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Top Performing Contact Center Tech, Tools, And Trends:

How to move the ROI needle with today's intelligent automation

There's a popular business concept called the Iron Triangle, which goes something like this: "Products can be good, fast or cheap, so pick two." For most projects, especially those built on technology, only two out of three are actually feasible.

The good news is that the Iron Triangle can be toppled with intelligent business process automation in the contact center. Done with a strong CX foundation, intelligent automation is an essential solution that provides faster, better customer interactions. And research has found it can generate ROI of up to 186%, which translates into tens of millions of dollars for enterprises.

Automation has surged as companies look for ways to enable business continuity amidst uncertainty. Yes, companies are looking to reduce costs and improve the speed at which they deliver customer services. But in addition to cost containment, companies also want to use bots and other automation to create effortless customer experiences.

This paper provides concrete research from Forrester, McKinsey & Co., and others to support the positive economic impact that intelligent automation has enterprises. We also share actual client results to see how automation is being applied in the real world.

Research has found intelligent automation can generate ROI of up to 186%

Automation's role in CX optimization

Automation is a natural fit in the contact center and across the customer experience. A customer journey touches many different touchpoints—some customer-facing and some in the back office. Many customer interactions are high-volume and repeatable, which can be done in channels like chat, messaging, IVR and others that lend themselves to be easily automated.

Automated bots work best with simple, repeatable interactions. Reducing human dependency along these parts of the customer journey helps to drive down costs and errors while at the same time increase process compliance and interaction speed. Unattended Robotic Process Automation (RPA) removes humans completely to speed up efficiencies and makes contact center agents available for more complex customer centric interactions. Attended RPA, meanwhile, is used to assist associates to help them make better, quicker decisions when dealing with customers or administrative tasks.

Each of these RPA applications has tremendous upside. [1]McKinsey & Co. found that companies that automate 50-70% of a task see average results including:

20-35%
annual cost reduction

50-60%
process time reduction

triple-digit
"most often" in triple-digit percentages ROI

Further corroborating this in the customer experience space, research conducted by Forrester on behalf of Pegasystems found a number of significant process and people benefits. A typical organization "realizes benefits of $34.9 million over three years versus costs of $12.2 million, adding up to a **net present value (NPV) of $22.7 million and an ROI of 186%."[2]** The benefits include a mix of quantifiable and intrinsic benefits to customers and to how business gets done.

Automation's economic impact on processes

Forrester researched many process benefits of automation in the contact center. Overall, brands decrease end-to-end process time after automating steps within a process. Processes are conducted faster and with higher volume and fewer errors. It increases improvement times and create better efficiencies, reduces costs and employee effort, and has sizeable financial impact. Below are some examples of process benefits:

Streamlined back-office capacity — $11.1 million

Within a three-year implementation, Forrester found approximately 175 back-office hires could be avoided by deploying unattended RPA to complete back-office processes. By leveraging unattended RPA for these tasks and processes, organizations can suspend hiring for the back office and reallocate personnel to other value-adding tasks within the organization. This move saves typical clients $11.1 million, Forrester noted.

Fewer errors and rework — $10.9 million

According to Forrester, putting guardrails on certain tasks and processes with attended RPA and fully automating some processes via unattended RPA reduced error rates and rework rates among users by up to 15%. That translates into nearly $11 million in savings over three years.

Long-term automation resiliency

By investing in a hybrid of both attended and unattended RPA solutions, companies reported a higher ROI per automation. Less-costly attended RPA automations stay in production for longer periods of time compared to fully unattended efforts, because humans continuously interacting and refining processes for ongoing improvement. Unattended RPA efforts can be applied to static back-office tasks and processes that don't change and can run over the long term with little intervention.

Automation of revenue-affecting processes

Automating processes that generate or optimize revenue—such as those related to new sales, upsell/cross-sell, collections, or renewals—can significantly improve the speed and volume of revenue-related work. In Forrester's research, multiple interviewees discussed a positive impact of automation on revenue-impacting workstreams.

Reduced training costs

Attended RPA serves as a virtual guide for users to conduct their daily activities and reduces the need for training. Automation makes tasks more intuitive, and inherently improves error rates.

CLIENT STORY

A global telecommunications provider wanted to improve cost efficiency in its contact center without risking the quality of the customer experience. TTEC's proactive solutions team of experts prioritized four back-office tasks to automate using Pega unattended RPA.

The combination of TTEC's human experts and innovative technology created immediate results that reduced costs and improved customer experiences. After automating just four call-related processes, the company saw results immediately. Within four weeks, the client reduced the average time to complete the four selected processes by **59%** and average handle time (AHT) decreased by **5.2%.**

Automation's economic impact on people

In addition to process benefits, there are also significant benefits to employees and customers as well. Forrester found that experiences become more effortless and lead to impressive quantifiable benefits. They include:

Employee productivity savings — $12.9 million
Users with attended RPA are more productive in their day-to-day responsibilities as repetitive tasks within processes are automated, reducing the length of the processes overall. This means that users can do more with the time they have in each day. Forrester calculated the user productivity savings to reach $12.9 million over three years.

Improved employee experiences
Employees that spend more time on true knowledge work and solving customer issues are happier and stay with the company longer. By automating mundane tasks, it gives employees more time to do the more interesting and valuable work. Anecdotally, this drives increased employee retention rates and attrition, Forrester reported.

Improved customer experiences
Automation plays a big part in creating effortless customer experiences that drive loyalty and advocacy. Forrester stated that in certain customer-facing, error-prone processes, a reduction of errors from automation leads to an inherent reduction of customer frustration.

CLIENT STORY

A government housing ministry had a disconnected sales experience that made it difficult to track information and manage systems for citizens who wanted to buy a home. They needed tools that could connect all points of the customer journey by simplifying the sales cycle and streamlining channels.

TTEC introduced attended RPA to integrate various sales applications into a single screen. Salespeople could streamline appointments and housing information without switching from screen to screen. In addition, we created a web-based case management platform for real estate developers and clients to get information all along the sales process.

The sales process decreased by **80%**, from 2 days to 10 hours or less. In addition, there was a **26% increase in number of units booked.** Homebuyers also reported satisfaction with a simple and convenient process.
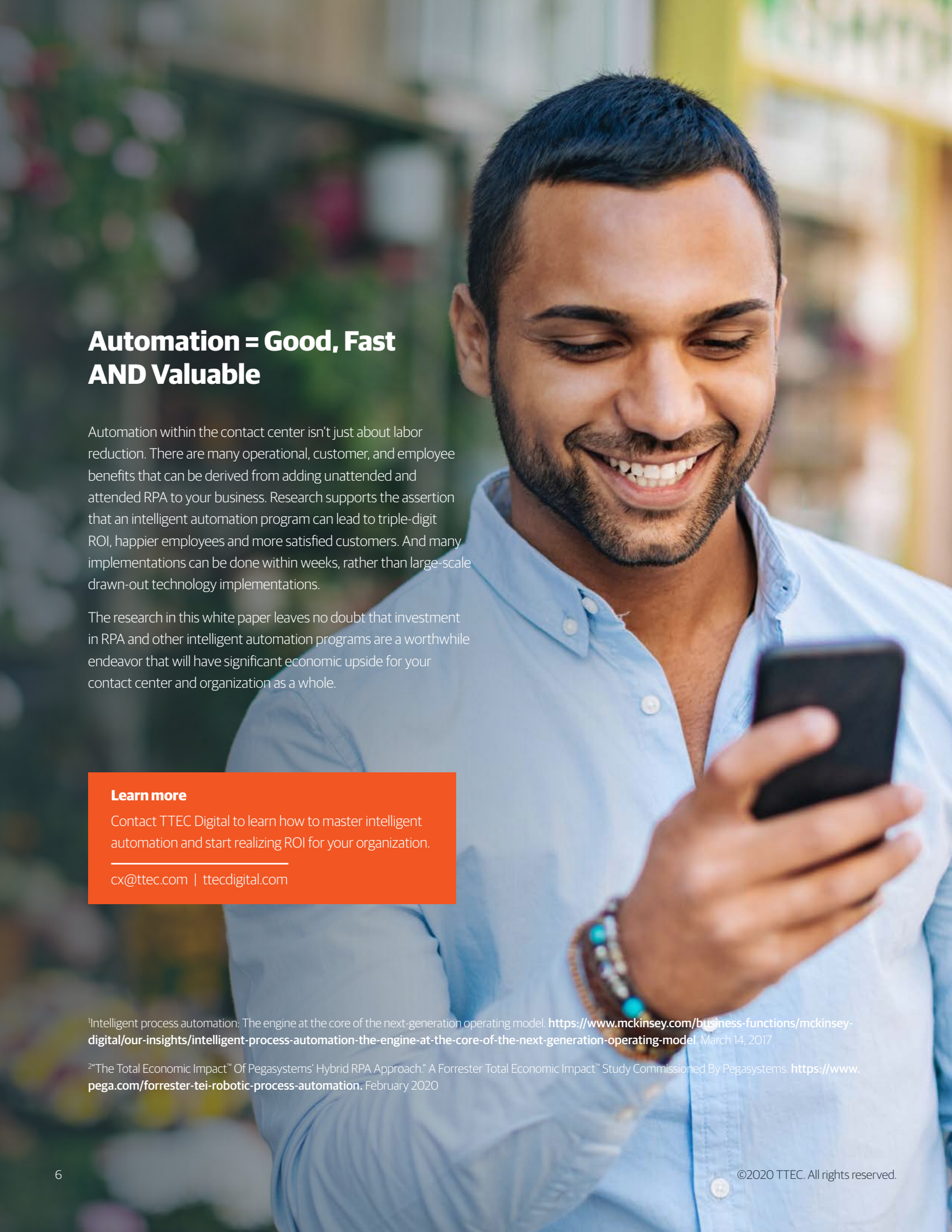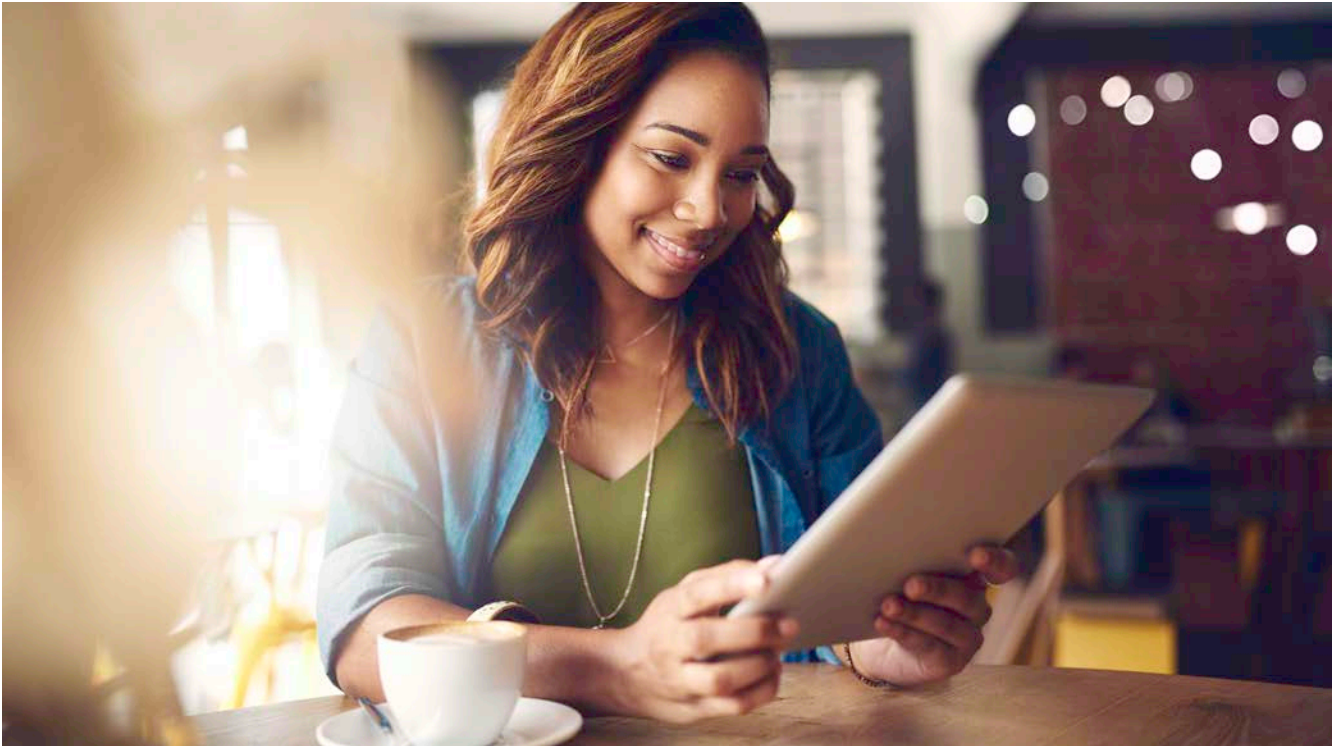
How to move the ROI needle

Organizations can take swift action to generate ROI from automation with the right approach and technology. Look for quick wins on the low-hanging fruit opportunities all across your customer-facing processes. Rapid implementation that show results will build momentum and encourage the organization to keep on moving forward.

Once automated processes are in place, you can add ongoing intelligence and insight to take your customer experience to the next level, which will also open the doors to create additional value from your customers through next-best-action strategies and continuously improve the customer experience.

The most important contact center automation best practice is to balance core service goals and KPIs with automation to continually improve customer experiences and operational efficiency. To optimize omnichannel services for your customers and employees, you must know when to utilize human interaction from live agents and when to deploy virtual assistants and automation processes. Finding this perfect balance in your contact center automation approach is what we call "Thoughtful Automation."

Know when to utilize human interaction from live agents and when to deploy virtual assistants and automation processes.

Automation = Good, Fast AND Valuable

Automation within the contact center isn't just about labor reduction. There are many operational, customer, and employee benefits that can be derived from adding unattended and attended RPA to your business. Research supports the assertion that an intelligent automation program can lead to triple-digit ROI, happier employees and more satisfied customers. And many implementations can be done within weeks, rather than large-scale drawn-out technology implementations.

The research in this white paper leaves no doubt that investment in RPA and other intelligent automation programs are a worthwhile endeavor that will have significant economic upside for your contact center and organization as a whole.

Learn more

Contact TTEC Digital to learn how to master intelligent automation and start realizing ROI for your organization.

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[1]Intelligent process automation: The engine at the core of the next-generation operating model. **https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/mckinsey-digital/our-insights/intelligent-process-automation-the-engine-at-the-core-of-the-next-generation-operating-model**. March 14, 2017

[2]"The Total Economic Impact™ Of Pegasystems' Hybrid RPA Approach." A Forrester Total Economic Impact™ Study Commissioned By Pegasystems. **https://www.pega.com/forrester-tei-robotic-process-automation**. February 2020

About TTEC:

TTEC Holdings, Inc. (NASDAQ: TTEC) is a leading global customer experience technology and services company focused on the design, implementation and delivery of transformative customer experience for many of the world's most iconic and disruptive brands. TTEC Digital delivers outcome-based, human-centric, tech-enabled, insight-driven customer experience solutions. TTEC Engage operates customer acquisition, care, fraud prevention and detection, and content moderation services. These two offerings combined deliver flexible and extensible customer experience solutions at scale. Founded in 1982, with nearly 50K employees and offices on six continents across the globe, the company and its employees are proud to live by a set of customer-focused values that guide relationships with clients, their customers, and each other. To learn more about how TTEC is bringing humanity to the customer experience, visit **ttec.com**.

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