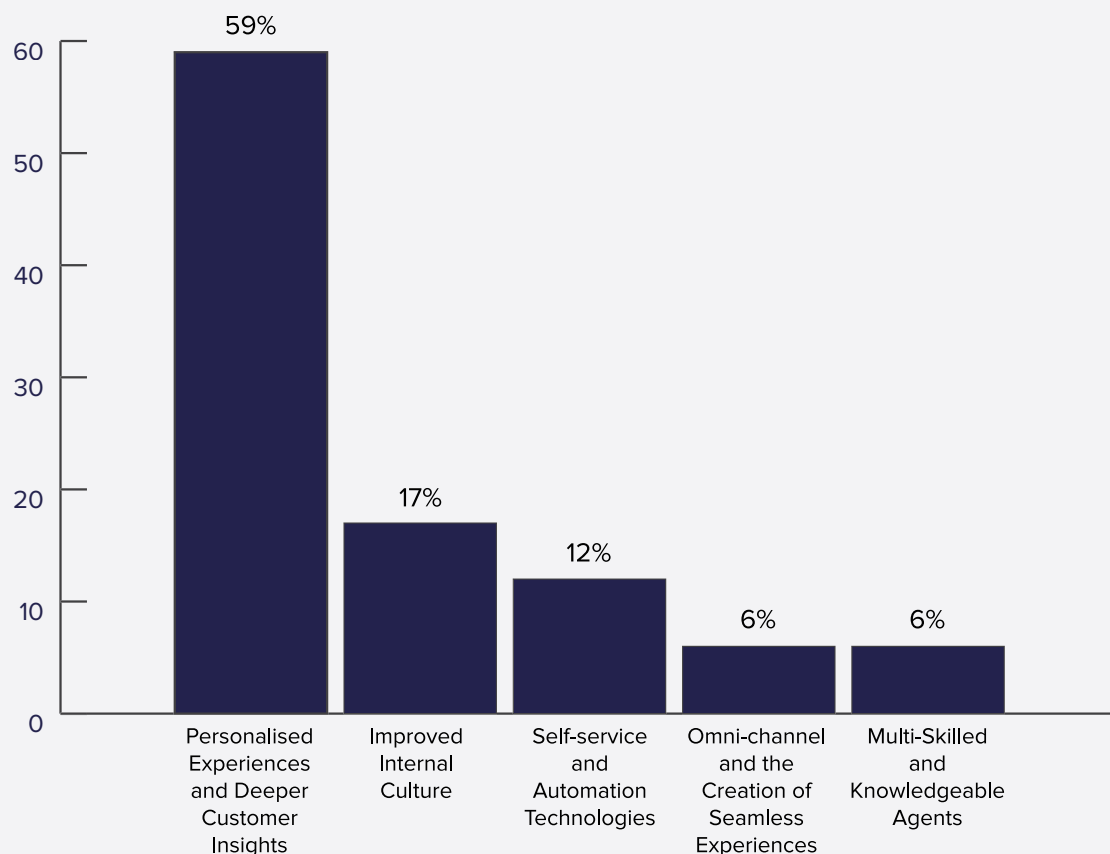
Figure 3: What is the Length of Your Contact Centre Career to Date?





It's interesting to note that while automation technologies have been quite a buzzword of late, an overwhelming majority of our respondents (59%) believe that personalised experiences and deeper customer insights will still be the top driver of superior customer experiences. Based on this insight, this report dives deeper into this subject and explores the all-important question of 'how' in turning this aspiration into reality.

Figure 4: Which do you Believe is Driving Superior Customer Experiences?





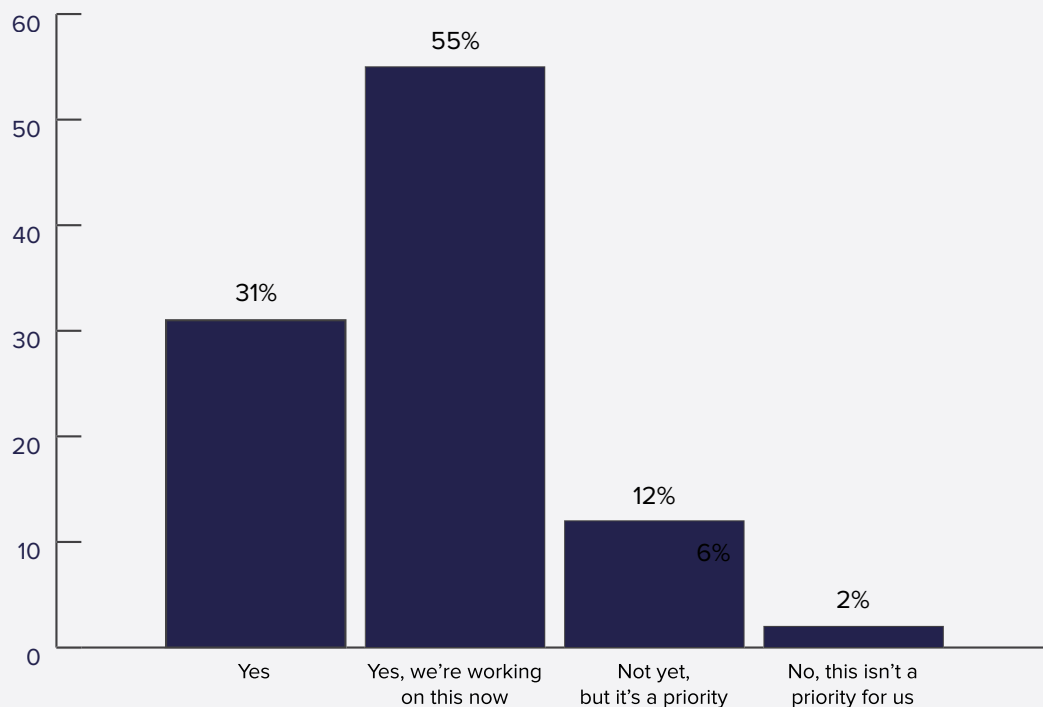
## WORKPLACE CULTURE

It has been said that culture eats strategy for breakfast. While there may be as many types of workplace cultures as there are companies that exist, the quest to transforming the contact centre culture, no matter how difficult, has never taken a backseat. According to Harvard Business Review, in its study about workplace culture, “strategy and culture are among the primary levers at top leaders’ disposal in their never-ending quest to maintain organisational viability and effectiveness.”

The study further emphasised that “strategy offers a formal logic for the company’s goals and orients people around them while culture expresses goals through values and beliefs and guides activity through shared assumptions and group norms.”

In our research, it was revealed that 86% of customer contact organisations today have either recently worked to transform their contact centre culture or are currently working on it.

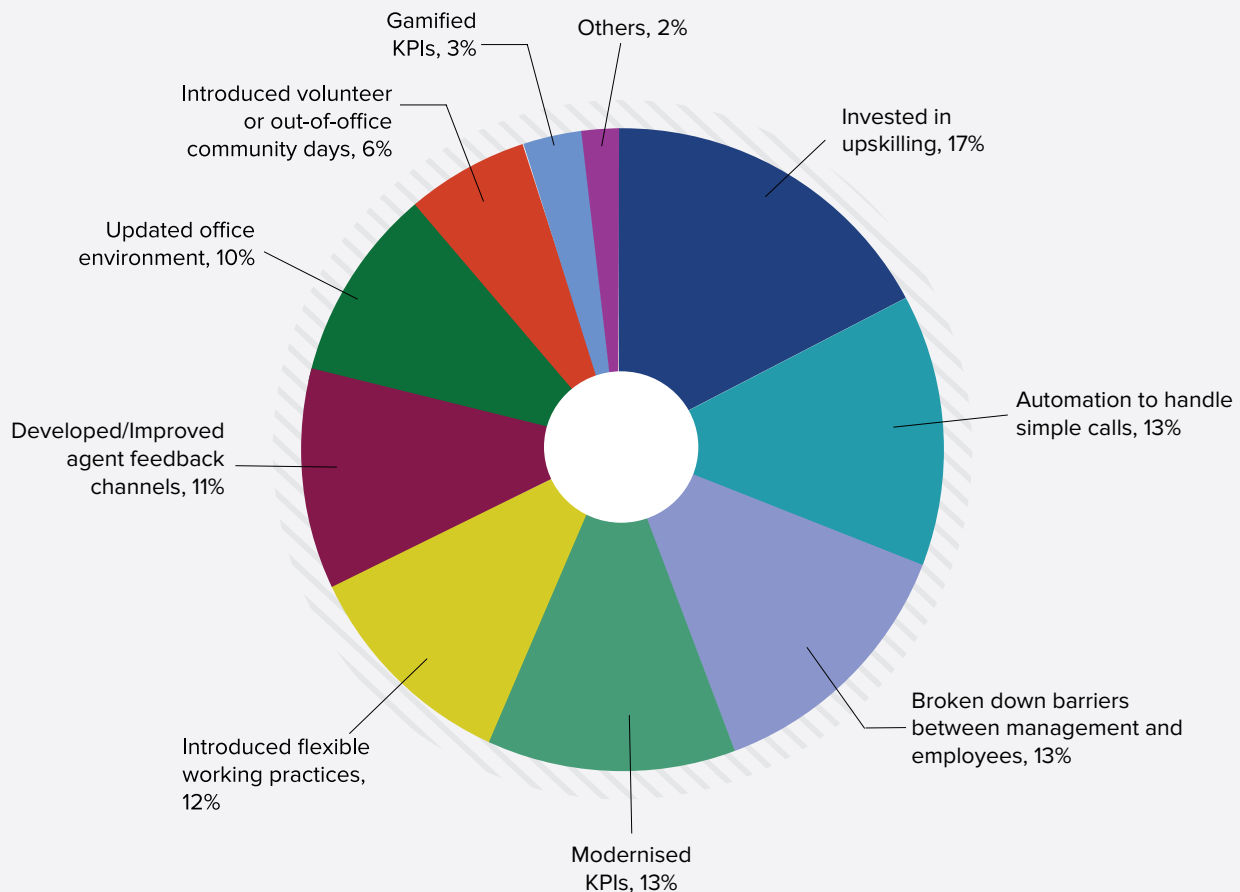
**Figure 5: Has your Organisation Recently Worked to Transform Contact Centre Culture?**



Investing in upskilling and agent training came out as the top strategy in transforming workplace culture with 17% agreeing of its importance. Among the top innovations implemented also include automation to handle simple calls (13%), breaking down barriers between management and employees (13%)

and modernising KPIs (13%). It's also interesting to note that introducing volunteer days and other out-of-office community activities work for some organisations, as these activities provide a different kind of fulfilment for some employees.

**Figure 6: What Strategies or innovations have you harnessed to improve culture?**

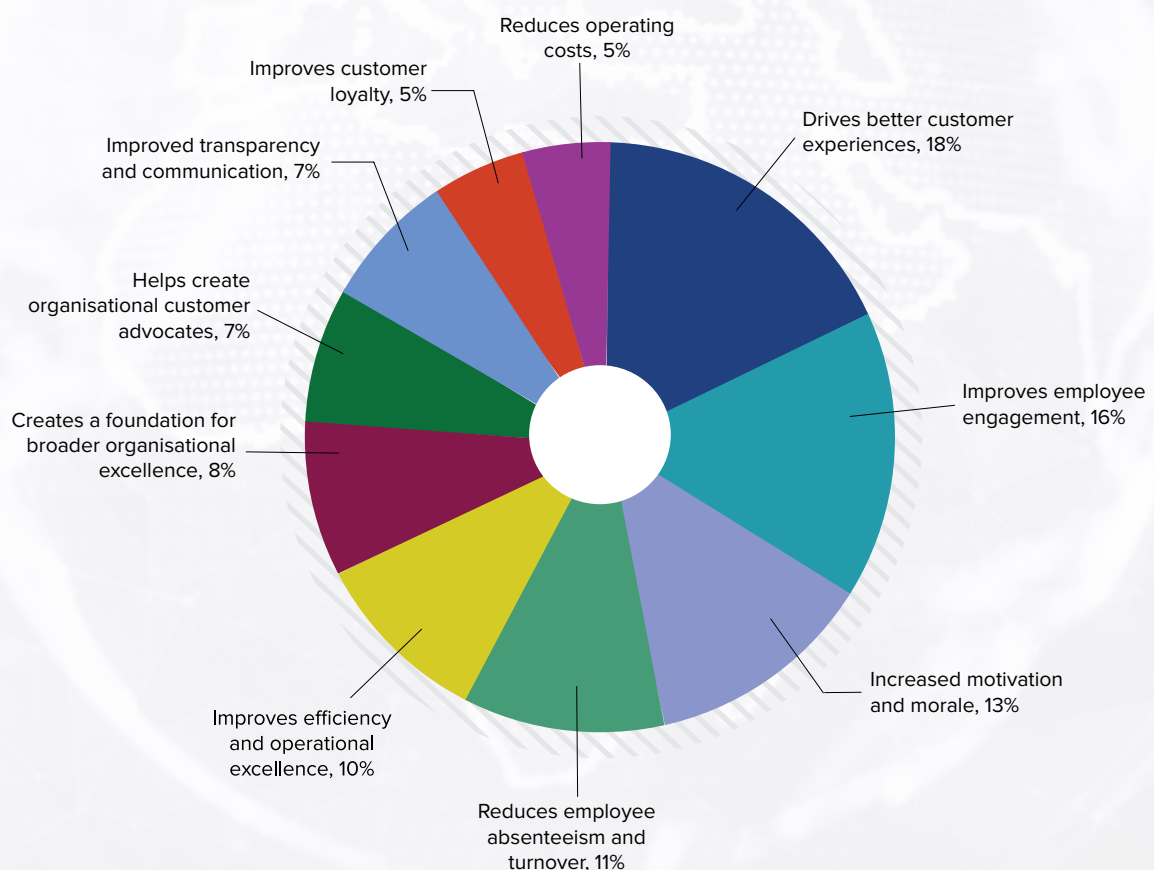




The obvious benefit of internal improvements is not lost among our contact centre leaders with 18% of them saying this drives better customer experiences while 16% of them believe that employee engagement also

improves as a result of cultural improvements. A further 13% believe that increased motivation and employee morale make a strong case for transforming workplace culture.

Figure 7: What are the benefits of creating a positive workplace culture?



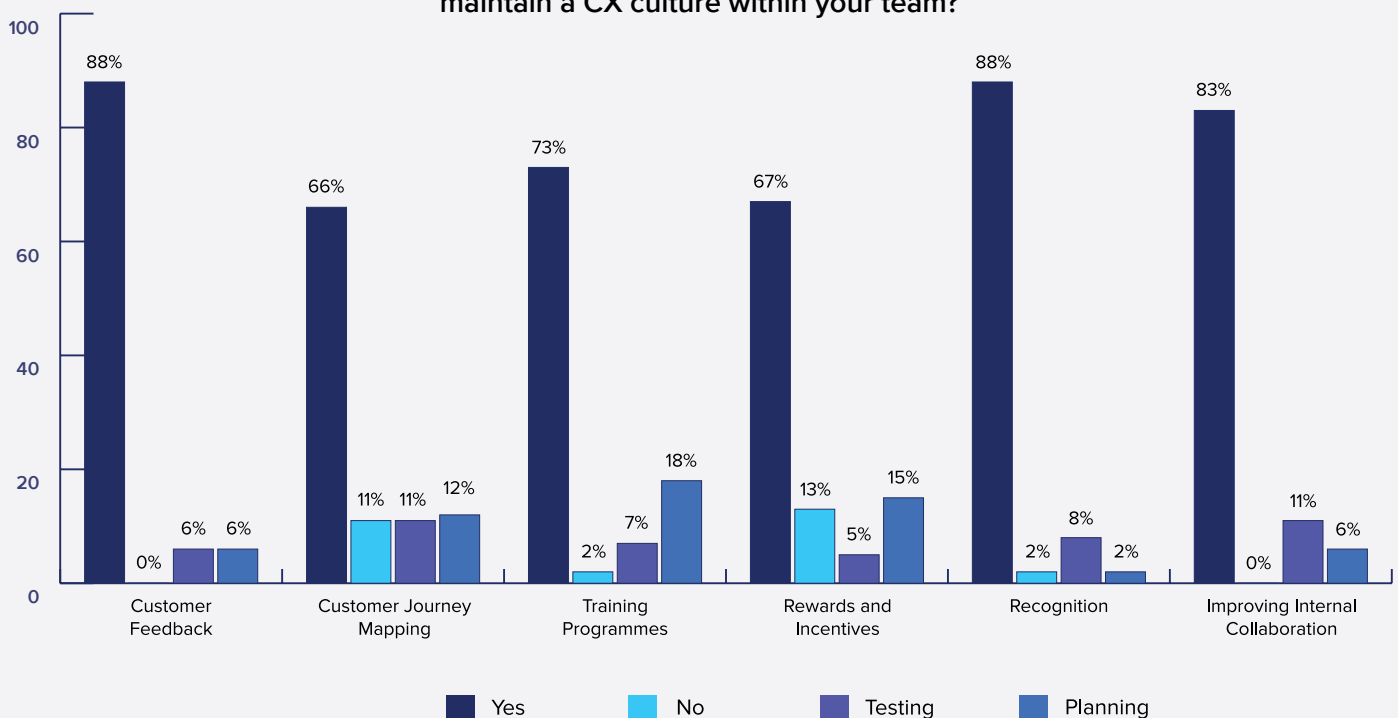


# SUCCESS

**In maintaining a customer experience (CX) culture within the organisation's team, it is important to try out various methods and strategies and continuously reinvest in activities that work.**

This is exactly what many organisations in our research show, with many of them using a combination of customer feedback, customer journey mapping, recognition, rewards and incentives, and improving internal collaboration as part of a bigger strategy.

**Figure 8: Which of the following strategies are you using to create or maintain a CX culture within your team?**





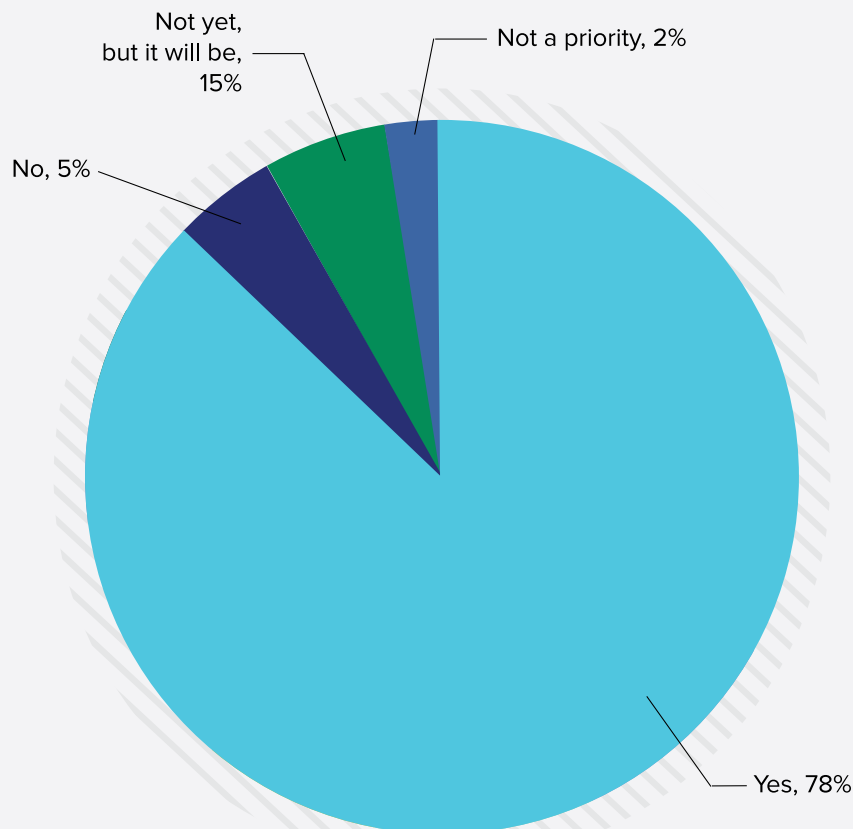
## SELF-SERVICE & AUTOMATION

It has been declared that 2019 is the year of automation. With the explosion of advanced technologies relating to RPA, machine learning and chatbots, many organisations have started to adapt and explore its potential benefits. It is true that automation has the potential to transform customer experience. By transferring relatively simple tasks to machines, customers are able to get the help that they need with great efficiency while reducing costs for companies to service those needs. With proper

planning, automation can contribute to career advancement of customer contact personnel as it will allow them to handle more sophisticated tasks that require decision-making and leadership.

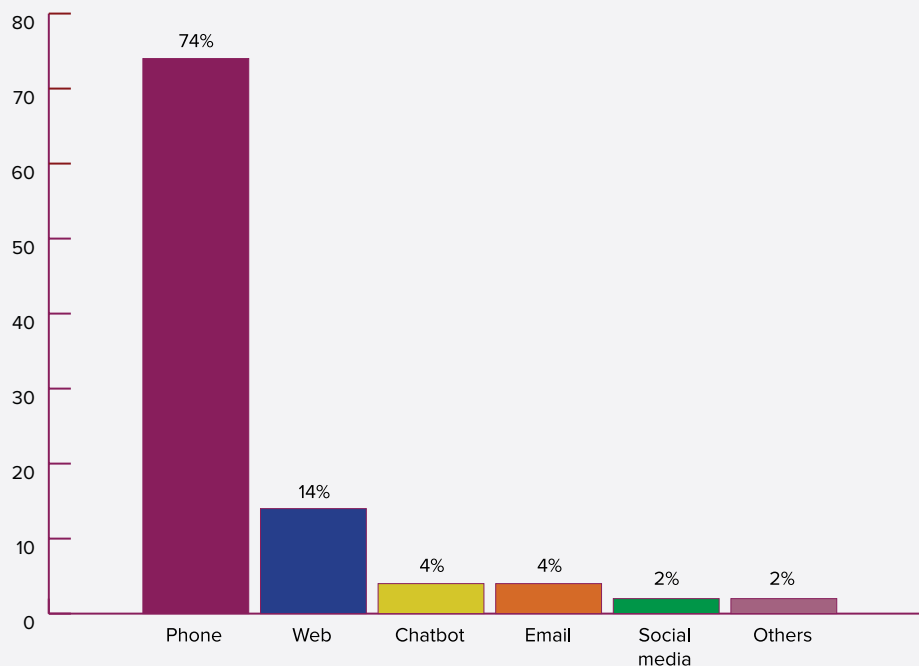
In fact, in our research, 78% of organisations already recognise self-service and automation as a strategic priority. An additional 15% don't consider it a priority today but believes it will be, soon.

**Figure 9: Is self-service and automation a strategic priority for you?**  
Do you believe this is the way forward for your organisation?



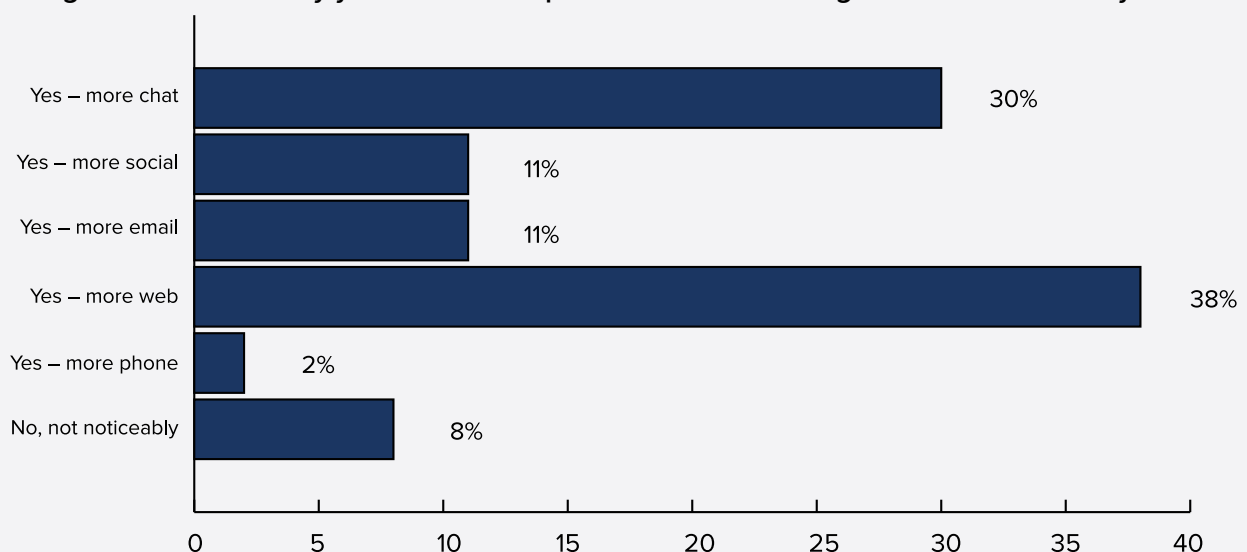
But while automation programmes are still underway and have yet to be fully implemented in most organisations, Phone still remains the top channel (74%) where majority of customer interactions are happening. It's interesting to note though that other channels such as web, email, chatbots and social media now handle one quarter of all interactions – a significant figure by all measures.

**Figure 10: From which channel do you get the majority of customer interactions?**



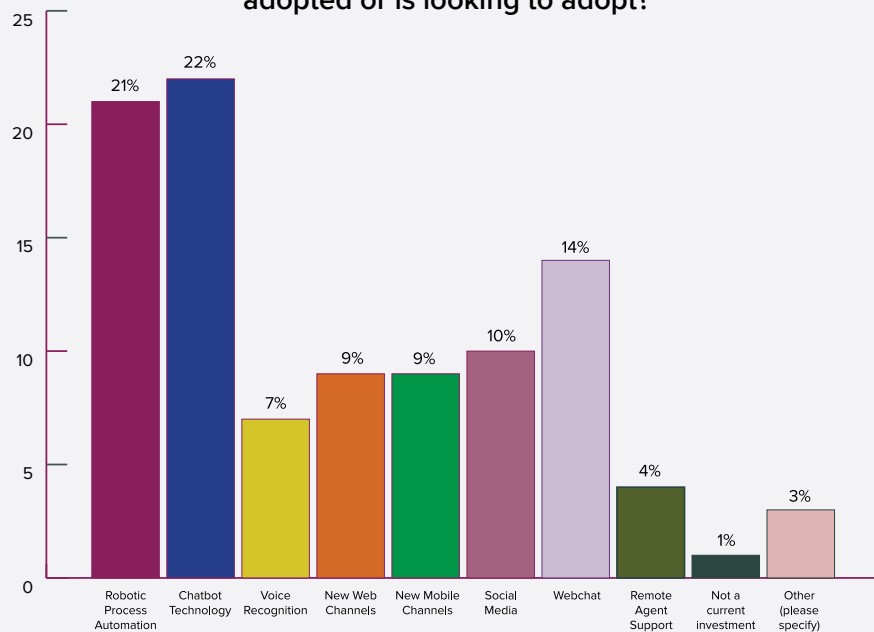
Add to the fact that over the last few years, a significant number of customers have shifted their interaction preference to “more web” and “more chat” and we can see a pattern of increasing efficiency.

**Figure 11: Has the way your customers prefer to interact changed over the last few years?**



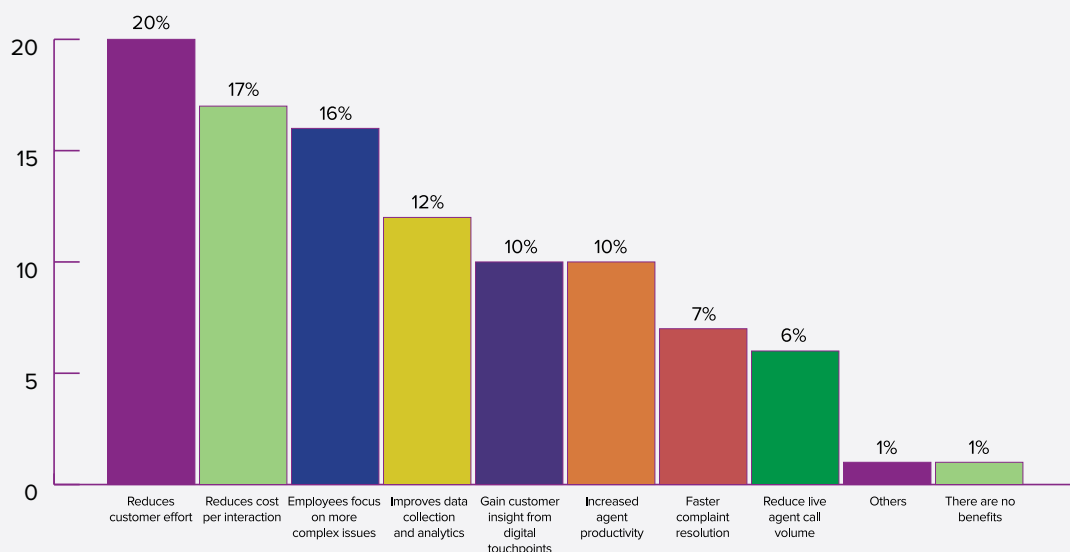
For these reasons, it is no wonder that 43% of organisations have either adopted or looking to adopt robotic process automation and chatbot technology. A further 14% have also invested in webchat solutions.

**Figure 12: Which self-service or automation technologies has your organisation adopted or is looking to adopt?**



The benefits of automation are manifold. 20% of customer contact organisations agree that it reduces customer effort, one of the key metrics of a truly customer-centric organisation. Other benefits include reduction of cost per interaction (17%), focus on more complex issues (16%), and improvement in data analytics (12%), among others.

**Figure 13: What are the biggest benefits of investing in digital technologies?**



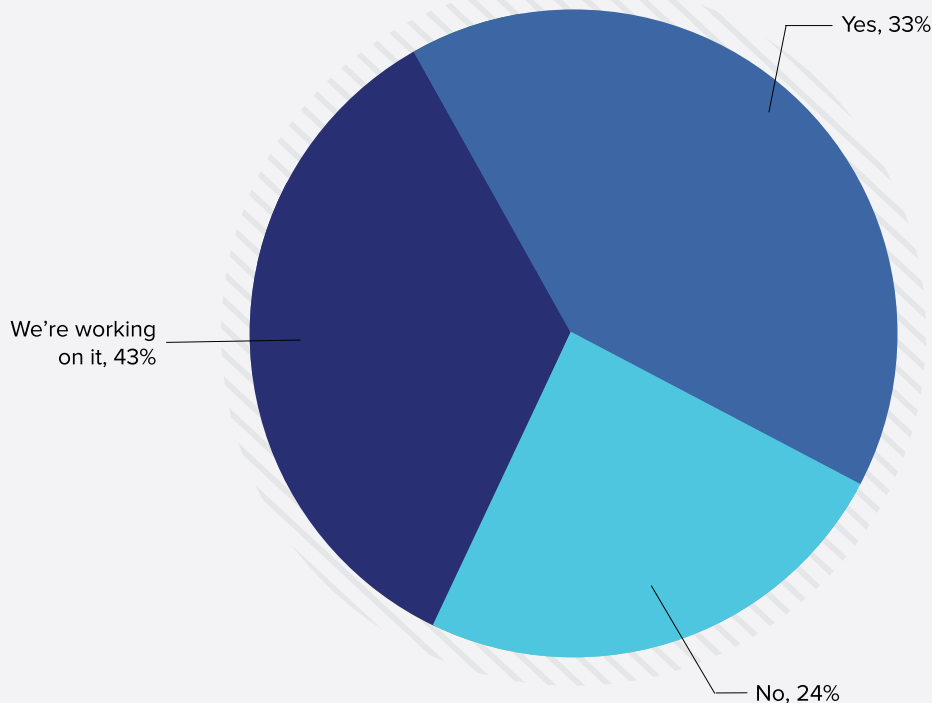


## OMNI-CHANNEL & SEAMLESS EXPERIENCES

Because of the tremendous advancement of computing technologies and the evolution of high-speed internet, customer contact behaviours have also changed. Suddenly, customers are no longer confined to just one channel or mode of communication. Because of the multiple devices they own, it is also natural to shift from one device to another within a span of a few minutes – and they expect this journey to be seamless and smooth.

This message is not lost among our survey respondents. Roughly 76% of them are saying that their contact centre currently is an omni-channel organisation or are currently working on it. As the technology further evolves and better processes are put in place, expect these organisations to further refine their omni-channel strategy to make it more responsive to customers' needs.

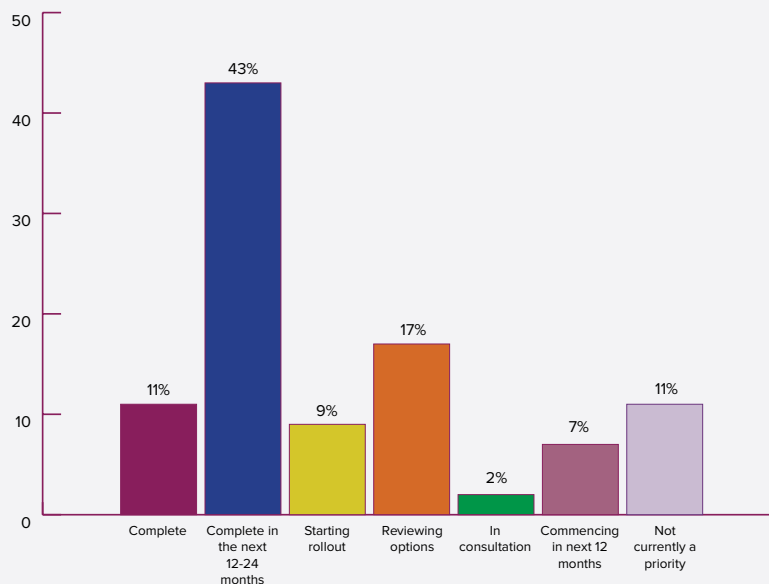
Figure 14: Would you describe your contact centre as Omni-Channel?





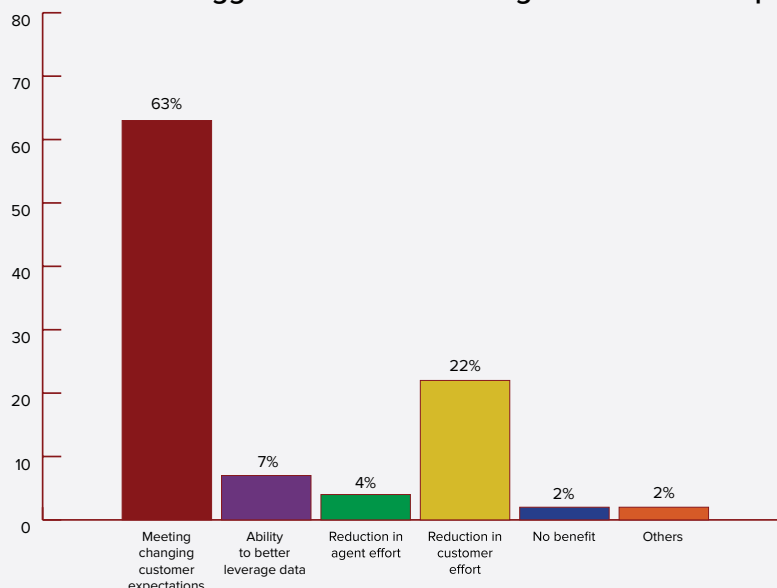
This journey towards a fully omni-channel organisation is an ongoing one with almost half (43%) of them saying that full roll-out is expected in the next 12-24 months. Meanwhile, one-tenth of our survey respondents have indicated that their journey is complete.

**Figure 15: What stage is your organisation at in the omni-channel journey?**



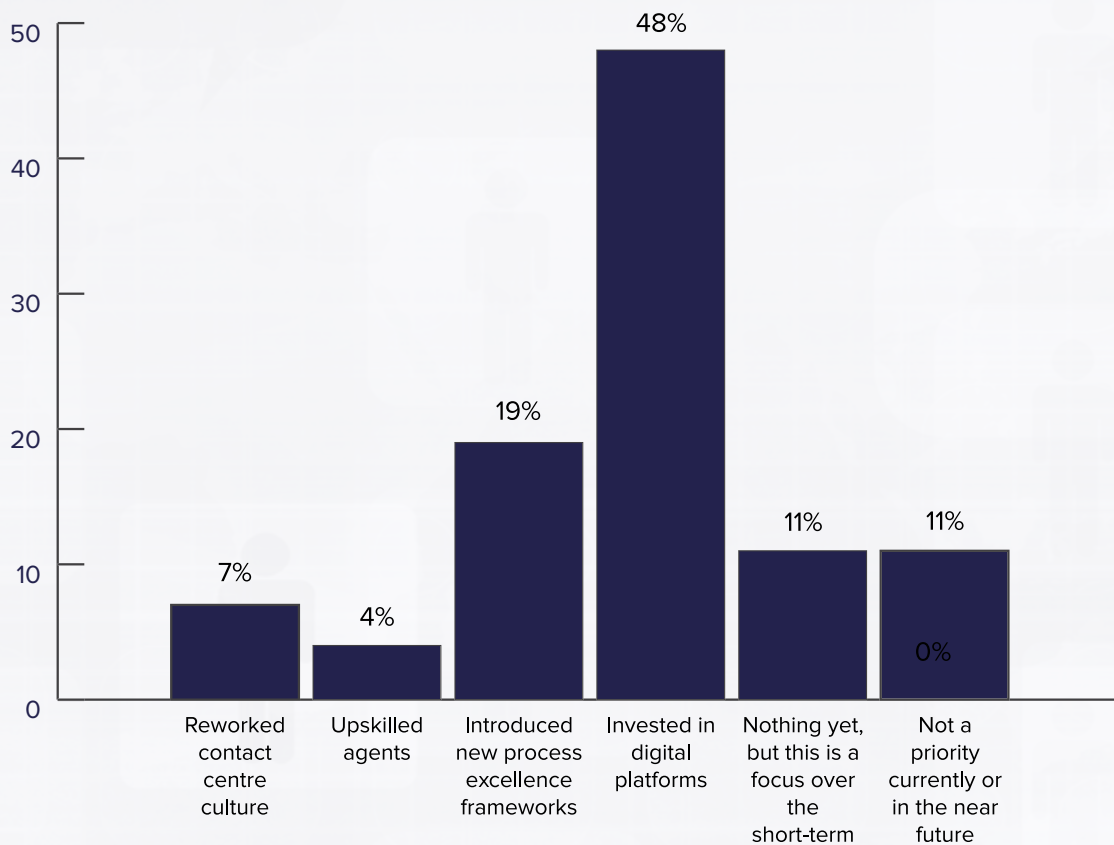
In this journey, the customer still remains the top consideration. In our research, it was revealed that 63% of all the organisations see “meeting changing customer expectations” as the biggest benefit in creating an omni-channel experience. A further 22% see “reduction in customer effort” as the main benefit. For others, the benefits in terms of leveraging data and reducing agent effort are of equal importance.

**Figure 16: What is the biggest benefit of creating omni-channel experiences?**



To achieve these benefits, 48% of the organisations we surveyed have invested in digital platforms to drive omni-channel experience. This was followed by introduction of new process excellence frameworks and addressing training and culture gaps.

**Figure 17: What steps have you taken, or are you looking at, to create an omni-channel experience?**



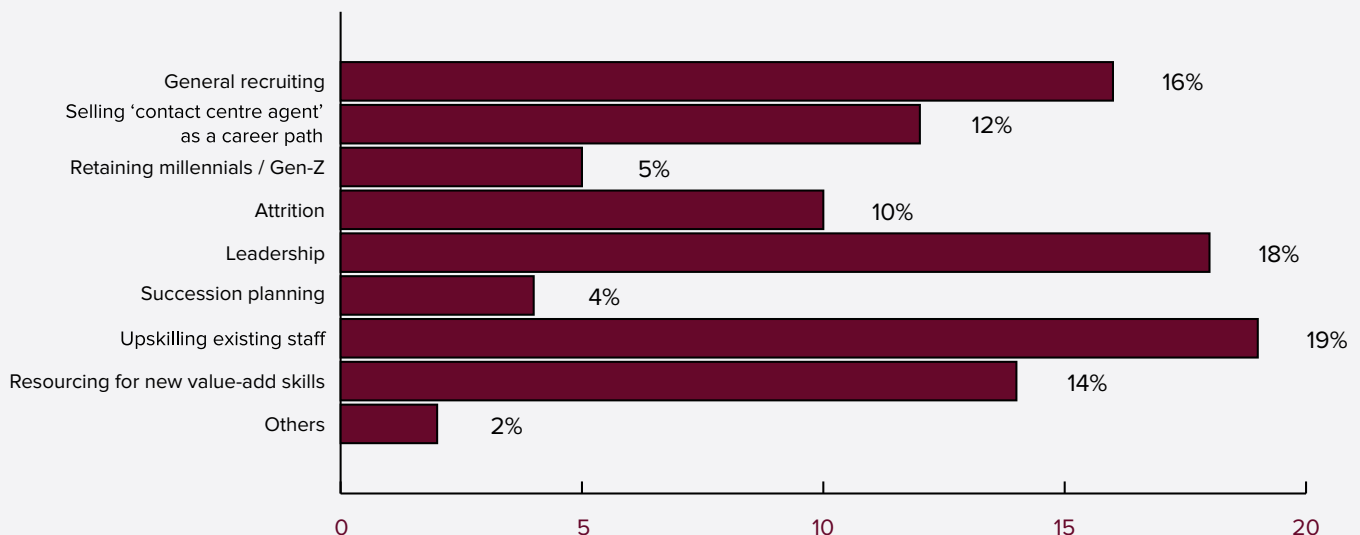


## THE NEXT GENERATION WORKFORCE

Millennials, and their younger counterparts tagged as “Gen Z”, have been the subject of so much criticism over their commitment to the workplace. Most see them as a generation who demands too much freedom from their employers and will take on as little amount of work as possible. And yet, according to Deloitte, “84 percent of millennials say they have experienced burnout at their current job and nearly half of millennials say they have left a job specifically because they felt burned out.”

Of course, these criticisms are mostly unfounded and usually a product of inter-generational misalignment of expectations. The next generation workforce has grown up accustomed to using technology as a way to make things easier and accomplish tasks faster. In fact, according to organisations we surveyed, only 5% sees retaining millennials/Gen Z as the biggest agent management challenge. The bigger concerns have more to do with leadership, upskilling and general recruiting.

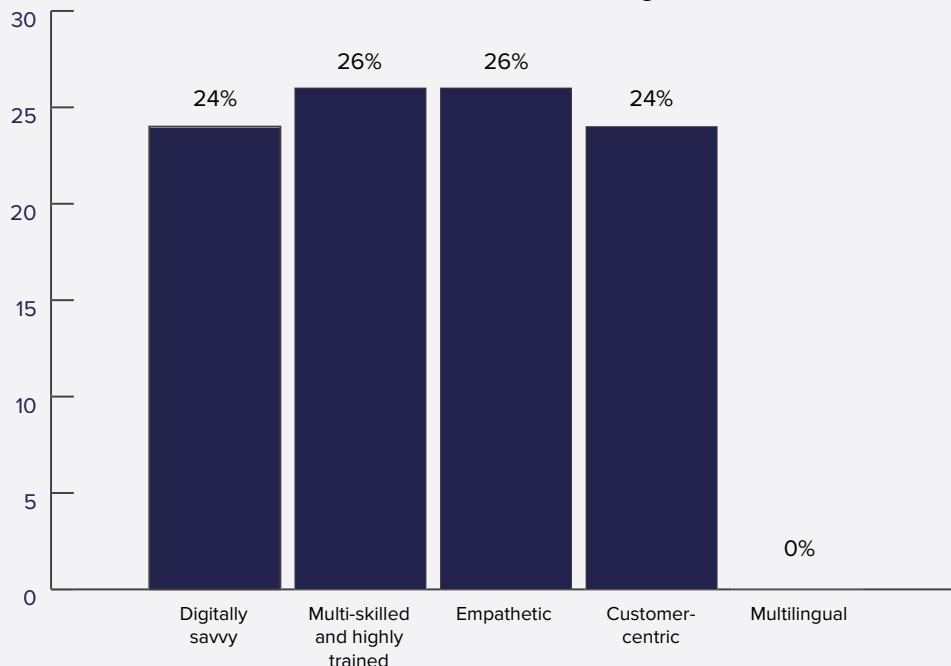
Figure 18: What's your biggest agent management challenge?



When it comes to skills necessary to succeed as a contact centre agent of the future, soft skills such as empathy and being customer-centric scored almost equally with digital savvy and being multi-skilled. It's also interesting

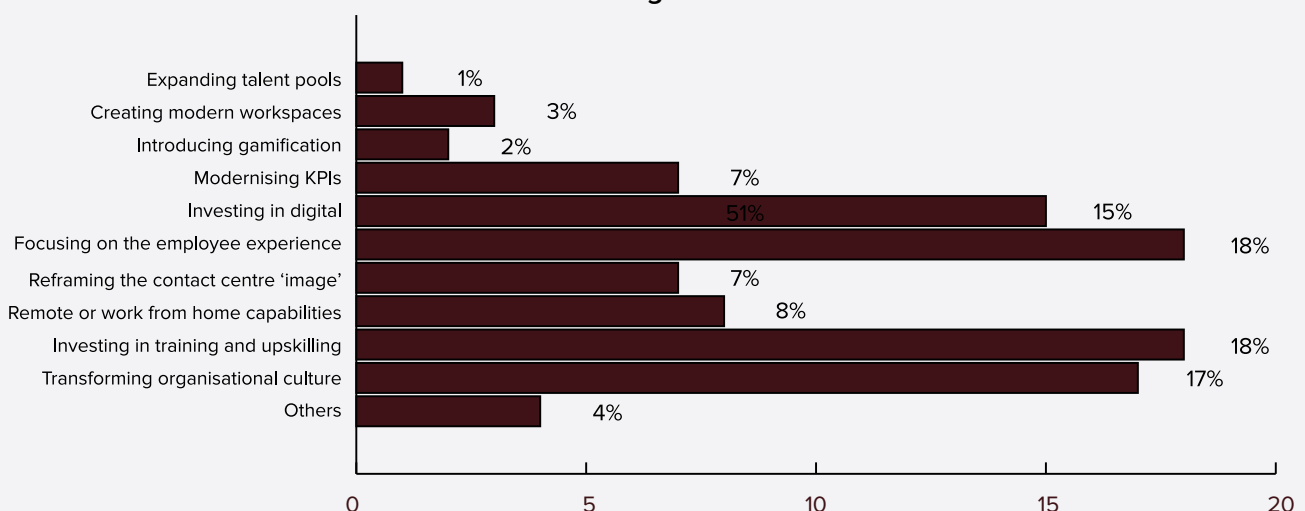
to note that none of the organisations we surveyed have placed an emphasis on being multi-lingual, perhaps an indication that technology takes care of this.

**Figure 19: What skills will the future contact centre agent need to be successful?**



To address the challenges of preparing current agents to be ready for the future, many organisations are investing in improving employee experience (18%) as well as training (18%) and culture change (17%). Investing in digital is also a key component in this strategy.

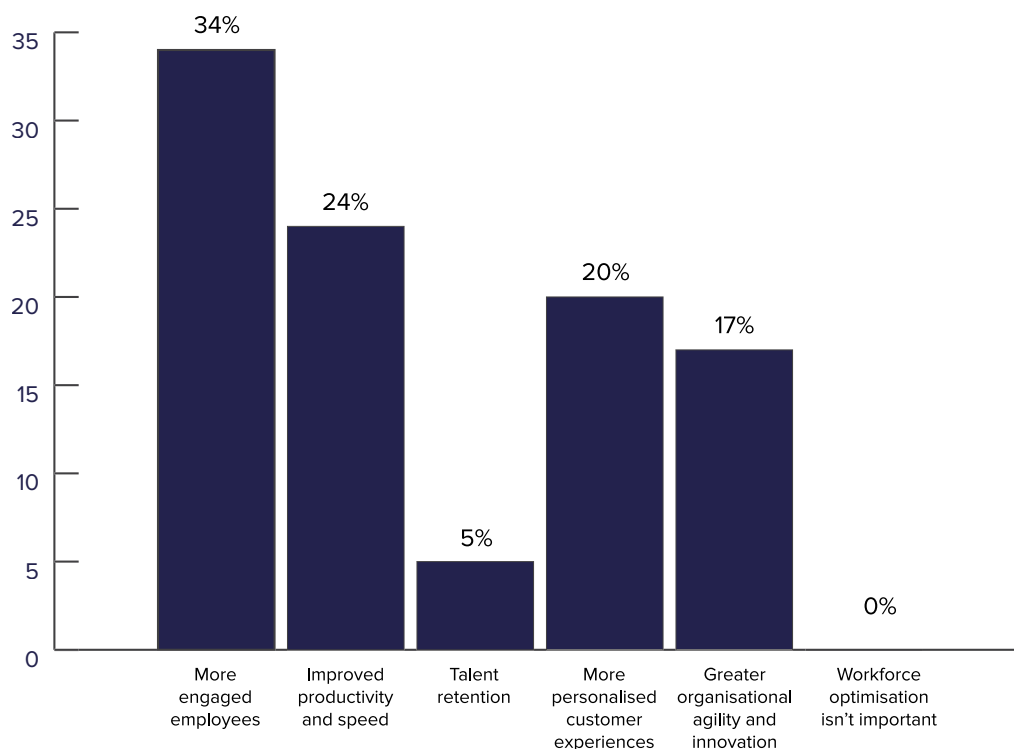
**Figure 20: What strategies are you harnessing to overcome challenges and create the agent of the future?**



There is no question that focusing on workforce optimisation help drive customer experiences. And for many organisations, this is important because it results in more engaged employees, with 34% of them saying this is the case.

Furthermore, it helps improve productivity and speed as well as greater organisational agility and innovation. None of the organisations we surveyed believe that workforce optimisation is unimportant.

Figure 21: Why is a focus on workforce important?







## INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE?

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Customer Contact Week 2020 will provide you with the necessary roadmap and tools to adapt your People, Process, Technology and Customer Service Delivery strategy towards a new frontier. We'll bring together pioneering organisations to discuss how they are successfully navigating this change and transforming their Contact Centres into a unified CX Hub that will forever change the way customers connect.

**DOWNLOAD THE AGENDA**

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