

**This is a natural byproduct of all technology investments, but how you handle the debt defines success or failure**

## Benefits

Numerous unknowns, aged designs, inadequacies, stability issues, and poor coding practices were substantially reduced or removed, resulting in a predictable and risk reduced upgrade

Replaced customizations with out-of-box features, reducing the level of future debt, cost, and risk

**“Do you have a handle of how your debt will affect your ability to upgrade or migrate from your existing contact center solution?”**

**“Did unknowns, technical roadblocks, or the lack of system knowledge hinder the success of your last project?”**

## Challenge

As your technology ages, technical debt increases. Technical debt is defined as “The cost consequence of any system design, software architecture, or software development within a solution.” Think of this phenomenon as quicksand; the longer you wait, the more difficult it will be to get out. Technical debt becomes increasingly difficult when advanced configurations and customizations are made to contact center technology. If you change integration partners or employees transition to other opportunities, the debt increases exponentially.

A large multi-site contact center chose to align their technology investment directly to their value proposition and competitive strategy. The alignment and customizations caused the technical debt to increase at a faster pace. However, the accumulative return far surpassed the costs. Eventually they had to replace the hardware infrastructure, resulting in the need to upgrade their contact center technology. The technical debt they accrued substantially increased the operational risk of the upgrade.

## Effort

Before an upgrade was seriously considered, a strategy was created to justify and handle the technical debt. Using new out-of-box enhancements reduced the level of customization. Creating an internal support structure and rewriting the code limited future debt. Restructuring the team and various policies increased documentation standards and mitigated the potential for knowledge loss. Iterative requirements and a strong quality assurance strategy focused on the needs of the business. A methodical production rollout exposed unknowns before the majority of the departments were upgraded.

## Results, Summary, and Considerations

All of these efforts combined with many years of compounding returns justified the upgrade, removed the technical debt, and significantly decreased the potential for new debt. The upgrade was a success!

Do not fear technical debt. It is a natural byproduct of all technology and contact center investments. However, develop a proactive strategy to handle the debt and decrease its rate of growth.

Some organizations believe the use of out-of-box technology and Software-as-a-Service solutions (cloud services) will minimize and remove technical debt. They are correct! However, the likelihood of achieving a competitive advantage, a stronger brand, and a superior customer experience will be impacted. Seek consultation, create a plan to handle technical debt, and continue to align your contact center investments to your business.