

FREE REFERENCE GUIDE

# Customer Service Glossary

*Plain-English definitions of every term you will encounter in customer service consulting, operations, and strategy.*

Customer service has its own language. This glossary gives you clear, jargon-free definitions for the terms you will encounter most often -- whether you are working with a consultant, evaluating software, or just trying to speak the same language as your team.

## A

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>ACD (Automatic Call Distributor)</b> | A telephony system that routes incoming calls to available agents based on predefined rules.        |
| <b>AHT (Average Handle Time)</b>        | The average time spent on a customer contact, including talk time, hold time, and after-call work.  |
| <b>After-Call Work (ACW)</b>            | The administrative tasks an agent completes after a call ends. Sometimes called wrap time.          |
| <b>Agent</b>                            | A customer service representative who handles customer contacts directly.                           |
| <b>ART (Average Response Time)</b>      | How long a customer waits from initial contact to receiving a substantive reply from a human agent. |

## C

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>CSAT (Customer Satisfaction Score)</b> | A metric that measures customer satisfaction with a specific interaction. Calculated as: (Satisfied responses / Total responses) x 100. |
| <b>CX (Customer Experience)</b>           | The sum of all interactions a customer has with a brand. CX is broader than customer service.   |
| <b>Churn</b>                              | The rate at which customers stop doing business with a company.   |
| <b>Contact Center</b>                     | A team that handles customer contacts across multiple channels -- phone, email, chat, social media.                                     |
| <b>CRR (Contact Repeat Rate)</b>          | The percentage of contacts that are customers calling back about the same unresolved issue within 7 days.                               |

## E

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>Escalation</b> | The process of transferring a customer issue to a higher authority when the first-contact agent cannot resolve it.          |
| <b>Empathy</b>    | In customer service, the ability to understand and acknowledge a customer emotional state before moving to problem-solving. |

## F

|                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>FCR (First Contact Resolution)</b> | The percentage of customer issues resolved on the first interaction without requiring follow-up.  |
| <b>Follow-up</b>                      | A proactive outreach to a customer after an interaction to confirm resolution or gather feedback. |

## J

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>Journey Map</b> | A visual representation of a customer experience across all touchpoints with a brand. Used to identify friction points and improvement opportunities. |
|--------------------|---|

## K

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>KPI (Key Performance Indicator)</b> | A measurable value that demonstrates how effectively a team is achieving a key objective. |
| <b>Knowledge Base</b>                  | A searchable repository of FAQs, how-to articles, and troubleshooting guides.             |

## N

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>NPS (Net Promoter Score)</b> | A loyalty metric based on: How likely are you to recommend us? Scores range from -100 to +100. |
|---------------------------------|--|

## O

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>Omnichannel</b> | A customer service approach that provides seamless experience across all channels with full context shared between them. |
| <b>Onboarding</b>  | The structured process of preparing a new agent to handle live customer contacts.  |

P

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <b>PEARLS Framework</b>  | Consumer Core Solutions framework for service standards: Professionalism, Empathy, Accessibility, Reliability, Loyalty, Solution-Oriented. |
| <b>Proactive Service</b> | Reaching out to customers before they contact you. Associated with higher loyalty scores.  |

Q

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>QA (Quality Assurance)</b> | A structured process for monitoring, evaluating, and improving the quality of customer service interactions. |
| <b>QA Scorecard</b>           | A rubric used to evaluate customer service interactions against predefined criteria.                         |
| <b>Queue</b>                  | The line of waiting contacts waiting to be handled by an available agent.                                    |

S

|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>SLA (Service Level Agreement)</b> | A defined commitment to respond within a specified timeframe. Example: 80% of calls answered within 30 seconds.             |
| <b>Service Recovery</b>              | The process of addressing and resolving a failed customer experience -- turning a negative interaction into a positive one. |
| <b>Sentiment Analysis</b>            | The use of technology to assess the emotional tone of customer communications.  |

T

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <b>Ticket</b>        | A logged record of a customer issue or request with a unique ID, status, and assigned owner.                        |
| <b>Touchpoint</b>    | Any point of contact between a customer and a brand.  |
| <b>Transfer Rate</b> | The percentage of contacts transferred from one agent to another. High transfer rates are associated with poor FCR. |

V

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>VoC (Voice of the Customer)</b> | A research process for capturing customer expectations and preferences. Used to inform service design. |
|------------------------------------|--|

## W

**Workforce Management (WFM)**

The process of forecasting contact volume, scheduling agents, and managing staffing to match supply with demand.

**Wrap Time**

See: After-Call Work (ACW).

**This glossary is updated periodically. For the most current version and additional resources, visit [consumercoresolutions.com/resources](https://consumercoresolutions.com/resources)**

### Ready to put this into practice?

Book a free 30-minute discovery call. No pressure. No obligation.

[consumercoresolutions.com/contact](https://consumercoresolutions.com/contact)