



CLOSE DEALS FROM ANYWHERE:

How to prepare your contact center to move to the cloud



The demand to switch to flexible workplace options

With a global pandemic wreaking havoc in today's economy, businesses are forced to look for ways to maintain stability. A lot of operations have temporarily ceased, giving salespeople the biggest responsibility to keep businesses afloat. In times when working from home is the only option, we can only rely on the most obvious solution – switch operations to the cloud.

The cloud has always been a haven for businesses, big and small. It has provided numerous ways to store and consolidate data from different platforms and devices. Today's situation is forcing decision-makers to cut costs on technology, and the cloud has provided solutions to get them by. Contact centers should start switching now, not only to survive, but also to be competitive in the future.



At opposite poles: The cloud vs on-premise

In terms of contact centers, companies have been presented with the standard on-premise system. New technology challenged this with instant access to cloud-based contact centers aided by the internet. While many business leaders have taken an interest in this inevitable trend, bigger decisions have yet to be made. The legacy of on-premise lives on in the hearts of many long-standing businesses.

The legacy of on-premise

Seemingly traditional and all hardware-based, on-premise contact centers have provided the framework for enterprises that run big on customer data. It prompted the evolution of contact center systems with hardware and software modifications made to fit very specific use cases.

Enterprises holding on to on-premise contact centers are choosing this traditional model because of its customizability, exclusivity, privacy, and reliability. Even for a bigger cost, it still remains the cup of tea for most businesses.

- Confidentiality of database and customer information
- Complete control over your systems' flow and functionality
- Comes in fixed up-front costs with no ongoing payments
- A system with features made for your business

Modern technology and a devastating pandemic ought to shift perspectives. Businesses are looking into the cloud for continuity. Trends relating to this big move indicated itself early on around 2017 with as much as **90% of enterprises anticipated to embrace cloud solutions** by 2021, and it is likely happening now at an even faster rate.

Taking things up to the cloud

The cloud is composed of servers that run data and software remotely over the internet. It made accessibility possible anywhere in the world, and on any device of your choice. It's safe to say that it's one of the best things that happened during the digital era, but contact centers and businesses instantly perceive one big concern: privacy.

Taking over an obsolete business telephony system, a cloud contact center takes engaging with customers up a notch. Interactions are made easier, with all the information available on the internet. It also syncs devices, programs, and platforms, making ready-made integrations for swift communication exchange. With modern customers' love for digital communication platforms, the cloud has provided contact centers with a new ways to connect and manage customers.

For companies who linger on privacy concerns, cloud contact centers have long been finding ways to make it work. Modernizing your contact center is an inevitable part of growing your businesses. With the whole world switching to virtual spaces and exploring remote work strategies, there's no reason to hold back.



Still not in the cloud?

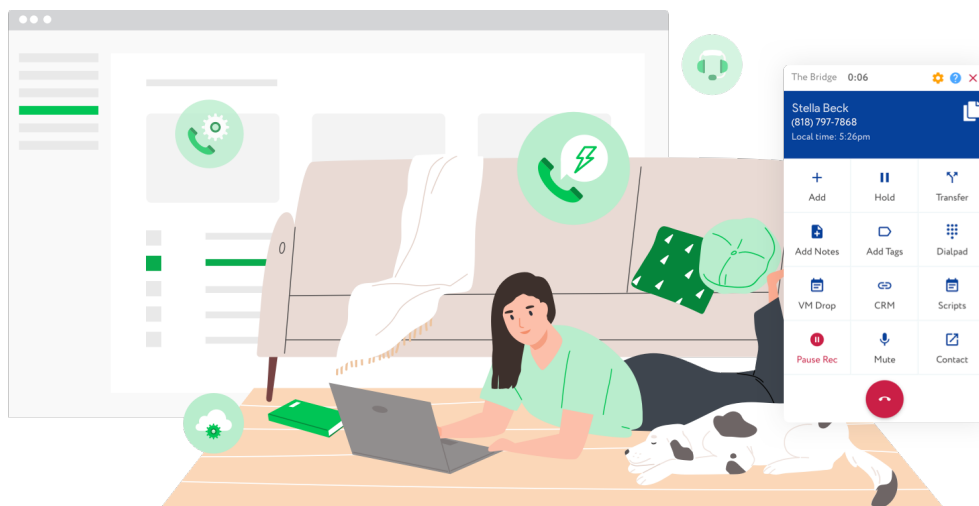
Here's what you're missing

Now let's talk about the benefits. Cloud contact center proves to be a good investment. Flexibility and functionality, to top it off with affordability, have made businesses switch almost entirely at once. If you're one of the doubting few who still have to question whether or not to make the switch, here are some of the reasons why you should consider.

01 Versatile work options

During the pandemic, work-from-home (WFH) setups have to be dealt with urgency as soon as lockdowns started. Contact centers need to shift to the 'new normal' strategy to keep sales from going down the drain. COVID-19 aside, having to shift to the cloud is something that contact centers and businesses should have long considered. A digitally-able world and the demand for remote work options makes cloud contact centers inescapable in the future.

For contact centers that have first embraced the cloud, shifting to WFH any day can be less challenging. Even in a COVID-free setting, giving agents the ability to work from home can make a huge difference. Having access to all the tools you need to be able to work normally from anywhere is possible as long as an internet connection is available.



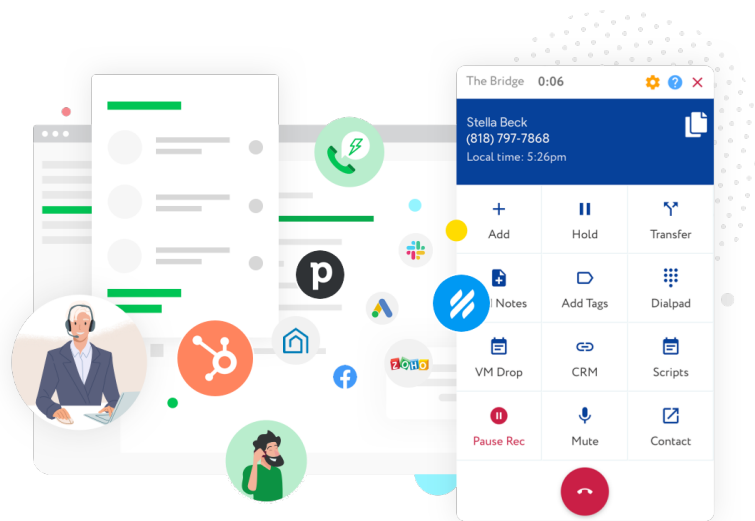
02 Less maintenance costs

Cloud-hosted contact center systems are built with ready-made solutions, therefore letting you save on resources needed for constant system upgrades and maintenance work. It frees up your organization from time-consuming development processes, letting you put your focus on business value and, well, sales.

Data recovery will be easier to deal with since information are kept in the cloud. Automatic backups are a big help, and solutions to restore and protect your data are endless. You don't have to worry about securing your data and having to cut a huge chunk of your budget for it.

03 Handy integrations

Since data is kept and can be accessed on the internet, collaboration with other apps and cloud-based services is readily available for most cloud contact center software. With API-enabled features, cloud contact center systems can make their resources “talk and work” with other apps and software.



This is great news for both your sales and customer service teams. Customer preferences are constantly changing, and the best way to deal with it is through a contact center that can keep up. From productivity platforms, communication apps, to Google-based services, you can easily bridge through processes faster and without any additional costs.

04 Updates and compliance

Wanting to update a certain feature? If you're using an on-premise contact center, get ready for additional IT hours, a new list of backlogs, and tedious project management. Moving your contact center to the cloud frees you up from all these. You never have to worry about getting on track with new trends, requirements, or even a new design interface because everything comes with your subscription package.

Additionally, strict policies are constantly changing in the contact center industry. With your cloud contact center provider managing this for you, quick compliance and requirements can be dealt with easier from your end. Regulatory policies on calls and private disclosures can be easily adapted and changed overnight, if not instantly.

05 Scalability and flexibility

Businesses have a tendency to shift and scale their contact center as they grow. This can be a lot of work for premise-based contact centers that run on hardware and licenses. Cloud contact centers offer on-demand solutions for scalability through API-based functionality. You'll have the ability to design and optimize customer outreach that is favorable for your business.

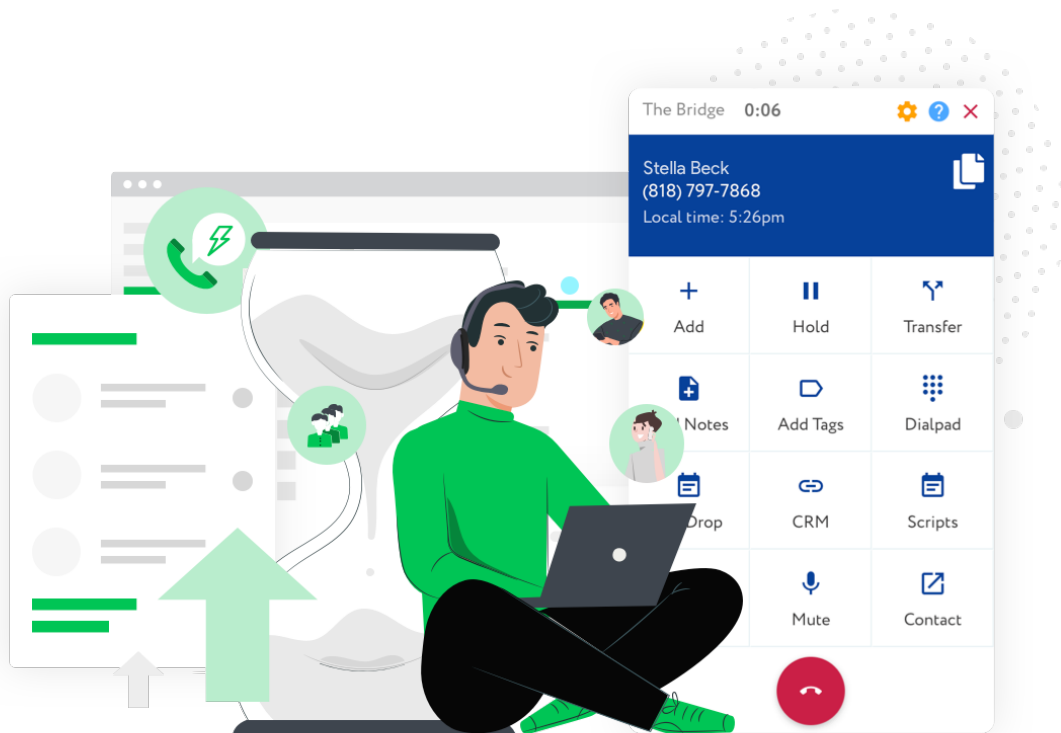
Aside from the flexibility to work anywhere, your contact center can also reach people globally, in stride with your business expansion. Contract negotiations with carriers have already been dealt with. All that's left on your part is to prepare your internal team for the shift. Flexibility also comes in handy whenever you need to upsize or downsize your services on occasion.

What should you look for in a contact center solution?

01 Advanced sales dialers

Modern sales dialers have come to the aid of salespeople in a contact center setting to boost their productivity and connect with customers at scale. If you're switching to the cloud, it's best to look for a contact center software that has a sales dialer packaged.

You also have to identify what type of sales dialer is best for your company. Most cloud contact centers differ in their sales dialer features, and choosing one can make or break your sales workflow. Among the most advanced sales dialers, **power dialers** top the preference list of most businesses because of its ease of use, controllability, and flexible options.



02 Multi-channel outreach

Calls are arguably still the most prominent communication mode when it comes to closing sales deals remotely. However, with other channels getting your customers' attention, there's enough reason to put your efforts on them too. The best contact centers understand this and don't stop at voice solutions. They utilize different media and make it possible for you to manage them all in one place.

Customers love SMS, are present on social networking sites, and check their emails daily. Aside from contacting them through calls, smart contact centers provide other communication means to help you convert leads faster. This also means that your chosen contact center should have the right features to serve these channels on a large scale.

03 Automated sales efforts

The way customers purchase is continuously changing through the years. Cloud contact center sought the help of automation and AI to produce results with less effort and manpower. By running pattern-based algorithms, automation enables contact centers to offer an extra hand to business operations. From managing and connecting with groups of customers, to automatically dialing numbers and sending texts, sales automation is slowly becoming a need today.

Sales automation doesn't necessarily mean getting 'bots' to close the deals. For outbound sales, it has provided aid to repetitive tasks like data recording, call routing, dialing, and follow-ups. With a highly customizable contact center, you will have full control on AI settings to make it work for your operations.



04 Live analytics and reports

Real-time data recording is one of the best things about cloud contact centers. As everything happens digitally, every activity, call, and information is recorded and tracked automatically. Through this, salespeople can study their market and improve their sales tactics.

From a business perspective, instant updates and live reports are essential to keep track of ROIs. With automatic data recording, human error is minimal, and reports can be dealt with accuracy and urgency. In addition, the management can also rely on these as a basis for incentives for agent performance. You can easily see metrics on call performance, engagement rates or sales goals with just a few clicks.



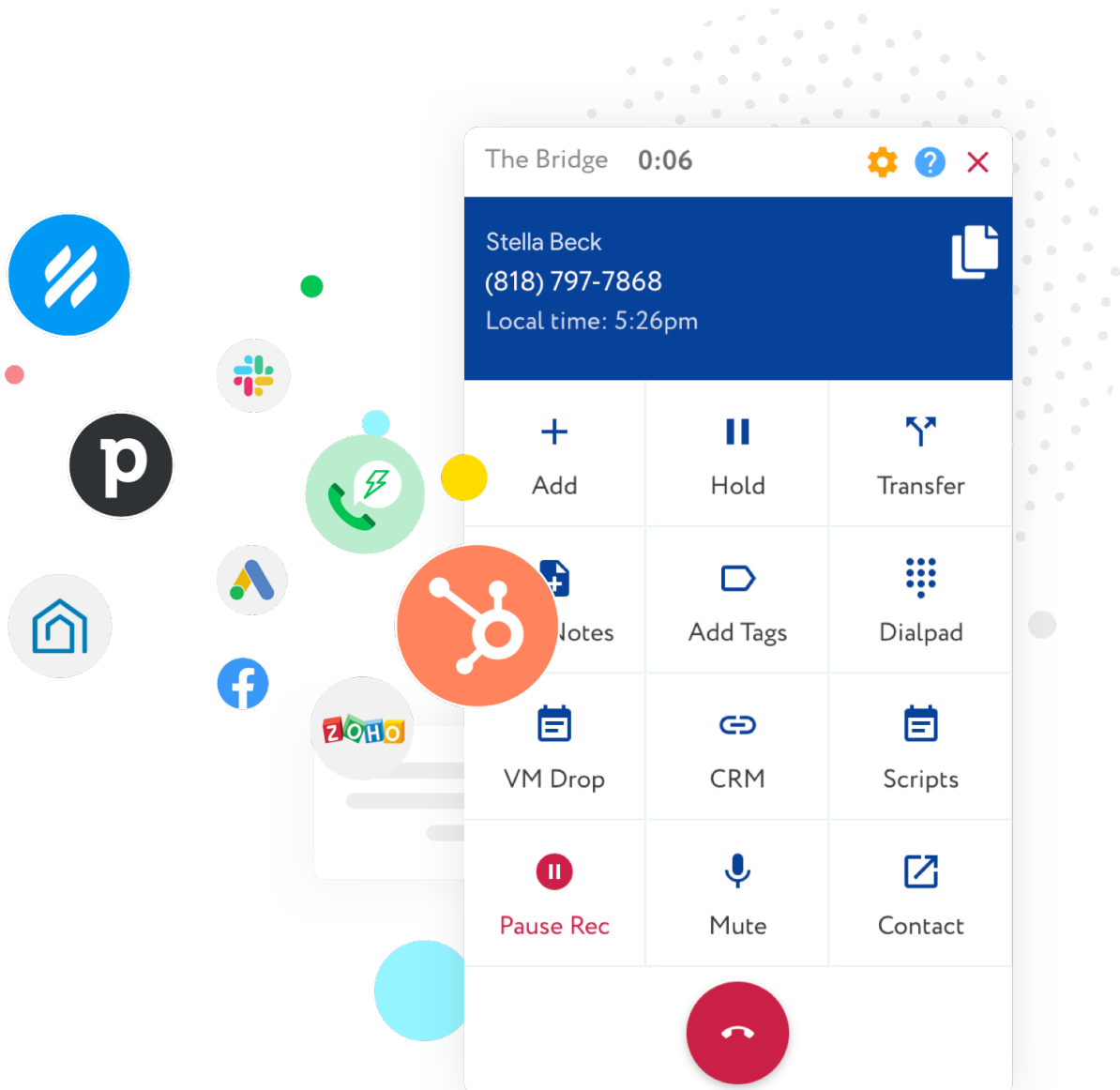
05 Lead management and customization

When looking for a contact center, aim for one that has ready-made features you can use for lead management. It's a practical necessity given the amount of customer interaction contact centers tackle on a day-to-day basis. Some handy lead management functionalities include contact tagging, automatic or manual lead distributions, custom fields, notes, and automatic list builders. This would assure you that your contact center can let you set up your own workflows inside their system. These functions should also have customizable privacy settings for every agent.

06 Integrations and syncing

Gone are the days when salespeople spend hours tracking customers and activities across multiple platforms. Thanks a lot to API-based integrations, cloud contact centers are given a chance to work with other technologies to consolidate work and data.

Find a contact center that believes in collaborating with other platforms. This should help you work more efficiently. Better yet, choose one that can sync their functions to make both platforms work as one for you. Talk about not having to switch tabs ever again!



Cloud contact center software checklist

Let's face it, a cloud contact center is brilliant in a lot of ways, but you still need to assess if this is what you really need for your business. Maybe you're also looking for specific features you can use? To guide you in your decision making, here's a simple checklist that can help.

Does it fit your desired process?

Whether or not you'll be using it firsthand, remember that adopting a new system should be dealt with objectively. It's important to know how your current workflow operates. Are you satisfied with your current system? What are the areas you need to work on? How can a new software help you find solutions to that?

Does it have your needed tools and features?

Although you won't easily find one that's a perfect fit, cloud contact centers are made to be conducive for any kind of business. Look for one that has the features you need, or tools that you can use for your business. Make sure to ask assistance or request for a live demo so you'll be guided through your evaluation.

Can you use it on mobile?

Let's be real, cloud-based software may be accessible on any device, but they should be completely functional when you use them on your mobile phone. This means that the overall interface, design, and features are optimized. A good cloud contact center should maximize its ability to connect with the most preferred device of your customers.

Is it easy to adopt and scale?

Adopting a new system takes time, effort, and training. You cannot expect your agents to know every little function of your chosen software right away. At least, look for one that is intuitive and user-friendly. It should also have the flexibility to handle large-scale sales efforts and multiple teams for when you grow.

Does it work with your CRM?

Chances are, you may already have an existing CRM, and getting a contact center would mean doubling the effort on data-related tasks. Your CRM is the lifeblood of your business. It's ideal if you could find contact center solutions that leverages its data seamlessly for sales outreach.

Is it cost-effective?

It's true that cloud contact centers are cheaper than premise-based solutions, but you shouldn't fall short on budget considerations. Price doesn't always mean value and vice versa. A proper comparison and competition study must be made before taking the big leap.

Are your agents comfortable with it?

It may be your business, but your agents should also have a say on this. Getting them involved in the decision making process allows you to see features needed to help their productivity. This will also prepare them for the switch when you decide to migrate to a new software.

Does it benefit your customers too?

After thinking about what the software can do for your team internally, it's time to look at it in the eyes of your customers. Do your customers complain about your current system? Do misunderstandings happen frequently during the routing process? Are irate calls being dealt with properly? Never underestimate the power of a smart contact center solution for inbound and outbound success.



Tips in migrating your contact center to the cloud

There's no easy way, and there will certainly be a lot to prepare for. Migrating from an on-premise system to the cloud should involve a well thought-out plan. It should consider all aspects of your business and management – workforce, processes, and technology. Know which to address first by using this guide.

Step 1: **Assess your current system**

The first step is to always look at your current organizational structure. What works in your process? Where do you lack? What would make your current system more efficient? Are your customers happy with it? By looking into these, you'll be able to determine the next steps.

It's also best to include the platforms that you are looking to integrate into your workflow. Do you wish to connect with contacts on social media? How about email? Or maybe SMS? This will help you find the solutions that you can test. Think of trends that might develop in the future, and see what you should improve or develop on.

Step 2: **Find the right partner**

Now, after determining the key factors you're looking for in a contact center, it's time you find your provider. In your decision-making, consider a contact center software provider that is able to deliver your needs, and at the same time, is also open for development.

It's true that unlike an on-premise system that offers exclusivity, cloud solutions are not specifically made for your business. However, this isn't something to worry about. Cloud contact center providers have great understanding of what most businesses need and have developed their systems with features that very well satisfy that.

Step 3: **Run controlled tests**

Even the best cars still need to be test-driven. It is after all a new system, with people behind it learning its interface and familiarizing its features. No matter how talented your employees are, they'd still need to try it out, and see how it would work for them.

It is also ideal to test it in a controlled environment to avoid errors. This will help your agents and employees understand it better, identify where issues may occur, or suggest a better workflow that fits them. Doing this will also help them set the pace of learning a new software while they keep track of your business goals.

Step 4: **Evaluate with agents and customers**

Your agents are the people who will use your system the most. Don't forget to ask them what they think, and discuss how it will affect them. There may be challenges along the way, but open communication and quick resolutions can certainly make the transition easier.

Before going live, you can also conduct pilot runs, and test the system out with real customers. This will provide everyone a chance to experience the software first-hand before going fully operational. Also, anticipate customer's preferences to see where you can improve. The best thing is now that you're in the cloud, upgrades and updates may happen even before the need arises.

Step 5: **Set a roadmap for future goals**

Lastly, as you launch your operations on the cloud, get ready to be more competitive. Once everything is migrated, it's now up to you to truly maximize your resource and technology. See how you can boost your sales, improve customer experience, and leverage new features to optimize your contact center. After all, everything's possible in the cloud.

Most business leaders find scalability and customization as some of the huge advantages of the cloud. With your new solution, you may also find other smart features you didn't think of using before. Plan and set a roadmap for your goals, and constantly talk to your contact center partner about it. This way, you are helping them provide better solutions for you, while making sure that what you're paying for serves you best.

Typical pricing and costs

Cloud contact centers usually let you pay on a per-user basis. Their costs can be laid out monthly or annually. Some offer enterprise packages with a minimum number of agents where you can enjoy a customized feature set at a friendly contract price.

The typical price range for a cloud contact center is between \$50 to \$300 per agent. This also depends on the features included in the solution. Basic plans cover some inbound and outbound minutes, routing, call recording, and data tracking. Top-tier subscriptions can include access to high-value offers like auto dialers, outbound automation tools, and white glove support.

Plan	Price /per user	Description	Icon	Key Features
iPro	\$35	Unlimited inbound calls best for support teams	Mountain	Local or toll-free numbers 2-way SMS/MMS Click to dial Call recording Real-time reporting 20+ CRM integrations
uPro	\$50	Unlimited inbound and outbound contact center favorite	Airplane	Everything in uPro SMS/MMS broadcasting Call and text sequences Call monitor and barge Tagging and dispositions Queue callback
xPro	\$70	Power dialer + custom workflows > 300+ leads a day	Rocket	Everything in xPro Power Dialer Workflow automation White-glove support Agent training Custom integrations

With Aloware, you can start from as low as \$35 to \$50 for basic contact center functions, with unlimited calls and texts. Premium packages run between \$70 to \$90 offering power dialer features, workflow customizations, and so much more.

The best contact center solutions at Aloware

Leaving a system you've long been accustomed to won't be that easy. However, Aloware makes it less stressful for you. Migration will not be so much of a hassle as Aloware provides instant ways to set up your system, sync your contacts, and start calling in minutes.

You don't need to worry about logging your data manually. Just upload your list or connect your web form, and let Aloware update everything for you. Through its native integration with popular CRMs like HubSpot, Zoho, Pipedrive, and Salesforce, it can get even better! Aloware lets you pull your CRM records, so you can contact your lists without the need to switch tabs.

Feel free to use Aloware's smart features ready-made for you. Boost your sales with Power Dialer. Be more productive with auto follow-ups, and work efficiently using advanced automation features that help you focus more in building relationships with customers. What's more, you have the ability to not only call but also text your customers to engage with them successfully.

Aloware seals the deal for businesses with contact centers looking for:

- Automated Dialer and Power Dialer
- Voice and text supported communications
- Automation-capable workflows
- Smart inbound routing options
- Omnichannel reach and management
- Scalable engagement solutions
- Unlimited call minutes, SMS/MMS
- TCPA-compliant operations
- CRM integration and syncing
- End-to-end contact center solutions

Ready to go up to the cloud?

With the ongoing pandemic, on top of customers' changing needs, it is essential to upgrade the way you're communicating with your customers. The best way to deal with it is to migrate to a cloud-based contact center as soon as you possibly can. On-premise might still be a good place to be, but trends are all pointing to the same path in the future – the cloud.

The cloud opens you up to more and better ways to deal with data, your agents, and customers. It pays to know which features are worth adopting. However, to make sure you're not making rash decisions, it is important to answer a bunch of questions to see if you're ready for the big switch.

To complete your transition with minimal errors and little to no downtimes, create and stick to a step-by-step process in moving your contact center to the cloud.

Need any assistance in migrating your team? Aloware is here for you in every step of the way. We offer white glove support 24/7 with free live demo and implementation for all businesses, big and small. Let's help you get your cloud contact center started!





www.aloware.com