



# Harnessing technology for success

Mid-market businesses must transform digitally now or risk being left behind.

## **CX**

Win in the mid-market with CX

## **Contact Centre AI**

Move from aspirational goals to actionable strategy

## **Debrief**

8x8's One System of Engagement

## **Cloud Comms**

Embrace cloud communications for mid-market business success

## **SD-WAN**

How SD-WAN is winning over mid-market CIOs

## **Scenarios**

Cut costs and drive efficiencies with video conferencing

## **Transformation**

Overcome digital transformation challenges

## **Checklist**

Assess digital transformation readiness



## Win with customer experience (CX) in mid-market.

By Mike Donohue,  
Mid-Market Sales Director

Disruptive technologies are forcing companies to react to stay ahead of the change. Businesses that create exceptional customer experiences can set themselves apart from their competitors, especially in the mid-market.

Customer experience (CX) experts from McKinsey believe businesses using advanced analytics can gain rapid insights to build customer loyalty, make employees happier, achieve revenue gains of 5 to 10%, and reduce costs by 15 to 25% within two or three years.

According to Gartner, 89% of companies now compete primarily on customer experience. Across all businesses, 72% say improving customer experience is their top priority. However, according to Bain: "What's even more amazing is 80% of companies believe they deliver "super experiences," but only 8% of their customers agree." So how does a mid-market company ensure the same consistent experience for customers on every platform?

The answer lies in a pre-integrated solution that merges communications data to create a seamless customer experience. Creating seamless customer experiences are not always easy. You need a joined-up approach to collect data from various customer touchpoints.

As you understand more about your customers, you can educate customer agents and sales teams to provide exceptional experiences for every customer interaction.

Better CX leads to satisfied customers, who in turn spend more and become brand advocates. They also refer new customers and lower churn along as well as customer acquisition costs.

Companies can use "voice of the customer" insights to identify new or emerging customer trends. Additionally, contact centre managers can review customer interactions to keep a pulse on product sentiments.

However, these approaches are limited and only evaluate a small portion of customer communications. Many of those don't have a material impact on building credibility and relevance.

Businesses must focus on three vital areas to revamp fragmented customer experience:

- Automated routines.
- Real-time customer insights.
- Integrate into systems of record.

Each of these topics is a dissertation by themselves. An abstract of each follows on the next page, so you have a better understanding of what it means for your business.



### Automated routines

How do customer service agents recognise popular customer demands and route them to more efficient paths to a resolution?

Using automation to handle routine customer queries, create and distribute regular reporting and extends the ability to make changes quickly. It ensures that frontline staff focus on those essential customer interactions

### Real-time customer insights

Voice of the customer insights is valuable as advanced capabilities allow customer support teams to listen to customers in new ways.

If customer care managers could instantly listen to 100% of customer calls and immediately gain insights on specific products or services, hot topics, key issues and new expectations? Magical? Sort of. We call it speech analytics, and it comes out of the box with 8x8, so customer support teams are up and running in just minutes.

### Integrate into systems of record

This integration combines communications data with your CRM, service, support and productivity applications. It also connects the information and subject matter experts and customer service agents to drive first call resolutions.

It's more than just embedding communications into those applications. This modern approach dynamically integrates communications into those applications so you can provide role-based experiences, make changes instantly and provide context sharing to further support first call resolution faster.

### Winning in the mid-market

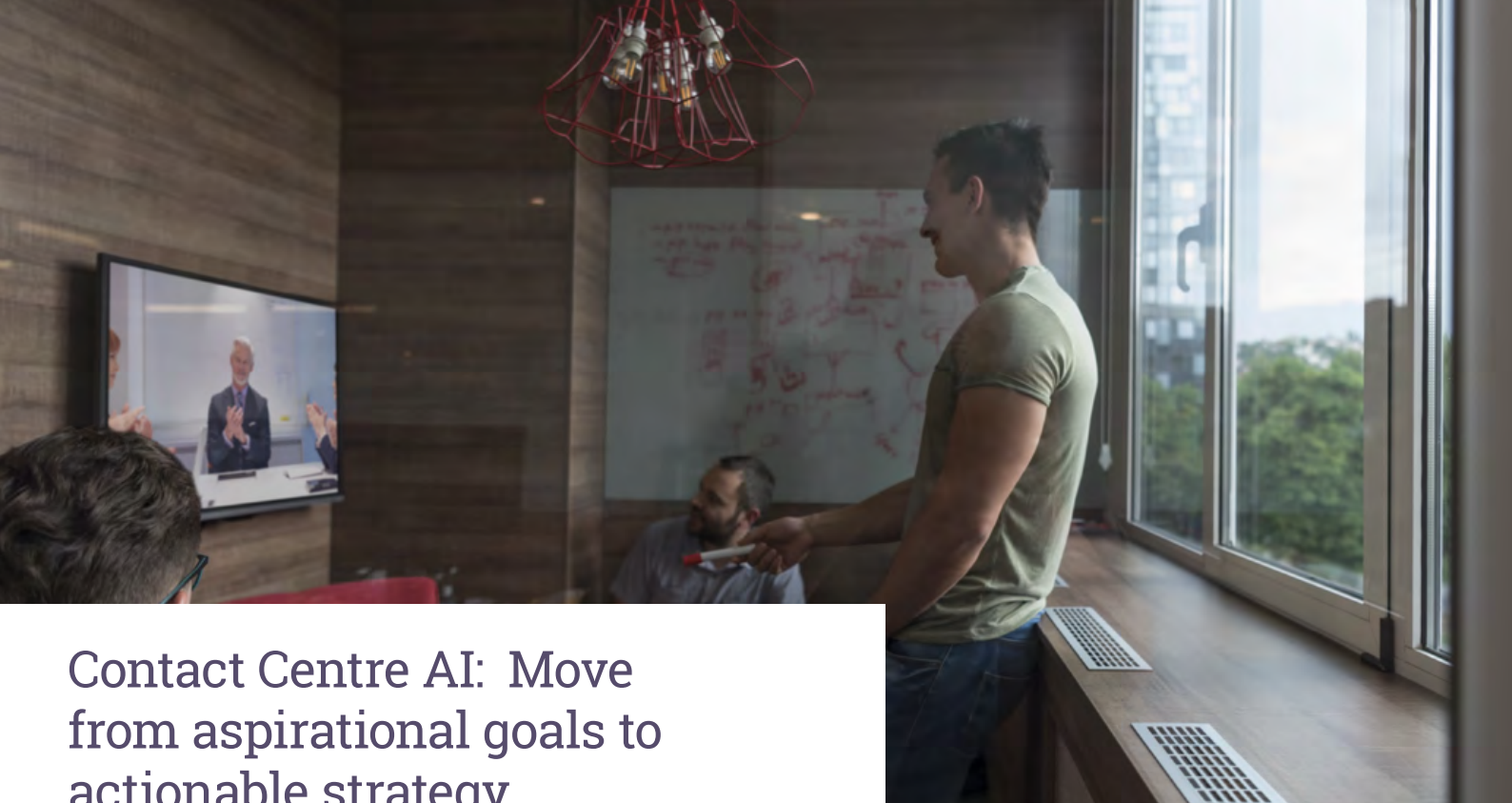
Mid-market companies can truly differentiate by offering a frontline service experience which moves people from apathy and inaction to awareness and understanding, and finally to action and advocacy.

Businesses that consider the customer experience as part of their frontline services are winning new customers, inspiring long-term loyalty, and build a brand synonymous with fantastic customer experiences.

## Next steps

Find out how you can use automation, optimisation and integration to create those remarkable experiences that improve customer perceptions and take your business into the digital age.

Contact our dedicated mid-market team at:  
**[uk-midmarket@8x8.com](mailto:uk-midmarket@8x8.com)**



## Contact Centre AI: Move from aspirational goals to actionable strategy

By Gary Suchley, Mid-Market Sales Executive

For mid-market companies, the contact centre is typically the beginning of a customer's interaction with that business. Washing machine not working? Call the service company to book a repair. Broken boiler? Contact the utility provider. Need information about a package holiday? Call a travel agent to find out more.

All customer interactions through the contact centre either create loyal advocates or turns them away. For this reason, many businesses are transitioning their contact centres to the cloud.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is one of the most exciting technology trends this year. Since contact centres have vast volumes of data, AI can connect the dots between the data points and change the way businesses interact with their customers.

However, you can't just deploy AI/ML technology and expect it's going to make everything better. In most cases, you need to integrate the right data sets, apply the appropriate topic modelling and choose the correct use cases.

Three elements are needed to make it work:

- 1) Topic modelling (steps to inform a decision).
- 2) Data sets (often from multiple data sources).
- 3) Processing or computing power.

The availability of large data sets can help train AI systems to recognise patterns in those data sets with little human direction, leading to better, more informed decisions over time.

Embedding AI into communications can help businesses understand where customers are in their journeys, enhance interactions and build trust by turning data into action.

AI-based virtual contact centre assistants can:

- Replace IVR Processes
- Collect customer interaction data
- Direct customers to correct information
- Predict customer behaviour
- Automate repetitive tasks and skills-based routing
- Enhance self-service capabilities

Here at 8x8, we have large volumes of data across our combined Unified Communications and Contact Centre platform, across voice, video, messaging and contact centre information. We have pooled this data and aggregated it so that we can glean insights and improve customer interactions.

Our virtual agent is “trained” to start customer conversations by predicting why they are calling, so it can get straight to the point on its first try using the data at hand.

We’ve partnered with Google Contact Centre AI to understand the voice transcription, the topic modelling and the caller profile. We use their dialogue flow and set up an interaction with the knowledge-base, and present the right information back to the customer.

Some customers may not be fully satisfied with a response from the virtual assistant, and they could call back. When that happens, we use the customer’s knowledge graph to understand that they’ve called previously and presumably their prior service visit was not successful. The customer can be directed to a knowledge-base article, or the call is escalated to a real service agent, and we use AI to do just that.

The call is split through the transcription and interface to the Google Contact Centre AI backend, and we present the knowledge-base article to the agent, to help provide a quick response to the caller. If the agent cannot resolve the issue, then an expert within the company can be located to help solve the customer query.

This is where it is essential to have a single platform with unified communications and contact centre capabilities.

Agents can also locate information from public chat rooms, which have a wealth of knowledge about a particular issue or topic.

The same AI-topic modelling is applied, allowing the AI to query the rooms and make suggestions regarding which expert to call, if a subject matter expert outside the contact centre is needed.

Businesses can take this approach to start deploying AI-based virtual assistants within their contact centre and combine data from across the organisation to find the right answers for customers in real-time.

8x8 provides this highly scalable, consistent data platform, that processes real-time and historical data, effectively leverages the computing power of the public cloud and provides immediate responses. It’s not what you get in a typical chatbot solution, with generic answers based on natural language processing.

## Request a demo

We’re dedicated to helping our mid-market clients unlock the positive potential of Contact Centre AI.

Contact our dedicated mid-market team at:  
**[uk-midmarket@8x8.com](mailto:uk-midmarket@8x8.com)**



# 8x8's One System of Engagement, Explained

By Danny Jones, Mid-Market Sales Executive

Customer expectations and competitive pressures are forcing mid-market companies to transform digitally, so a great place to start is with your communications system.

## Voice still matters

Salesforce.com found that 92% of customer interactions still happen over the phone. That's a high percentage, and that makes sense because we always prefer talking to human beings. For mid-market companies, communications are a crucial part of digital transformation. A company can only move as fast as its communications system, and having a single system of engagement increases your communications speed.

## What is "one system of engagement?"

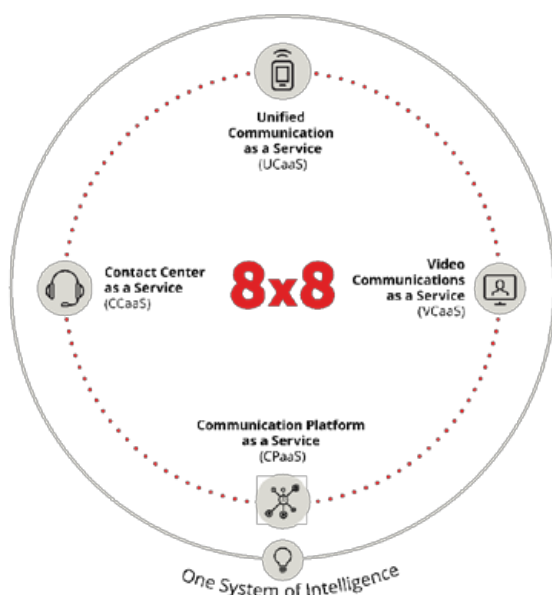
This term specifies how unified communications and contact centre capabilities merge on one platform in the cloud. That results in a lower total cost of ownership, full customer journey analytics, and revenue acceleration. In contrast, when companies use different cloud solutions for voice, video, messaging or contact centre, employees experience "app fatigue".

They have to download, learn and manage four or more apps to do their jobs. It also means that data from these solutions are fragmented across the different systems making it more difficult to gain insights to improve business operations and productivity.

One system of engagement eliminates app fatigue and enables business-wide analytics and visibility. Instead of the individual products, you have an integrated platform for all your communications needs, allowing you to engage with colleagues and customers more effectively.

## Lower Total Cost of Ownership (TCO)

8x8 offers one system of engagement with a lower total cost of ownership compared with individual cloud communication solutions. One system of engagement, also means you only pay for one support team since all the solution components are owned by one company.



### **Full Customer Journey Analytics Integrated Across Systems**

The second significant benefit of single cloud platform over multiple cloud communications solutions is that the whole customer journey analytics integrated across systems.

Using multiple cloud communications solutions from different providers make it difficult to track metrics such as revenue conversions across customer interactions.

One cloud-based system of engagement, provide customer metrics and conversion rates across any mode of communication, giving managers insights to improve the customer journey.

### **Better Employee Productivity**

A third benefit of the 8x8 cloud communications approach is better employee productivity. When communications are readily accessible, and modes of conversations can be changed seamlessly, full context can be served up with every live customer interaction, enabling quicker sales, better support and smooth internal communications.

Subject matter experts are contacted with one click, to respond to customer queries, resulting in high customer satisfaction levels and Net Promotor Scores (NPS) scores.

### **8x8's One System of Engagement**

8x8 cloud solutions help growing businesses to transform their customer and employee experience. With one system of engagement for voice, video, collaboration and contact centre and one system of intelligence on one technology platform, businesses can now communicate faster and smarter to exceed the speed of customer expectations.

## Speak with a Specialist

See how 8x8 cloud solutions can help your business communicate faster and smarter to exceed the speed of customer expectations.

Contact our dedicated mid-market team at: [uk-midmarket@8x8.com](mailto:uk-midmarket@8x8.com)





# Embrace cloud communications for mid-market business success

By Jason Zimmer, Mid-Market Account Executive

The mid-market is the engine room of the UK economy, creating more jobs in the last year, and employ more people than either FTSE 350 or small businesses, according to new figures published today by accountancy and business advisory firm BDO.

Despite such a pivotal role, mid-market businesses face the same digital disruption challenges as larger enterprises. Business leaders are supportive of embracing digital technology faster as they recognise the benefits of a “cloud-first” approach.

However, some businesses perceive a move to cloud communications as a painful experience

## **Power your ecosystems**

Drawing on our experience of working with mid-market customers across the UK, we understand how complex communications solutions have historically been used.

That's why 8x8's Dynamic Integration Framework connects existing business applications with the 8x8 X Series Cloud Communications platform to enhance the experience of every customer conversation.

8x8 enables users to leverage turnkey integrations with best-of-breed business tools for CRM, productivity, help desk systems and more.

## **Redesign customer communications**

Field-based staff can use their mobile devices to respond faster to problems and don't need to wait to return to their desk to log an issue.

By utilising innovative cloud technology, the software enables and drives flexible working and transforms behaviour, across the organisation. That allows staff to fit their work around other commitments and reduces the amount of office space required, leading to cost savings.

The latest digital tools enable companies to completely redesign customer communications from the front end to back office onto a single platform, rather than applying a sticking plaster of new technology over corrupt practices.

## **One platform for customer information and communications**

Many businesses have call centres that are available 24/7 if necessary, allowing customers to get in touch the moment an issue arises.

So integrating all channels of communication within a CRM makes it easy to communicate and access information from a single location without switching applications.



### **Cloud telephony and CRM integration**

Integrating a CRM system with a cloud-based telephony solution makes it quicker and simpler for customer service staff to respond to service queries or share information internally. Information captured can help with service improvements for new products

### **Customer engagement through webchat**

Offering a webchat channel for customers as the first point of contact means staff can participate in three or four chats simultaneously. They can even receive documents securely, making it an efficient way to engage with customers, and gives them another channel to communicate.

Staff can also record, merge, warm transfer, hold and resume calls. Call logs can help managers keep track of service queries, issues discussed and successfully resolved. Additionally, follow-ups help managers assign the next step to accelerate resolution.

Success in business depends on the speed of responsiveness and execution, and with 8x8 cloud communications solutions, mid-market companies can communicate faster and smarter to meet customer expectations.

## Learn more

Find out how 8x8 can help you manage customer interactions through any channel. Contact our dedicated mid-market team at: [uk-midmarket@8x8.com](mailto:uk-midmarket@8x8.com)



## How SD-WAN is winning over mid-market CIOs

By Mark Taylor, Mid Market Sales Executive

The UK cloud adoption rate has reached 88%<sup>1</sup> in 2018 and is now the preferred model for IT and communications for mid-market businesses.

However, the challenge for CIOs is to ensure that new technology, including cloud communications solutions, are treated equally in the cloud. Without network provisioning, all communications traffic can be affected, resulting in reduced quality for high-priority traffic.

The performance of a cloud communication service is dependent on the service level agreements (SLAs) and enabling technologies from the service provider. Equally, the existing network must be capable of supporting bandwidth-intensive applications, smart devices and real-time voice and video traffic.

Network inefficiencies can cause the audio to “break-up,” and video to become “jittery” and unusable, so optimising performance to deliver a good user experience is critical.

Upgrading inefficient networks that deliver both continuous traffic optimisation and real-time visibility while providing budgetary relief can help. That’s where software-defined extensive area networking (SD-WAN), comes in.

SD-WAN is a cloud-enabled networking infrastructure which uses any available connection to the internet by constructing a web of virtual private network (VPN) links. It makes the network more flexible and software-centric, delivering easy monitoring and management.

Businesses can use additional connections to the internet, providing a much faster end-user experience for staff working from remote locations. It also provides increased flexibility when connecting remote sites for shared IT support.

Cost-conscious CIOs can shift from expensive multiprotocol label-switching (MPLS) services to SD-WAN solutions. While MPLS does a great job at managing a private network, but when you move communications to the cloud, everything is routed through a single point of failure, causing bottlenecks and inefficiencies. SD-WAN solutions offer better traffic flow management.

Mid-market CIOs can facilitate services transformation with SD-WAN in the following ways:

### **Centralised control**

SD-WAN abstracts away the hardware and puts all of its functionality into the software. It takes the intelligence of how a network is managed and decouples that information from the network itself. Since it's software-defined, it's much easier to configure, deploy, scale and re-configure than hardware-based networking options.

In practice, it means that IT can send an SD-WAN appliance to a remote office. The discovery and identification processes are automatic, as is bringing the node appliance online, configuring it and applying governance policies.

No further intervention from IT is needed. A process that previously took days or even weeks is reduced to a matter of seconds.

This increases the IT control, peace of mind and savings while delivering crystal clear cloud communications services even to far-flung remote offices with choppy internet.

### **Cut costs**

As cloud delivery models become increasingly popular, cloud voice, video, even cloud contact centres can be hosted anywhere and everywhere, supporting mobility and reach.

CIOs can choose to not only optimise their cloud communications traffic but also cut expensive fixed lines, focusing instead on selecting the most effective broadband service: fibre, 4G, 5G or satellite and consolidating suppliers, allowing IT budgets to go further.

### **Improved Network Performance**

SD-WAN is easier to monitor and manage. The intelligence is abstracted away from the hardware and hosted at the customer premises or on the cloud.

SD-WAN offers IT a centralised view of the whole network, and make on-the-fly adjustments to enhance network performance to meet ever-changing needs.

### **Automatic failovers**

Figuring out how to prevent network downtime is the one thing keeping CIO's and their IT admins up at night. How do you maintain business-critical communications if the network fails?

SD-WAN improves network resilience by logically aggregating all those connectivity links, and can switch between connections during an outage.

Not only does this provide continuous uptime, but because SD-WAN enables automated failovers, there's no need for constant monitoring, analysis and reconfiguration during a failover. It ensures cloud communications are available when staff to interact with customers.

SD-WAN offers improved network performance, centralised control and cost rationalisation opportunities for the forward-thinking CIOs.

## Discover how

We want to help you deliver exceptional user experiences, automate your network and reduce WAN costs.

Contact our dedicated mid-market team at:

**[uk-midmarket@8x8.com](mailto:uk-midmarket@8x8.com)**





## Cut Costs and Drive Efficiencies with Video Conferencing

By James Connors, Account Executive

Amid unprecedented uncertainty and complexity, nearly every UK Mid-market business will face significant challenges.

However, as business chiefs work against the backdrop of leaving the European Union and continue to push their IT teams to create value and impact their business positively, while overcoming big technology considerations.

Forward-thinking CIOs have been quick to harness modern digital tools and technologies that have the potential not only to make mid-market companies more efficient but also to support innovation, collaboration and transformation.

Video conferencing is an excellent example of applying technology to lead change while embedding new ways of working across the organisation. This tool creates an engaged, better connected, more productive staff and helps cut travel and real estate costs.

These scenarios describe how video conferencing makes a difference in mid-market businesses today:

**1 Consolidate multiple apps for video conferencing, messaging and telephony into one. Instead of using three or more apps, use one.**

For users, this means it takes just one click to move from call to chat to video conferencing while maintaining content and context along the way. It also benefits IT since they only need to administer and configure one application.

**2 Connect staff across locations while reducing travel expenses and dramatically lower costs.**

Empower internal teams to collaborate, in high-definition (HD) audio and video, with each other and with customers from anywhere. 8x8 integrates with your calendar system so you can schedule a meeting with just one click. Share your screen instantly to get everyone on the same page. Record the session to reference later or to send to colleagues who couldn't attend.

**3 Transform all-hands meetings using interactive video conferencing with reliable, crystal clear video and audio conferencing.**

HD Video and voice enhances web conferencing for up to 100 participants improving all-hands meetings where anyone, anywhere can ask questions, make comments, deliver announcements or share information.

Additionally, the highest levels of security and compliance ensure that data is always protected.

**4 Enable frontline staff to meet quickly with customers from any device to make interactions personal.**

It just takes one click to join or start a meeting from your computer, iPad, iPhone, Android or a conference room phone. Customers can join the meeting from their web browser.

**Video is in our DNA.** It's even in our name! The name '8x8' refers to the basic building block of video compression (8 pixels by 8 pixels), of which we were a pioneer. We've carried this technology leadership forward into our communications using our 183+ patents to provide one communications platform that is tried and true so that you can start your meeting productively.

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## Get started

Find out how your business can cut costs and drive efficiencies with video conferencing  
Contact our dedicated mid-market team at [uk-midmarket@8x8.com](mailto:uk-midmarket@8x8.com)



## Checklist: Overcome digital transformation challenges in the mid-market

By Adam Cray, Mid Market Sales Executive

Businesses that spend on new technology innovations to transform themselves for the digital age can expect an improved competitive advantage in their industry segment.

A smart strategy will identify specific investments in IT solutions, such as secure and scalable communications that support the business' first step toward transformation.

Some businesses start with facilitating new ways of interacting with customers across multiple communication channels. For others, it's empowering staff to collaborate better internally and with business partners using video-based tools. Mid-market firms poised for growth, leverage the latest cloud-based solutions to enable their mobile and remote workforces.

Companies can develop bespoke digital transformation strategies for their business, which are more likely to succeed, compared to larger competitors.

Due to their size, it is the mid-market who can scale their projects, pick individual targets for success, and complete a digital transition without breaking the bank.

To overcome overcome digital transformation challenges, business can:

- Embrace cloud communications that are most suitable for your business.
- Follow a strategy and guidance from a trusted partner to reach your transition goals.
- Educate key stakeholders about the direct benefits of one system of engagement for voice, video, messaging and contact centre.



## Checklist:

**Use this checklist to quickly identify critical gaps and assess your company's current state of readiness for digital transformation.**

### Organisational Strategy

- ☐ Is your business dependent on the use of digital communication tools, products or services?
- ☐ Do you have a digital strategy to acquire new customers / operate more efficiently / drive internal performance by using digital communication tools?
- ☐ Is the digital strategy communicated to all staff?
- ☐ Is there funding allocated for your digital initiatives?
- ☐ Does your business collaborate with external parties?

### Customer Experience

- ☐ Does your business have an accurate customer views across the various engagement points?
- ☐ Do you interact with customers using multiple channels (Voice, Video, Chat, Mobile, Contact Centre?)
- ☐ Does each of your channels provide a consistent customer experience?
- ☐ Are customers complaining about long wait times when trying to reach contact centre agents?

### People and Processes

- ☐ Do all staff have access to digital tools such as email, mobile apps, web applications for their daily communications and functions?
- ☐ Are monthly communication costs unpredictable and expensive? When was the last time you checked?
- ☐ Do IT staff spend more than 20% of their time administering and maintaining the phone system and related communications applications?

### Data and Technology

- ☐ What other communication services do staff use besides phone and conferencing (video, web meetings, chat applications and collaboration tools like Slack)?
- ☐ How many vendors are you managing for these services?
- ☐ Do staff use other, non-sanctioned technologies to communicate and collaborate (aka "Shadow IT")?
- ☐ Does your business make critical product, performance, or other strategic decisions using detailed reports?
- ☐ Do your systems produce reports used to support critical management decisions?
- ☐ What kinds of customer insights would help improve perceptions of your business?
- ☐ Does a fixed number of phone lines result in customer calls not getting through?
- ☐ Is getting an outside line problematic at times?
- ☐ What is the impact on the business when your phone system goes down?
- ☐ How do you integrate communication islands across team messaging solutions?
- ☐ How are communications integrated with security and compliance policies and procedures?
- ☐ Does your current communications solution provide fully automatic disaster recovery?
- ☐ Is your communications provider compliant with the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure (CPNI) regulations for protecting customers network information?
- ☐ Does your communications provider hold Cyber Essentials Plus, ISO 27001, ISO 9001 certifications?
- ☐ Can your contact centre manager measure how long customers are on hold or how often calls go unanswered?
- ☐ Is adding or changing phone numbers or locations burdensome to IT or so slow it becomes disruptive?
- ☐ Is setting up communications for a new office or location a significant undertaking?



## Ready to Take the Next Step?

Contact a solution expert to learn why 8x8 is the only complete communications platform that uses the collective power of your organisation to improve the customer experience across all interaction channels.

**For more information call 0333 014 6999 or visit [8x8.com/uk](https://8x8.com/uk)**



8x8, Inc. (NYSE:EGHT) is a leading provider of cloud phone, meeting, collaboration and contact centre solutions with over a million business users worldwide. 8x8 helps enterprises engage at the speed of employee and customer expectations by putting the collective intelligence of the organisation in the hands of every employee. For additional information, visit [www.8x8.com/uk](https://www.8x8.com/uk), or follow 8x8 on LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook.



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