Australian CX Dynamics: Balancing Cost, Compliance, and Employee Experience

Audrey William
Principal Advisor, Ecosystm

APRIL 2024

Introduction

CX leaders in Australia are actively refining their customer and employee strategies. Due to high contact centre operational costs, outsourcing to countries like the Philippines, Fiji, and South Africa has gained popularity. However, compliance issues restrict some organisations from outsourcing. Despite cost constraints, elevating customer experience (CX) through AI, self-service, and digital channels remains crucial. High agent attrition also highlights the need to enhance employee experience (EX).

TOP OUTCOMES EXPECTED OF CX TRANSFORMATION IN AUSTRALIAN ORGANISATIONS

47% Improving EX	46% Saving money in CX delivery	45% Offering enhanced CX

Source: Ecosystm Future of CX Study, 2024

Meeting these challenges has prompted organisations to assess AI and automation solutions to enhance efficiency, cut costs, and improve EX. Australian CX teams hold extensive data from diverse applications, underscoring the need for a robust data strategy — that can provide deeper insights into customer journeys, proactive service, improved self-service options, and innovative customer engagement.

Here are 5 ways organisations in Australia can achieve their CX objectives.

#1 Prioritise Omnichannel Orchestration

Customers want the flexibility to select a channel that aligns with their preferences – often switching between channels – prompting organisations to offer more engagement channels.

Aim for unified customer context across channels for deeper customer engagement.

Coordinating all channels ensures consistent experiences for customers, with CX teams and agents accessing real-time information across channels. This boosts key metrics like First Call Resolution (FCR) and reduces Average Handle Time (AHT).

It is important not to overlook voice when crafting an omnichannel strategy. Despite digital growth, human interaction remains crucial for complex inquiries and persistent challenges. Context is vital for understanding customer needs, and without it, experiences suffer. This contributes to long waiting times, a common customer complaint in Australia.

> **Despite 54% of organisations in Australia expanding their self-service channels, only 27% are prioritising the enhancement of omnichannel experiences in 2024.**
>
> Source: Ecosystm Future of CX Study, 2024

#2 Eliminate Data Silos

Despite having access to customer information from multiple interactions, organisations often struggle to construct a comprehensive customer data profile capable of transforming all available data into actionable intelligence.

A Customer Data Platform (CDP) can eliminate data silos and provide actionable insights.

→ Identify behavioural trends by understanding patterns to personalise interactions.

→ Spot real-time customer issues across channels.

→ Uncover compliance gaps and missed sales opportunities from unstructured data.

→ Look at customer journeys to proactively address their needs and exceed expectations.

> **50% of organisations in Australia will invest in a unified customer data platform in 2024.**
>
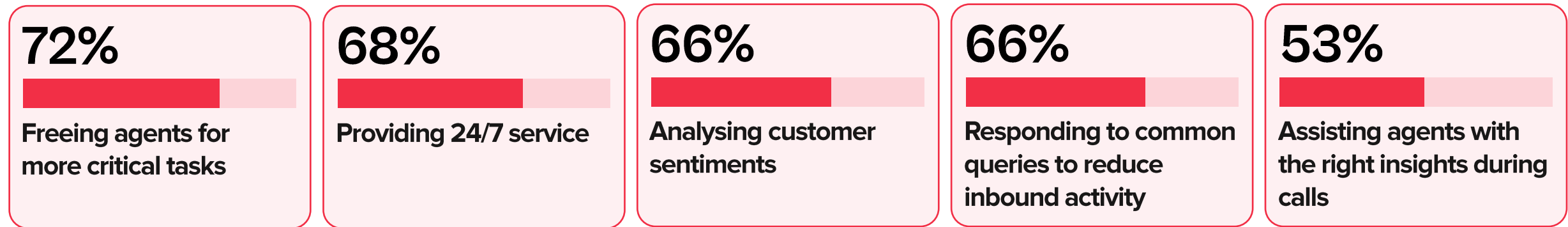> Source: Ecosystm Future of CX Study, 2024
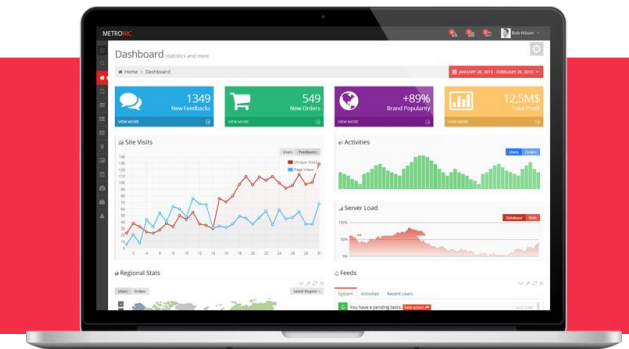
#3 Embed AI into CX Strategies

The emergence of GenAI and Large Language Models (LLMs) has thrust AI into the spotlight, promising to humanise its capabilities. However, there's untapped potential for AI and automation beyond this.

Australian organisations are primarily considering AI to address key CX priorities: enhancing efficiency, cutting costs, and improving EX.

KEY DRIVERS OF ADOPTING AI/AUTOMATION IN AUSTRALIAN ORGANISATIONS

72%	**68%**	**66%**	**66%**	**53%**
Freeing agents for more critical tasks	Providing 24/7 service	Analysing customer sentiments	Responding to common queries to reduce inbound activity	Assisting agents with the right insights during calls

Source: Ecosystm Future of CX Study, 2024

Agent Assist solutions offer real-time insights before customer interactions, improving CX and saving time. Integrated with GenAI, these solutions automate tasks like call summaries, freeing agents to focus on high-value activities such as sales collaboration, proactive feedback management, personalised outbound calls, and skill development. Predictive AI algorithms go beyond chatbots and Agent Assist solutions, leveraging customer data to forecast trends and optimise resource allocation.

#4 Keep a Firm Eye on Compliance

Compliance in contact centres is more than just a legal requirement; it is core to maintaining customer trust and safeguarding brand's reputation.

Maintaining compliance in contact centres is challenging due to factors such as the need to follow different industry guidelines, constantly changing regulatory environment, and the shift to hybrid work.

Organisations should focus on:

▶ Limiting individual stored data

▶ Segregating data from core business applications

▶ Encrypting sensitive customer data

▶ Employing access controls

▶ Using multi-factor authentication and single sign-on systems

▶ Updating security protocols consistently

▶ Providing ongoing training to agents

COMPLIANCE ONE OF THE TOP 3 REASONS FOR TECH DEPLOYMENT IN CONTACT CENTRES IN AUSTRALIA

23% Cost reduction

20% Increased business insights

19% Improved compliance

18% Improved customer satisfaction

12% Improved employee engagement

8% Increased sales revenue

Source: Ecosystm Future of CX Study, 2024

#5 Implement New Technologies with Ease

Organisations often struggle to modernise legacy systems and integrate newer technologies, hindering CX transformation.

> **Only 35% of Australian organisations managing contact centre technologies in-house utilise API integrations.**
>
> Source: Ecosystm Future of CX Study, 2024

Delivering CX transformation while managing multiple disparate systems requires a platform that can integrate desired capabilities for holistic CX and EX experiences.

A unified platform streamlines application management, ensuring cohesion, unified KPIs, enhanced security, simplified maintenance, and single sign-on for agents. This approach offers consistent experiences across channels and early issue detection, eliminating the need to navigate multiple applications or projects.

Capabilities that a platform should have:

| Programmable APIs to deliver messages across preferred social and messaging channels. | Modernisation of outdated IVRs with self-service automation. | Transformation of static mobile apps into engaging experience tools. | Fraud prevention across channels through immediate phone number verification APIs. |

Ecosystm Opinion

Organisations in Australia must pivot to meet customers on their terms, and it will require a comprehensive re-evaluation of their CX strategy.

This includes transforming the contact centre into an "Intelligent" Data Hub, leveraging intelligent APIs for seamless customer interaction management; evolving agents into AI-powered brand ambassadors, armed with real-time insights and decision-making capabilities; and redesigning channels and brand experiences for consistency and personalisation, using innovative technologies.

About Ecosystm

Ecosystm is a Digital Research and Advisory Company with its global headquarters in Singapore. We bring together tech buyers, tech vendors and analysts onto one integrated platform to enable the best decision-making in the evolving digital economy. Ecosystm has moved away from the highly inefficient business models of traditional research firms and instead focuses on research democratisation, with an emphasis on accessibility, transparency, and autonomy. Ecosystm's broad portfolio of advisory services is provided by a team of Analysts from a variety of backgrounds that include career analysts, CIOs and business leaders, and domain experts with decades of experience in their field. Visit ecosystm.io

About Twilio

Today's leading companies trust Twilio's Customer Engagement Platform (CEP) to build direct, personalised relationships with their customers everywhere in the world. Twilio enables companies to use communications and data to add intelligence and security to every step of the customer journey, from sales to marketing to growth, customer service and many more engagement use cases in a flexible, programmatic way. Across 180 countries, millions of developers and hundreds of thousands of businesses use Twilio to create magical experiences for their customers. For more information about Twilio (NYSE: TWLO), visit: www.twilio.com.