

10 TIPS TO MAKE MIGRATING TO AMAZON CONNECT AMAZING!



VoiceFoundry
a waterfield company

INTRODUCTION

We know that no two journeys are the same and migrating to a cloud solution is no different. However, we have found through many customer engagements that there are also many similarities that exist. We have taken those challenges and similarities and built our methodology to make the migration a smooth journey. Often customers grapple with the same questions time and time again—How do I create a plan to migrate my contact center to the cloud? How can we easily make the move to the newly launched Amazon Connect solution? What applications do I need to eliminate, enhance, or simply redo? Hasn't technology changed enough by now that we can finally do some cool things with our customer service interfaces?

That's why we are focused on making the migration journey to Amazon Connect nothing more than spectacular. Our approach is simple and delivers real results. Let us help you with your journey with these ten tips to ensuring your migration to Amazon Connect is amazing!

1. LEARN MORE ABOUT AMAZON CONNECT

We all know that Amazon Web Services is a giant when it comes to delivering technology solutions that support and drive businesses every day. Amazon Connect is the solution for contact centers looking to improve performance, productivity and reduce costs to serve. That said, technology variables are broad and diverse. It's important to understand the features and benefits brought to you by Connect and to understand how those benefits can work for you. Technology in the Contact Center space has been around for years; Connect doesn't attempt to rebuild or replace every facet of your aging (or even recent) system; but rather re-thinks that approach as a whole.

To make your migration successful, it is imperative that you understand the mindset behind Connect. Understand that it's based on never-before seen architecture, with an unmatched pricing model and truly ground breaking automation capabilities like Lex and Polly.

Companies like VoiceFoundry have also developed rapid pricing tools that can help you realize the TCO and ROI for moving to the Cloud. Make sure your plans explore how to leverage these pricing models as you build your business case.

2. ASSESS YOUR EXISTING TECHNOLOGY AND BUSINESS OBJECTIVES

The contact center has evolved over time and often becomes a complicated mess of multiple vendors, outdated applications and bolt-ons that no one is really sure how to change without breaking something significant. It can be scary to start "poking around", however it is a must to understand what you have, how it is connected and integrated and what services are impacted. Your technology assessment must also align with your business objectives, which have also evolved over time—or at least since your technology was last implemented. You will likely find that you can shed a lot of needless weight quickly. It has been said that customer experience is the next competitive frontier, so consider what kind of engagement you want for your customers and assess that need based on the technology providers in the market.

Key questions to ask during this phase are:

- What is the purpose of my contact center as a whole? Do I have a service center? Sales center?
- Is my goal to reduce agent expense? Or drive product revenues? If both—do I have my teams and technologies oriented in such a way to support these objectives?
- How frequently are you updating your customer interfaces? Does your system welcome customers by name? Does your system understand why your customers are calling? Should it?

It is essential to understand that customer's expectations are more demanding in 2017 than ever before—think about how to create interfaces that push the boundaries of what customers might expect.

- Consider who in your organization might be tasked with managing and supporting ongoing change. Are there ways that business owners might be more empowered to modify, create and administer key customer interfaces?

3. REVIEW YOUR APPROACH TO AUTOMATION

When developing your business objectives and technology, a key component is evaluating the degree of automation offered by your technology platforms. Self-service and automated business processes often reduce costs while improving agent and customer productivity. Consider what you are doing to drive overall customer automation, expand the linkages between front-end and back-end systems to streamline the agent experiences (CTI), support your agents by empowering them to better service your customers (WFO) and most importantly, what systems do you have (and desire) to measure your centers performance (Reporting)? What do you need to add, enhance or revamp to deliver a better customer experience? By expanding automation technology across the contact center you can also expand the areas to which the technology itself can bring value.

AWS Connect offers unmatched capability by introducing Amazon Lex into your automated service flow. For decades the promise of a natural voice interface has been not only marketed, but often implemented with less than staggering results. For the first time in more than 20 years however, a groundbreaking new solution promises to deliver on natural speech interactions. By harnessing and training millions of interactions through its hardware offerings (Amazon Echo & Dot), Amazon has created a technology offering that finally delivers in the ways customers expect.

Due to Lex's expanded automation capability, businesses with existing investments in Nuance or other speech platforms should strongly consider looking outside their built grammars for speech interactions. Not only will this afford significant cost savings against existing software and application requirements, but the new capabilities will further reduce expenses due to the ease and simplicity of new deployments.

Every business should ask the question, what would I do in my service channels if my existing systems weren't holding me back? How can I replicate my best human-human interactions with technology? And how can I better predict why my customers might be calling me? Could we

leverage some of the other AWS tools to store, mine and derive insights that might allow us to create dynamic, personalized service offerings for each and every caller?

4. EVALUATE ADDITIONAL SERVICES FROM AWS

When building the vision for the customer experience, evaluate other AWS services that can add value to customers and impact the bottom line. Adding speech to self-service applications, collaboration to advanced applications or simply enhancing your reporting and analytics will have material impacts on the servicing costs within your organization. AWS has an extensive portfolio of products that can deliver real business results and that easily integrate with Amazon Connect services.

Unlike most any other solution provider in the contact center space, there is a good chance that somewhere in your organization AWS is already being leveraged. The opportunity to migrate to Connect will open new opportunities to take other supporting systems from the contact center and also migrate these to AWS. From your storage and database (S3 and RDS) to real time analytics using Kinesis, or even taking stand-alone integration servers to the cloud leveraging EC2, the opportunities are endless and traditional barriers around networking and linkages can easily be addressed. Not only does this present a unique opportunity for performance improvements, but like with Connect, the cost reductions can be significant.

5. DELIVER REAL BUSINESS RESULTS

As with any technology change, it is critical to justify the costs of the change and understand the benefits to the customer, agents and the business bottom line. “44 percent of Sr. Executives would be willing to write off IT legacy investments and move straight to the cloud if they could find a solution that provided speed to value”. The investment needs to not only balance the speed to which the technology can be implemented, but also the value to the business overall. With Amazon Connect, you gain more control and can easily make changes to support customer service initiatives, plus AWS will continue to supply you with great new features to provide ongoing value to your business.

The AWS distribution model makes it easy to explore migration of smaller initiatives that might be on the backlog or have been planned for ages, but haven't yet seen the light of day. Just because your contact center is tightly intertwined and may take a while to untangle, doesn't mean that you couldn't look at focused initiatives that might deliver rapid, immediate business value. Think of opportunities like PCI Payment card compliance or taking just one set of service functions (e.g. Resetting a PIN) and look for ways to migrate these applications exclusively to Connect while

working on a broader plan for migration. Not only will these endeavors prove worthwhile in helping learn about the platform, but the rapid deployment capabilities will help establish the longer term justification and rationalization for rapid migration to the cloud.

6. DEVELOP A MIGRATION ROADMAP

As with any complex technology undertaking, planning and thorough study will prove infinitely valuable as your project ensues. Be sure to consider all the different technology areas that are impacted by your contact center platform and verify that you have reviewed not only what they do, but how they work with your other systems.

Some questions worth considering:

- How do calls get routed in your contact center? Are they routing directly from the PSTN or are they going through your PBX? Are calls first going to an IVR, or are calls going to an IVR after first being classified by your ACD?
- How do you view cradle to grave reporting to identify the start point and end point of every caller interaction? Most call centers route calls between 4-5 distinct systems for each and every call. Make sure you understand how this will work when you begin routing your calls through a different source destination.
- Do your agents collect information about each call through a CTI link? Where is this data collected? What systems are communicating here to pass this agent to your desktop? How does the linkage with your existing CRM system function and how can this be replicated within Connect?
- Workforce planning and ongoing training is essential in every high performance contact center. Make sure to understand how call records are integrating with your WFO systems for agent planning and scheduling, as well as your system for training and coaching. AWS offers robust linkages to integrate with your platforms. Make sure you have considered how these systems will continue to function in support of your existing business process.

Once you have a clear understanding of what you have, what you need to update or what applications and services you need to add, you're ready to create the roadmap. The journey is best laid out in phases that will enable you to deliver on milestones and prove out the solution as you go vs. an all in one cut-over. The roadmap planning should also include a roll-back plan should the

implementation of the phased migration not perform, enabling you to roll back in minutes. With a solid implementation plan and a roll back option we call this a risk-free migration strategy.

7. CONSIDER THE CUSTOMER

VoiceFoundry is passionate about the customer experience. When building new applications or implementing new services, thorough planning must consider today's user. How will they use it, interact with it, what will their expectations be? Spend time documenting the customer experience 'use cases' you want to achieve. You can set these critical success factors when planning and measuring the performance and success of the migration.

As noted earlier, Connect brings unmatched capabilities to bear in support of your customer's needs. For decades businesses have explored natural speech and routing to improve the customer experience with limited success—Lex can make these possibilities a reality and finally bring about true change in how you service your customers and how your customers view your offerings.

It is also worth considering that real customer-impacting change doesn't have to come in fancy speech understanding, it can also be simple in the form of improved routing or messaging around an interaction. Simple things like sending a post call SMS with call details or offering a proactive call back during a standard wait can make a big impact to your overall service offerings. Connect makes these capabilities simple and easy—and without legacy systems to worry about, the traditional challenges are easily overcome.

8. PROVE OUT THE CONCEPT

More than any time in the history of contact center technology, the opportunity to “have an idea” and “execute” are closer than ever before. For many businesses, getting the wholesale buy-in to quickly move to the cloud can be time consuming and process laden. That said, leveraging Connect allows businesses to quickly prototype existing features or functions while broader adoption support is being explored.

Some of the most common POC types we encounter are:

- Agile marketing driven initiatives
- Standing up dedicated service lines for new products or capabilities
- Offering expanded service tiers for VIP / high net worth clients

- Creating a comprehensive service scenario to link SMS and Mobile interactions with an existing voice flow
- Rerouting after hours or overseas calls through more aggressive automation tiers
- Exploring linkages with new enterprise applications that haven't previously been linked with your CC platform

Proof of concepts serve a critical component when migrating to the cloud. With the cloud it is as easy as turning on the service and spending a short amount of time in setup and configurations for specific applications, so when conducting a POC it needs to be done with a minor application and on the live service to ensure it is essentially a real production roll out and aligns with your objectives. This allows you to test your processes for migration without impacting your existing customer service interactions.

9. OPTIMIZE AND MEASURE

Like every good project, start with the end in mind and make sure you realize that customer touchpoints must evolve. In truly great customer service, there's no such thing as a finish line and that customer demands will continue to grow. As a result, your ability to gauge, measure and understand your customer's behavior is essential in maintaining your strategic roadmap.

Understanding this essential concept will position your organization to be constantly tuning and tweaking to improve performance. As part of the roadmap and objectives you should create a checklist of performance factors (Automation Percentages, Net Promoter Scores, Agent Satisfaction Scores, Abandonment Rates, Average Handle Times, etc) that enable you to determine success or to identify and target areas where additional improvements might be needed. Most contact centers have a dashboard of performance metrics that focus on agent performance and overall productivity, customer engagement metrics and of course the cost savings factors associated with the overall project—make sure these are incorporated into your overall plan for migrating to AWS.

10. ESTABLISH ONGOING SUPPORT

Ongoing support is a huge factor in selecting a vendor. Understanding the support options from your cloud vendor are often a critical factor in selection. Cloud solutions offer the ability to take control and manage your costs and standard moves, adds and changes in your system. However, the benefits of the cloud extended beyond management and costs as you also gain immediate access to new services and features can add to that cost savings or improved productivity.

Migrating an existing contact center to the cloud can be a challenging project with many moving parts. You want a swift, secure and smooth transition. And once you're in the cloud, you'll need to evolve. Join us on the journey to the Amazon Cloud and leverage the benefits that VoiceFoundry can bring, from our unparalleled experience, methodologies, and best practice approach to cloud migration. Let us unravel the complexity of migrating your contact center to the cloud and help you create the optimal roadmap for the journey. Our team will help optimize your applications and enable you to quickly achieve your business objectives.

The key is to find the right partner to help you create the vision and plan. VoiceFoundry is that partner. We are ready to talk to you today about how to make the move to the newly launched Amazon Connect.