

**Analyst Perspective****Keith Dawson**Director of Research,
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Verint Uniquely Advances AI for CX with New Ownership

Verint held its annual Engage conference in September, shortly after it announced the news that it had agreed to be acquired by private equity firm Thoma Bravo for \$2 billion. The new ownership plans on merging Verint with its competitor, Calabrio, after the deal closes in 2026. That sequence of events raises many important questions about the direction of both companies and the sector itself—questions that cannot realistically be answered until we get clarity from the merged company on how it plans on integrating existing product lines and how it will devote its development resources.

Even if the future is uncertain, there are some things we do know about where Verint currently sits in the marketplace.

The contours of the market for contact center technology are changing rapidly. Consider the modern service operation: in general, it is a highly efficient, cost-controlled business entity that is purpose-built to respond to customers across channels at massive scale. It does what it is asked to do and does it very well. What's changing is that businesses are increasingly asking the contact center (and its professionals) to do things that are outside that comfort zone.

For example, it is likely expected to play a large role in managing (if not orchestrating) full-blown customer experiences, not just react to incoming problems. It is now seen as a collector and custodian of critical customer data that is of great value to revenue generators in other departments. It is also seen as a feedback engine for the rest of the business, providing insights into customer health, sentiment, intent, loyalty and so on. And perhaps it can become a revenue generator in its own right. We predict that by 2029, one-half of enterprises will focus on customer value and loyalty as the key metrics

Customers & CX

Market Assertion

By 2029, one-half of enterprises will focus on customer value and loyalty as the key metrics defining success in customer relationships.

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defining success in customer relationships. The contact center is also being asked to be the custodian of new artificial intelligence (AI) applications, many of which upend traditional operating assumptions.

Two things happened at roughly the same time to foster these shifts. One, clearly, was the emergence of AI tools that augment and replace human agents. The other is the incursion into the contact center market by software providers with little legacy in the voice and routing business and hence little baggage related to being invested in old technology. This trend has caught many established Contact-Center-as-a-Service (CCaaS) firms off guard. They now face competition from providers that make CRM, or analytics, or martech, as well as the hyperscaler platforms like Connect.

What's different is that a software provider doesn't have to offer a routing engine or ACD to compete effectively as a contact center supplier. If your core product is an ACD, that puts you in a tough spot competitively. (This is one of the reasons why CCaaS providers fell so hard for the AI transition; it gave them someplace else to look for differentiation.)

Two years ago, Verint tried to shift the tone of the buying conversation by arguing that buyers shouldn't have to build their tech stacks around the ACD; they could, instead, choose another core element first and then select the routing afterwards. This was more of a rhetorical gambit than a reflection of current reality. But it's certainly where the market is headed, even if it's not there yet.

What Verint got right was the idea that new technology needed to be rationalized: in order to deploy AI tools, buyers need explicit, clear use cases, narrowly defined, accompanied by robust ROI proof points to back them up. It released a series of AI bots that were aimed at some of the most costly and time-consuming manual operations in contact centers and the dollar figures associated with each process. This strategy made the advantages clearly stand out, allowing practitioners to inject AI applications into their existing tech stack at their own pace, with minimal disruption.

The result was an AI product line with more than 50 purpose-built bots, some of them showing remarkable efficiency improvements. The TimeFlex bot, for example, allows agents to make changes to schedules without needing supervisor review; it fosters better adherence to forecasts in a way that also improves the employee experience. At Engage, they demoed a bot released earlier this year called Genie that brings sophisticated analytics to line-of-business non-analysts. Other notable bots are aimed at the IVA market, transcription and automated quality management.

This approach—spot the problem, build the automation, release it as a point solution embedded within the AI framework—contrasts sharply with the more scattershot AI approach taken by some competitors. This approach results in Verint being rated as Exemplary in the [2025 ISG Buyers Guide on Conversational AI for CX](#).



Verint also offers an Engagement Data Hub, which acts as a central repository for customer data, akin to a CDP. In the transitional future described above, control of customer data provides the contact center with an entry point into interdepartmental conversations about enterprise customer experience (CX)—in other words, it allows the contact center manager to show up with a boatload of data about customer history, intent and behavior that marketers need to design and optimize journeys and experiences. Without control of data, a contact center is just an operational stub hanging off the side of a business. With it, it's a player in the process of boosting customer revenue.

When the acquisition and merger closes in 2026, Verint will face this transformed future environment with a core technology mix that supports broad enterprise CX *and* fundamental interaction handling operations. (Note that Verint was rated as an Exemplary provider and a Leader in the ISG Contact Centers Buyers Guide for 2025. Read more [here](#).) It has existing relationships with key partners to embed its technology into a wide spectrum of competitive CCaaS products. Calabrio has a similar approach; time will tell what the PE owners see as the optimal strategy for market dominance.

My sense is that Verint foresaw the market changes and did a good job pivoting its technology development to meet the coming buyer reality. It is also possible that the march to that future state is both slower and more complex than any mid-sized software provider could manage on its own. Without the deep pockets of an Amazon or Microsoft, Verint has to work with more limited development and marketing resources, and so far it has managed to produce meaningfully better tools to fit the changing needs of today's buyers.

Tomorrow's buyers will be wise to consider Verint as both a foundational tool in their contact center and as an on-ramp to more adventurous CX projects that go well beyond the service environment.

Regards,

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Keith Dawson – Director of Research, Customer Experience

Keith Dawson leads the software research and advisory in the Customer Experience (CX) expertise at ISG Research covering applications that facilitate engagement to optimize customer-facing processes. His coverage areas include agent management, contact center, customer experience management, field service, intelligent self-service and voice of the customer.