

# GOVERNMENT CONTACT CENTER SATISFACTION INDEX (GCCSI)

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REPORT | 2020

*Managing the Entire  
Customer Experience*



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# INTRODUCTION

Government contact centers play a central role in delivering support to citizens across the country seeking assistance with federal, state, and local government services. With the significant stress placed on government services by COVID-19 lockdowns, the critical role played by contact centers is even more evident.

Government agencies can boost satisfaction among citizens by effectively managing the entire customer experience, from pre-contact visits to the agency website, to direct contact with a contact center agent, to post-contact engagement through social media channels. Effectively managing across the entire experience requires integrated thinking from contact center managers that stretches beyond the specific customer service interaction with a customer.

The CFI Group Government Contact Center Satisfaction Index study measures contact center performance regarding their experience interacting with government customer service. This year's report provides the latest information on customer experience, key drivers of customer satisfaction, trends in pre-contact website self-service, how interaction with the agent impacts the experience, and how post-contact interaction on social media should be considered part of entire customer service journey.

## CFI GROUP SOLUTIONS FOR GOVERNMENT



**SHERI PETRAS**  
**CEO**

Sheri manages offices across 4 continents from the CFI Group world headquarters in Ann Arbor, Michigan.



**KELLY STALLARD**  
**Program Director, Public Sector**

Kelly manages CFI Group's practice for Citizen Satisfaction, Website Satisfaction, and Contact Center Satisfaction for public sector clients.



**DAVE HAM**  
**Program Director, Public Sector**

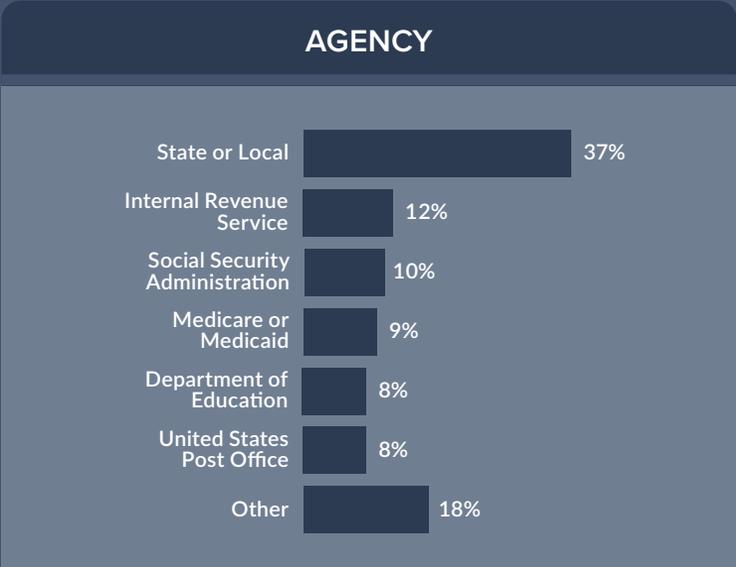
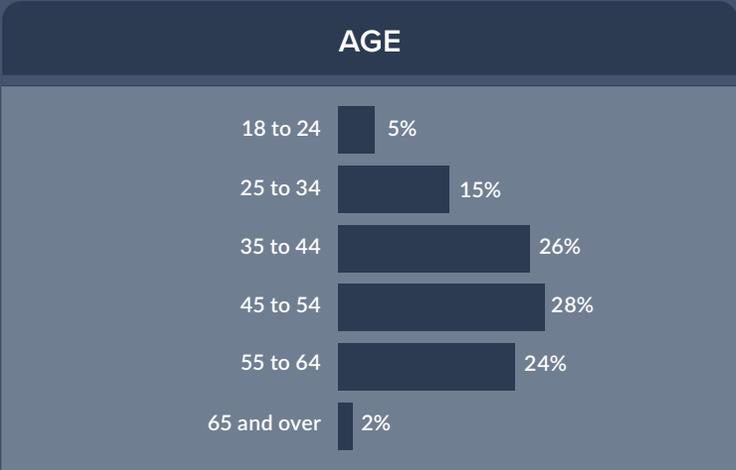
David works with the Veterans Administration and other public sector clients to help measure and manage citizen and employee experience.



**RODGER PARK**  
**Director of Customer Analytics**

Rodger manages accounts in the public/military sector as well as others in both consumer and business-to-business contexts.

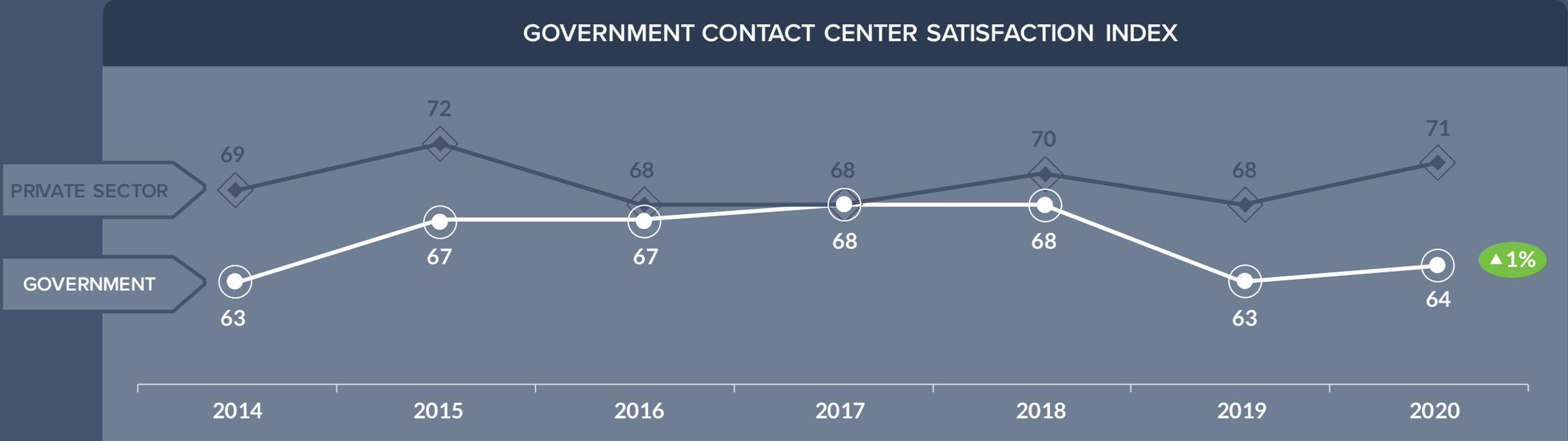
# SURVEY RESPONDENTS AT A GLANCE



# OVERALL SATISFACTION INCHES UP

The Government Contact Center Satisfaction Index (GCCSI) is now 64, as measured on a 0-100 scale, up slightly from 2019 and. These results are based on a panel of 700 respondents who had contacted federal agency customer service in the prior 30 days. Data was collected 2/1/20 – 2/24/20 just as the pandemic was beginning to upend the US economy, making corrective actions from the study insights all the more urgent and critical.

Private sector CCSI historically has run a few points higher than the public sector. The gap closed in 2016, but has now broadened again in 2019 and 2020. This report looks at factors that influence the satisfaction of customers contacting the customer service and provides executives with insights into where to invest in those improvement efforts.



\* See full CCSI Report at <https://cfigroup.com/resource-item/contact-center-satisfaction-2020/>

# SIX DRIVERS OF THE GOVERNMENT CONTACT CENTER EXPERIENCE

To improve customer satisfaction with the government contact center experience and resulting customer actions, contact center managers must prioritize operational improvements among the six elements of the government contact center experience.

SIX DRIVERS OF AN EFFECTIVE CONTACT CENTER EXPERIENCE			
SATISFACTION DRIVERS	KEY MEASURES		
 AGENT EFFECTIVENESS	Explaining the process	Helping you find the information you need	Helping you successfully complete your transaction
 AGENT EMPOWERMENT	Policies that make sense	Offering a solution tailored to you	Being empowered to address your issue
 IVR	Ease of accessing information	Degree to which information met needs	Order of the menu options
 AGENT DEMEANOR	Courteousness	Friendliness	Professionalism
 AGENT KNOWLEDGE	Ability to answer your questions in a timely manner	Ability to understand your situation	Ability to provide accurate information
 AGENT COMMUNICATION	Speaking/writing clearly	Explaining things in a way that is easy to understand	Using words that are easy to understand

# SATISFACTION DRIVERS ARE ALL UP FROM 2019

The scores for the six satisfaction drivers have all made gains in 2020. Government continues to lag behind the private sector across most of the six main satisfaction drivers.

PRIVATE SECTOR			SATISFACTION DRIVERS	GOVERNMENT		
2019	Δ	2020		2019	Δ	2020
72	3%	74	EFFECTIVENESS	71	3%	73
69	4%	72	EMPOWERMENT	64	3%	66
52	0%	52	IVR	49	8%	53
80	3%	82	DEMEANOR	75	3%	77
74	3%	76	KNOWLEDGE	70	4%	73
78	4%	81	COMMUNICATION	76	1%	77

# MODELING SHOWS HIGH-IMPACT ELEMENTS FOR CONTACT CENTER IMPROVEMENT

To prioritize improvement areas, agencies need to consider the impact improvements will have on the overall customer experience. Scores alone will not tell you where to invest in contact center improvements. Only by modeling the customer experience data can contact center agency leadership effectively prioritize initiatives that will impact desired customer actions.



Click to hear  
Dr. Claes Fornell explain  
customer data modeling



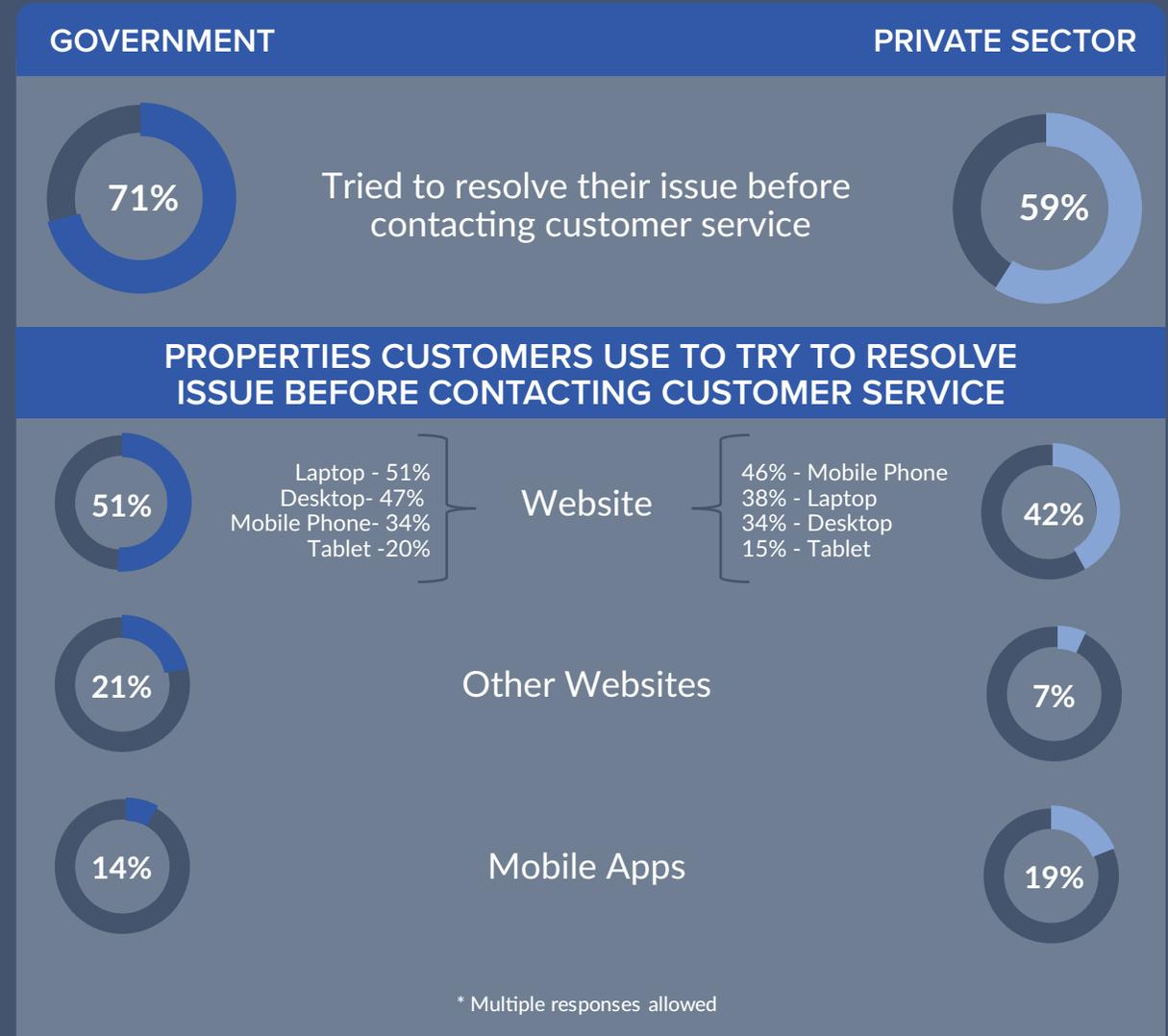
**1** PRE-CONTACT: The Digital Experience

# CUSTOMERS OFTEN VISIT AGENCY WEBSITE BEFORE CONTACTING SERVICE

Our study shows that for all customers who contact customer service, 71% have already tried to resolve the issue by visiting the company website. Trying to resolve an issue before contacting the agency for support is more common for federal government services than for the private sector.

If agencies provide customers with the tools needed to locate information or easily address their problem, customers would not have had to tie up customer service resources to resolve the issue.

One implication to keep in mind is that as more customers are able to resolve simple issues online, those who do contact customer service will increasingly tend to have more complex issues, making the average customer service contact more difficult to handle.



# IMPROVED WEBSITES COULD SPELL SIGNIFICANT SAVINGS

The [CFI Group Government Websites 2020](#) study projects that as citizens are able to get the information they need and accomplish their tasks online, fewer phone calls and office visits to agencies results in significant savings. Reducing the percentage of citizens unable to complete their tasks online could dramatically reduce cost by lessening the need for contact centers and office visits.

**10 BILLION**

number of visits to government websites annually<sup>1</sup>

**1.2 BILLION**

unable to accomplish their task<sup>2</sup>

**~3.5 BILLION SAVINGS**

31% or 372 Million website visitors call the agency after failing to accomplish task X \$9.30 per call<sup>3</sup>

**~2.1 BILLION**

18% or 216 Million website visitors visit a local office after failing to accomplish task X \$9.30 per visit<sup>4</sup>

1. Digital Analytics Program, which collects web traffic from around 400 executive branch government domains across about 5,700 websites, including every cabinet-level department

2. CFI Group 2020 Website Satisfaction Research

3. An estimate of the average cost of completing a call through federal contact centers

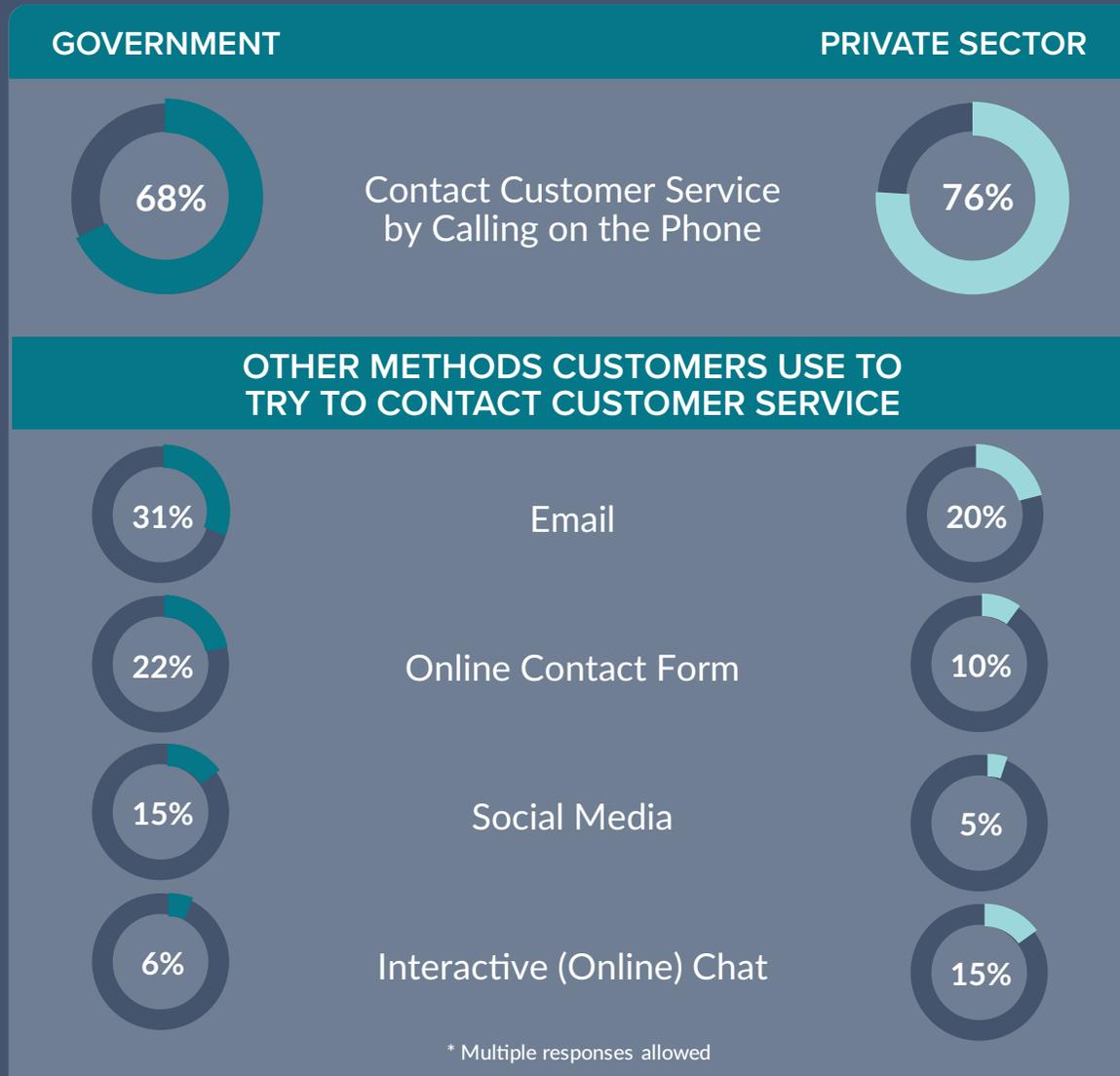
4. An estimate of the average cost of an office visit to a federal agency local office



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## CONTACT: The Agent Experience

# PHONE CALLS REMAIN THE PREFERRED CUSTOMER SERVICE CHANNEL



Despite the growth and ease of digital communications with agencies, phones continue to be the primary method used by citizens to contact customer service. Roughly two out of three (68%) citizens used a phone when contacting an agency’s customer service, particularly when self-service online is not possible. Most people try to solve their issue online before contacting customer service.

This does not mean that contact centers can neglect other channels. Many still use more traditional delayed channels such as email (31%) and online contact forms (22%). Others use faster methods such as social media (15%) and interactive online chat (6%), two channels that have been growing and will continue to grow in 2020 as contact centers increasingly make chat and social media common customer service engagement platforms.

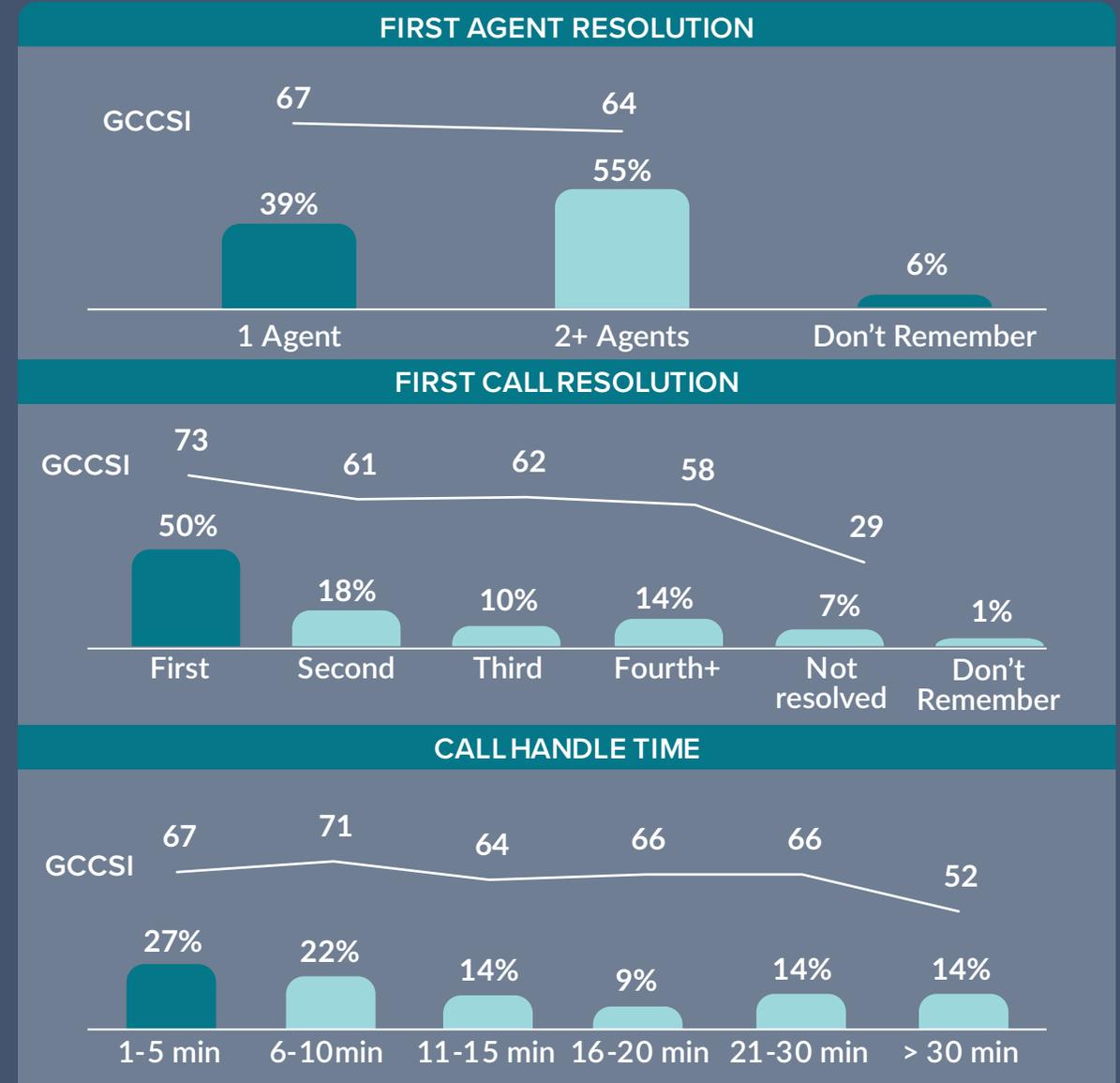
# PHONE CALL CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Contact centers create a great customer experience when agents are empowered to make decisions when trying to solve customer issues. Effective agents can deliver on three key metrics: first agent resolution, first call resolution, and low call handle times.

**FIRST AGENT RESOLUTION** – Only 39% of callers said the issue is resolved with the first agent, resulting in a GCCSI of 67. GCCSI dips slightly if two or more agents are needed to resolve the issue.

**FIRST CALL RESOLUTION** – Half of all callers said that the issue is resolved the first time, with an average GCCSI of 73. GCCSI declines as the issues required multiple contacts.

**CALL HANDLE TIME** – 27% of callers say the contact was handled in five minutes or less, and another 22% of all calls were handled within 6-10 minutes. GCCSI remains fairly steady at 66-71 as citizens recognize that agents must take time to resolve an issue for which many have already tried unsuccessfully to resolve on the website.





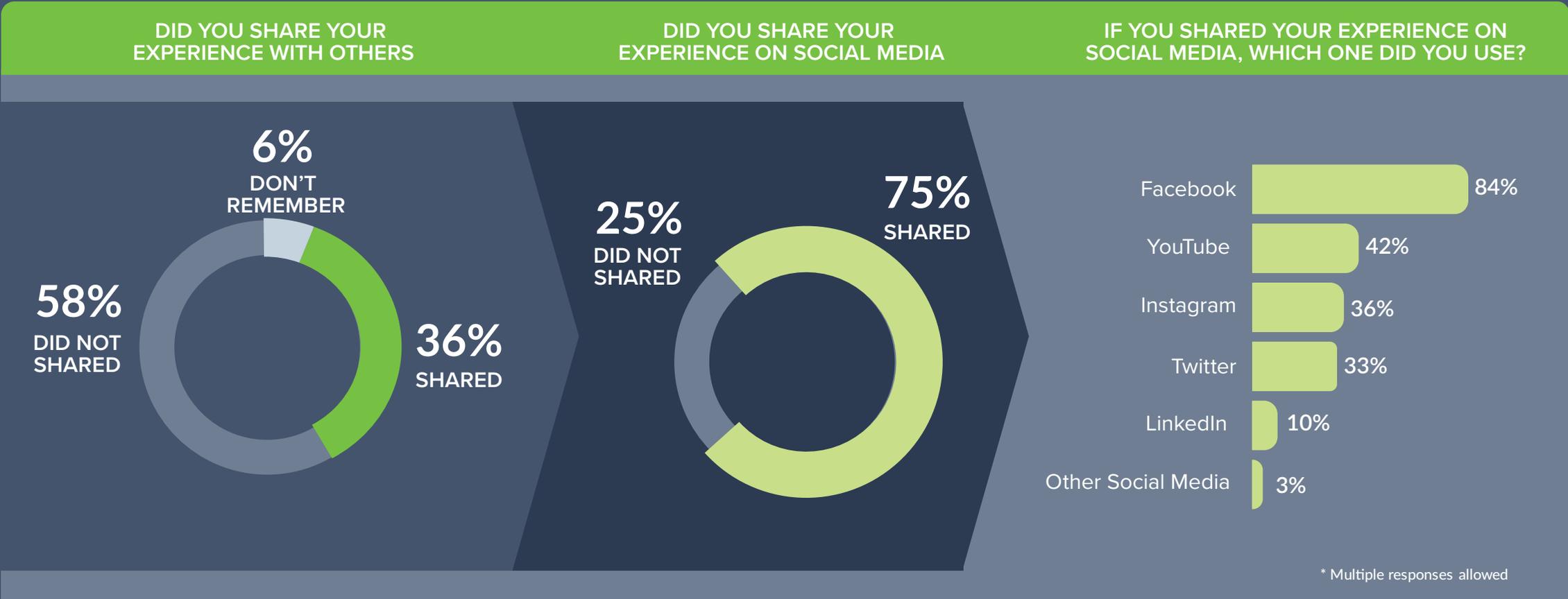
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POST-CONTACT: The Social Experience

# CONTACT CENTERS MUST CONTINUE TO MANAGE POST-CONTACT EXPERIENCE

A customer contact doesn't end when it's resolved. Customers frequently tell others about their experience, often using social media as a channel. One out of three (36%) shared with someone about their experience contacting a government contact center, and three out of four (75%) do so on one or more social media platforms.

Government contact center executives should actively monitor and engage popular social media platforms to ensure the contact experience is managed completely to conclusion. Facebook (84%), YouTube (42%), Instagram (36%), and Twitter (33%) are the most popular platform for contact centers to monitor and manage.



# ABOUT THE APPROACH

CFI Group conducts an annual study of customer satisfaction with contact centers using the proven methodology of the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI). All respondents to the survey have had recent contact with a federal agency service center. The purpose of this study is to provide managers with a better understanding of how to deliver a great customer service experience for customers.

This report analyzes the aggregate set of respondents across the mix of government agencies measured. Data was collected 2/1/20 - 2/24/20 just as the pandemic was beginning to upend the US economy, making corrective actions from the study insights all the more urgent and critical. Given the scope of services provided by government, CFI Group focuses the contact center study on those agencies with which a typical citizen would most likely have an interaction.

Contact centers measured in the GCCSI include:

- Internal Revenue Service (IRS)
- Social Security Administration (SSA)
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Service (CMS)
- Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
- Department of Education (DOE)
- Other Federal Agencies
- State or Local Government

Within this select group, the range of functions the contact center must perform is far-reaching. Centers must provide technical support, give policy information, handle complaints, and potentially play countless other roles.

This year's GCCSI study continues the exploration of how well government contact centers are delivering services to citizens and resolving their issues across the customer service journey. It examines trends and offers recommendations to improve satisfaction with the services provided by government contact centers.

## ABOUT US

Since 1988, CFI Group has delivered customer experience measurement and business insights from its Ann Arbor, Michigan headquarters and a network of global offices. As founding partner of the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), CFI Group is the only company within the United States licensed to apply customized ACSI methodology in the federal government. Using this patented technology and top research experts, CFI Group helps agencies improve the citizen experience with the federal government.

For more information contact:

phone: 800.930.0933

email: [AskUs@cfigroup.com](mailto:AskUs@cfigroup.com)