

WFO TRANSFORMATION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY



Chartered Institute of Global WFM, USA & Canada

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Introduction

The workforce management function has witnessed a sea change in the last few years with the disruptions in technology, more so during the current pandemic times. While business leaders understand the situation, which has completely thrown people off balance and is empathic towards the employees, they also have the responsibility towards organizational performance and delivering what has been promised to their customers.

This white paper provides an overview and insights into the transformation that technology has brought into Workforce Management (WFM) and Workforce Optimization (WFO). Its purpose is to assist leaders in Business, WFM, and HR to understand the influence of technological advancements particularly in the field of workforce management. This white paper describes key players and how they are contributing towards technology transformation from Workforce Management to Workforce Optimization.

Verint Customer Engagement Solutions™ help organizations meet their strategic goals by simplifying, modernizing, and automating customer engagement across the enterprise.

Pre-Covid-19, Verint has made a huge contribution in providing a range of variable WFO solutions that have **resulted in a 53% market share** in Asia Pacific Accreditation Cooperation (APAC).

The technologies in business and the strategies for an effective workplace have made it possible for organizations to minimize and cut down costs where possible while increasing employee productivity and customer satisfaction through workforce optimization. The roles of WFM professionals are moving towards that of Strategy and Advisory roles.



Scenario

We would like to share our experience of how different things were a few years ago and what it is today.

Over a decade ago, most of the companies including many IT companies barring a few top organizations, used to manage workforce-related data either manually or on multiple excel files or sheets. It used to be a challenge when we had to collate the data or get an insight to take important decisions. It would take at least a day or two to ensure that the data is correct and useful to produce a summary status report.

IT companies which had their own inbuilt tools or used vendor tools sparingly, had a similar challenge, if not identical. We recall one of the well-known IT & IT Enabled Services Company, when merged with its parent company as part of consolidation used to operate on multiple tools, some were used by the Parent company and few others were used by Indian company and its counterparts. SAP was used for resource allocation, internal billing portal for showing billing status of the resource, Resource Management portal for Skill repository, People soft for HRIS, payroll, and employee self-service, recruitment, had a different tool, Finance had another tool in addition to SAP and most importantly, the overall headcount of the company had altogether a different tool, where they maintained the overall headcount of the organization.

The headcount reported by any of the geographical locations had to tally with the official headcount tool that was managed by the Head office. Any report that was generated by any office across geographies had to ensure that the final headcount tallies with the master tool.

The weekly status reports used to take a lot of time despite multiple tools throwing up data, the review meetings gave

nightmares to the presenters as well leaders who were always caught by surprise when the report was presented.

Being a WFM professional, it was very important for the team to crack the source of the problem and understand how it rolls up before fixing the gaps. We had multiple meetings with each team that generated reports like the recruitment and operations team to check if the new joiner report tallied; Delivery, Resource Management, and Operations teams had to ensure allocations and billings were in line; HR operations and the Line HR to ensure the unit headcount, joiners, resignees, and payroll count tallied; finance, business, and resource management to reconfirm expected revenues and so on.

At the end of all the meetings, we discovered, two places having lapses which resulted in huge emotional highs and lows during the review meetings.

1. Tool Integration

- There was a time gap of 48 hours in the data flowing from the HRIS to SAP.
- A time gap of 24 hours for the data flow from Billing Portal to SAP.

2. Human related where the Managers missed updating the tool on a real-time basis (attrition, billing, etc.).

The solution was arrived by reaching out to the IT team and the multiple teams uploading data on HRIS and SAP respectively, understanding challenges and defining agreeable ***back-to-back Service Level Agreements (SLA)***, and ensuring that there was an ***integration of all the systems*** within three months so that anyone who generated the report saw the same data.

Right tools, technologies, and systems, custom functionalities, user-friendliness, and integration of systems is the key.



Technologies in Workforce Management and Optimization

The days have changed from being just a hard worker to that of a smart worker. Workforce Management has extended its wings to Workforce optimization with an overall combined approach of tools and its applications for organizations to become more efficient and effective as they grow. *The essence is synchronizing all essential aspects of their business into one space.* It is going back to the basics - understand how your employees work and, how to leverage their skills and talent to achieve greater organizational goals. This information helps in mobilizing the right resource in the right place at the right time, and with the right technology providing factual and useful data.

Businesses need WFO solutions to maximize labor efficiency, improved customer satisfaction, and most importantly reducing the cost of operations. These optimization solutions are integrated with workplace technologies to improve organizational and employee efficiencies, and elevating customer experience.

WFO enables organizations to analyze data, predict future volumes in business, calculate time required to generate a schedule, deploy skilled resource, or to estimate the time required to complete a future task.

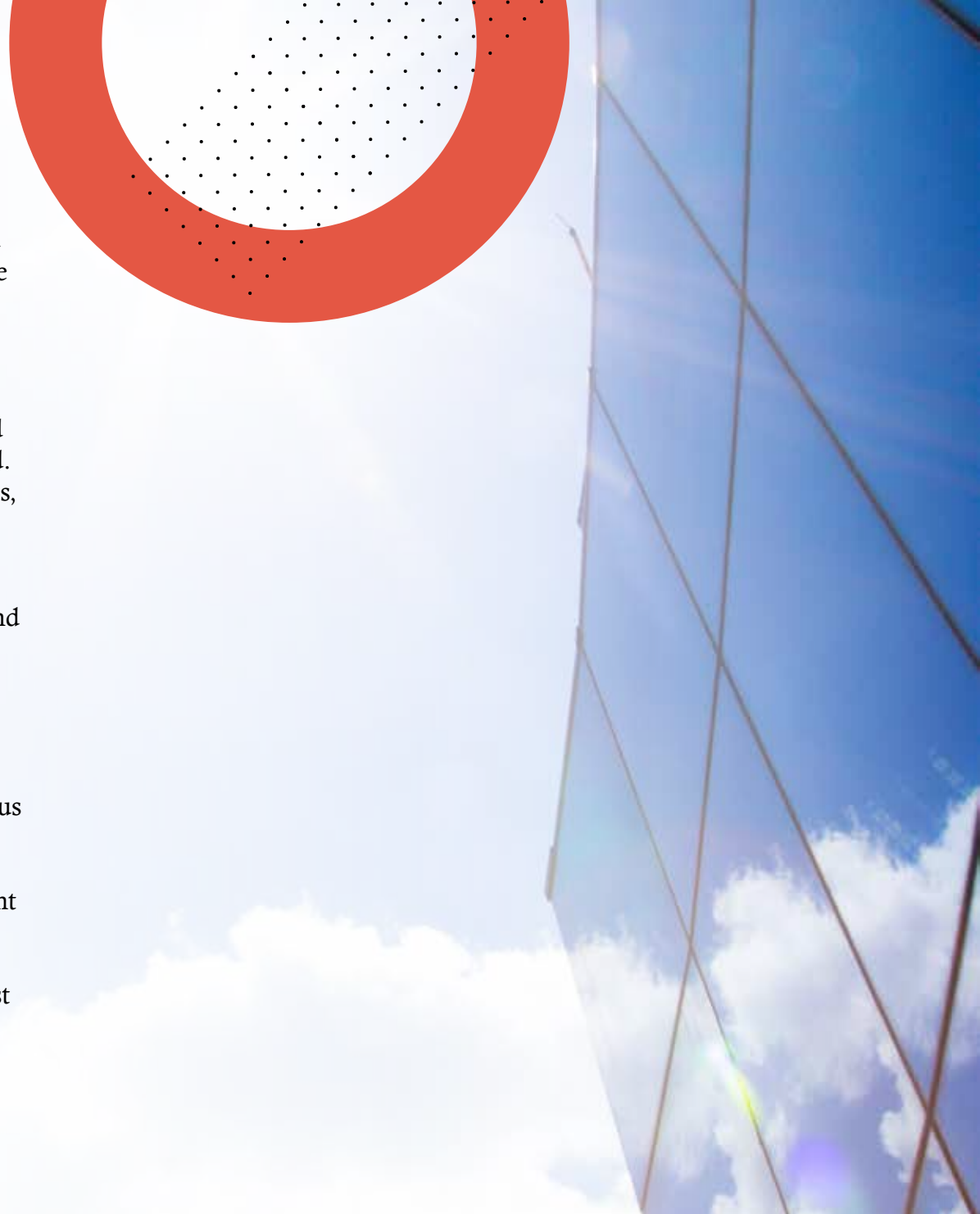
While it started in contact centers, today “workforce & optimization” has become the keywords across industries like Manufacturing, Retail, Banking & Financial Services, to improve their employee efficiency.

Workforce Optimization Software integrates various call centre technologies like call management, quality management, call monitoring, audio recording, speech analysis, text analysis, workforce management, recruitment and training, performance management, and workforce scheduling to optimize employee performance and maximize customer satisfaction.

The Covid-19 pandemic no doubt, created confusion, mixed emotion, and a lot of uncertainty in minds of people. Initially, it was a state of shock, trying to understand what happened, why it was happening, and what could be next. There were lockdowns announced across the world. Companies and organizational leaders took charge, made quick changes, and rolled out certain norms like mandatory remote-work, work-from-home, plugging the gaps to meet customer requests on time by making use of evolving technologies such as Teams, WebEx, Skype, Facetime, Zoom, Google Hangouts, Slack, cloud computing, emails, and texting, etc., where employees are no longer required to be in the office full-time to be an effective and productive team member. They put in place their respective business continuity management plans to protect the interest of the organization and all its stakeholders.

As the days went by and with subsequent phases of lockdowns in various regions, work-from-home or remote or virtual office has become a reality. The intervention of technological advancements is gradually changing the situation from Business Continuity Plans and Management towards Business As Usual (BAU).

The WFM 2020 trends survey conducted by GWFM (R3) shows that almost **78% of the organizations see WFM as a high priority function.** The advancement in tools, technologies, and trends as both drivers and enablers have a high impact on WFM Strategies in addition to the staffing skill and Competency mix, Learning and Development, and Employee Satisfaction, among others.






Digitalization in WFM transformation

Workforce Management today is not limited to IT companies and contact centers. It has gained importance and visibility in other industries such as Retail, Manufacturing, Hospitality, Healthcare and Education.

Cloud Deployment, Business Intelligence, Analytics, Mobility, and Social Platforms have become the pillars of WFM Strategy and Digital Foundation. Data Sciences, Machine Learning, Artificial Intelligence, Cloud-based solutions are clearly standing out as technology enablers driving WFO and WFM.

Competition in the global marketplace has forced companies to relook and redefine their workforce management solutions. Some key areas are:

- Optimizing the efficiency of workforce processes
- Minimizing the risks with the accuracy and validity of workforce data
- Reducing workforce costs
- Leveraging value from workforce intelligence and analytics
- Attracting and retaining a valuable workforce



The *Grand View Research 2017* (R1) states, the Workforce Management market size will be close to USD 11.09 Billion by 2025. With a younger and diverse workforce including the Gigs, there will be a high usage of technology and digitalization in daily operations. WFM being a multi-faceted function, systems and solutions are constantly evolving, enabling predominant changes with good paybacks in terms of both revenue generation and ease of use.

The current situation has certainly inspired technology companies, the insurance industry, pharmaceutical vendors, and healthcare companies to invest in their research and development. The new-age technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Virtual Reality (VR), and Augmented Reality (AR), Cloud solutions are expected to contribute significantly to address the continually evolving challenges. The WMS /WFO solutions can also be deployed on-premises or cloud in small, medium, and large enterprises and across industry sectors like Automotive & Manufacturing, Education, Banking and Financial Services, Government, Retail, and others.

The *Scope* of WFM solutions will encompass

The *Scope* of WFM solutions will primarily encompass



According to the Markets and Markets Analysis, markets are expected to grow from USD 6.0 billion by 2020 to USD 9.3 billion by 2025 at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 9.3% during the forecast period. *Source: Grand View Research – 2017* (R1)



Building organizational capabilities; WFM and WFO takes the driver seat

Global trends, customer demands, competitors' landscape, and other external factors that impact business are few primary reasons for organization to focus on capability building. This is embellished by organization's culture of creating and fostering an environment of employee development. The one thing that is unique to an organization is, its culture. It is the DNA of the organization which gives a competitive advantage to choose their operating business models and build foundation capabilities.

Companies rely more than 60-70% merely on the job training. The reasons could be plenty - losing a day's billing/revenue, lack of resource backup, shortage of resources, stringent deadlines, etc. These training can become ineffective unless backed and reinforced from time-to-time by formal teaching, feedback & feed-forward loop.

According to *Mckinsey Global Survey report* (R2), 70% of senior executives say capability building is among their companies' top three priorities.

Capability building is more often directly linked to immediate business goals. The agenda set by business leaders for capability building programs compasses key criteria and is well planned.

Having said this, the report also points out that only one-third of IT companies focus on capability development and training programs that add the most value to their companies' business performance.

With the companies across the globe adapting to Industry 4.0, disruption is the keyword that is used for the constant changes that are happening around. To a very large extent, technology has driven the need to change. Innovations in technologies are offering newer opportunities in areas like data analysis, data mining, decision-making, building customer, and employee experience. In addition to technology, the changes are seen in people, where new expectations have been set by the changing workforce. The Workforce Managers play a key role in driving and supporting initiatives of building organizational capabilities that help meet the changing demands. Adapting to newer technological solutions in workforce management and optimization are enablers of an efficient, effective, and productive workforce.

The WFM 2020 trends survey conducted by GWFM (R3) revealed that over 56% of the senior leaders (directors & above) emphasized on the use of technology-enabled services to effectively manage the WFM. Nearly 82% of respondents mentioned that their companies have Workforce Management Systems and Solutions particularly, in forecasting, managing employee schedules, time & leave management, monitoring and managing overtime, measuring employee and customer satisfaction levels, and most importantly ease of use. The WFM solutions are also anticipated to have a high demand as organizations across the world embrace digital tracking at a rapid rate. Besides, the increasing adoption of mobile devices is expected to play a vital role in the industry.

The organization's priorities to evaluate the Workforce Management Solutions (WMS) / Workforce Optimization (WFO) are on Mobile Capability Integration, Integration with other systems, and Ease of use in addition to the other features mentioned above.



Market Players

Calabrio, Telepoti, Avaya, Nice IEX, Verint, Aspect, Nobel Systems, Genesys Employee Engagement, VPI, Zoom, WalkMe.

Calabrio ONE is a U.S. software technology provider owned by KKR, and their EM capabilities are available either on-premises or in the cloud.

Teleopti WFM are known best for budgeting & forecasting, contractor management employee life cycle.


Avaya, is a global provider of business collaboration communication solutions, providing unified communications, contact centers, networking, and other related services to companies across the globe.

Genesys Employee Engagement - provides a range of WEM solutions tailored for organizations of different sizes and complexities.

Aspect's WFO solutions, offer features of Workforce Planning, Back Office Optimization, Call Centre Analytics & Workforce Management in the cloud.

Noble Systems suite is a unified Customer Interaction Management solution, for today's environment.





VPI offers quality service and the highest quality of call recordings and WFO solutions.

Jacada is a small, global public software company based in Israel and is a Niche Player.

Zoom is a small, privately owned U.S. specialist in WFO applications. It is niche player due to its proven quality management (QM) capabilities.

WalkMe is a midsize, privately owned company with offices around the world.

VERINT

Verint Customer Engagement Solutions™ help organizations meet their strategic goals by simplifying, modernizing, and automating customer engagement across the enterprise.

As *The Customer Engagement Company*™, Verint offers a portfolio of best-in-breed software and services for Workforce Engagement, Self-Service, Voice of the Customer, and Compliance and Fraud.

Verint develops highly scalable, enterprise-class software and services with advanced, integrated analytics for both structured and unstructured information. Organizations across the globe use Verint's solutions to capture large amount of information from numerous data and sources, glean insights from it by applying analytics, and leverage the resulting business intelligence to optimize customer engagement.

Organizations can “start anywhere” with their technology investment and deploy in the way that best suits their business — whether on-premises, via private cloud or public cloud, or using a hybrid approach.

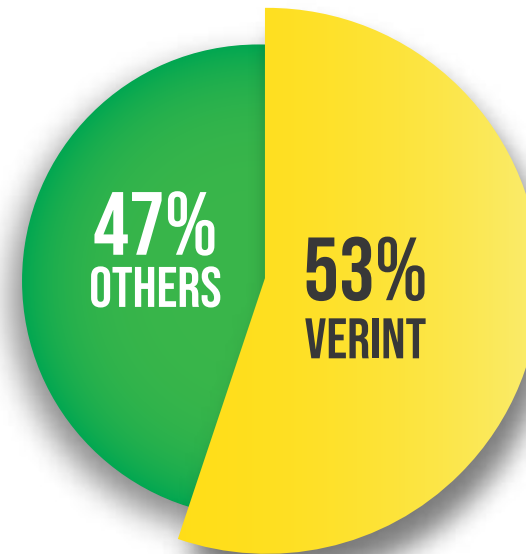
Organizations worldwide leverage Verint solutions in their contact center, branch, and back-office operations — as well as customer experience, compliance, fraud, and digital marketing functions — to help turn engagement into a sustainable competitive advantage, while reducing the complexity and cost of customer operations.

Why Verint ?

Verint is committed to its core values and promotes a culture of openness. Verint encourages and promotes its employees to imbibe and demonstrate those values, follow ethical business practices, and collaborate across industries.

Over 6500 dedicated professionals are focussed on innovation in technology which reflects in Verint’s more than 1000 patent registrations worldwide.

Verint has 53% share of the contact center WFO market in the APAC region. They are leaders in customer engagement solutions.



Source: DMG Consulting’s Contact Center Workforce Optimization Market Share Report – May 2020 (R4)

Verint’s solutions are developed keeping in mind the changing needs of its customers with the right technologies. Their solutions suite is focussed on three key areas of Interaction Analytics, Engagement Management and Workforce Optimization. The WFO solution suite has key solutions like Verint Workforce Management, Verint Performance Management, Verint Advanced Desktop Analytics and Verint Work Manager. The broad and enterprise nature of the suite approach has empowered organizations to offer superior customer experience, improve customer satisfaction levels, revenues and ROI’s while reducing cost to serve and improve operational efficiency.

Verint Workforce Management can be deployed in the cloud or on premises to help contact center forecast workload and schedule staff efficiently.

- **Verint Workforce Management** includes some critical functions like
 - *Flex Time Off Requests* – where the employee can request time off and make-up time in a single request.
 - *Task Switching* – Schedule an agent for a time in different channels in a single shift.
 - *Employee Self Service* – that allows employees with schedule conflicts to trade shifts with a co-worker, apply for time-off, set their shift time preferences, OT and VTO preferences and request for custom shifts.
 - *Net Staffing* – provides visibility to managers and agents to the staffing gaps. Employees can opt to contribute to any low staffing periods.
 - *Mobile App* – all the above is accomplished using web portal or best of breed Verint Mobile App for agents and managers.
 - *Strategic Planner* – for long term budget and headcount planning.

• **Verint Optimization Suite** includes Interaction Recording, Quality Management, Performance Management & Advanced Desktop Analytics. Verint's has been pioneer in creating a platform from which all their solution modules are rendered. This enables the customers to scale both vertically and horizontally across processes and functions.

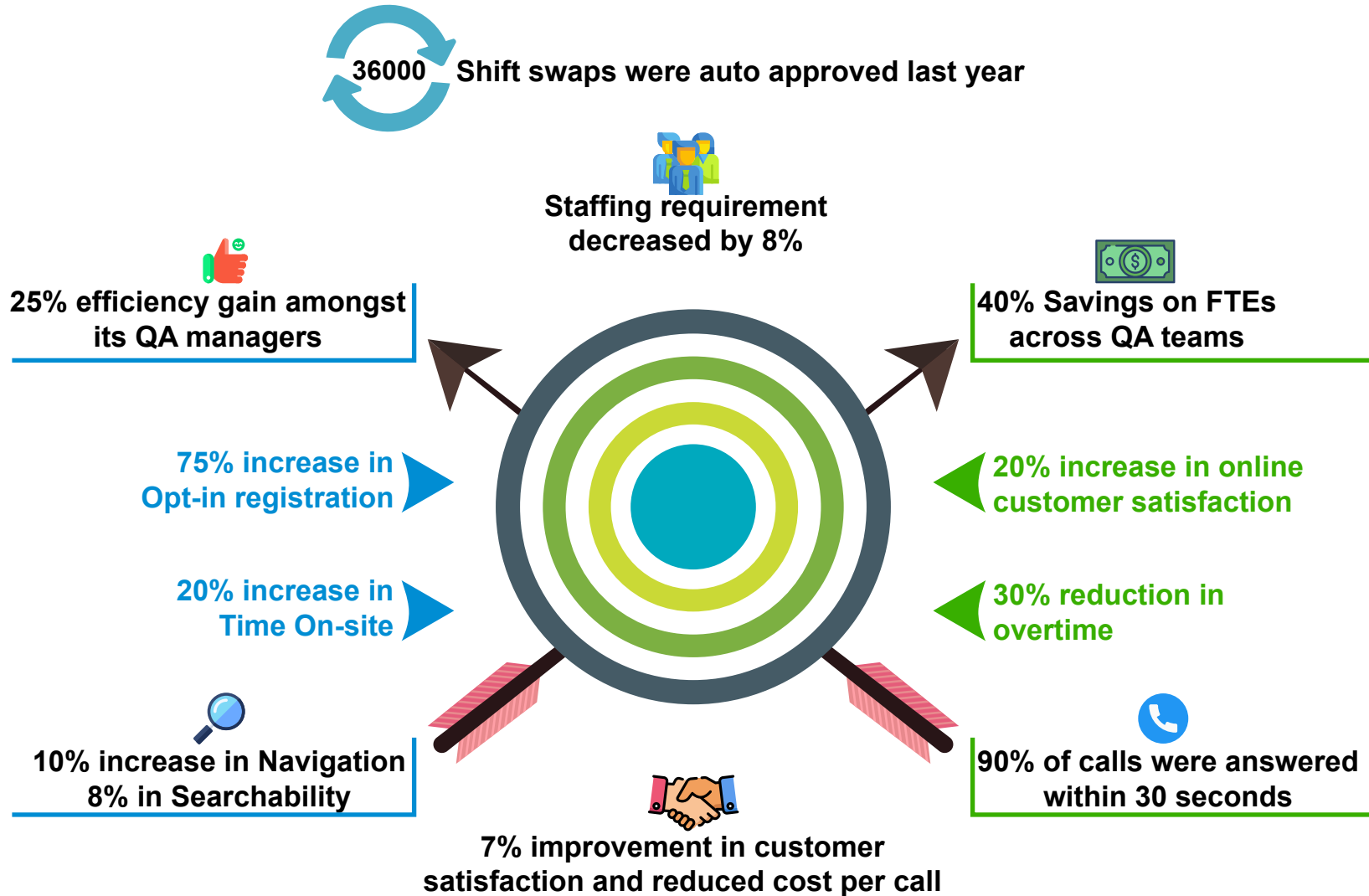
Verint Work Manager – requires a special mention. Four years ago, Verint added the back office Work Management functionality. This is a made-to-purpose COTS back-office workforce optimization solution that addresses complex transactional processing in multichannel environments. It enables work items to be automatically or manually scheduled and allocated based on priority, service goal, and the real-time availability, skill level, and capacity of back office teams, regardless of their geographic location and preferred channel. The end-to-end process of each case and task can then be tracked to produce a comprehensive audit trail in the form of historic and predictive intelligence. It even addresses functions like maker-checker, Quality Check and SLA governance.



VERINT®

Quick Stats of Verint's Customer Success

Some impactful results as shared by Verint's delighted customers like New York Life, L'Oreal Paris, BMW, U-Haul, and Commerce Bank.





Awards & Recognitions

Verint's significant and remarkable contributions are praiseworthy. To name a few,

- Cloud Computing/SaaS Product or Service for Contact Center-Silver winner- Verint Workforce Management.
- CRM Magazine WFO and Analytics Industry Leader.
- Cloud Computing Verint's Knowledge Management was named as the Best AI based solution for Customer Service.
- CCW Excellence Awards recognized Verint's AI-Blueprint as the winner of Automation Solution of the Year.
- Verint's Knowledge Management - AI Trailblazer, was listed in KMWorlds inaugural AI-50 list. The Companies Empowering Intelligent Knowledge Management are enhancing solutions and services with intelligence and automation.
- Verint's product saw its place as finalist UC Today Awards for Best Compliance Product.

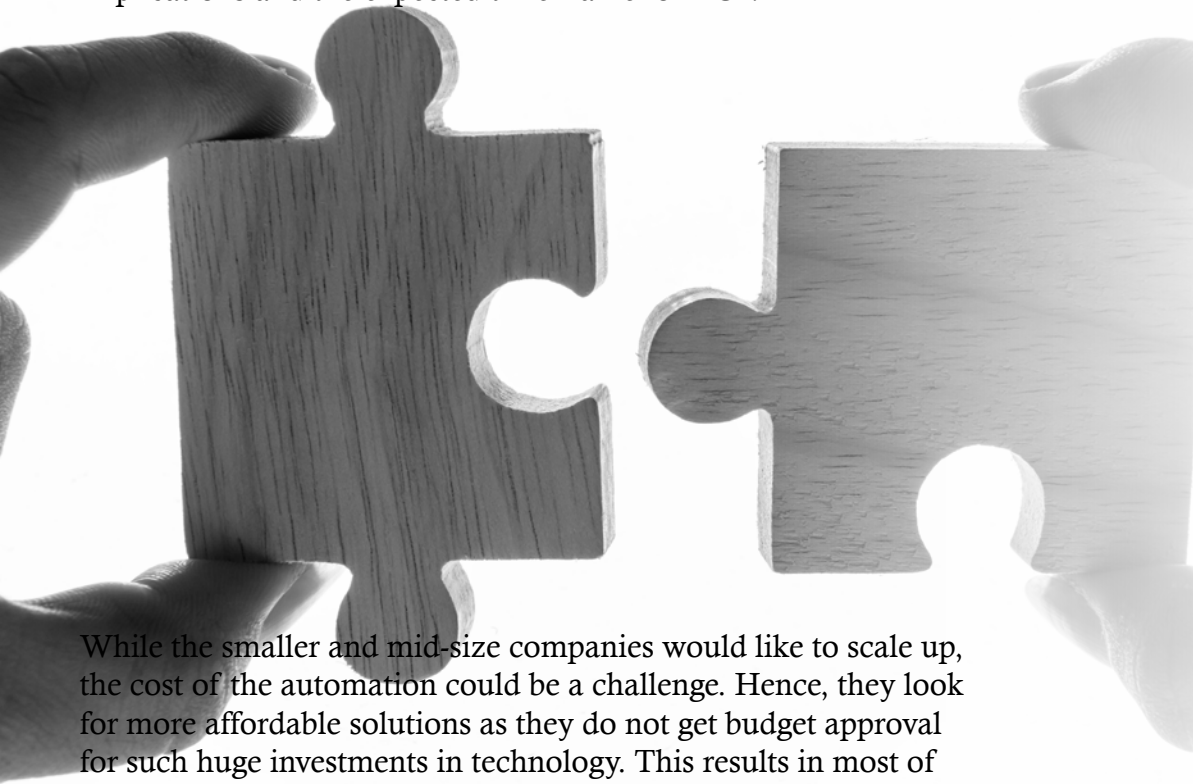
The awards and accolades speak volumes of Verint's capability and commitment towards technology innovations.

It would not be a surprise to see more customised product suites from Verint in the days to come.

Conclusion

The Covid-19 pandemic has forced organization leaders to think beyond just the survival, adapt and ensure business continuity, employee productivity, customer satisfaction. It is not about just adapting to technology but also the newer ways of working.

The use of automation and work-from-anywhere has become essential. It is not that every organization is matured to use the technology. The option to use it is a business decision. Having worked in multinational corporations, one of the challenges that has been witnessed was the willingness to invest in new or advanced tools and technologies. The prime factors were the cost implications and the expected time frame for ROI.



While the smaller and mid-size companies would like to scale up, the cost of the automation could be a challenge. Hence, they look for more affordable solutions as they do not get budget approval for such huge investments in technology. This results in most of these companies settling to their home-built software through open source or learn and use Advanced MS Excel.

The journey of Workforce Optimization is transforming how companies can respond faster, be more productive and responsive post Covid-19 pandemic. As much as organizations demonstrated agility in adapting to the new normal like remote work, online learning, etc., they realise, the new normal has now become Business as Usual (BAU) and which in turn is boosting the innovation.

GWFM has written the white paper on Verint's Workforce Management and their reimaged WFM offerings success story in the global market. Soon WFO is on way to reach AI based interface to interact with each other tool in the organisation. Throughout the pandemic, WFM function has become priority for business leaders.

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About Chartered Institute of Global WFM, USA & Canada

Global Workforce Management Professional Chartered Body is the 1st WFM Forum in the world registered in USA & Canada. “GWFM Professional Chartered Body is the 1st one to dedicate “International WFM Professionals Day” as on 27th June”.

GWFM Network Professional Chartered Body is a non-profit professional organization, comprising of a group of WFM professionals committed to promoting the WFM movement in the global platform and enhancing the capability of human capital professionals to compete globally and thereby creating value for society.

GWFM is committed to the development of human resources through education, training, research, and experience sharing. GWFM is one of the fastest-growing professional chartered bodies in the world and a trendsetter where we discuss current and future happenings in the global business. Established in 2014 June, Chartered Institute of Global Workforce Management is registered in USA & Canada, we are an autonomous, not-for-profit professionally managed organization, playing an Evangelist role in grooming Leaders for Future.



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