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Definitive Guide to Contact Center Metrics for Agents

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Establishing a basic overview of metrics commonly used to measure a customer service agent’s effectiveness is essential to understanding how to best use training and technology to help them be more successful. We’ve developed some simple explanations of those metrics in this ebook.

1 Average Calls per Agent

2 Abandon Rate

3 Average Speed of Answer

4 Average Handle Time

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Average Calls per Agent

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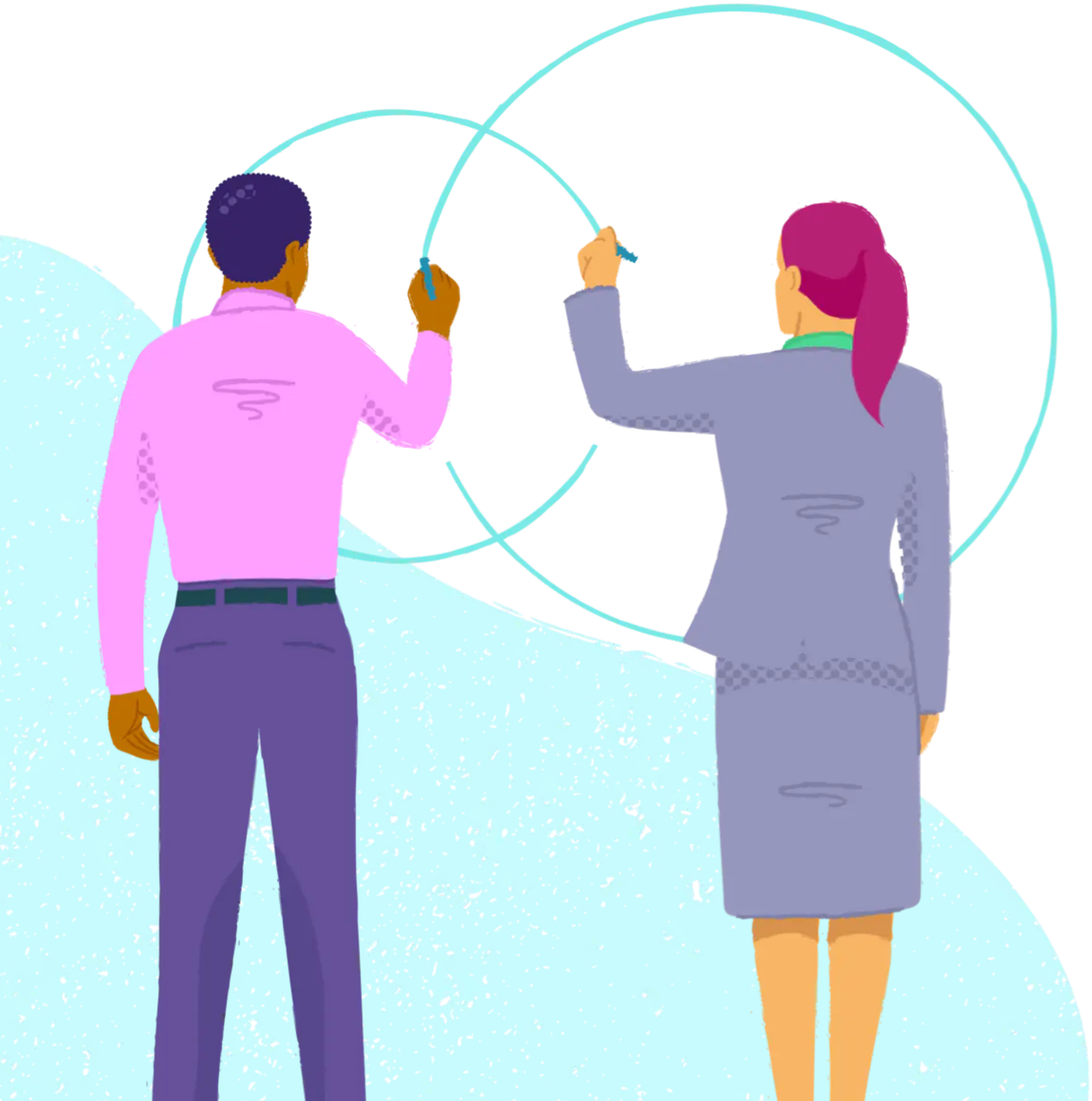
Calculating this KPI

Average Calls per Agent is one of the most important KPIs as it helps determine how well the number of agents is aligned with the average number of calls being received.

TO CALCULATE AVERAGE CALLS PER AGENT

$$\frac{\text{Total Talk Time per Week}}{\text{Answered Calls per Week}} = \text{Average Calls Per Agent}$$

Example: If your agent received 250 calls per week for a total of 1,000 minutes. That means the agent spends an average of 4 minutes per call and is actively on a call 5 hours each day.



Contact center management should determine the appropriate number of calls per agent based on a number of factors. These factors could include the type of calls being received and the average time it takes to handle each type of call. Also, the metrics can fluctuate depending on which types of calls are being received and potentially the time of year.

For example, a retailer may be dealing with a high volume of returns after the holiday season which can extend the length of each call. Or, there could be a special promotion that increases the number of short calls where agents are providing concise, specific details to each caller.

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Abandon Rate

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Calculating this KPI

Another closely monitored contact center KPI is Abandon Rate. A high abandon rate represents missed opportunities, customer dissatisfaction and ultimately lost revenue. Call Abandonment is often directly connected with wait and hold times.

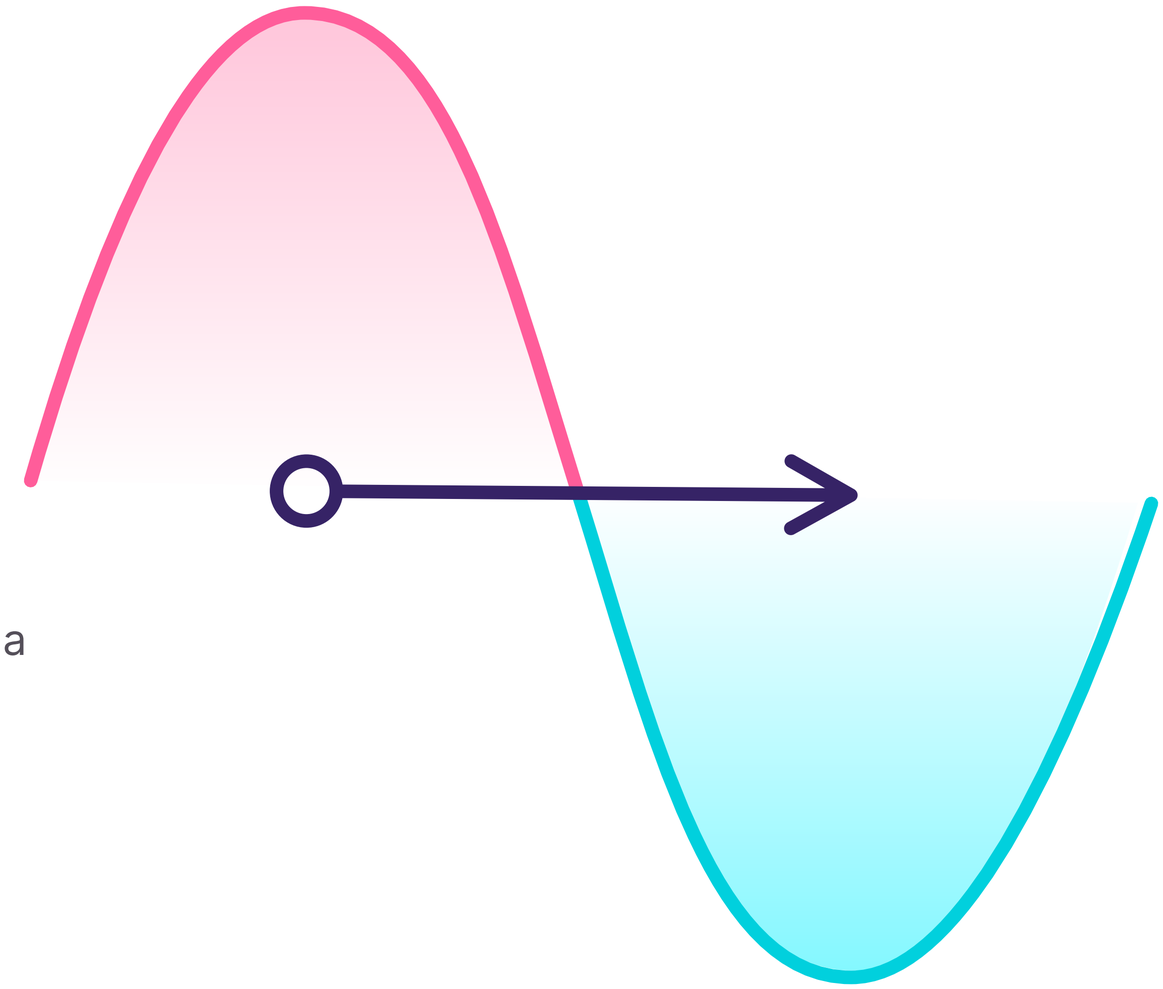
TO CALCULATE ABANDON RATE

$$\frac{\text{\# of Abandoned Calls}}{\text{Total \# of Calls}} = \text{Abandon Rate}$$

Example: If your contact center receives 1,000 calls and 50 are abandoned, your abandon rate is 5%.

What Is an Average for Call Abandon Rate?

Every industry has its own standards when it comes to abandon rate. However, most experts will say that a rate of 2% or less is ideal. Any rate that is over 5% is considered poor and in need of improvement.



Calls Abandoned in the IVR

Don’t forget to measure calls being abandoned while the caller is in the IVR system. A poor IVR experience can result in missing significant and often easily corrected problems that could be hindering customer journeys. A prompt that isn’t accurate or a line that isn’t working can result in caller drop-offs.

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Lowering Your Abandon Rate

High abandon rates speak directly to customer dissatisfaction. And in today's digital era, callers that aren't getting their needs met are now engaging on more visible channels like social media and are quicker to shift to the competition. In other words, keeping your abandon rate low should be an essential business focus.

Offer a Callback

Among the most effective ways to lower your abandon rate is to add callback to let callers choose between waiting on the line and receiving a callback when it's convenient for them. This saves their place in the queue, and when an agent is available, they receive a callback.

Not only does this result in a lower abandonment rate but we also see it routinely raise a brand's Net Promoter Score (NPS).

Callback calculates the expected wait time and gives customers an estimated time when they should expect a callback. They also have the option of scheduling a callback at a more convenient time.

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Average Speed of Answer

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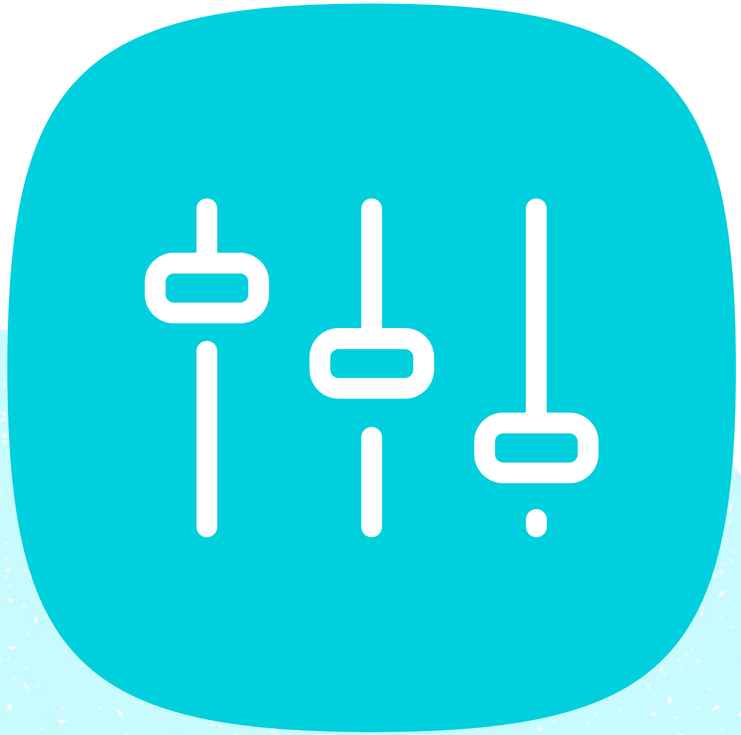
Calculating this KPI

In its simplest terms, ASA is the average amount of time required for calls to be answered within a set period of time. Although ASA typically doesn't include the time it takes callers to navigate through an IVR, it does include the time a customer is in a queue and the time it takes for an agent to answer the call.

TO CALCULATE ASA

$$\frac{\text{Total Wait Time of Answered Calls}}{\text{Total \# of Answered Calls}} = \text{Average Speed of Answer (ASA)}$$

Example: If there are 1000 callers in a day, and the total waiting time for all answered calls is 10 hours. The total waiting time in seconds is 36000. The ASA is 36000/1000 = 36 seconds.

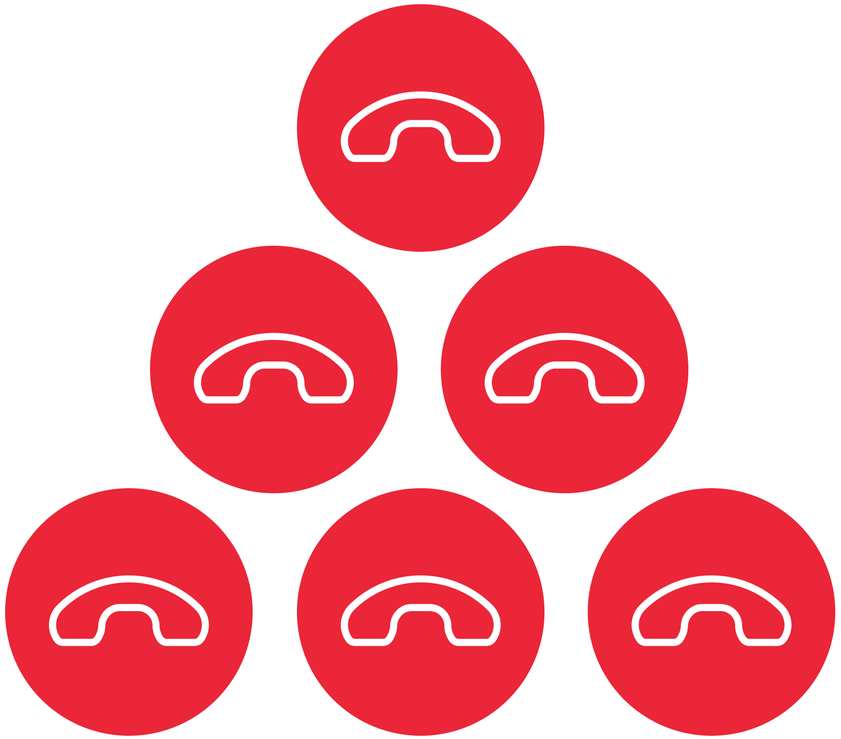


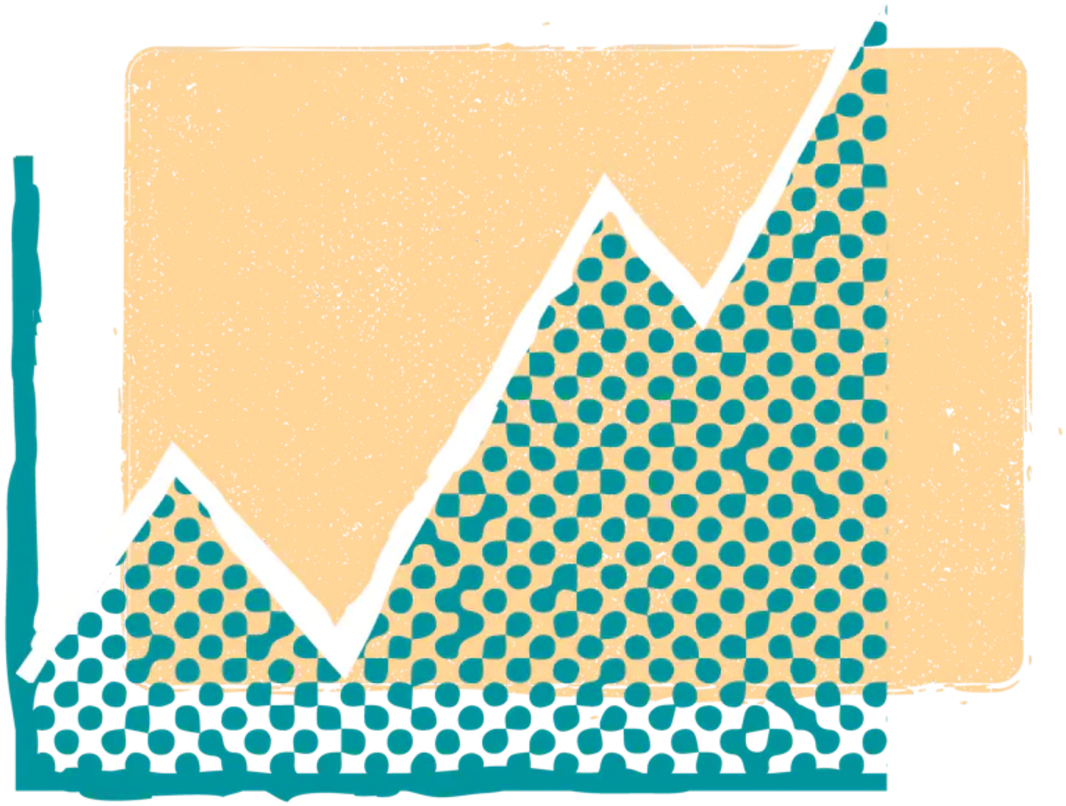
Impact of Non-Voice Channels on ASA

Because today's contact centers are not solely focused on voice interactions, the average speed of answer is now sometimes calculated for digital channels, such as web chat, SMS text messaging and app-based instant messaging.

High Abandonment Rates

Callers have a limited amount of patience. The longer it takes for their call to be answered, the more likely they will abandon the call and potentially take their business elsewhere. Learn more about Abandon Rate above.



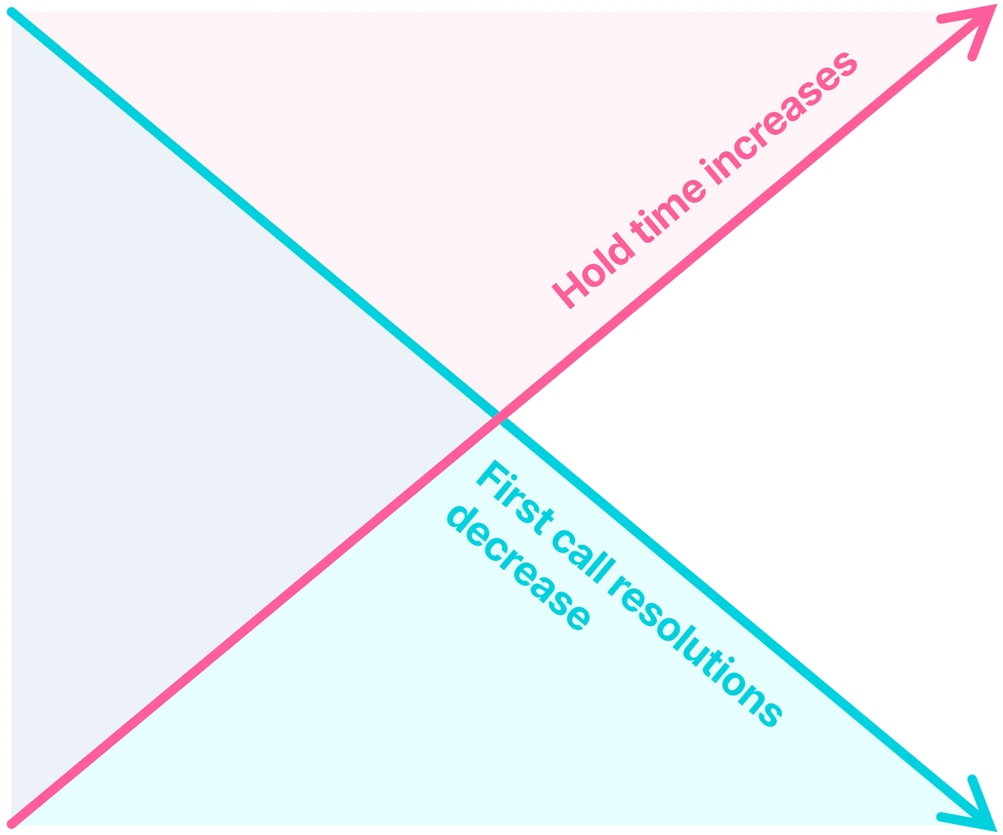


Increased Handle Time

Those who stick it out to speak with an agent can be unhappy and will take extra time to complain about their struggles with wait time. They may even ask to speak with a supervisor or have other requests that require more of an agent's time. With every additional apology or call transfer an agent has to make, efficiency and profitability drops.

Fewer First Call Resolutions

Frustrated callers are also less likely to have their issue resolved to their satisfaction on first contact. The less time a customer is waiting on hold, the more likely they are to resolve their issue in a single interaction.



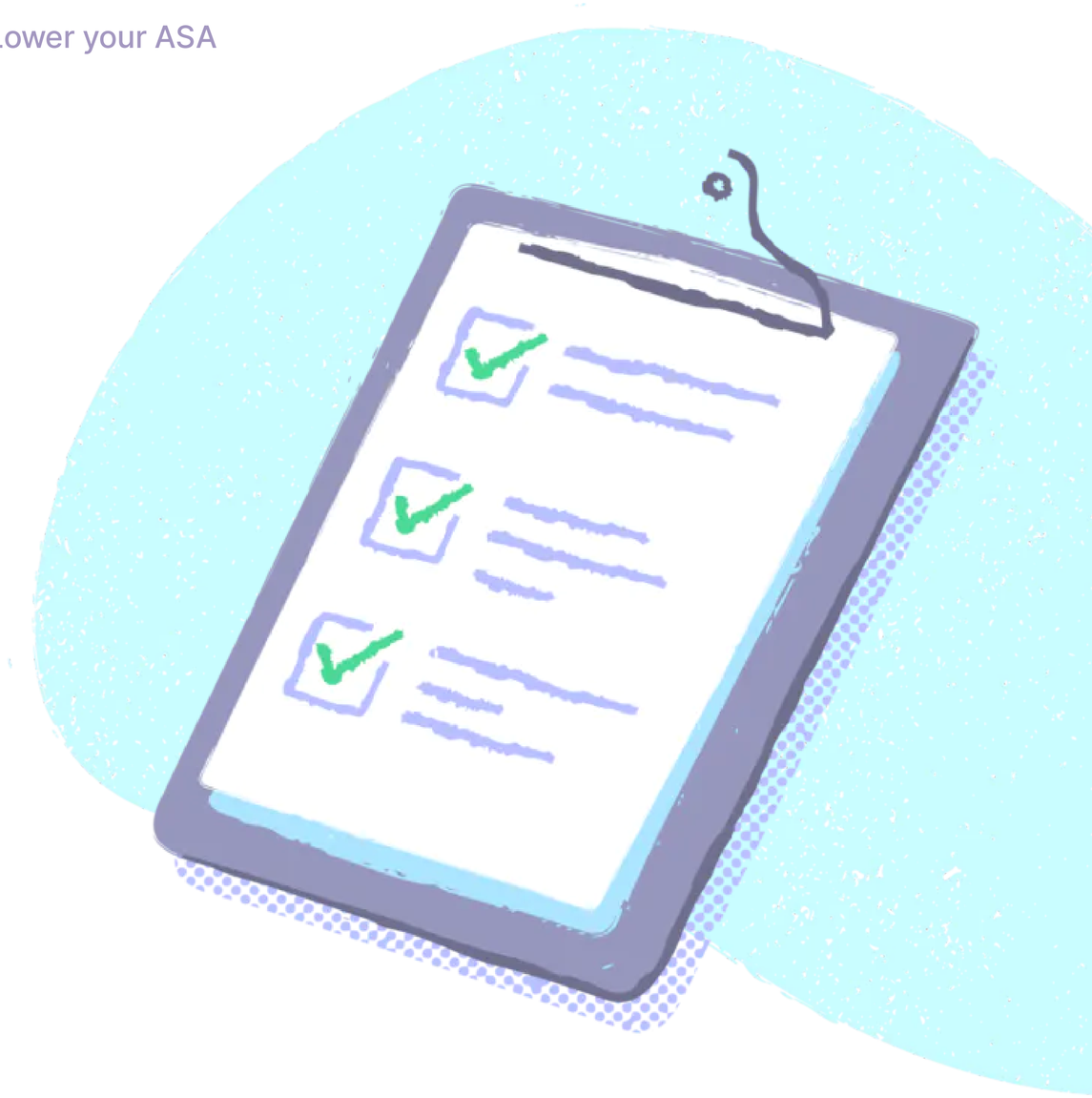
Agent Dissatisfaction

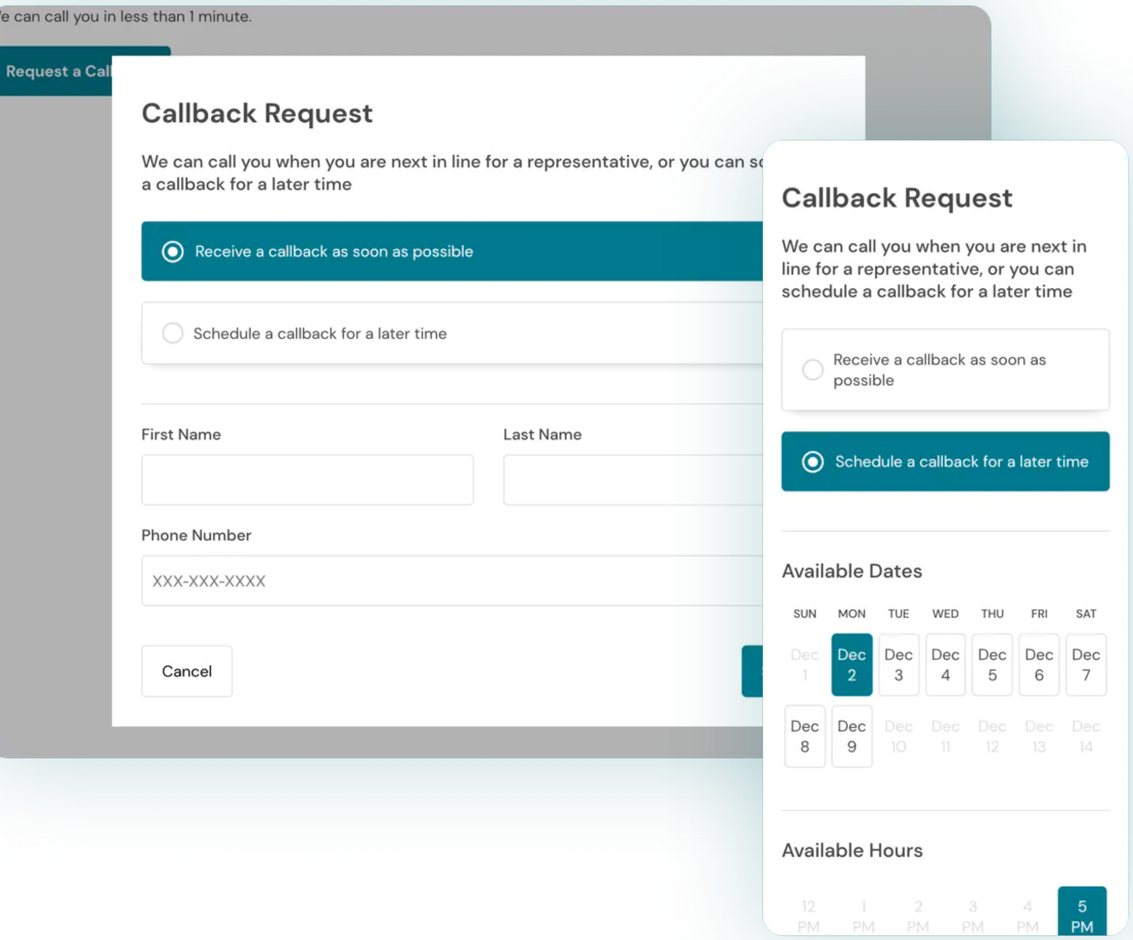
Impatient and frustrated customers aren’t the only ones affected by longer speed to answer times. Unhappy customers complain to agents which causes agent stress and burnout. Stressed agents are less likely to provide speedy and successful service and are more likely to turn over causing hiring and training costs to increase.

Ways to Lower your ASA

Improve Call Routing

Traditional queue-based routing that routes every caller without any context often means long wait times, especially during busy times of the day. A better approach is to use skills-based routing that matches callers with agents based on select criteria.





Offer Callbacks

Incorporating VHT Callback through Mindful into your call center operations is a highly effective way to reduce ASA. Even with the best planning and forecasting, an unexpected surge in contact center volume can cause longer hold times. Give callers the option to be contacted by an agent when their turn in the queue arrives so they don't have to waste time on hold.

Your contact center's ASA isn't just a KPI for a report. It is an important metric that indicates the overall success of your operations. By continuously focusing on keeping it in check with proven best practices, you'll reap benefits that ultimately impact the bottom line.

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Average Handle Time

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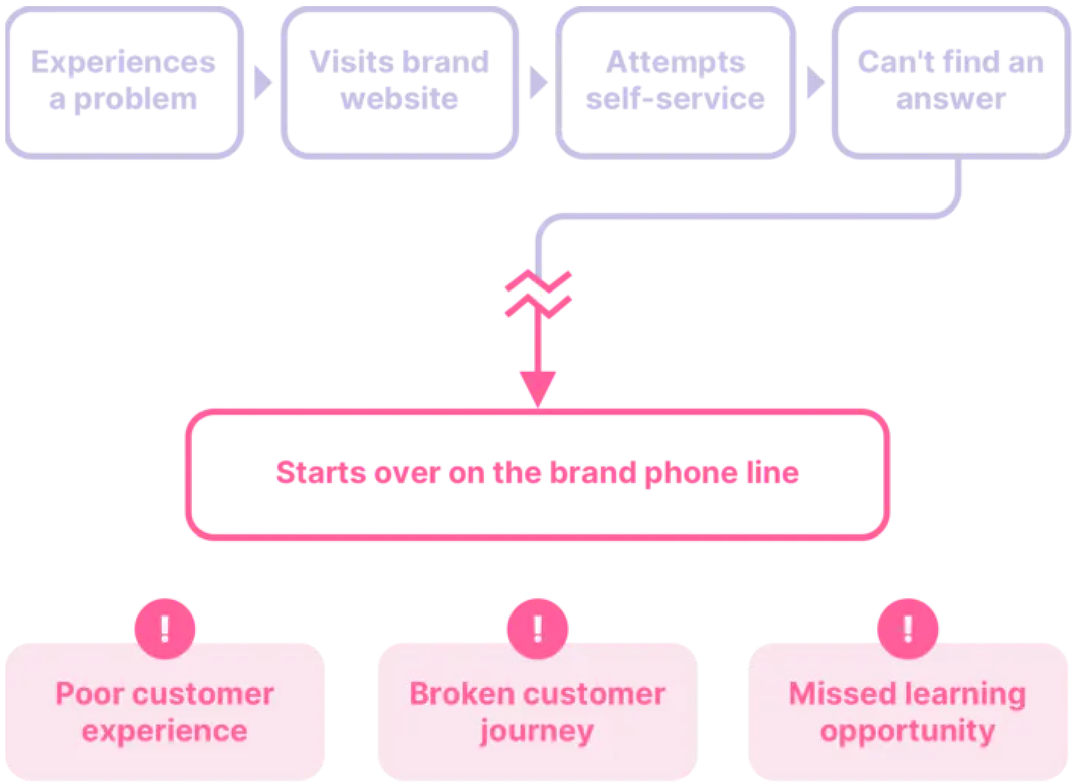
Calculating this KPI

Average handle time is a metric that indicates the average duration of a customer transaction. It is measured from the time a call is initiated through the conclusion of any related tasks that follow the interaction.

TO CALCULATE AVERAGE HANDLE TIME

$$\frac{\text{Total Talk Time + Total Hold Time + Total Wrap-Up Time}}{\text{Total \# of Calls Handled}} = \text{Average Handle Time}$$

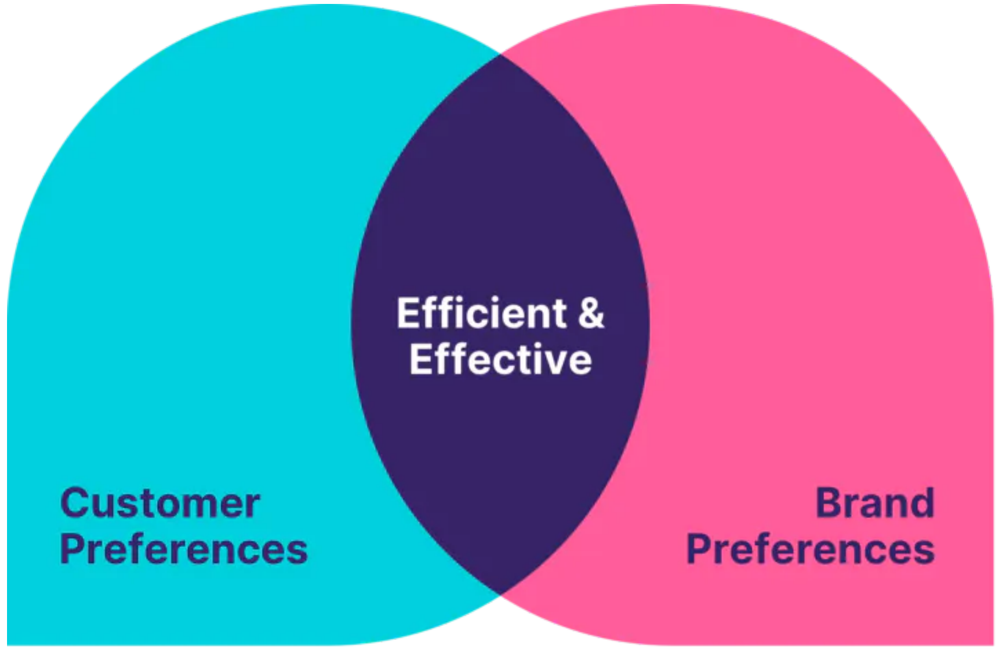
The Impact of Self-Service on Average Handle Time



Many KPIs have been impacted by the introduction of digital channels, including average handle time. Because customers are more likely than ever to address simple issues via digital self-service options, like IVR and mobile apps, the voice channel is being used more for complex issues. This results in agents having to spend more time with customers or having to transfer them to others for additional help.

Many industry analysts believe that voice will increasingly become an escalation channel, rather one for primary service. Thus, the average handle time metric will need to continuously be reassessed as the voice channel continues to evolve.

How to Reduce Average Handle Time



Reduce Total On-Hold Time

This is often one of the most significant ways to reduce the average handle time, especially for contact centers with high volumes that lead to long on-hold times. By offering customers a callback or even offering a text message option. This is likely to remove the on-hold metric completely which will drastically lower the Average Handle Time.

Identify Processes That Can Be Reduced or Automated

Investigate simple tweaks to processes can lower average handle time. Look for those processes with a duplication of work or where tasks can be easily automated or digitized. One method is to analyze the top 5 call types. This allows you to identify and measure the most common types of incoming calls and focus training on them. Digging deeper into this is where VHT's Customer Success Team can really be heroes for a brand.

Should we update our end-of-day procedures?

Which queues will benefit most from callback?

How can we encourage self-service options?

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Boost Your Metrics

Each of these metrics can be benefited by subscribing to VHT's Mindful Platform.

If you have questions, just get in touch at www.vhtcx.com/get-started