



Picking the Best CX BPO Delivery Model

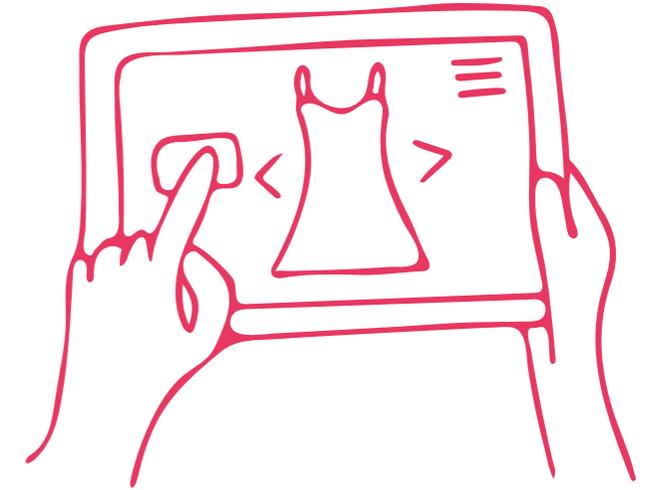
FOR AN E-COMMERCE PROVIDER





The ability to drive the best interactions for customers is a challenge in the e-commerce space.

Consumers are more impatient than ever, and this reality has been made more intense by the number of contact channels used to contact an e-tailer. This explains why so many e-commerce providers are opting to work with an outsourcing partner for their customer management needs. E-tailers can improve consumer loyalty, and lower their capital costs, by working with a third-party outsourcer that is experienced in driving the best CX outcomes using the best people, processes and technologies.



But, upon deciding to work with an outsourcing provider, the issue becomes: Which is the right CX model to use? The reality of contemporary consumer management is no longer the large, generic call centers of yesteryear. Rather, today e-commerce operators have the chance to leverage several approaches to satisfy their end-users ever-changing support requirements.

100% in-center support

Some e-commerce operators are likely to choose an outsourcer that can provide them with a CX delivery platform where all agents are housed within a physical contact center operation.

This is the most traditional manner of customer service delivery, and most BPOs run modern and well-equipped sites. There are numerous advantages to using this approach, including:

- + High agent morale** – agents who work exclusively within physical sites feed off the energy and social aspects of the work environment, which has a record of driving positive outcomes for consumers.
- + Supervision** – it is easier to monitor agents in a physical site, both in terms of productivity and fraud prevention. For e-commerce clients focused on compliance, this has never been more important.
- + Training** – physical contact centers offer the chance for agents to be centrally trained in larger groups, and for individual feedback to be given on the contact center floor.

However, there are challenges that e-commerce clients of outsourcers should be conscious of when delivering from a physical contact center, such as:

- + Higher levels of attrition** – agent churn tends to be higher in this model, meaning increased costs that get passed back to the client via higher prices.
- + Less popular work choice for agents** – the pandemic has shown that agents, on the whole, are less willing to work 100% of the time in a contact center, which impairs the ability to onboard quality staff.



Exclusive work-from-home CX delivery

There is an argument that e-commerce providers should opt for 100% remote delivery of agents working from their residences.

Many companies across sectors have chosen this model and it carries many advantages, which include:

- + Lower costs** – facilities overhead costs are immediately reduced by not having contact centers to operate and maintain. Ideally, this means lower prices for the e-commerce client.
- + Ramp-up capabilities** – e-commerce is notoriously subject to seasonality in customer management. A 100% home-agent BPO can help manage this pressure point, by bringing team members online for short periods of time to support consumers. Ramping down capacity once peak periods subside is also seamless. This feat is nearly impossible to replicate in a physical site.

- + Agent profile** – the type of recruit who is attracted to a 100% home-working model tends to be more educated and experienced than agents who are based in a contact center. This results in an agent that has problem-solving capabilities and one who tends to stay in their role longer, meaning lower recruitment/retention costs.





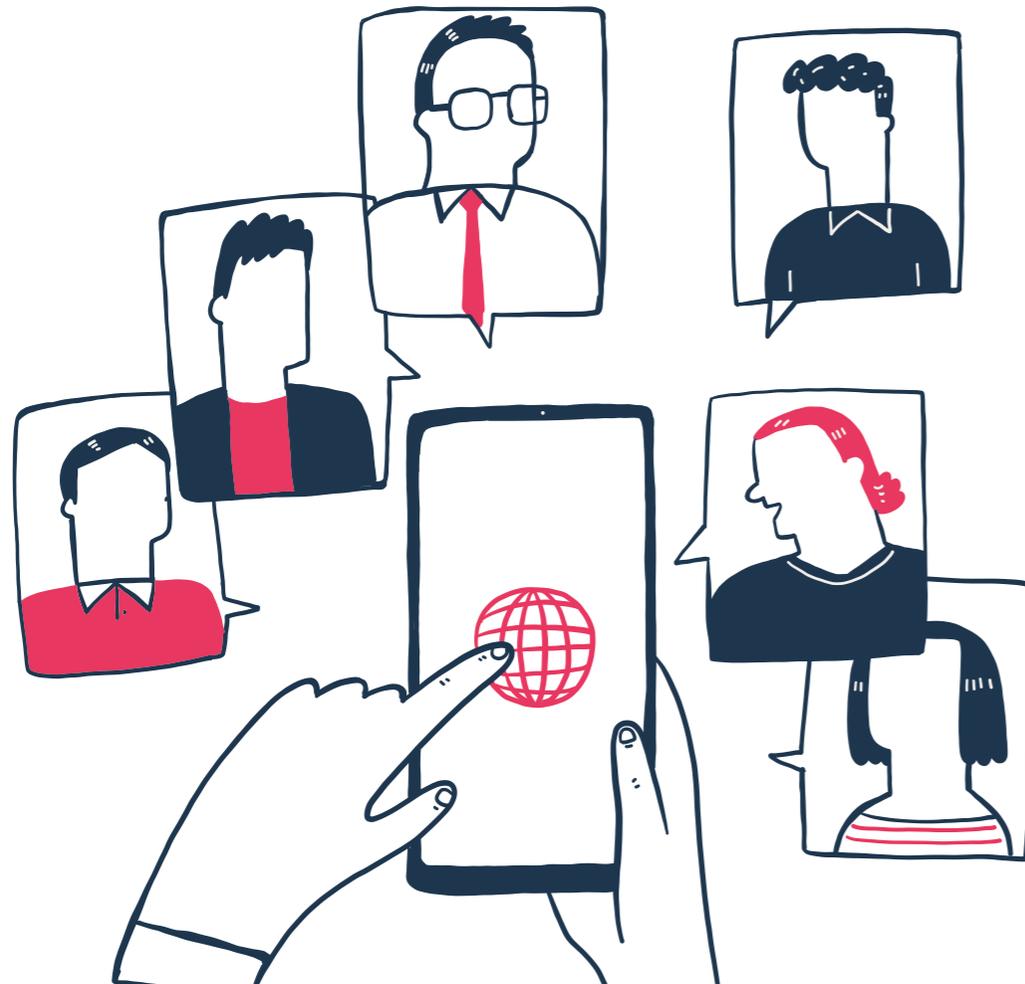
Still, e-commerce operators must consider the challenges of being supported by a BPO that only deploys remote agents. Some of these include:

- + **Concerns about agent supervision**
 - clients not used to the home-working model often worry about productivity from remote agents. There are also concerns related to ensuring fraud prevention, especially related to personal and financial details (which are paramount in the e-commerce environment).
- + **Inability to drive team dynamics**
 - another concern related to 100% virtual teams is how best to manage, train and instill a team spirit among agents who may be distributed across a city or country. Depending on their locations, managing remote agents may prove a challenge—for some it will be impossible.

As noted above, whether employing agents exclusively from home or in a contact center, each has its advantages and disadvantages. But, there is also the opportunity to leverage a hybrid model, which provides clients of outsourcers the opportunity to support end-users with both remote and in-center agents. Some of the reasons for choosing this approach include:

- + **Redundancy** - e-commerce operators can immediately insulate against risk by having agents distributed across different delivery platforms. This can prevent major impacts if a location or region suffers a disruption.
- + **Lower overall costs** - working with a BPO that has a proportion of agents based at home means that the e-commerce client benefits immediately from lower attrition and overhead costs related to facilities management. Savings can be passed back to the client in the form of lower price points.
- + **Best of both agent profiles** - while in-center agents are known for their energy and vibrancy—a trait that customers love—those working from home have a reputation for helping solve complex issues for end-users. A hybrid model provides the e-commerce client with the chance to leverage each of these approaches.
- + **Agent satisfaction** - research shows that a large number of CX agents want the chance to work a portion of their week at home and in-center. By working with an outsourcer that can accommodate this growing trend, recruitment is optimized. This yields higher quality applicants, and in turn results in superior outcomes for e-commerce clients.

As e-commerce expands, the need to ensure the best possible interactions for consumers has never been stronger. This is why so many e-tailers are looking to the BPO community for partnerships around CX delivery. With many options available to the e-commerce community in delivery models, picking an outsourcer that can excel in remote delivery, on-site CX management, or a hybrid model is vital to end-user satisfaction.



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