



Now We're Talking

Multilingual Hubs Deliver
World-Class Customer Experience

ATENTO

WHITE PAPER



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00 Introduction: The World Is Your Oyster. Don't Clam Up

With its 748 million potential customers, access to an educated workforce, and some of the globe's strongest economies, Europe is the pearl in the world's oyster.

Increasingly, brands are expanding their reach throughout Europe. **Recent research found that 47% of global companies are considering a European expansion in 2022.**¹ The expansions are lucrative, too. On average, the European market represents 30% of global revenue for American brands having already expanded there.² Adding significantly to the interest from American companies are European brands who are looking to expand their footprint on the continent.

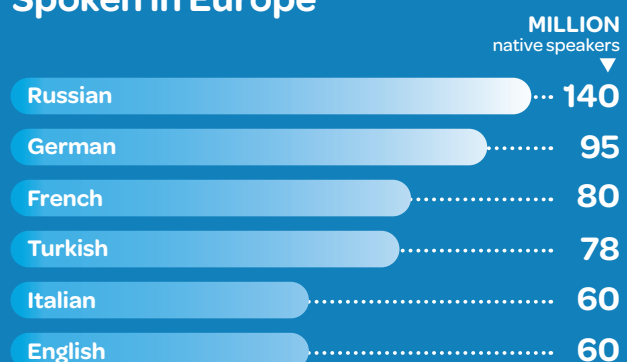
But expansion here is not without its challenges — and **the language barrier is among the most significant of those challenges.** The European Union has 24 official languages. And while English is one of those 24, only 13% of EU citizens speak English as their native language.³ Brands whose reputation depends on delivering exceptional customer experiences at every touchpoint can't risk being silenced — speaking their customers' languages is crucial.

Customers expect service in their native language.⁴ However, the vast majority of contact centers have customers that speak languages different from the brand's primary language — and only 19% of them can provide voice support for those various languages.⁵

How can brands provide world-class, localized customer experience to their customers throughout Europe? **The first step is providing service and support in their customers' native tongues.** Multilingual Customer Contact Hubs that speak each customer's language enables companies to build loyalty and brand engagement. Here we consider why providing a multilingual customer experience is a brand essential, the challenges companies have in providing this service, and the ways an experienced, global Business Process Outsourcer (BPO) can overcome those challenges and power a brand's European expansion.

+ Only **13%** of EU citizens speak English as their native language

+ Most Common Languages Spoken in Europe



01 Localize It – The Multilingual Imperative

Global brands striving to reach consumers in new markets need to offer localized experiences that make every customer feel at home. As people, goods, services, and money cross borders, brands that can keep the communication flowing will come out on top.

Research suggests that **75% of customers are more likely to purchase the same brand again if customer care is in their language.**⁶ Most say they will pay a higher price for a product or service if a brand offers a customer experience in their native language.¹⁴ And, 71.5% of customer service leaders assert that support in a customer's native language increases satisfaction.⁴ (We think the remaining 28.5% must have misunderstood the question.)

Ecommerce represents a perfect example of the blurring of borders. A record 55% of online shoppers made a cross-border purchase last year.¹ In fact, cross-border eCommerce sales jumped 21% in 2020⁷ and another 17% in 2021.⁸ In 2020, cross-border eCommerce sales accounted for 26% of all such sales in Europe.⁹

And it's not just shoppers that are going global. [Travelers](#) are reengaging with the world outside their home borders too. A poll by Expedia found that more than two-thirds of Americans are planning to go big with their next trip, eyeing international destinations like Rome, Bali, London, and Paris.¹⁰ Europeans are taking to the air too — EU commercial flights were up 156% in March 2022 over 2021.¹¹ Banks and financial institutions are embracing globalization as well — many are building cross-border platforms to attract and serve an increasingly international audience.¹²

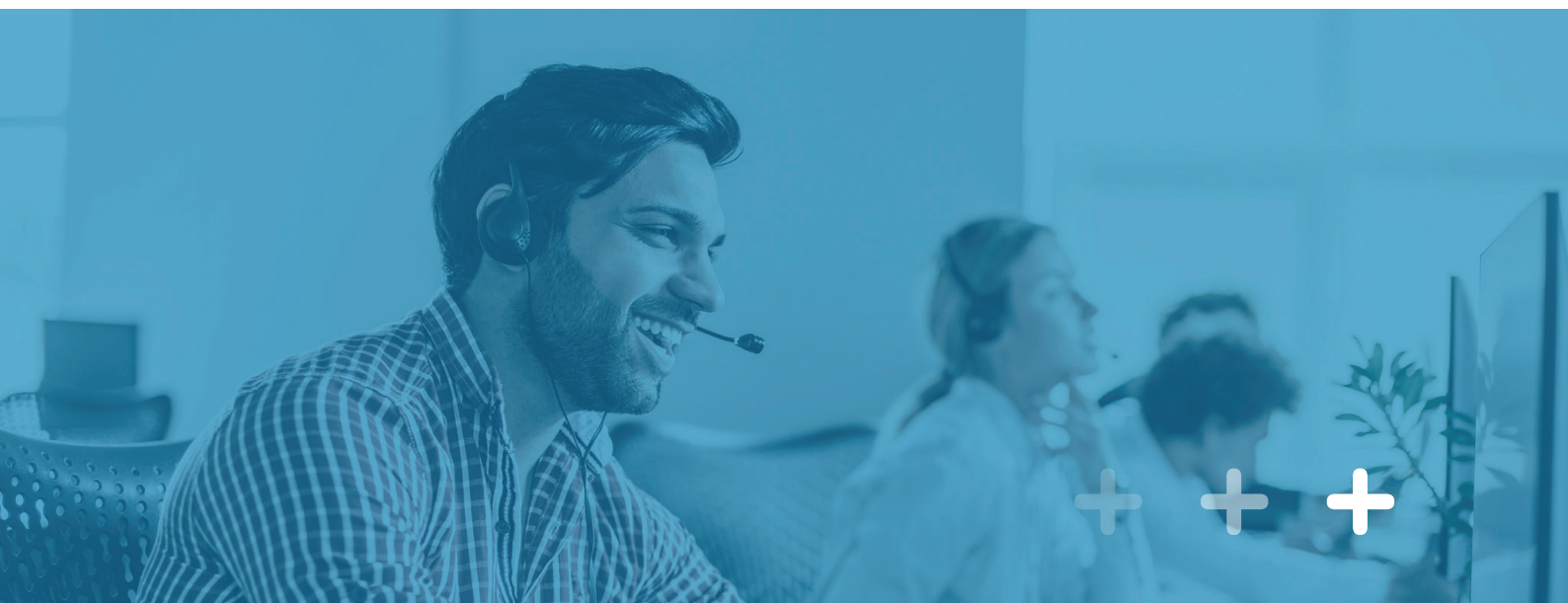
+ 75% are more likely to purchase again from brands that offer customer care in their native language

+ Two-thirds of customers say they would switch brands to one that offers support in their native tongue



As brands expand their presence to additional EU countries and Europeans shop, travel, and bank with little regard for borders, it becomes a competitive advantage — an imperative even — for companies to provide their customers with service and support in customers' native languages. And don't be fooled into thinking translation services are the solution — translation does not equal communication. It's vital to retain contact center personnel who fluently speak each customer's language.

Failing to provide multilingual support can be costly for brands. Nearly one-third of businesses have lost customers by not offering support in their customers' native language.⁶ Consumers value multilingual customer experiences and native-language support enough to switch to brands that offer them — over two-thirds of customers say they would switch brands to one that provides support in their native tongue.¹³



02 The Challenges Involved in Getting it Right

We've established that speaking to customers in the language they are most comfortable in is good for business. But that doesn't mean it's easy accomplish. **Brands face multiple challenges** when supporting a global, multilingual customer base.

+ Lost in Translation

Providing a multilingual experience involves more than simple translation. It requires cultural understanding, familiarity with colloquialisms, nuances of tone, cultural etiquette, and even a bit of humor. Considering that voice is used by virtually all brands as the primary support channel, it's vital to retain contact center personnel who speak each customer's language. Native speakers can communicate confidently and empathetically with customers, reinforcing a brand's identity and more quickly resolving calls. And these employees are increasingly harder to hire and retain.

+ Contact Center Employees Are Hard to Find – and Keep

Eighty-five percent of support managers say **they struggle to find reps who speak more than one language**.¹⁴ Yet hiring them is only half the problem. While companies in some countries, including Germany and Italy, are maintaining a stable churn rate among employees, France and other European nations are seeing higher attrition rates for call center employees.¹⁵

+ **85%** of support managers struggle to find reps who speak more than one language

+ **54%** percent of Europeans speak more than one language

Of course, challenges finding and retaining employees isn't limited to contact centers. A study from Microsoft found that 41% of the global workforce is considering leaving their job in the next year, and the UK saw an all-time high of one million job vacancies last summer.¹⁶ Across Western Europe, 20% of millennials quit their jobs during 2021. In short, the employment climate throughout Europe is uncertain and varied, and it is increasingly difficult to attract and retain qualified contact center employees.

+ Increasing Costs

Operating a call center is costly. Operating multiple call centers in multiple countries is more costly. Yet, brands seeking to effectively serve customers across Europe must find a way to provide support in the local languages its customers speak — which for some means staffing several European-based facilities. For most brands, this quickly becomes **inefficient and cost prohibitive**, meaning they resort to providing local language support to a smaller slice of their customer base.

+ Regulatory Diversity

While EU employment law protects the rights of workers across the member nations, the **laws often operate differently in each country**. For brands attempting to manage multiple contact centers, this regulatory diversity compounds the operational overhead and puts brands at risk of non-compliance.



+ Security and Compliance

Protecting company and customer data and ensuring the data is stored and used in a compliant manner are top concerns for every company. A patchwork of multiple touchpoints, locations, languages, applications, and vendors complicates a brand's ability to ensure security and compliance.

+ There is some good news in all this

While there are certainly challenges, Europe provides an ideal location from which brands can base customer contact centers. **The European workforce is well-educated, skilled, and overwhelming multilingual.** Fifty-four percent of Europeans speak more than one language.¹⁷ Combined with the ease of cross-border travel employment, European hubs can draw multilingual talent from a large area. Nowhere else on Earth is there this much diversity of world languages in such a concentrated geographic area. Let's consider how brands can put this talent and diversity to work.

03 What's a Company to Do?

Providing a world-class experience to customers across the European market is challenging. Dozens of languages, an uncertain labor market, the high costs of operating multiple call centers, and a patchwork of employment regulations add to the complexities. That's the bad news.

The good news is that it's easier than ever for brands to localize support for customers throughout Europe using **Multilingual Hubs**. Rather than manage a complex network of customer management operations across different countries, brands can deliver cohesive, standardized services from a **centralized European hub that speaks all of their customers' local languages**. Through a multilingual hub, brands can build cultural connections with customers and serve new markets, without having to grow their physical footprint.

+ Consider a Multilingual Hub

A multilingual hub is a strategically placed, centralized customer contact hub capable of supporting customers in multiple languages. Multilingual hubs are most often operated by business process outsourcers (BPOs) who specialize in customer experience solutions and who have the experience, expertise, and resources to support growing, global brands.

A multilingual hub is ideal for high-growth multinational companies who need speed, agility, efficiency, and superior levels of professionalism. As a result, multinational brands are realizing enormous benefits when they choose a multilingual hub.



Lower Costs

by centralizing contact center operations in a single location, brands gain tremendous cost efficiencies

Regulatory Ease
a single location reduces a brand's exposure to cross-border regulatory differences



Improved Security

BPOs deploy next-generation security controls — including facial recognition, MFA, screen watermarks, and agent geolocation — to keep brand and customer data safe and secure

Flexibility to Scale
brands can quickly scale operations without hiring and training new CX staff



Improved Service Levels

the ability to communicate in customers' native tongues elevates service levels

Empower Employees
cloud technologies support hybrid work environments that improve the employee experience and boost retention rates



+ Leverage Technology at Every Turn

We've directed much of our focus to the power of voice — the irrefutable value of having a native language speaking agent connect with a brand's customers. But the best BPOs and the most successful **multilingual hubs also leverage technology at every point of contact.**

In actuality, technologies including artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), and robotic process automation (RPA) are imperative for brands seeking to provide world-class, omnichannel customer experiences. Technology is powering CX tools including dynamic, responsive IVR; smart, scalable virtual assistants, chatbots, and voxbots; document management flows; multilingual self-service; real time translations for scripts and content, voice to text; voice search; and video-enabled services. What's more, technology can unite any or all of these tools, allowing companies to provide 24/7 seamless, omnichannel experiences in the languages and on the channels that best serve their customers at every point in their journeys.

Multilingual hubs combine human native language speaking agents' compassion, wit, and agility with technology's scalability, accuracy, and speed. The combination translates into superior experiences for customers and higher value for brands.

+ Select a Strategic Partner

We mentioned that multilingual hubs are often operated by BPOs specializing in delivering exceptional customer experiences on behalf of the brands they work with. By leveraging emerging AI-fueled technologies surrounding speech, real-time text translation, and data analysis combined with local language fluent agents, BPOs empower brands to expand cost-effectively while maintaining superior service levels.

It's essential to partner with a BPO that understands. They must speak your customers' languages, provide an omnichannel experience that acknowledges an individual at every point of contact, and invest in the next-generation technology that allows the BPO to deliver all of this reliably and cost effectively. ●

Atento **at a glance**

15

European sites

27

languages
spoken

12,000+

agents

8,000

workstations

Atento's multilingual hubs work with some of the world's biggest brands. We employ more than 12,000 trained agents across 15 sites throughout Europe that support customers in 27 languages. With diversity at our core, Atento is leading the next generation of customer experience services by combining the power of technology with the human touch.

+ About Atento

Atento is **the largest provider of customer relationship management and business process outsourcing ("CRM BPO") services in Latin America**, and one of **the top providers globally**. Atento is also a leading provider of nearshoring CRM BPO services to companies that carry out their activities in the United States and Europe. Since 1999, the company has developed its business model in 14 countries where it employs approximately 150,000 people. Atento has over 400 clients to whom it offers a wide range of CRM BPO services through multiple channels. Atento's clients are mostly leading multinational corporations in sectors such as telecommunications, banking and financial services, health, retail and public administrations, among others. Atento's shares trade under the symbol ATTO on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE). In 2019, Atento was named one of the World's 25 Best Multinational Workplaces and one of the Best Multinationals to Work for in Latin America by Great Place to Work®. Also, in 2021 Everest named Atento as a star performer: Gartner named the company as a leader in the 2021 Gartner Magic Quadrant.

For more information visit www.atento.com



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