

Solving the CX challenge in travel and hospitality

How to meet demand surges better,
faster and cost effectively



Solving the CX challenge in travel and hospitality

With tourism set to restart, hospitality and travel companies are on a precipice of a demand surge. After a period of limited trade the coming months are crucial for airlines, hotels, operators and booking providers. But servicing customers at scale presents a challenge.



On the one hand companies need to:

Delight customers and drive sales with smooth and efficient services



On the other hand they need to:

Reduce costs and work within tight budgets

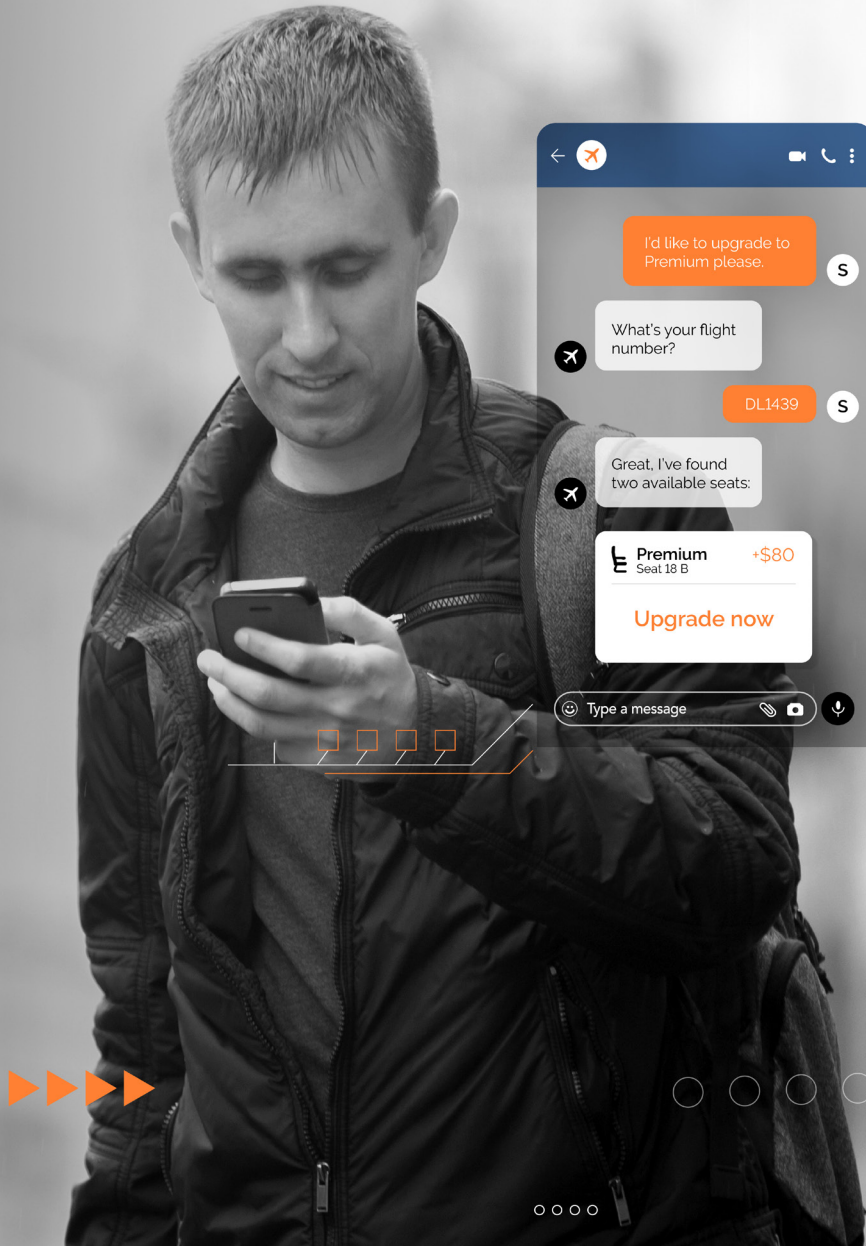


And on top of this they need to:

Have servicing capabilities in place in time for the surge

In other words, companies need a servicing solution that is cost efficient, effective and fast! And some conventional business wisdom says this is impossible.

The good news is – **BETTER, FASTER** and more **COST EFFECTIVE**, is possible! And there are a couple of tailored solutions available to help you achieve this. Let's dig in.



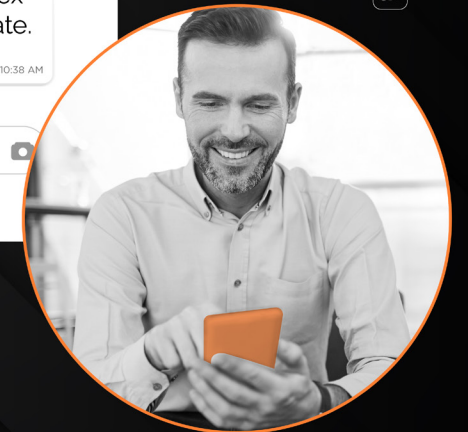
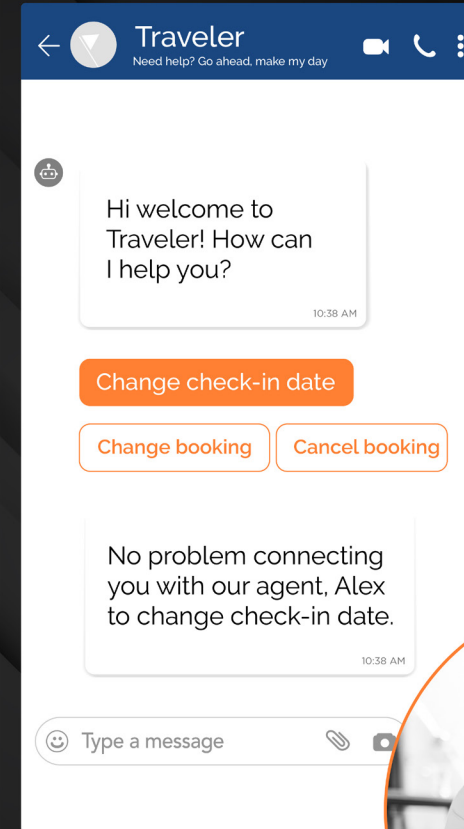
Solution 1

Getting digital and automation to do the work

Customers want smooth, frictionless transactions from start to finish – calling is not always convenient. Yet travel and hospitality companies still use voice as the default option. Voice-heavy services fall short for two reasons:

- 1 **Your tech-savvy customers expect services on their channel of choice**
... they will take to Twitter after being stuck in a lengthy phone queue
- 2 **Voice can be a 'wasteful' solution for more straightforward interactions**
... do customers really need to call you to change the booking date?

This is where technology can help. Opening more digital channels, enabling self-service and automating routine tasks will save you time and money while delighting customers. And a happy customer is a much-more-likely-to-return customer. On the following pages we explore opportunities to use digital for superior customer experience.





OPPORTUNITY 1

Going omnichannel

Following the pandemic, a big change seen across all industries is - customers are much further ahead in their **use of digital channels**. For service-focused companies this translates into needing to play catch-up while managing costs and navigating technology-hype. Here's how they can get real value from omnichannel.

First of all, companies can identify low-value customer transactions and processes. Then they need to map how digital channels such as chat, chatbots, asynchronous messaging or text can be used to automate these. Using digital to handle straightforward interactions can:



Reduce inbound call volumes – along with the wait and hold times



Allow colleagues to handle more interactions at once – raising personal productivity and allowing you to scale

Secondly, companies need to take a 'right-channel' approach determining which route will help resolve customer's issues quickly and competently. This is where analytics can help. Speech, text and behavioral analytics can be used to gain insights and align channel capabilities to customer preferences. And using digital colleagues to support these can help you scale quickly and flexibly.

OPPORTUNITY 2

Automating repetitive tasks

The evolution of back-office has resulted in an accumulation of manual, repetitive processes. Digital creates opportunities to automate mundane and recurrent tasks. There are some obvious prospects for automation e.g. sending a confirmation email after details change, and some less obvious e.g. offer repricing.

Automating simple tasks by running bots will enable companies to:



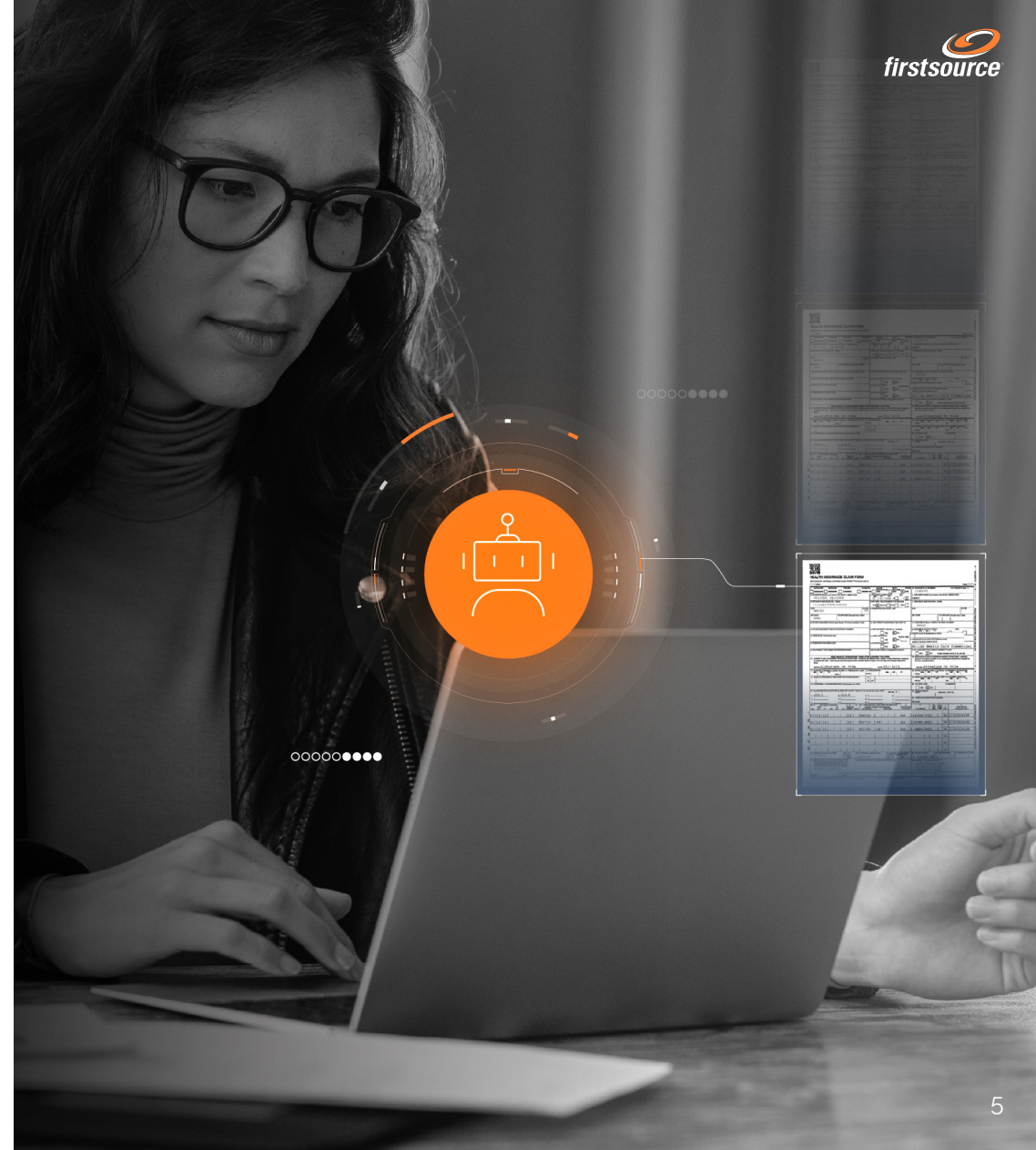
Reduce manual workload



Speed up processes



Allow colleagues to handle more complex, higher-stake tasks



OPPORTUNITY 3

Intelligence at your fingertips

Conversations become more efficient and meaningful when colleagues have relevant information at hand. A bot can retrieve needed information quickly as it sifts through options and detects issues in the background. This means:

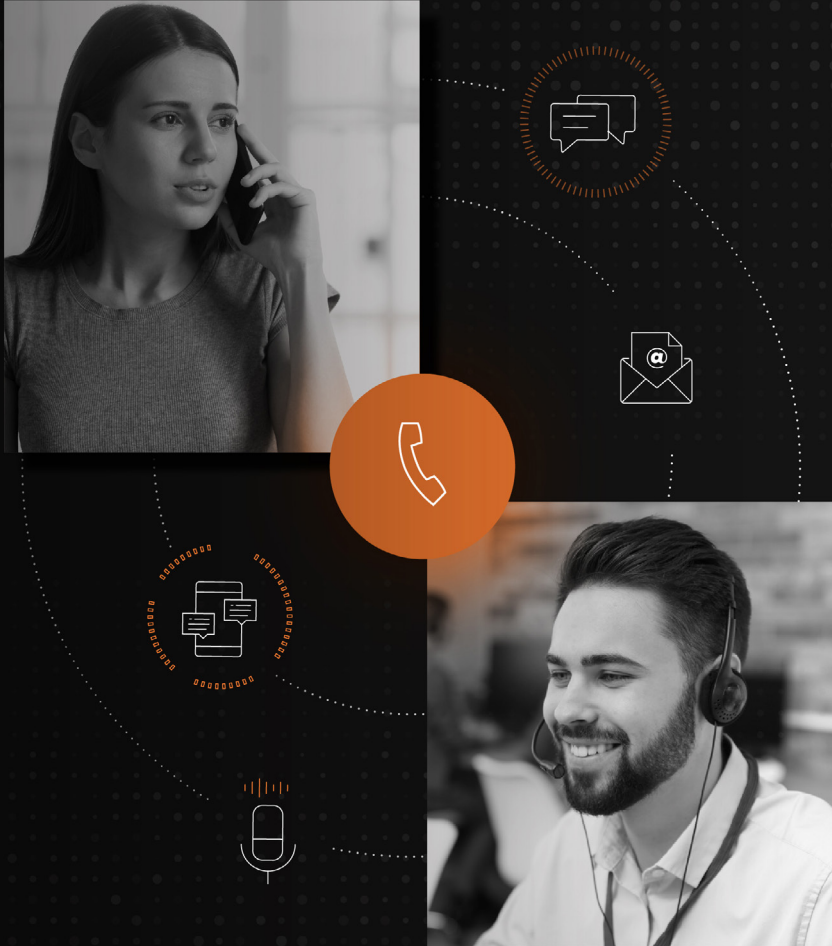


Customer queries are dealt with faster and resolved first time



More calls can be handled by colleagues

Using bots to surface information and complete simple tasks helps colleagues focus on building rapport with your customers. And having the right insights makes it easier to offer tailored solutions, supporting your cross-sell and up-sell goals and generating more revenues.



Digitally Empowered Contact Center in action

For a superior customer experience tech needs to enable better human interactions. Firstsource **Digitally Empowered Contact Center** (DECC) combines the best of what people and technology have to offer. This holistic solution provides omnichannel support – from voice to email, text, messaging, social media and chat across the customer lifecycle.

To ensure our clients get the most value Firstsource offers to contractually underwrite cost savings and revenue generation to deliver budget certainty (subject to joint agreement). We've used this differentiated model to drive outstanding results for major brands. Through our transformational partnership approach we've helped a major division of a Leading UK Bank reduce cost by 20%, and enabled an international motor-finance company see 32% in guaranteed cost savings.

Examples on the coming pages demonstrate how clients use these solutions to delight customers quickly and cost effectively.



Scaling quickly

Service live within 2½ weeks

A Firstsource client was facing a spike in enquiries post launch. To speed-up deployment and deal with volumes we up-skilled employees to handle more complex conversations and recruited 30 additional chat colleagues. The solution surpassed quality targets delivering an enhanced customer experience. Results include:



Live service launched within 2½ weeks



Reduction in response time to fully support customers



Achieving quality benchmarks within one week of going live

Optimizing services

200% increase in customer channel efficiency

Our client wanted to reduce long wait times by deflecting voice calls to more appropriate channels. Firstsource analyzed inbound calls via the client's IVR and identified those that could be transitioned to SMS and Facebook Messenger, resulting in:

30%

of IVR calls diverted to SMS or Facebook Messenger

200%

increase in customer channel efficiency

85%

customer satisfaction

Reducing costs

Lower customer care costs with 19% less contact

A major UK airline was facing a rise in customer care costs and falling satisfaction levels. Firstsource deployed an advanced analytics solution to evaluate customer sentiment, emotions and behavior. To close the identified gaps we implemented process improvements, optimized the website, coached colleagues and enabled self-service. By harnessing customer intelligence we delivered:

10%

increase in sales conversion

19%

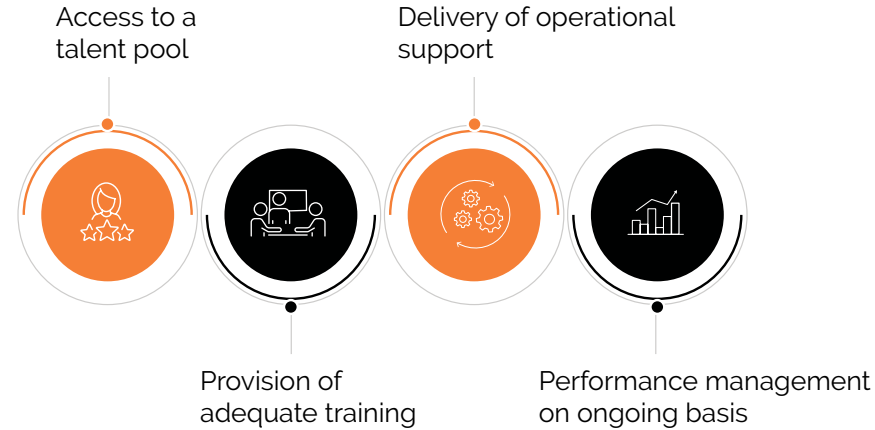
contact avoidance opportunity identified reducing customer care costs

[Read the full case study](#)

Solution 2

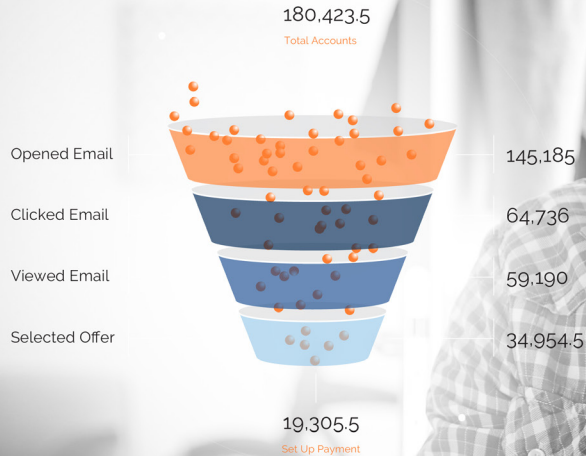
Right-shore customer support operations

For certain interactions there is no substitute for human judgement. Answering calls, managing chat, monitoring emails and sending texts requires a degree of human input, but setting up people-based operations requires:



Right-shore customer support operations

This is where finding opportunities to support your customer services with the right global partner makes sense. Firstsource has over 20 years' experience establishing customer servicing operations globally to meet our client's servicing needs, we can:



Quickly recruit and on-board staff



Optimize services by using knowledge and expertise



Lower costs through right-shoring operations



Set-up fully work from home (WFH) operations at speed and scale

Firstsource right-shore approach has helped clients realize cost savings while maintaining high customer satisfaction. Our contact center expertise allows us to recruit and educate associates quickly and efficiently across the globe. We understand which interactions are suited for different channels. For example, chat and digital are particularly suitable for moving offshore compared to voice. That's why Firstsource offers a hybrid model to help clients find the right-shore for each channel.

Scaling quickly

6 weeks to launch new service

Firstsource was approached by a client to create a robust and scalable back-office during rapid growth. We hired, onboarded and trained over 100 colleagues across 12 business areas. The solution spanned an on-shore team of domain experts and off-shore support operations. The results include:



Developing and transitioning new processes in 6 weeks



Maintaining quality control and performance



Robust security framework to maintain information security

Optimizing services

750 colleagues in 12 weeks and 20% reduction in call time

To meet a surge in demand and improve customer support a client asked Firstsource to scale-up services across voice and social media. We managed recruitment, on-boarding and supported colleagues exposed to stressful customer calls with health and wellbeing initiatives. The outcomes delivered include:

750

colleagues recruited and trained in 12 weeks

20%

reduction in average call handling time

95%+

consistent Quality Audit performance

Reducing costs

30% initial cost savings with right-shore

A client wanted to continue providing excellent customer services while reducing the cost-to-serve. Firstsource saw an opportunity to right-shore some processes. We hired, trained and managed 600 FTEs in India for back-office administration and 200 FTEs in the Philippines for customer support via telephone and webchat. This allowed the client to deliver great services while driving down costs including:

30% initial cost savings by right-shoring back-office and customer support

5% year-on-year efficiency gains contractually guaranteed

70% of colleagues cross-skilled for efficient queue management

How we can help

Firstsource is a business process management company specializing in digital customer experience management, intelligent back-office processes for a range of industries.

To hear about our tailored solutions get in touch by writing to Marketing@firstsource.com or visit [our contact page](#).

Learn how our **Digitally Empowered Contact Centre** solution uses tools and people to maximize value, helping you to scale fast and on-budget.

Dig into insights on how we've enabled an airline to bolster sales with **customer intelligence**.

Get more insights on how **digital and automation** can improve customer services in the Next Normal.

For more insights follow us on social media:





Helping customers **stay ahead** of the curve through transformational technologies and capabilities

Firstsource Solutions Limited, an RP-Sanjiv Goenka Group company, is a leading provider of transformational solutions and services spanning the customer lifecycle across Healthcare, Banking and Financial Services, Communications, Media and Technology and other industries.

Our 'Digital First, Digital Now' approach helps organizations reinvent operations and reimagine business models, enabling them to deliver moments that matter and build competitive advantage.

With an established presence in the US, the UK, India and the Philippines, we act as a trusted growth partner for over 100 leading global brands, including several Fortune 500 and FTSE 100 companies.

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