The convergence of new technologies (mobile, omni-channel, cloud, big data, etc.) and rapidly increasing customer service expectations has rewritten the rules of the game for contact centers. Even though many organizations have long realized that the old call center model no longer fits for today's demanding customer requirements, many of those same organizations are trying to adapt legacy platforms and methodologies to the new paradigm. At the end of the day, they're discovering that it's not working.

The stark reality is that the technology platform upon which a contact center is built has to be refreshed to move forward. This is essential to improving the contact center's ability to keep up with significant changes in how organizations interact with customers and prospects. For a variety of reasons, many contact centers still are operating under legacy infrastructure installed years ago. Many of those contact centers have yet to adopt Internet protocols such as Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) as the foundation for their contact center infrastructure, effectively isolating the organization from being able to leverage new omnichannel contact center capabilities and services.

For CIOs looking to justify the investment needed to modernize their contact center's technology platform, there are many drivers that warrant making the move sooner rather than later. Some of these pain points include:

- Proprietary hardware with regularly rising maintenance costs and limited upgrade options.
- Concerns with outages/downtime on legacy platforms due to failures of aging hardware.
- Infrastructure that's reaching end-of-life status, and sometimes end-of-support.
- Managing solutions from multiple vendors with little to no integration.
- Poor customer experience with low first-contact resolution and high transfer rates.
- Inability to segment customers and personalize service to maximize value.
- Difficulty in integrating customer support into back-office systems for fulfillment.
• Problems supporting digital channels needed to effectively service customers where they are.
• Dealing with silos that prevent efficient utilization of agents across all channels.
• Legacy reporting that prohibits comprehensive understanding of customer interactions and the creation of actionable insight to improve the customer experience.

The great news is that addressing these common pain points by investing in contact center modernization delivers obvious technical, financial and operational benefits to the organization.

TECHNOLOGY BENEFITS
CIOs and senior IT executives obviously need confidence that investing in modernizing contact center infrastructure makes sense from a technical perspective. The resulting technology benefits are primarily driven by standardization, consolidation and virtualization.

Standardization of vendors and platforms across the enterprise not only reduces capital expenditures, but it also eases systems management, reduces infrastructure complexity and trims service and support costs.

Consolidation of the infrastructure and virtualization of resources maximizes the use of agents and back-office workers across the enterprise. It also supports seamless integration to back-office business applications like customer relationship management systems.

Key technology benefits that organizations can achieve include:
• **Contact center resiliency**
  Disaster recovery and business continuity are enhanced by replacing aging, legacy Automated Call Distribution (ACD) systems with more reliable and resilient IP-based solutions, resulting in less contact center downtime.

• **Technology consolidation**
  Transitioning from multiple technology suppliers to perhaps as few as a single partner results in better service, reduced maintenance, improved uptime and faster problem resolution.

• **Easy integration via SIP**
  Upgrading from Time Division Multiplexing (TDM) to SIP supports easy integration across customer touch points.

• **Unified agent desktops**
  Having a single interface gives service agents full customer history and all necessary tools to address customer needs across interaction channels and back-office systems.

• **Contact center extensibility**
  Scalable, future-proof infrastructure that can support unanticipated workloads and additional interaction channels mitigates the need to rip and replace existing systems.

An additional option to consider when modernizing your contact center infrastructure is to move platform hosting to the cloud, limiting the need to manage all infrastructure in-house or to have IT staff handling infrastructure upgrades.
COST BENEFITS
Ultimately, much of the motivation for CIOs to modernize their contact center platform derives from the economic benefits they deliver. Upgrading contact center infrastructure provides a wide range of positive financial impacts, ranging from cost savings to enhanced business opportunities.

• **Reduced hardware, service and support costs**
  Financial benefits to replacing aging, ACD-based systems with open IP-based solutions include reducing hardware, service, support and network transport costs for proprietary ACD systems.

• **Reduced operational costs**
  Consolidation helps contact centers reduce service and support costs by moving to a single unified platform that is easier to manage and maintain.

• **Improved resource utilization**
  Queuing theory dictates that “virtualization” of multiple agent populations within the enterprise results in increased resource utilization and staffing optimization opportunities. Moving from multiple contact centers with queue-based routing to a universal queue across all contact centers delivers great economies of scale, facilitates workforce staffing and assignments, improves interaction to agent matching, shortens queue times and reduces transfers.

NEXT STEPS FOR MODERNIZING YOUR CONTACT CENTER
Genesys was positioned as a “Leader” in the “Magic Quadrant for Contact Center Infrastructure” report by Gartner Inc. in May 2014. The Gartner Magic Quadrant report evaluates contact center vendors on their completeness of vision and ability to execute. This marks the sixth consecutive year that Genesys has been named a Leader for Contact Center Infrastructure.

Genesys understands the limitations of older, hardware-based TDM systems and legacy PBX equipment, particularly from the perspective of scalability, systems management and ability to support new contact center channels.

By helping organizations move to SIP-based solutions, Genesys enables them to easily add functionality and features to their contact centers, enabling their agents to do more to help resolve customers’ problems and build stronger, more consultative relationships that can result in improved sales and profits.

Additionally, Genesys partners with its customers to improve operational efficiency through customized contact center training programs, as well as programs to help organizations create a virtualized agent workforce to reduce costs and improve agent productivity.
Genesys’ modernization programs also align contact centers with the many new ways customers and prospects want to interact with organizations. Customers today are seeking to communicate with businesses on their terms—over a variety of channels and touch points, any time of day or night. Customers expect a consistent experience across channels, and they also expect the businesses they deal with to know and act on previous interactions. The Genesys Customer Experience Platform ensures a consistent cross-channel experience across each customer’s interaction, key journeys such as the purchase of a new product or service, or the resolution of a product issue.

Finally, Genesys recognizes that no two contact centers are the same, and it deploys solutions that leverage the optimal mix of technology, process overhaul and market knowledge for each client. Genesys also provides free, easy-to-use calculators, tools that will provide a quick snapshot of your expected benefits and return-on-investment scenarios.

**CONCLUSION**

As contact centers transform from traditional order-taking and problem-resolution activities into omnichannel contact centers that serve customers across their journeys, it’s essential that CIOs, IT decision makers and business stakeholders consider new technology solutions to make this transition.

CIOs looking to justify their modernization investments should focus on how replacing traditional ACD-based systems, often built around aging and inefficient hardware, improves agents’ ability to exceed customer expectations while reducing costs. By modernizing their infrastructure, organizations can proactively anticipate customers’ needs based on context and insight from previous interactions across all channels, rather than by simply asking and answering questions.

CIOs should consider and evaluate the Genesys Customer Experience Platform in order to build a modern, future-proof contact center infrastructure. Doing so will help organizations reduce infrastructure cost and improve scalability, while improving agents’ productivity and the customer experience.

For more information, go to [www.genesys.com/solutions/contact-center-modernization](http://www.genesys.com/solutions/contact-center-modernization).