

CONTACT CENTRE INDUSTRY TERMS/ACRONYMS

This information is for reference purposes only and not intended to be the definitive source of Contact Centre industry terminology. If you come across a term or acronym that does not appear here, please let us know, we'd be happy to add it to the list below.

Abandoned Call	A call terminated by the caller prior to being answered
Abandoned Call Rate	A measurement of abandoned calls usually expressed as a percentage of total calls received
Absenteeism	Refers to staff who are scheduled to work but do not attend due to unplanned reasons (ie sickness) Also referred to as "Unplanned leave."
ACD	Automatic Call Distributor - A telephone system that distributes calls to agents according to predefined business rules.
ACW	After Call Work - The time taken by an agent to complete call related work after the caller hangs up, is also referred to "Wrap up" time
Adherence to Schedule	Refers to the adherence of staff to their rosters or hours of work. Often expressed as a percentage
Agent	The person who handles the call see also CSR or CSO
AHT	Average Handling Time - The average time taken to handle a call, can include actual talk time and after call work.
ASA	Average Speed of Answer - A measurement expressing the time taken for a call to be answered either by an agent or Auto Attendant.
ATA	Australian Teleservices Association – the professional body for the Call & Contact Centre industry
Auto Attendant	A telephony facility that routes calls according to the selections made by the caller pressing the keys on the telephone.
Automated Call Monitoring	Software that records calls for the purpose of assessing quality standards, customer satisfaction and agent performance. Call monitoring can be pre-scheduled and agent-specific.
Availability	A measurement covering an agent who is available to handle the next call.

Blending	A process where individual agents are able to operate across multiple function calls at the one time i.e. an agent that processes inbound service calls and outbound sales during their shift.
Call Demand	Estimated number of calls that are expected to be received by the centre.
CLI	Call Line Identification – An ISDN facility that displays the callers number.
Cold Calling	Telemarketing to prospects with whom there is no established relationship.
Cost per Call	A measurement of the financial cost of each call, usually calculated by the centre costs being divided by the number of calls received.
CRM	Customer Relationship Management – Total management of customer inquiry using customer details to recognise and allocate the customer to the most appropriate agent, record details of the inquiry or transaction and segment/service customer appropriately.
CSO	Customer Service Officer – The person who handles the call. An alternative name for an agent
CSR	Customer Service Representative – The person who handles the call. An alternative name for an agent
CTI	Computer Telephony Integration – A function that provides for the telephony and customer information to be integrated. This allows for such functions as screen popping.
Demographic Matching	Recruiting staff who match the same demographic as your customer base i.e. by age
Erlang C	A formula used in centres to calculate staff needs based upon historical call trend data.
FCR	First Call Resolution – A measurement of the number of calls that are resolved during the first contact with the caller.
FTE	Full Time Equivalent – An expression of staff numbers calculated on the number of hours a full time staff member would work.
GOS	Grade of Service – See Service Level



Intelligent Routing	The routing of calls through predefined business rules that are based upon the expected characteristics of the caller.
Intelligent Scripting	Online guides and prompts that are triggered at certain entry or transaction points, to assist the agent in best servicing the customer or in identifying lead generations.
IVR	Interactive Voice Response – A system that interacts with callers using predetermined menus and telephone key input, or speech recognition software.
Logged On	Where an agent is logged into the phone system
Mystery Shopping	Where performance is measured through the use of dummy calls, usually conducted by a third party.
Occupancy	A measurement of the time spent by an agent actually handling calls against the total time available
PABX	Private Automatic Branch Exchange – The switch which manages calls with an organization.
Predictive Dialler	A system that automatically initiates outbound calls and presents the call to an agent on connection to a called party
Queue	A bank of calls waiting for an agent to become available.
Real Time Adherence-Monitoring Software	Software that tracks the agent's adherence to their roster, to determine actual availability of agents against schedule. Used to measure agent productivity.
Real Time Management	The management of work volumes as they occur to ensure the maximum number of resources are available to meet work demands. This usually involves utilisation of spare or extra staff, transfer of work volumes to less busy queues, overflow calls to support areas etc
ROI	Return on Investment
Roster	A schedule of time to be worked.
Service Level	Typically measured as a percentage of calls answered within a specific time frame (e.g. 80:20 80 % or calls answered within 20 secs)
Scorecard	A group of performance indicators that reflect the operations of the centre.
Schedule adherence	See Adherence to schedule



Shrinkage	An allocation of time from rosters that accounts for unscheduled breaks, i.e. unplanned leave
Skills Assessment	The process used to evaluate the skill sets of staff. Skill sets are used to determine which calls/work can be handled by which staff.
Skills-based routing	Calls are automatically routed to specialised agents according to predetermined variables, e.g. caller origin, menu selection, caller identification. Enables the most appropriate agent to handle the customer inquiry.
Talk Time	Measurement of time that an agent spends talking to callers.
Thru Call Per Hour	The actual number of calls handled by an agent in an hour
UPS	Uninterrupted Power Supply – Systems in place that cover normal power supplies i.e. battery, generators.
VR	Voice Recognition
Voice Response	Use of a pre-recorded message to answer incoming calls
VOIP	Voice Over Internet Protocol – System that enables voice calls to be carried over a data network
Workforce Management Tool	Software that is used to forecast call loads, identify base staff required and prepare rosters and schedules for changing call patterns. Uses historical data to best predict future call behaviour.
Wrap-up	See ACW - After call work