



# Creating better student, alumni, and faculty experiences in a competitive higher education market

## Introduction

Higher education institutions face stiff competition in today's market. Universities are searching for ways to grow enrollment, and students and alumni are demanding faster access to information and services on the channel of their choice. There is an interest to have always-on communication for the customer. At the same time, each higher education department has its own unique responsibilities and audience demands to meet. It's up to institutions to adapt to these emerging trends, and having the right customer experience solution for higher education makes all the difference.

## Why higher education uses contact centers

Student, alumni, and faculty success begins with exceptional customer service. In particular, this involves the day-to-day operations of answering questions and interfacing with students. While higher education has a need for contact center capabilities, it is not in the traditional sense. Inquiries and communications do not come through one central point of entry like they do in organizations with a contact center. Instead, administrative staff have responsibilities similar to a traditional call center agent — yet that is only part of their role. Whether it's answering questions or interfacing with students, contact center technology plays an integral part in delivering prompt responses; increasing productivity; and improving customer satisfaction, cost savings, and successful outcomes.

Contact center solutions can also come into play during high-volume periods, like the start of a new semester or admissions season. The ability to scale and adjust operations as needed is critical when handling seasonal call volume spikes.

Throughout the student journey — from their initial application to graduation and alumni relations — contact center capabilities play a key role. It becomes the digital and communication connection point with students. A high-performing contact center solution unifies all the communication channels, tools, and data onto a “single pane of glass” to provide streamlined workflows for rich customer connections. It can turn positive student experiences into a competitive advantage.



**“Talkdesk’s commitment to innovation and development philosophy stood out to us, making it clear that Talkdesk was the right partner to advance and future-proof our customer service operations. Our contact center operation is expanding quickly and we needed a platform that would grow with us...We are very excited for the future with Talkdesk as our customer service solutions provider.”**

— ANGELA ASKEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING, CENTRAL ARIZONA COLLEGE

## Future proof the contact center

**Talkdesk CX Cloud™** is a leading cloud contact center solution that automates and optimizes critical customer service processes for higher education. Artificial intelligence (AI) is leveraged to deliver a more efficient and more frictionless experience. Talkdesk enables 24/7 support via a digital-first self-service strategy using virtual agents, which are AI-powered bots that can be deployed over voice or digital channels. Students and alumni can get quick answers to frequently sought-after information, while automation can be used to route more complicated inquiries to a staff member who is best equipped to respond. And with a human-in-the-loop AI trainer,

non-technical staff can easily modify the customer service workflow without having AI expertise or IT skills.

To stay ahead in today's educational environment, institutions should ensure they have a contact center platform that stays ahead of the most current customer experience trends. Talkdesk puts powerful features, solutions, and integrations into the hands of administrative staff, helping them provide better service every day and during peak surges. With Talkdesk, students, alumni, and faculty enjoy faster, more convenient experiences powered by the latest contact center technology.

## Great student and staff experiences start with Talkdesk

There are many different departments within a college and university campus, and each one has distinctly different needs for how best to deliver student and faculty services. This is why Talkdesk features a flexible, cloud-native contact center platform to address them all.

### Flexible communication to meet students and faculty wherever they are

No matter the audience you're trying to reach, Talkdesk Omnichannel Engagement allows you to communicate with students, alumni, and staff on their preferred channel — whether voice or digital — with an integrated suite of easy-to-use capabilities that leverage AI to suggest a course of action.

Talkdesk offers the flexibility education departments need to manage their communications effectively:

- **Administration and student services** to handle things like registration, admissions, financial aid, and continuing education.
- **Fundraising** to meet departmental development goals and communicate with alumni and donors.
- **Student health services** to quickly answer questions and schedule appointments.
- **Help desk** to resolve IT requests and the end-to-end delivery of services.
- And more, including the **athletics department, alumni engagement, the book store, and student housing.**



**"As an online campus, our distributed workforce needed a better way to communicate with prospective and current students. We chose Talkdesk because their platform was easy to implement, customize, and integrate with our other technologies. After partnering with Talkdesk, we reduced costs and improved agent productivity by approximately 75%, and we saw roughly an 85% jump in customer satisfaction. They make it quick and easy for us to deliver great customer experiences."**

— **ANDREW DIESTER**, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS, ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

# Smart AI made simple

AI introduces untapped opportunities to improve the student and faculty experience. With the help of AI, colleges and universities can not only respond seamlessly across communication channels with personalized, intelligent service but can predict and prepare for future needs and wants. These insights enable universities to genuinely listen to students and staff and make them feel more connected.

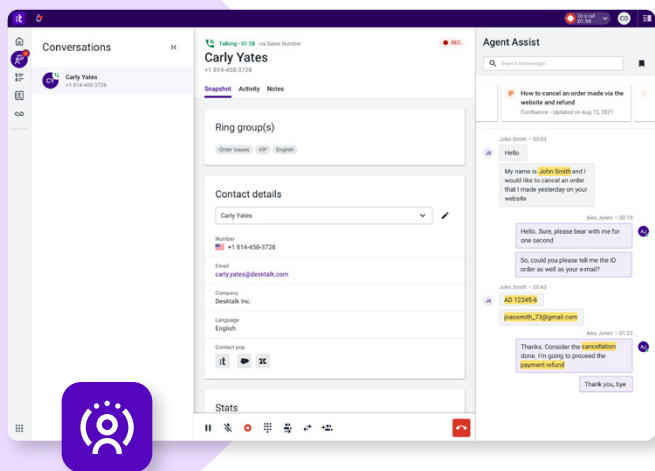
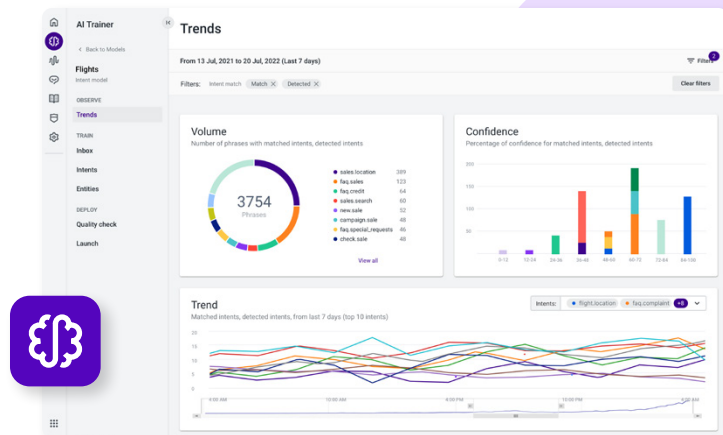
It is this connection that helps drive desired outcomes and build personalized, productive student, alumni, and faculty relationships.

## AI Trainer™

To enable administrative staff and supervisors to easily update and modify AI training data without needing expensive data scientists.

Future-proof your contact center platform with cloud-native software that continually evolves and improves alongside the requirements of your institution — avoiding costly upgrades or a full system replacement.

Talkdesk makes impactful student experiences easy with tools like:

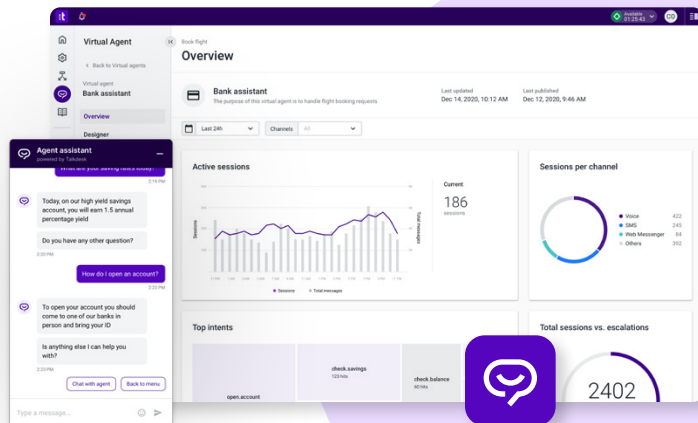


## Agent Assist™

To proactively listen, learn, and suggest next best steps in real time and deliver automated assistance, reducing hands-on supervisor assistance during student, faculty, or alumni interactions.

## Virtual Agent™

To respond to every customer query at any time of the day using conversational AI technology on voice and digital chat channels.



# Innovative technology to attract top students and staff

Whether you're trying to attract a new graduating class of students or secure talented staff who prefer remote flexibility, your customer service solutions should grow with you. Contact centers solutions can act as a strategic, business-driving asset for the entire university — delivering on-brand communication and strengthening student, alumni, and faculty relationships and loyalty.

Talkdesk On The Go™ solutions and the Talkdesk Conversations Mobile App™ give administrative staff greater flexibility to facilitate conversations or collaborate with peers while away from their desks. This kind of technology empowers staff with workforce engagement solutions that elevate employee engagement, effectiveness, and overall satisfaction — ultimately ensuring you're keeping pace with other colleges and universities.

## Talkdesk supports higher education software integrations

Talkdesk also simplifies third-party software integrations and open API access with features like:

- Out-of-the-box integrations with more than 60 CRM and other higher education applications, including Salesforce and ServiceNow.
- Talkdesk Connections™ enables custom integrations with higher education systems such as Ellucian Banner and Slate, through open API, by using standard web protocols.
- A trusted platform with over 30 different security certifications.
- Talkdesk Guardian™, an AI-driven cloud compliance solution to mitigate the risk of a distributed workforce, negligence, and system performance issues.

# Customize your contact center with Talkdesk

Your contact center should be built to meet the needs of your specific audience. Talkdesk empowers you to customize every aspect of the contact center interface with custom-, low-, and no-code tools; AI; and machine learning (ML) for maximum flexibility and agility.

## Capabilities



### Omnichannel engagement

Use Talkdesk Workspace with voice, SMS, email, chat, social media, and more, so you can connect with students, alumni, and faculty on the channel of their choice.



### Self-service experience

Talkdesk Virtual Agents (voice and digital chat bots) handle frequently asked questions, freeing up staff to address more complex scenarios or engage with alumni who prefer to speak with a live person.



### Agent assistance

Proactively provide workers with AI-based next best actions to address each student's stated needs.



### Flexible deployment and scalability

Store your data, your way. Choose from public, private, and hybrid cloud options that put you in control. Talkdesk is a cloud-native solution with the scalability to ensure you can adjust as needed to handle seasonal call volume spikes such as new semester enrollment.



### Customer experience analytics

Create custom reports and dashboards. AI-powered insights surface trends and help supervisors identify and act on coaching opportunities for student workers or transient and new staff.



### Contextual routing

Collect data from the user journey — such as web or mobile activity, or query — to connect students, alumni, and staff with the department best equipped to help.



### Enhanced security and stability

Use AI and ML to detect fraud attempts, data leakages, privacy-related breaches, and identity thefts to safeguard your students' and alumni's data.

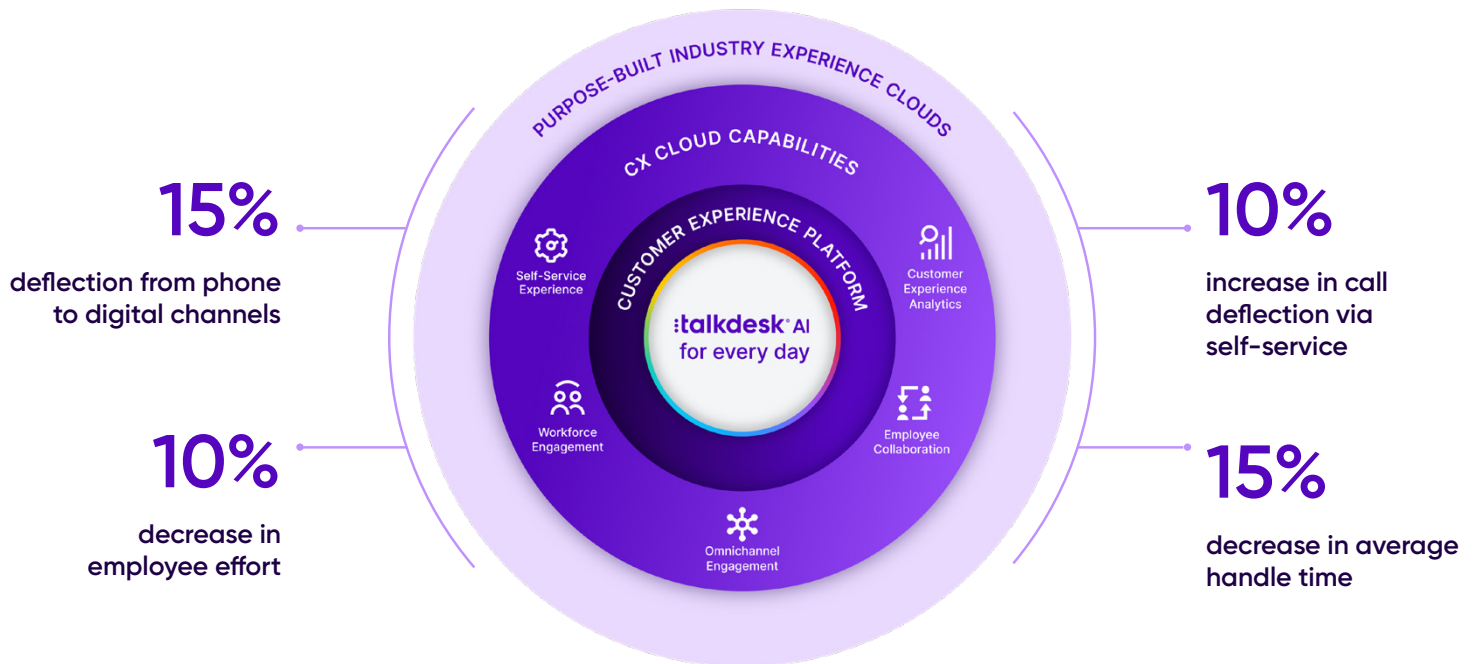


### Proactive outbound engagement

Automate the dialing process to maximize outbound calling volume. Quickly provide students and administrators with important information during periods of high traffic. You can also engage with students proactively using event-triggered SMS notifications.

# Talkdesk is an industry-recognized solution for creating outstanding student experiences

Our customers see real results across key performance metrics like increased staff productivity, reduced handle time, and decreased costs. These stats represent average improvements achieved:



## That's why Talkdesk was named...

- Gartner® Magic Quadrant™ Leader for CCaaS two years in a row
- 2021 Aragon Research Globe Leader for Intelligent Contact Centers
- 2020 Forrester Wave™ Leader for CCaaS

To learn more about how Talkdesk can help you create a contact center customized to meet your higher education needs, visit [talkdesk.com/GovEdu](https://talkdesk.com/GovEdu).

### About Talkdesk

Talkdesk® is a global cloud contact center leader for customer-obsessed companies. Our automation-first customer experience solutions optimize our customers' most critical customer service processes. Our speed of innovation, vertical expertise, and global footprint reflect our commitment to ensuring that businesses can deliver better experiences across any industry and through any channel, resulting in higher customer satisfaction and accelerated business outcomes.

**:talkdesk®**  
Experience. A better way.

Government & Education