Long live customer service! Your answer to great customer experiences

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Great customer experience begins with great customer service

When it comes to the customer experience, modern consumers are putting their money where their mouth is.

73%
of respondents identified customer experience as an important factor in their purchasing decisions.

In a PwC study of more than 15,000 consumers globally, 73% of respondents identified customer experience as an important factor in their purchasing decisions, with 43% saying they would pay more for convenience and 42% saying they would pay more for a friendly, welcoming experience.[1]

Other research highlights the same trend. A study led by Forbes revealed that most customers would pay more for a better experience, so there's not a lot of wiggle room for your customer service to fail.[2]

Here's the rub, though. Customer service can be a challenge, especially when you have a small team. Small businesses don't always have a dedicated customer service department. Instead, customer service might fall on random shoulders in the company, with employees wearing multiple hats. What can you do if this is the case?

Whether you're a team of two or have 100 employees, we're here to help show you the path to delivering great customer service — and as a result, deliver an even greater customer experience. We'll also show you what to look for in a communications system to support your customer service strategy.

Let's get started.

[1] Experience is everything: here's how to get it right, PwC

[2] Customers Will Pay More For This, Forbes

Simplify employee and customer communications

The first step to creating a strong customer experience is to create an incredible employee experience. It's simple: If your employees are happy, they'll be more willing to make your customers happy. That means giving them the tools they need to do their job effectively.
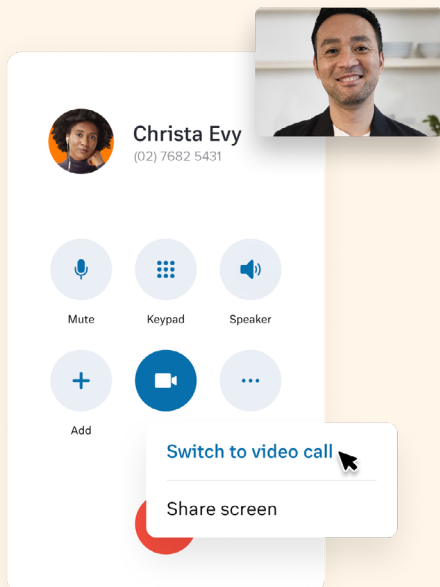
Poor team collaboration and customer experience are hard to overcome, especially if your business has been operating the same way for a long time. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Are you dealing with insufficient legacy phone system capabilities that undermine staff and customer service levels?

- Are your store employees receiving calls meant for your customer service or sales teams?

- Are your sales and customer service teams struggling to respond to customers on time due to delayed answers from their peers?

If you answered "Yes" to any of the above, it's time to rethink your customer service strategy. Finding a simple solution that makes it effortless for employees and customers to communicate will make all the difference.

Engage with your employees and customers

Make it easier for your employees to engage with each other and customers through a single communications app. Imagine a world where your employees and customers can communicate using phone, video and messaging in one unified cloud platform. Sounds nice, doesn't it?

Ditch legacy systems and a messy bucket of tools for one simplified communications system that can do it all.

Separate the business from the personal

Working at a small business can easily blur the lines between your business and personal life. Find techniques to help you and your employees separate both.

For starters, when it comes to your business phone system, find one that can keep your current number or lets you get your own local, global or freephone numbers so you can stay connected wherever work takes you. Don't feel obligated to always use your personal number for business purposes.

Reduce staff burden

Not all customer queries are complicated. So, why not make the resolution process less complicated too? With customisable, self-service Interactive Voice Response (IVR), your customers can do simple, straightforward tasks independently and conveniently — this saves your staff time and customers have faster resolutions. It's a win-win!

If you're not convinced about the power of self-service IVR, check out this stat: 79% of customers would rather self-serve than use human-assisted support channels.[3]

Route customer calls to the right person

When customers need to reach out for live assistance, make sure they're routed to the right person. No one likes long wait times or going through multiple transfers before getting help. Set up call queues and automated call routing so customers always reach the best-matched expert in sales or customer service the first time around.

This is critical for the 60% of small business customers who prefer to interact with brands over the phone,[4] and the 83% of customers who expect to engage with someone immediately when contacting a company.[5]

Press

1 Technical support
2 Sales
3 Hours of operation

[3.] 7 Remarkable IVR Trends, Zephyrnet

[4.] Local Business Websites and Google My Business Comparison Report, Brightlocal

[5.] State of the Connected Customer, Salesforce

Simplify your workflows

Team messaging, file sharing and task management foster collaboration and make it easier for your team to communicate without extra thought and in real time. Look for a communications system that enables instant, real-time collaboration and communication across your entire organisation.
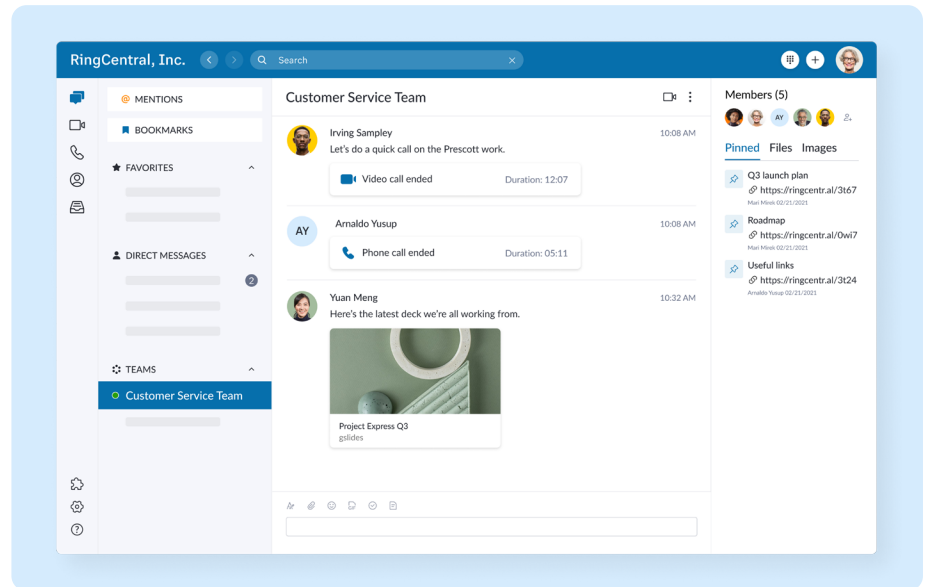
Monitor, coach and support your team members

Improve employee training and customer experience by discreetly listening in on calls in real time without the customer knowing. Top communications solutions also enable whisper-coaching, providing more support to team members and leading to better call outcomes.

Strengthen customer service and staff efficiency

If you're like most small businesses, you may find it hard to track historical and real-time performance of your customer service, sales and telemarketing staff.

When you can't recognise call volume patterns or assign staff accordingly, you can't get proper customer experience insights.

Luckily, with a robust communications solution, you can increase operational agility by monitoring call queues in real time and gaining insights to improve customer satisfaction and employee productivity.

Access real-time and historical insights

Start making strategic decisions by turning to real-time and historical insights. With the right communications system, you can monitor call queues, use line of business analytics and view dashboards that track the performance of customer service representatives and overall customer experience.

Tapping into this valuable data will help guide your customer service strategy and validate your business decisions.

Become a customer experience champion

Did you know small business customer experience champions reduce average total resolution time by 44%?[6] Take the next step toward becoming a customer experience champion by upgrading to a communications system packed with real-time data, like RingCentral.

Track customer engagement

An advanced communications solution makes it easy for you to get an accurate read on customer engagement. By seeing when customers come into a queue, how long they had to wait, who they were routed to and how long they were engaged, you can determine whether the outcome was effective and track their overall customer experience.

Improve customer service quality

Deliver a five-star customer experience by constantly improving your customer service quality. Get a communications system that helps you identify calls that indicate a need for coaching and makes it easy for you to monitor on-hold calls, agent availability, missed calls and overall service levels to improve team performance.

Service Level
The percentage of calls answered within the threshold time.

Call Volume
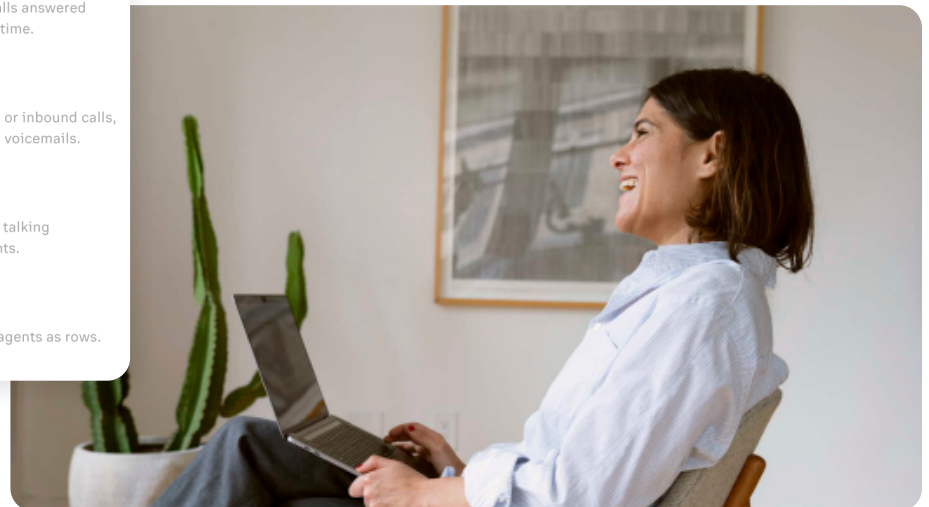Number of outbound or inbound calls, abandoned calls and voicemails.

Agents Count
Number of available, talking and unavailable agents.

Agent Details
Tabular widget with agents as rows.

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6. How SMB CX Leaders Who Raise Their Game Are Driving Business Success, Zendesk

Ensure proper staffing levels

A communications system with baked-in data can help you analyse queues and spot emerging patterns in call traffic to staff accordingly and prevent queue overload. You can even drill down into each location to adjust resources to support heavy call volumes.

Proper staffing levels only lead to stronger First Call Resolution (FCR) rates — this is a big deal because studies show that a 1% FCR improvement lowers operating costs by 1% and increases customer satisfaction by 1%.[7]

Display any dashboard

With the right platform, you can display any dashboard on a wall-mounted screen for the entire team to see. You and your team will have constant visibility into the current state of your customer service operations and can immediately course correct to improve productivity.
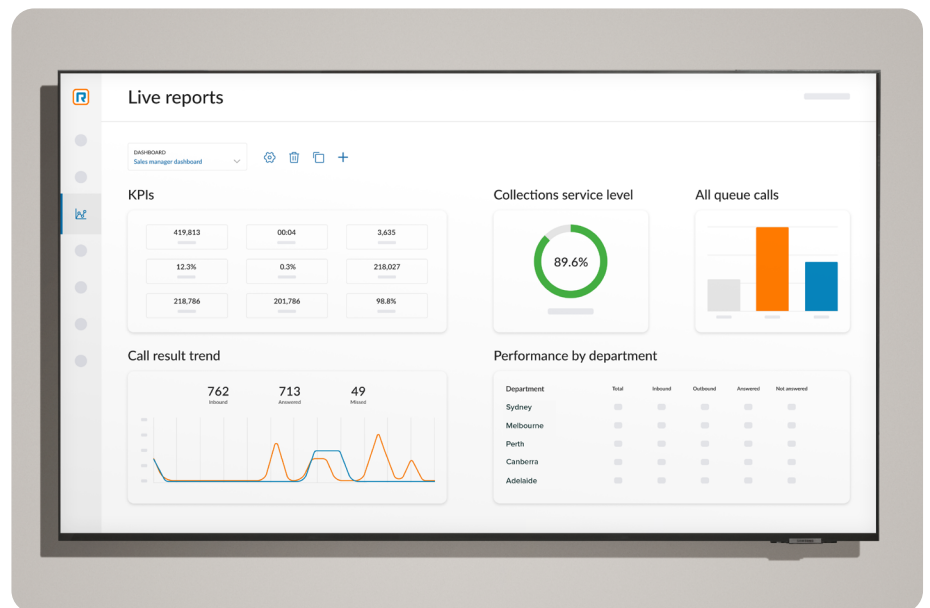
[7] First Call Resolution: Comprehensive Guide, SQM

Scale your operations affordably

Cost is arguably the most critical factor for small businesses that aim to implement new tools and improve their operations. It's essential to find tools that will grow with your business and protect your budget at the same time.

Many small businesses are not yet ready to make the investment in a fully-featured call centre solution. You need an affordable solution that meets the needs of your small business, both now and in the future.

The great news is that you can grow your customer service and sales communications using one secure app from one vendor to improve your ROI without breaking the bank.

Set up new lines and team members instantly

Look for a communications system with easy-to-use configuration tools that can set up new lines and team members at record speed. In addition, ensure it can enable supervisors to use out-of-the-box templates and customisable dashboards to track KPIs, trends and more without the need for technical expertise.
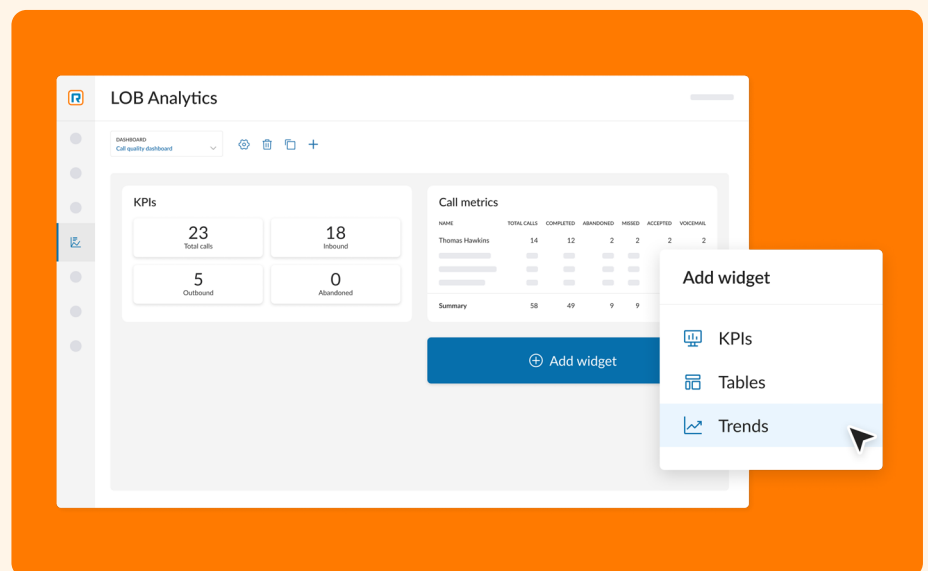
Simplify workflows
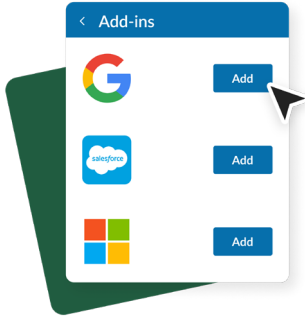
Did you know 42% of customer service agents are unable to efficiently resolve issues due to disconnected systems, outdated user interfaces, and multiple apps?[8] Streamline how you work by connecting your phone to your most-used business apps, like Salesforce, Google, Zendesk and Hubspot.

Even enable your employees to work more efficiently with smart screen popups and save them time by integrating with your CRM — all customer information and calls can be housed together. Jumping back and forth between apps will be a thing of the past.

Get one bill from one vendor for all of your business communications

Who wants to deal with multiple vendors and endless paperwork? No one. Choose one vendor for all your business and customer communications needs. One of the biggest perks of choosing an all-in-one communications system from a single vendor is that you'll only pay one bill.

When researching vendors, look for one that will always be by your side with a dedicated support team to help you manage your communications setup. Also, keep an eye out for one that gives you real-time analytics for phone and meetings to get the most out of your investment.

Always stay connected

Availability %	Downtime per year
99.99%	52.60 minutes
99.999%	5.26 minutes

Businesses are well aware of the negative impacts that come with unexpected downtime: loss of productivity and sales. It's critical to get a communications system that keeps your business connected at all times.

Look for a communications system with industry-leading 99.999% uptime availability, which means that your vendor's carrier-grade infrastructure works day and night to keep you online, anytime. You may not think that extra 9 matters, but it does. It's the difference between 52.60 minutes of downtime per year versus 5.26 minutes per year.[9]

With 99.999% uptime availability, you'll be able to easily manage your remote teams from anywhere — even on your mobile device.

Secure customer data

If there's one thing you should never skimp on, it's security. Just because your business is not yet in the enterprise-playing field doesn't mean that you can't take advantage of enterprise-grade security

Bulletproof your business and choose a communications system with enterprise-grade security that encrypts all your meetings and conversations.

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8. [Customer Service Tips: 20 Tips to Keeping Customers Happy, Salesforce](#)

9. [8 Benefits of Choosing A UCaaS Provider for Teams Telephony](#)

Small businesses winning in customer experience

What does success look like for small businesses that prioritise customer experience and choose their communications solution wisely? Here's a quick look at three small businesses delivering exceptional customer service to drive great customer experience.

naked wines

INDUSTRY: Retailer

About

Founded in 2008 in Norwich, England, NakedWines.com is a customer-funded wine business changing the way wine is made and enjoyed. Their customers (who they call Angels) directly support independent winemakers in return for exclusive access to delicious handcrafted wines at insane prices.

Challenge

When it opened an office in Napa, California, NakedWines.com needed to establish a common phone system that worked across both offices (UK and Napa), with affordable internet calling between them.

While the growing business needed a phone system that was easy to manage across global locations, customer service was also front of mind. They didn't have a system that gave them visibility into what was coming their way, this meant managers couldn't proactively plan staffing.

Solution

NakedWines.com established RingCentral MVP™ as its common phone system that worked in Norwich and Napa, with affordable internet calling between them.

Ann Shimizu

020 3555 1212
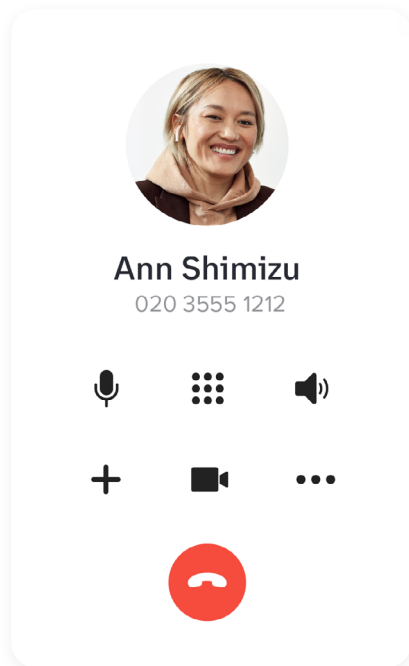
"The scalability from a company standpoint – being able to grow and shrink as needed – has been huge for us," says Mark Hansen, Customer Happiness Phone Team Manager. Adding a new extension is as simple as plugging a new phone into an internet socket, and moving operations is a breeze because everything is in the cloud," says Hansen.

Derek Hardy, Chief Technology Officer at NakedWines.com, says he appreciates the way RingCentral simplifies his job.

"Not having to worry about the telephones means that I can get on and do IT work, and the phones just work," he says.

At the same time, simple victories emboldened NakedWines.com to get more ambitious about how it uses RingCentral services.

With a click-to-call function for its customer service and support software, NakedWines.com became one of the first RingCentral customers to take advantage of the RingCentral API platform for a custom integration.

"That was worth a little extra programming," Hardy says, "We can initiate calls directly, which makes it easier for our team to call customers and reduces misdials."

More recently, NakedWines.com also added RingCentral Live Reports to the mix, which provides real-time data on the performance of call queues. That allows Hansen to rebalance staff members assigned to the four queues or pull in additional staff if necessary.

"With Live Reports, I can monitor the traffic on those queues and see who's holding, how many calls we have taken on a queue, how many agents we have available, how many missed calls, and what our service level is. I can slice and dice the data on those queues very finely and ensure we have the right number of staff available to service our customers."

Live Reports makes it easier for Hansen to spot emerging patterns in the call traffic and prevent problems, rather than waiting until the call queues are overloaded.

"Live Reports really helps us shine a light and get visibility into what's coming our way and proactively plan our staffing based on these patterns and call volume forecasts."
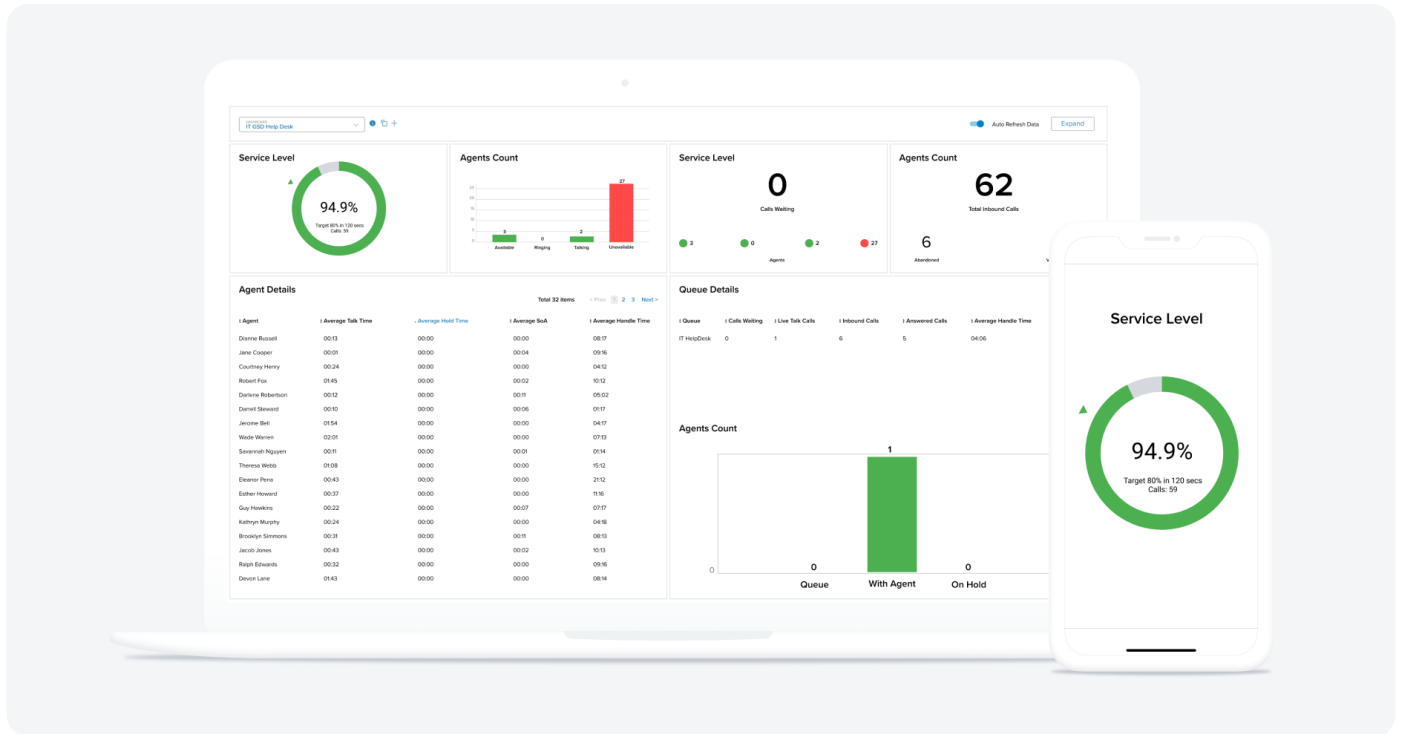
TRIUMPH

INDUSTRY: Manufacturing

About

Triumph is an iconic brand, and you've seen their products many times. Hollywood movies from The Great Escape to Jurassic World have featured stars riding Triumph motorcycles. The iconic bikes became so popular in the US that in 1994 the UK-based Triumph Motorcycles launched Triumph Motorcycles America Ltd.

Challenge

In recent years, the growth of Triumph Motorcycle America has been picking up a lot of speed. As the organisation grew, Operations Manager Brandon Keller and his team decided it was time to upgrade and modernise their business phone system to deal with the increasing demands of the company's accelerated hiring.

Solution

"First, we needed a better voice system than the old PBX we were maintaining," Keller says. "And second, we wanted a solution that would be flexible enough to offer lots of communication features to our teams that needed it, but at the same time just be an easy-to-use phone for employees who didn't want or need more than that."

"Actually," Keller continues, "it wasn't until we started talking with RingCentral that we realised how much we could also benefit from additional services built into the system like electronic fax, online meetings, a mobile app and other communication services. The RingCentral team actually showed us ways we could improve our efficiency and collaboration that we didn't even know about."

" One early win we enjoyed with the RingCentral rollout," Keller recalls, "was how easy and trouble-free it was to get our staff trained on using the system. Pretty much all we had to do was send everyone some of the video tutorials from RingCentral University, and that was it."

"Also, the support and Customer Care Centre have been fantastic whenever we've had questions or needed support. I recently contacted them to walk me through a couple of changes I wanted to make—just to make sure I didn't mess anything up. They were so responsive, so helpful, and that gives me peace of mind."

" RingCentral MVP lets us record that entire video and show it on-demand to our other dealers. This is another game changer because it frees our people up from having to host that same training session over and over for every dealer." Brandon Keller, Operations Manager, Triumph Motorcycles America Ltd.

"Thanks to a combination of no longer needing to support our aging PBX phone system and being able to do away with some of the other communication services we were paying for, like our online meeting service, we're now seeing a 30% savings over our old system."

"This system is also benefitting us in ways that we didn't anticipate when we rolled it out," explains Keller.

" For example, we set up our call centre staff on RingCentral MVP, and from the beginning the service was great for helping us more easily rotate people in and out based on their shifts. But then we started using the Live Reports to learn more about how our calls were being handled, and when we reviewed those reports we realised it didn't make sense to keep our call centre operating 24/7. Almost nobody was calling after midnight or on Sundays, so that insight allowed us to adjust schedules in ways that made more sense for the

business. Right there, RingCentral helped us become more productive and save money without sacrificing our service or the customer experience."

CBS
Car Benefit **Solutions**

INDUSTRY:
Financial services

About

Car Benefit Solutions (CBS) is a leading provider of Employee Car Ownership Schemes in the UK. These arrangements help businesses provide a cost-effective car benefit for both employers and their employees. Today, CBS dominates the industry in a number of ways. The company's solutions register more than 30,000 new cars each year, across hundreds of businesses, representing more than £1 billion in vehicle sales.

Challenge

As CBS continued to grow – and added business customers, automotive partners, vehicle registrations and staff to handle the increasing demand – the company's customer teams continued running into the same IT challenge. All of its business phone calls ran through an outdated PBX sitting in the company's headquarters.

" The old system gave us inconsistent call quality, outages and pretty much every other problem you can think of," recalls IT Manager Steve Hall.

Another shortcoming of CBS' on-premises phone system was that it offered essentially no support for employees when they were away from the office. When the UK's pandemic lockdowns went into effect, this became the top challenge the company faced.

" At first, we tried redirecting inbound calls to temporary mobile phones that we gave to employees, but that created its own problems. Once we diverted a call off of our network, we lost control of it… so we couldn't do another redirect or even see what was happening with the call. In those early lockdown days, we had no choice

Hi Jane! How can I help you?

but to send some people back into the office to handle support calls," explains Martin Greenhalagh, Operations Development Manager.

As much as the operations development and IT managers (and the company's customer teams) wanted to move to a more reliable and flexible phone system, they knew the internal approval process would take time. So, they continued to do the best they could with the phone system they had.

Solution

"RingCentral ticked all of the key boxes for us – affordable cost, intuitive interface so our teams could manage the solution themselves, a professional team we felt confident in and all of the functionality we needed," says Steve.
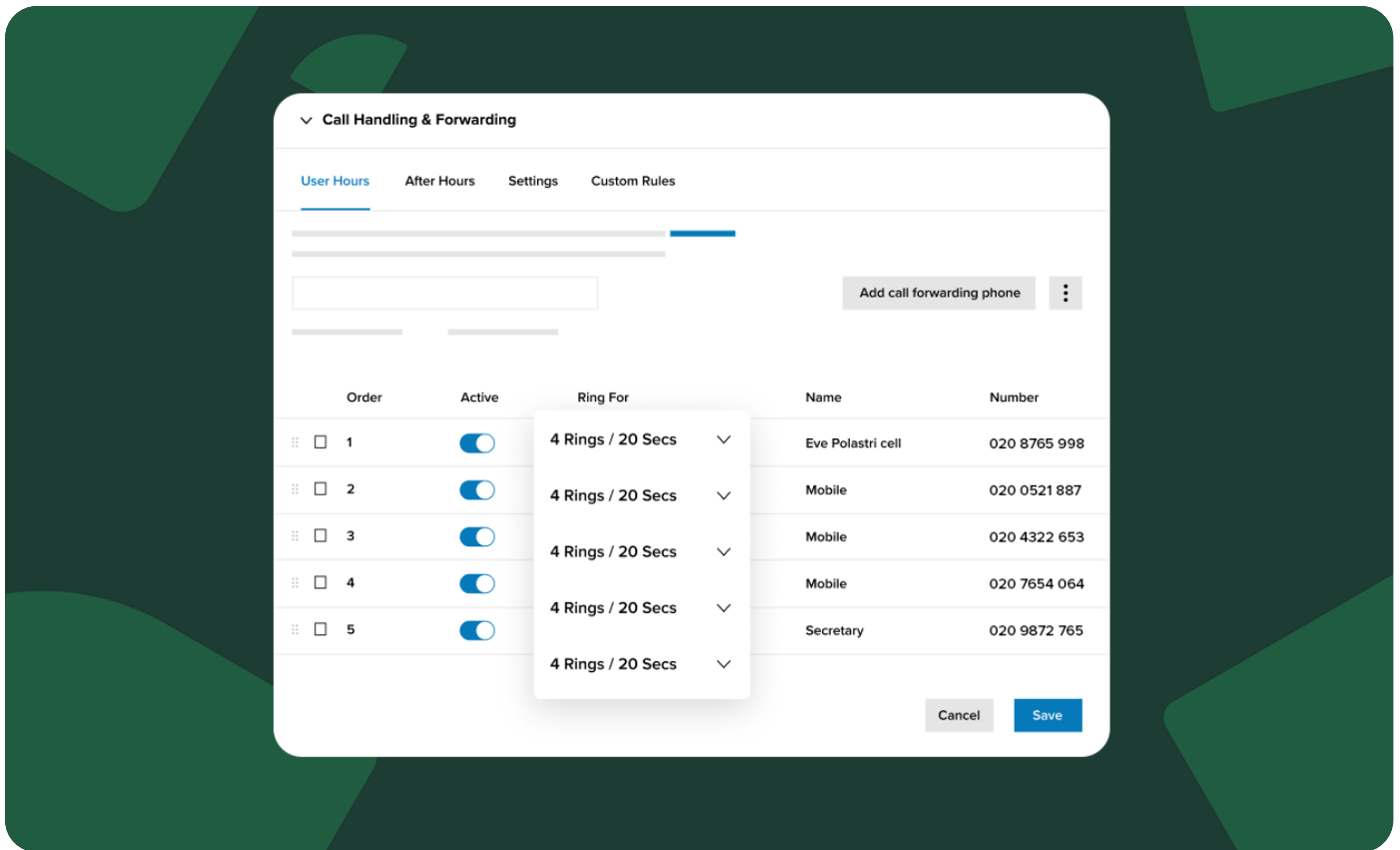
As Martin notes, in addition to offering the capabilities CBS needed immediately – specifically enabling every employee to make and receive business calls on any computer or mobile phone – RingCentral also offered functionality the company knew it would want to implement over time.

"We didn't want to switch to a new solution to get us through the lockdowns, but then realise later that as we needed more functionality, we'd have to either bolt-on other apps from different vendors or switch our whole system again."

The more Martin enquired about RingCentral's functionality, the more convinced he became that this was the future-proof solution CBS was looking for.

"I asked about everything I could think of...could we integrate RingCentral with our CRM? Would it integrate with our own internal apps? Did it offer automated diallers and other call centre tools? In every case, the answer was yes."
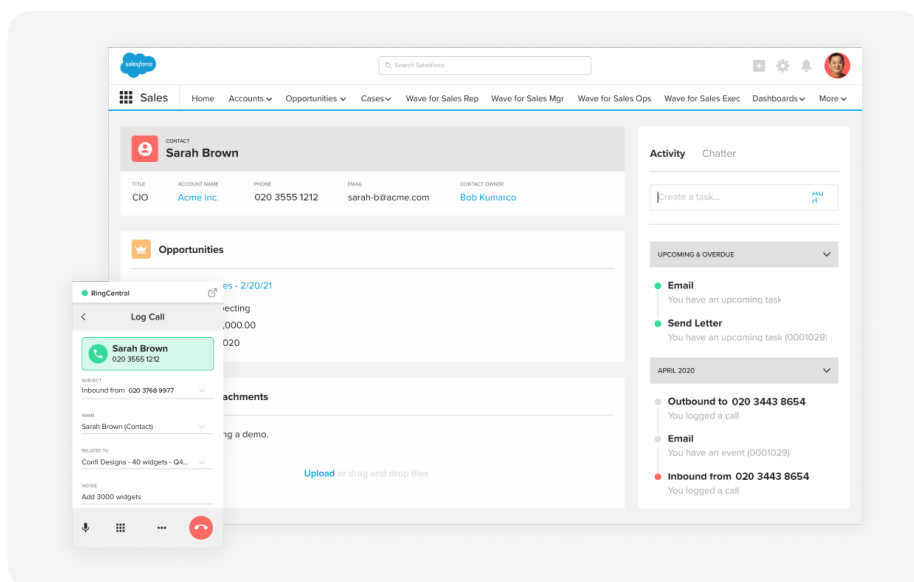
As helpful as CBS found RingCentral for its operations, the company is even more enthusiastic about implementing more of the solution's functionality as the company confirms future operational plans.

"With RingCentral, we have communications options we never had before like the CRM integration, the ability to get creative with call routing, and access to more granular call data and analytics than we ever had," explains Martin.

The tools also enabled the team to keep up customer service as the team worked remotely during the lockdowns.

Steve adds: "The team now is looking forward to seeing how else we can use the solution to improve our business - we know it will help us drive efficiencies through the extra data we see and the workforce management tools, which will be vital as we all move to a hybrid way of working."
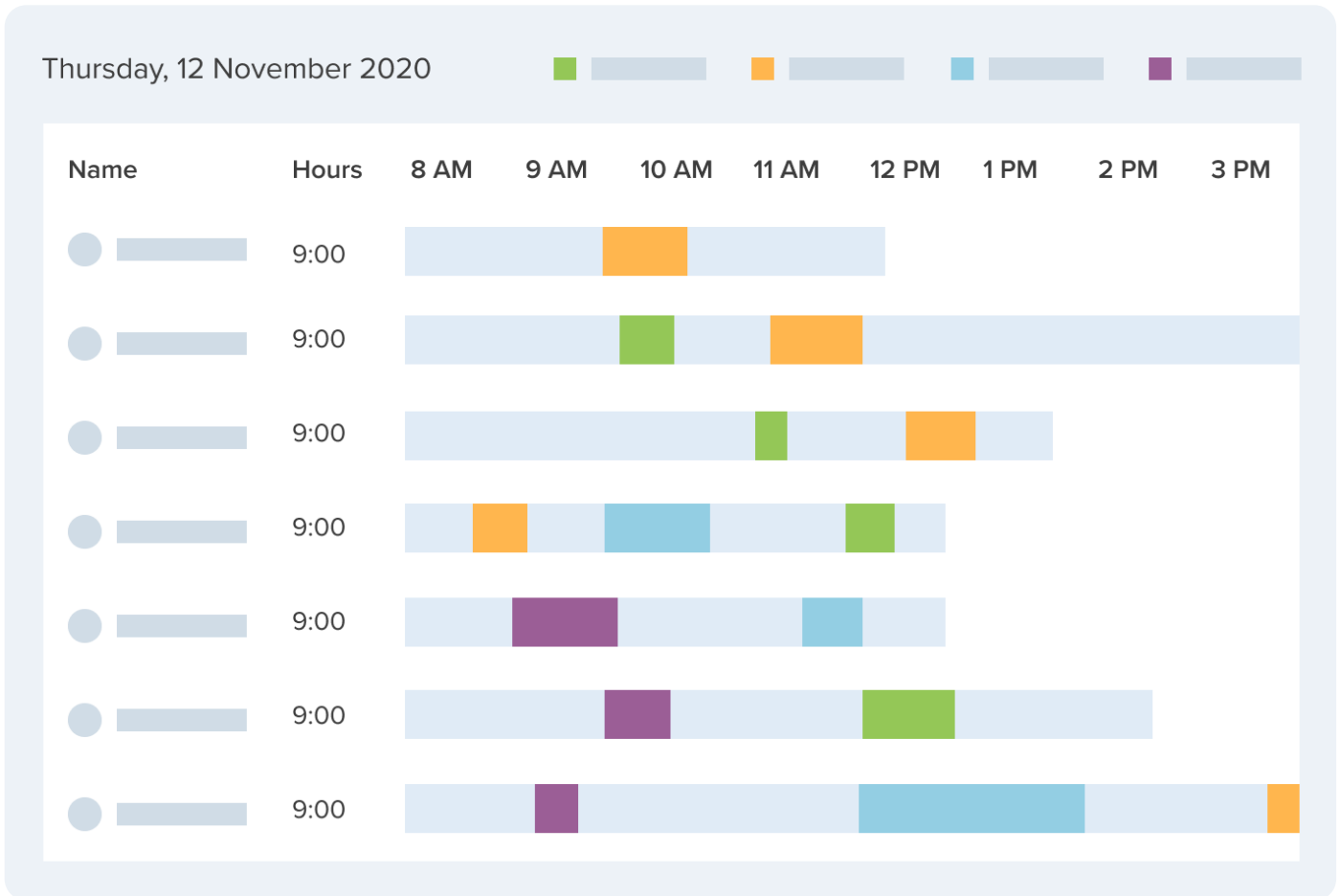
" Finding a cloud phone system that checked all the boxes for functionality and mobility – which RingCentral did – wouldn't have mattered if it weren't also cost-effective enough that we could get management signoff."

Make every customer conversation count

Stop relying on on-premises phone systems and personal smartphones to stay connected with your customers. When the capabilities of a traditional call centre solution may be more than you need right now, a cloud-based solution that scales with you allows you to implement only the tools you need now with the freedom to upgrade later.

Start creating a better customer experience from beginning to end with the advanced functionality of combining RingCentral MVP and Live Reports.

With RingCentral's Customer Service Essentials bundle, your business can use unified communications and real-time analytics to simplify employee and customer communications, and strengthen customer service and staff efficiency. Unlike other solutions in the market, Customer Service Essentials provides a simple yet market-leading global solution from one vendor with high reliability and an affordable price that businesses can use to scale their operations.

Get the ideal customer experience with RingCentral's Customer Service Essentials, starting at just £34.98.
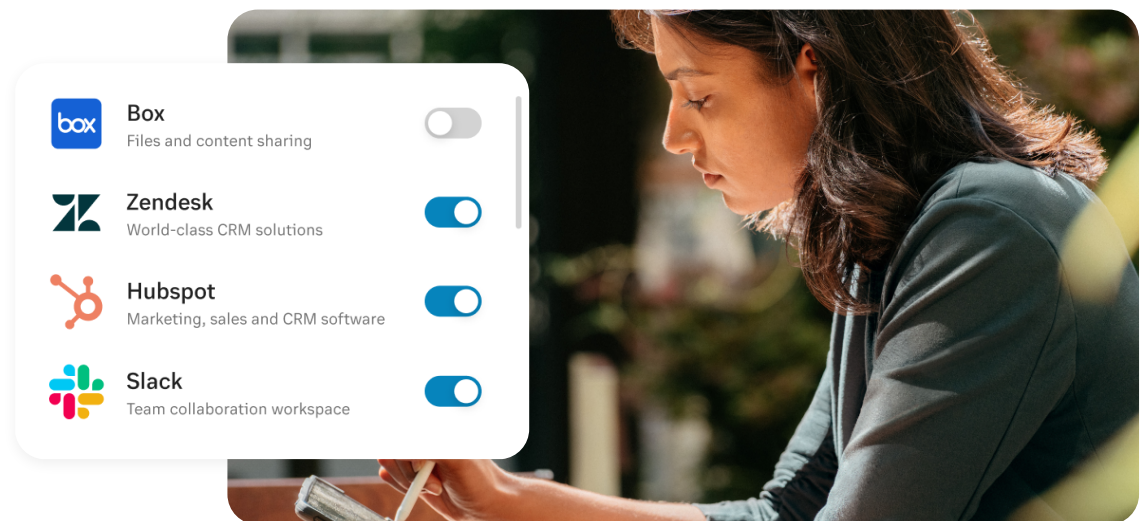
Take advantage of a complete phone system that delivers value with customer service capabilities.

Don't forget about all the perks that come with RingCentral. For starters, tap into:

- 300+ integrations in the [RingCentral App Gallery](#) and open APIs through the [RingCentral developer portal](#) to customise all your workflows

- Add-on solutions to meet your unique needs, including:

  - [Balto](#) for real-time guidance

  - [Liquid Voice](#) for quality management and compliance

  - [Akazio](#) for call archiving, discovery, and compliance

  - [Genesis](#) for emergency notifications

To learn more about Customer Service Essentials, visit [ringcentral.com/gb/en/customer-service-essentials](#).

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