

# THE BUSINESS CASE FOR LANGUAGE SERVICES

## A GUIDE FOR CONTACT CENTERS



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Speak hundreds of languages in seconds.

# WHY SHOULD CONTACT CENTER LEADERS BE CONCERNED ABOUT LANGUAGE SERVICES?

## ***About this Document:***

The majority of calls arrive in English, but the way contact centers handle non-English calls may yield significant short-term and long-term impacts on performance.

This document explains the potential benefits of building a non-English customer support strategy and some best practices for doing so.

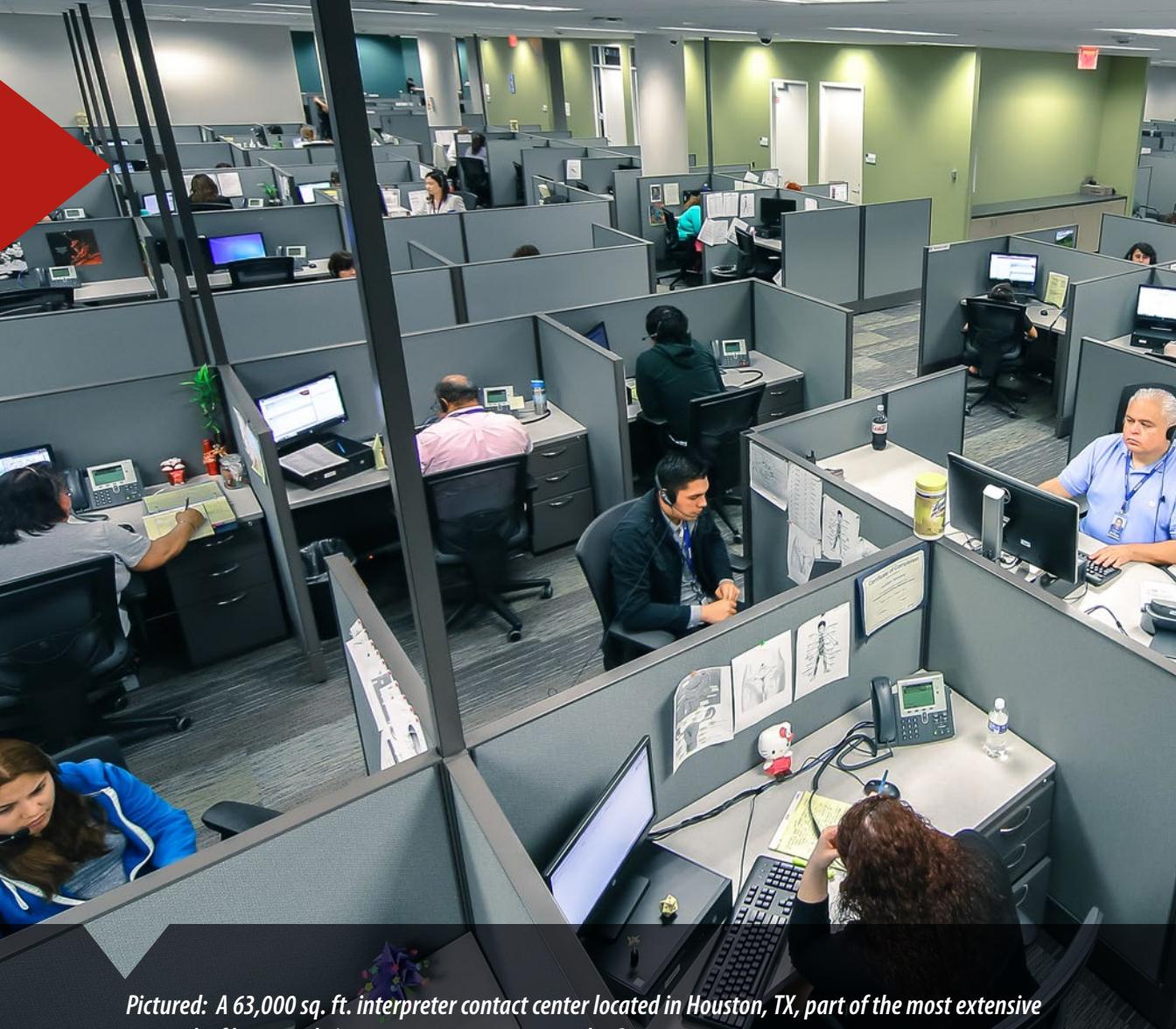
The International Customer Management Institute (ICMI) reports that 86% of contact centers receive non-English calls. But many lack the tools to assist these customers across all channels.

## ***Changing US Demographics***

69% of contact center leaders expect non-English call volume to increase over the next five years, making language support a competitive differentiator.

### **US demographics support this assessment:**

- One in five Americans prefer a language other than English.
- 30 million US residents speak English “less than very well” and may not be able to complete a service call in English.
- More immigrants arrive annually from Asia than Latin America – supporting Spanish is no longer enough.



Pictured: A 63,000 sq. ft. interpreter contact center located in Houston, TX, part of the most extensive network of large-scale interpreter contact centers the Company operates.



# LANGUAGE SERVICES IMPACT YOUR CUSTOMER SATISFACTION



According to ICMI, a majority of contact center leaders agree that supporting a customer's native language increases customer satisfaction. This key factor impacts retention, revenue, and other important metrics.

The positive effects on customer satisfaction take many forms. Over 400 contact center leaders told ICMI that multilingual support:

**72%** **Improves satisfaction with customer support.**

**70%** **Impact customers that prefer a language other than English positively.**

**58%** **Increases loyalty to the brand.**

# LANGUAGE SERVICES IMPROVE YOUR EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

66% of call center agents become frustrated when a language barrier keeps them from helping their customer. And 62% worry that, without an interpreter, the customer may miss needed information.

A quality language services program can give your staff the tools to overcome these obstacles. 90% of contact center leaders told ICMI that introducing phone interpretation improved or maintained agent productivity in key metrics like:

 *First Call Resolution (FCR)*

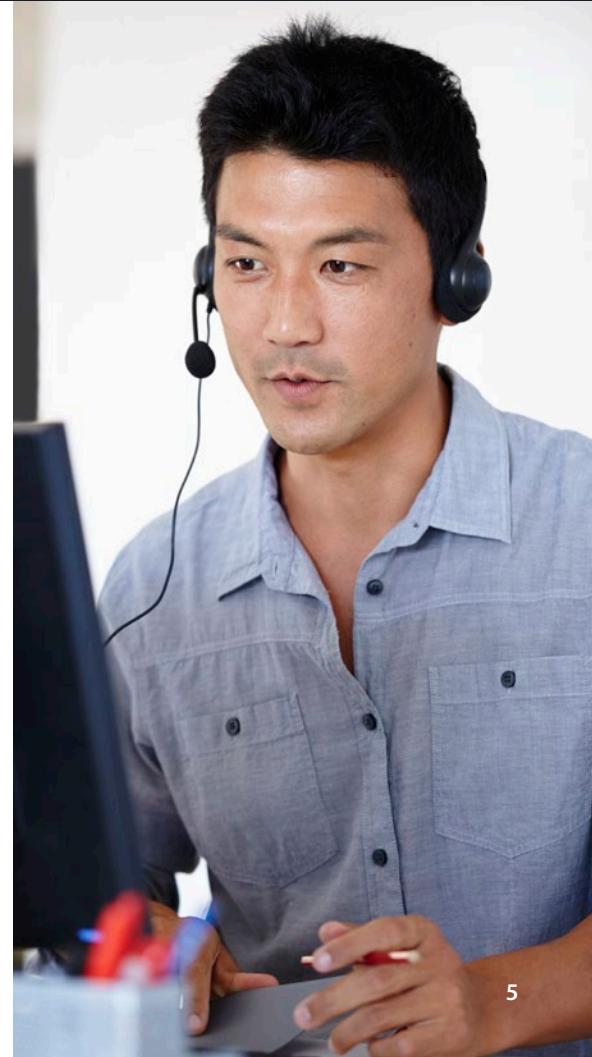
 *Transfers/Escalations*

 *Average Handle Time (AHT)*

 *Errors/Rework*

 *Utilization*

 *Quality of Call*



# FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN EVALUATING MULTILINGUAL SUPPORT CHANNELS

## **Language Proficiency Testing**

It's easy to assume that an agent's communication skills in English will carry over to their second language, but native speakers will notice if an agent speaks informally or has a limited vocabulary. To avoid miscommunication, consider language proficiency testing as part of your bilingual agent onboarding process.



*Voiance can test your agents by phone, eliminating the need to travel for testing.*

Your customers decide which contact channels to use; you decide which tools your employees have to respond. A well-thought-out multilingual support strategy will consider the best method to assist non-English-speaking customers in each channel.

## **Voice & Video Channels – Bilingual Agents**

ICMI recommends that contact centers staffing bilingual agents:

- **Hire True Bilingual Agents** and qualify them using professional language proficiency testing.
- **Provide Cultural Training** so agents understand both the culture and language of the customers they serve. Many languages are spoken by multiple, diverse cultures.
- **Support Non-English Calls** as you would English calls. That means training, monitoring, and evaluating calls in-language so that non-English calls continue to meet your quality standards.

*More on these tips can be found in ICMI's larger study on the topic at:  
<http://www.icmi.com/Resources/Research/2014-Multilanguage-Customer-Support>*

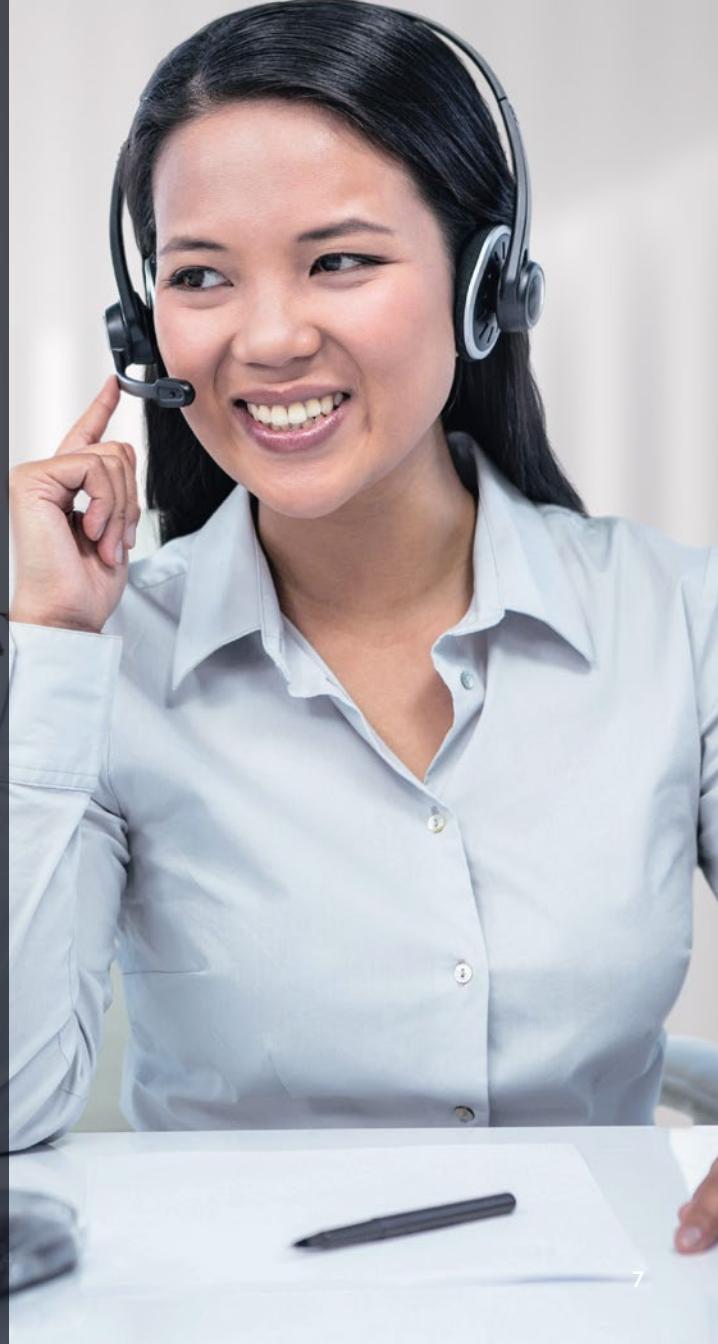
## Challenges when Staffing Bilingual Agents

Hiring agents who speak English and another language you want to support may seem like an ideal solution, but the high fixed costs tend to leave some languages underserved or unsupported. More than a third of contact center leaders surveyed reported difficulty recruiting, training, and monitoring bilingual agents.

**Contact centers told ICMI they do not offer non-English customer support due to:**

- 33%** Limited budget
- 21%** An inability to hire multilingual agents
- 15%** A lack of resources needed to manage multilingual service.

Since many contact centers leaders may find managing their own multilingual team impractical, many opt instead to partner with a language services provider to handle non-English customer support.



# FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN EVALUATING MULTILINGUAL SUPPORT CHANNELS

Voiance believes your language services provider should adhere to the same quality and security standards you demand of your own staff. We provide phone interpretation using:

- The most extensive network of large-scale interpreter contact centers, located in the continental US.
- Certified employee interpreters trained for 120 hours – three times longer than is typical in the industry.
- Facilities that receive regular audits for:

ISO 9001:2008 –  
Quality Management System

ISO 13611:2014 –  
Guidelines for Community Interpreting

ISO 17100:2015 – Translation Services

Payment Card Information (PCI)

## ***Voice & Video Channels – Phone Interpretation***

Phone interpretation is a three-way conference call between your agent, the customer, and a live, human interpreter who acts as a bridge for communication. With more than 60 million Americans speaking a diverse mix of languages at home, phone interpretation gives your English-speaking agents access to hundreds of languages in seconds.

82% of contact center leaders report increasing or maintaining customer satisfaction scores when using phone interpreters vs. bilingual agents, making phone interpretation a low-cost, pay-per-use alternative.

## ***Voice & Video Channels – Video Interpretation***

Video interpretation is the video chat equivalent of phone interpretation and offers the added benefit of face-to-face communication. Proactive contact center leaders may evaluate this option when considering video chat support for customers.



*Voiance offers more than 25 popular languages over video, including American Sign Language.*

## Why Does Quality Matter?

Phone interpretation is like contact center support: quality may vary depending on work environment, training, monitoring, technology, infrastructure, and even geographic location.

Contact centers should hold their language services provider to the same quality and security standards they require of internal agents. That means having answers to questions like:



### Where are interpreters located?

Are they in the US or overseas? Do they work from home or in secure facilities?



### How much training do interpreters receive?

What topics, including those related to your industry, does training cover?



### How does the provider safeguard your private customer information?

Does the provider monitor their interpreters?  
Do they enforce a "clean desk" policy?  
Do they record and store your calls?



*Our large-scale US contact center model: Interpreter supervisors have raised stations to provide support to their team members in the rare event that help is needed on a call. Center management regularly walks the floor to enforce the Company's clean desk policy*

*Common complaints and issues with competitor work-at-home models: lack of privacy and security controls against negligence or malicious intent, as well as noisy or uncontrolled environments.*



# FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN EVALUATING MULTILINGUAL SUPPORT CHANNELS

Voice provides fast, professional translation services in hundreds of languages to hundreds of industries. Our translation services operate under two International Standards Organization (ISO) certifications: Quality Management Systems (9001:2008) and Translation Services (17100:2015).

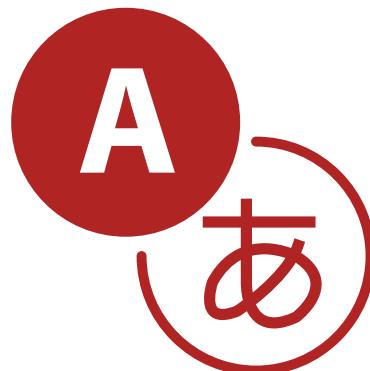


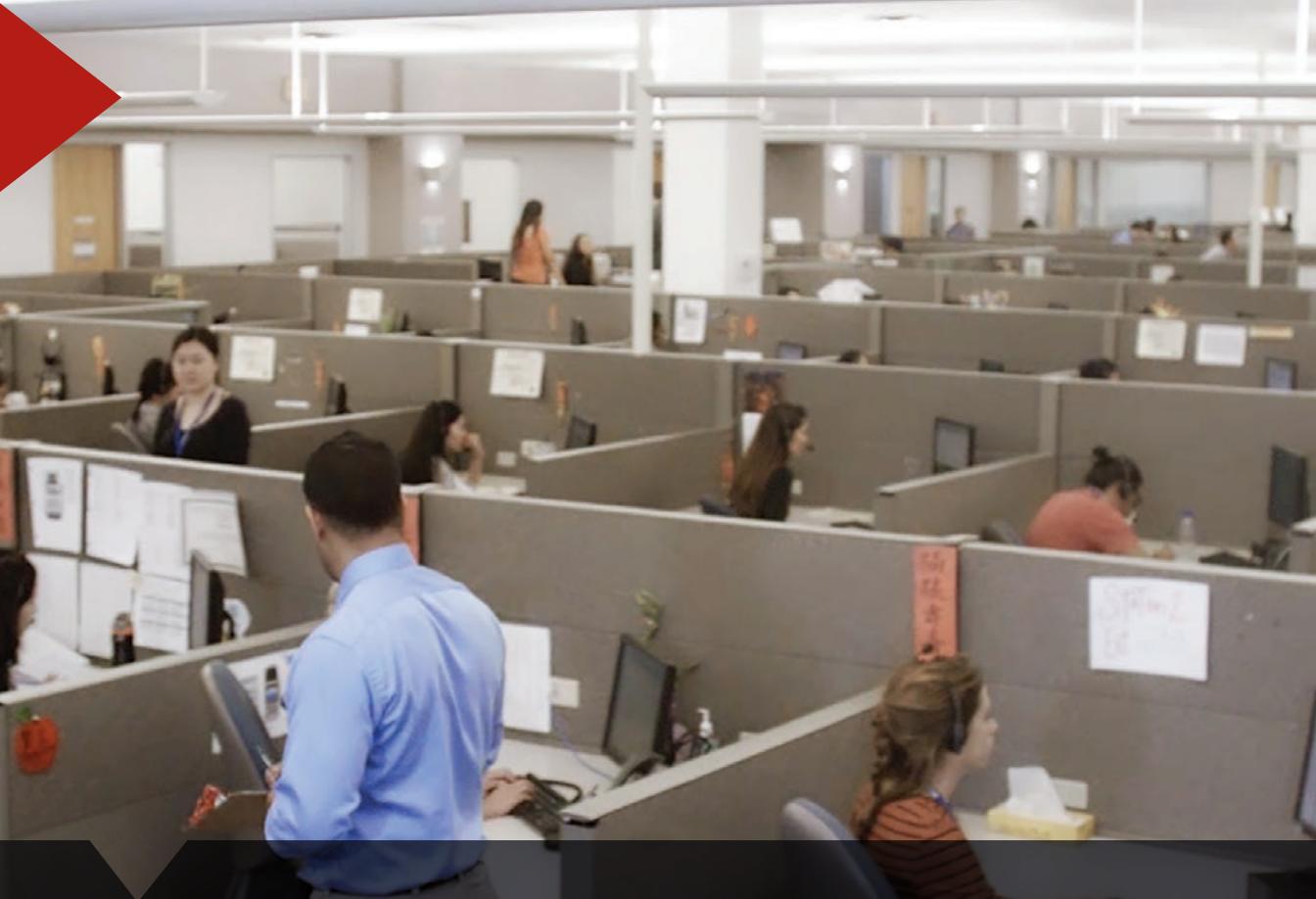
## *Translation and Localization*

Employees and customers both benefit from self-service or self-education – and so do the companies offering these options. Expanding self-service options like FAQs and basic instructions into additional languages may reduce requests, calls, or other support tasks.



*"Free" translation tools available online require users to hold the translation tool company harmless if inaccuracy causes a customer service error; they have no liability for mistranslations. These services also mine all information entered, meaning they do not provide privacy or confidentiality.*





*Pictured: A 70,000 sq. ft. interpreter contact center located in Phoenix, AZ, part of the most extensive network of large-scale interpreter contact centers the Company operates.*

*Established in 2011, the Phoenix center houses both video and phone interpreters. Each interpreter has their own workspace, and supervisors oversee dedicated teams.*

## About Voiance

Voiance, a division of CyraCom, is the leading provider of interpreting services to Fortune 500 companies, government agencies, and contact centers. Whether by phone, video, mobile app, or written text, Voiance's language interpretation services help improve customer and employee satisfaction for thousands of organizations across the US. The Company offers hundreds of languages and operates 24/7, making interpreters accessible within seconds.

Many other language services providers rely primarily on at-home or offshore interpreters. Calls to Voiance are serviced in the continental United States, where the Company operates the most extensive network of large-scale interpreter contact centers. These centers are PCI-compliant and audited under the ISO 9001:2008 standard.

Our internal audit group aligns our standards with our clients' in the areas of data security, business continuity, and disaster recovery. Voiance regularly hosts organizations with confidentiality and privacy requirements to audit the Company's interpreter contact centers, helping to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations.



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