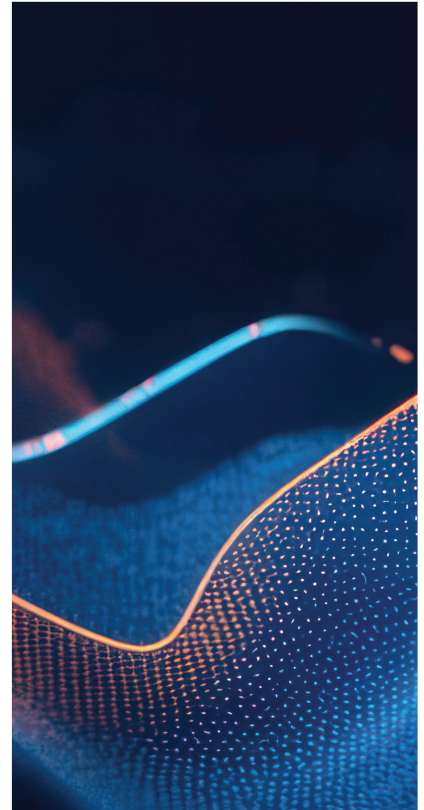


FROST & SULLIVAN
BEST PRACTICES



2026

NORTH AMERICAN

CLOUD CONTACT CENTER

**CUSTOMER VALUE
LEADERSHIP**

 Sharpen

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Best Practices Criteria for World-class Performance

Frost & Sullivan applies a rigorous analytical process to evaluate multiple nominees for each recognition category before determining the final recognition recipient. The process involves a detailed evaluation of best practices criteria across two dimensions for each nominated company. SharpenCX excels in many of the criteria in the cloud contact center space.

RECOGNITION CRITERIA	
<i>Business Impact</i>	<i>Customer Impact</i>
Financial Performance	Price/Performance Value
Customer Acquisition	Customer Purchase Experience
Operational Efficiency	Customer Ownership Experience
Growth Potential	Customer Service Experience
Human Capital	Brand Equity

The Transformation of the North American Cloud Contact Center Industry

The North American cloud contact center market continues to grow despite the unpredictable macroeconomic environment. The United States' (US) fluctuating tariff policies and tense US-Canada trade dynamics introduce planning difficulties that slow enterprise procurement cycles. Cloud-contact-center-as-a-service (CCaaS) platform providers face tighter decision windows and must create more adaptive contingency strategies that respond quickly to policy swings. Despite these pressures, organizations across the region continue to invest in customer experience (CX) modernization because they view CX as a core driver of competitiveness rather than an optional expense.

Enterprises increasingly adopt hybrid deployment models to balance modernization with operational constraints. They combine public cloud, private cloud, and on-premises infrastructure to maintain data control, preserve legacy investments, and support compliance requirements. This shift creates opportunities for providers that deliver strong integration capabilities and flexible deployment support. In Canada, government and quasi-public sectors increase demand for domestically hosted CX platforms as data sovereignty, national infrastructure growth, and geopolitical sensitivity shape technology choices.

Organizations modernizing their operations face challenges that traditional systems cannot resolve. These companies must preserve context across voice, digital, social, and emerging channels while sustaining high service quality and agent productivity. To meet these demands, many enterprises adopt unified, artificial intelligence (AI)-enabled platforms that automate routine interactions, personalize engagement

at-scale, and orchestrate customer journeys more effectively. They also rely on real-time analytics and advanced workforce optimization tools to fine-tune operations and support consistent omnichannel experiences.

Market momentum remains strong as digital transformation accelerates, and AI adoption expands. Frost & Sullivan research finds the North American cloud contact center industry will reach \$12.75 billion by 2029, with a 12.7% compound annual growth rate, from 2024 to 2029.¹ This revenue will make up about 66.7% of the \$19.12 billion forecasted revenue for the global market.² Vendors looking to capitalize on this growth must address the challenges to differentiate in the market.

A High-Stability Business Model with Accelerated Future Potential

Founded in 2011 and headquartered in Murray, Utah, SharpenCX (Sharpen) is a cloud-native, AI-driven contact center platform designed to improve CX by empowering agents with unified omnichannel tools and streamlined workflows. Sharpen demonstrates a disciplined financial foundation driven by a unified cloud-native architecture that reduces overhead, stabilizes cost structures, and supports predictable subscription economics. The company's 95% retention rate further strengthens revenue reliability and margin consistency, giving it a solid financial base from which to scale.³ Rather than relying on aggressive bundling or long-term contracts, Sharpen focuses on sustainable growth built on operational discipline and measured expansion.

"Sharpen operates from a unified, cloud-native architecture that reduces technical friction and supports efficient internal execution. By maintaining a single coherent system rather than a patchwork of acquired solutions, the company accelerates development cycles, reduces rework, and focuses resources on innovation rather than maintaining legacy complexity."

**- Sebastian Menutti,
Industry Director, ICT**

This financial strength enables Sharpen to pursue strategic, future-oriented growth opportunities. A modular adoption framework allows customers to deploy high-impact AI or outbound capabilities without undergoing full platform migrations, opening access to organizations previously limited by legacy contracts or transformation fatigue. This approach increases the company's total addressable market and allows it to enter competitive environments with lower friction and higher conversion potential.

Sharpen's partner ecosystem accelerates this growth trajectory. Through investments such as the nationwide

CX Masters Class program, the company activated a wide network of advisors capable of positioning it effectively within mid-market and regulated verticals. These partners extend reach, improve pipeline quality, and enable Sharpen to scale efficiently without expanding internal acquisition cost structures.

Vertical strength further reinforces Sharpen's long-term growth potential. In industries such as healthcare, financial services, and insurance, organizations value reliability, workflow adaptability, and compliance alignment, areas where the company's architecture and execution model offer specific

¹ Global Contact Center Solutions Market, Forecast to 2029 (Frost & Sullivan, August 2025)

² Ibid

³ Frost & Sullivan's Discussion with SharpenCX

competitive advantages. Together, Sharpen's financial resilience and strategic expansion pathways form a cohesive trajectory of sustainable, market-relevant growth.

Frictionless Customer Journeys Built on Clarity, Choice, and Confidence

Sharpen approaches customer acquisition with clarity and an outcome-focused engagement model, reducing the noise and complexity that often characterizes cloud contact center evaluations. Early discovery centers on the specific improvements customers seek (e.g., agent performance gains, outbound modernization, or AI augmentation), allowing prospects to quickly understand the operational relevance of the company's capabilities. This consultative, targeted approach strengthens buyer certainty and accelerates initial engagement.

The company's modular adoption model strengthens the acquisition experience by allowing organizations to deploy standalone AI or outbound components without committing to full platform migrations. This reduces risk, broadens entry points into competitive accounts, and helps organizations modernize incrementally based on readiness and available resources. Lowering the threshold for early adoption is one of Sharpen's most effective pipeline expansion tools.

Sharpen maintains this clarity into the purchase phase through transparent subscription structures that avoid opaque bundling or multi-year lock-ins. Customers receive straightforward explanations of costs, deployment timelines, and anticipated impact, enabling them to move from evaluation to contracting with confidence. This simplicity contrasts with the complexity common among legacy providers and reinforces trust at the moment of signature.

Continuity between pre-sale and post-sale teams strengthens the transition from acquisition to onboarding, upholding commitments made during evaluation in delivery. This alignment reassures customers that expectations will translate directly into implementation outcomes, creating a purchasing experience defined by transparency, predictability, and early value realization.

Where Internal Excellence Meets High-Velocity Customer Support

Sharpen operates from a unified, cloud-native architecture that reduces technical friction and supports efficient internal execution. By maintaining a single coherent system rather than a patchwork of acquired solutions, the company accelerates development cycles, reduces rework, and focuses resources on innovation rather than maintaining legacy complexity. This architectural clarity forms the backbone of Sharpen's operational efficiency.

The organization's lean structure further enhances execution speed. Teams collaborate fluidly across functions, supported by shared visibility into customer environments, upcoming releases, and active issues. This integrated operating rhythm shortens decision pathways and ensures that internal alignment translates into consistent and dependable delivery outcomes for customers. Operational clarity becomes directly observable in the quality of Sharpen's customer-facing performance.

Sharpen's customer service experience reflects the strength of this internal foundation. The company offers direct access to knowledgeable personnel rather than routing customers through offshore queues or tiered silos. Support teams (e.g., Customer Success Managers, Technical Account Managers, and

product specialists) enter engagements already familiar with customer context, reducing diagnostic time and improving resolution speed.

Leadership involvement reinforces this high-accessibility model. Senior executives engage directly in escalations that require cross-functional coordination, signaling accountability and accelerating resolution. Combined with the company's agile delivery model, Sharpen offers a service experience that is responsive, informed, and grounded in operational discipline.

A Commitment to Customer Success Beyond Implementation

“Vertical strength further reinforces Sharpen’s long-term growth potential. In industries such as healthcare, financial services, and insurance, organizations value reliability, workflow adaptability, and compliance alignment, areas where the company’s architecture and execution model offer specific competitive advantages.”

**- Samantha Fisher,
Best Practices Research Analyst**

Sharpen delivers a lifecycle model built on continuity and long-term alignment, ensuring customers experience stable, accountable guidance from contract signature through ongoing optimization. Unlike providers whose lifecycle stages operate in silos, the company maintains ownership across the entire customer journey, preserving context and ensuring commitments made during evaluation are upheld during delivery.

The company's post-sales roles designed for long-term strategic guidance reinforce this continuity. Customer success managers and technical account managers

operate as proactive advisors, focusing on optimization, roadmap alignment, and the incremental evolution of customer environments. Their involvement ensures deployments mature in sync with business needs rather than stagnating after initial implementation.

Sharpen's unified architecture enables low-friction adjustments and rapid configuration updates, supporting an ownership model defined by adaptability. Customers can evolve workflows and integrate new capabilities without encountering the constraints, downtime, or complexity typical of stitched-together platforms. This agility supports long-term operational resilience and reduces operational risk.

Sharpen extends its ownership excellence through its partner ecosystem. The CX Masters Class program ensures partners remain informed, skilled, and aligned with Sharpen's capabilities, enabling them to act as consistent advisors throughout the customer relationship. This shared knowledge ecosystem reinforces stability and deepens long-term customer confidence.

A People-Powered Culture Driving Execution, Agility, and Innovation

Sharpen built its human capital strategy on empowerment, accessibility, and ownership. These cultural pillars directly strengthen the company's performance. Employees operate within a lean organizational structure that minimizes barriers to communication and accelerates decision-making. This agility enables teams to respond quickly and cohesively to internal challenges and customer needs.

Leadership accessibility distinguishes Sharpen's culture from that of many CCaaS competitors. Senior executives, including the chief executive officer, remain engaged across operational contexts, offering guidance and maintaining strategic visibility. This involvement strengthens organizational alignment and signals a culture where contributions matter and people share context openly.

Sharpen's commitment to employee enablement further reinforces its talent model. Leadership backgrounds in professional development translate into structured learning, cross-functional exposure, and role versatility. Employees gain hands-on experience across product, support, and customer-facing roles, enhancing skill depth and building stronger organizational resilience.

Importantly, Sharpen cultivates a work environment where employees see the direct impact of their efforts. Whether improving AI-assisted workflows or resolving complex customer issues, individuals observe how their contributions translate into meaningful outcomes. This clarity strengthens motivation, improves retention, and amplifies the talent-driven advantage that underpins the company's broader differentiation.

Modern Cost-to-Value Model Delivering Proven Operational Gains

Sharpen delivers a strong price/performance profile rooted in architectural efficiency and transparent economics. Its unified, cloud-native system avoids the maintenance and integration costs common among legacy providers, enabling the company to translate structural simplicity into measurable total cost-of-ownership savings for customers.

The company's modular adoption framework reinforces this value by enabling organizations to deploy targeted AI or outbound capabilities without committing to full-scale migrations. Customers invest only in the components that address immediate needs, ensuring alignment between spending and operational improvement while minimizing upfront financial exposure.

Sharpen's ability to deliver quantifiable performance gains strengthens its return-on-investment narrative. AI-driven workflows reduce escalations, improve agent accuracy, and lower attrition, as shown in customer environments where turnover dropped from above 40% to around 17%.⁴ These improvements translate directly into financial benefits through reduced training costs, faster onboarding, and improved service metrics.

Transparent, straightforward pricing models further enhance customer trust. Sharpen avoids opaque bundling or forced long-term commitments, opting instead for clear subscription structures that allow organizations to map expenditures to realize value. This clarity reinforces confidence and ensures customers maintain a strong understanding of cost-to-impact ratios.

Credible, Customer-Centered Branding Anchored in Proven Value

Sharpen grounds its brand in trust, consistency, and customer-centered performance. Rather than relying on marketing scale or legacy recognition, the company's reputation grows from its ability to deliver reliable outcomes and transparent engagement across the lifecycle. Customers view Sharpen as a modern, accountable partner capable of practical, high-impact operational needs.

Sharpen's high retention rate serves as one of the strongest signals of its brand equity. Customers stay because they trust the company's ability to deliver long-term value, not because they are contractually obligated. This loyalty reflects a brand reputation rooted in reliability and partnership rather than promotional positioning.

⁴ Frost & Sullivan Discussion with SharpenCX

Leadership accessibility further strengthens Sharpen's brand identity. Senior executives engage directly during strategic escalations or complex engagements, reinforcing a perception of accountability and responsiveness. Customers consistently recognize this involvement as a defining and rare attribute within the CCaaS sector.

Moreover, Sharpen's partner ecosystem amplifies its brand presence. Through rigorous enablement programs such as the CX Masters Class, partners become effective advocates capable of articulating Sharpen's value with clarity. Combined with the company's practical, impact-focused innovation posture, these elements create a brand and market position defined by credibility, transparency, and sustained operational relevance.

Conclusion

SharpenCX (Sharpen) demonstrates a level of discipline, clarity, and customer-centered execution that sets it apart in the North American cloud contact center market. The unified architecture, modular adoption strategy, and transparent economics form a modern, resilient foundation that delivers measurable performance gains without imposing unnecessary complexity or cost. A deeply aligned organizational model amplifies this structural advantage. Empowered teams, accessible leadership, and an integrated operating rhythm translate directly into exceptional service quality and long-term customer trust. Rather than competing on volume or broad claims, the company differentiates on relevance, reliability, and verifiable customer outcomes.

Across every dimension evaluated (e.g., financial strength, growth trajectory, customer acquisition, lifecycle ownership, service excellence, human capital, value realization, and brand reputation), Sharpen reinforces a consistent identity: a company that earns confidence through performance rather than promotion. The ability to combine architectural simplicity with operational rigor and high-touch customer engagement positions the company as a provider capable of leading customers through modernization on their own terms. Strong retention, expanding vertical traction, a rapidly maturing partner ecosystem, and a reputation for unwavering accountability demonstrate Sharpen's robust innovation matched with practical, high-impact delivery, fully aligning with the principles of Customer Value Leadership.

With its strong overall performance, SharpenCX earns Frost & Sullivan's 2026 North American Customer Value Leadership Recognition in the cloud contact center industry.

What You Need to Know about the Customer Value Leadership Recognition

Frost & Sullivan's Customer Value Leadership Recognition identifies the company that offers products or services customers find superior for the overall price, performance, and quality.

Best Practices Recognition Analysis

For the Customer Value Leadership Recognition, Frost & Sullivan analysts independently evaluated the criteria listed below.

Business Impact

Financial Performance: Strong overall business performance is achieved in terms of revenue, revenue growth, operating margin, and other key financial metrics

Customer Acquisition: Customer-facing processes support efficient and consistent new customer acquisition while enhancing customer retention

Operational Efficiency: Company staff performs assigned tasks productively, quickly, and to a high-quality standard

Growth Potential: Growth is fostered by a strong customer focus that strengthens the brand and reinforces customer loyalty

Human Capital: Leveraging innovative technology characterizes the company culture, which enhances employee morale and retention

Customer Impact

Price/Performance Value: Products or services offer the best ROI and superior value compared to similar market offerings

Customer Purchase Experience: Purchase experience with minimal friction and high transparency assures customers that they are buying the optimal solution to address both their needs and constraints

Customer Ownership Excellence: Products and solutions evolve continuously in sync with the customers' own growth journeys, engendering pride of ownership and enhanced customer experience

Customer Service Experience: Customer service is readily accessible and stress-free, and delivered with high quality, high availability, and fast response time

Brand Equity: Customers perceive the brand positively and exhibit high brand loyalty, which is regularly measured and confirmed through a high Net Promoter Score®

Best Practices Recognition Analytics Methodology

Inspire the World to Support True Leaders

This long-term process spans 12 months, beginning with the prioritization of the sector. It involves a rigorous approach that includes comprehensive scanning and analytics to identify key best practice trends. A dedicated team of analysts, advisors, coaches, and experts collaborates closely, ensuring thorough review and input. The goal is to maximize the company’s long-term value by leveraging unique perspectives to support each Best Practice Recognition and identify meaningful transformation and impact.

STEP		VALUE IMPACT	
		WHAT	WHY
1	Opportunity Universe	Identify Sectors with the Greatest Impact on the Global Economy	Value to Economic Development
2	Transformational Model	Analyze Strategic Imperatives That Drive Transformation	Understand and Create a Winning Strategy
3	Ecosystem	Map Critical Value Chains	Comprehensive Community that Shapes the Sector
4	Growth Generator	Data Foundation That Provides Decision Support System	Spark Opportunities and Accelerate Decision-making
5	Growth Opportunities	Identify Opportunities Generated by Companies	Drive the Transformation of the Industry
6	Frost Radar	Benchmark Companies on Future Growth Potential	Identify Most Powerful Companies to Action
7	Best Practices	Identify Companies Achieving Best Practices in All Critical Perspectives	Inspire the World
8	Companies to Action	Tell Your Story to the World (BICEP*)	Ecosystem Community Supporting Future Success

*Board of Directors, Investors, Customers, Employees, Partners

