

FROST & SULLIVAN

# BEST PRACTICES

AWARDS

FROST & SULLIVAN

2020 BEST PRACTICES AWARD

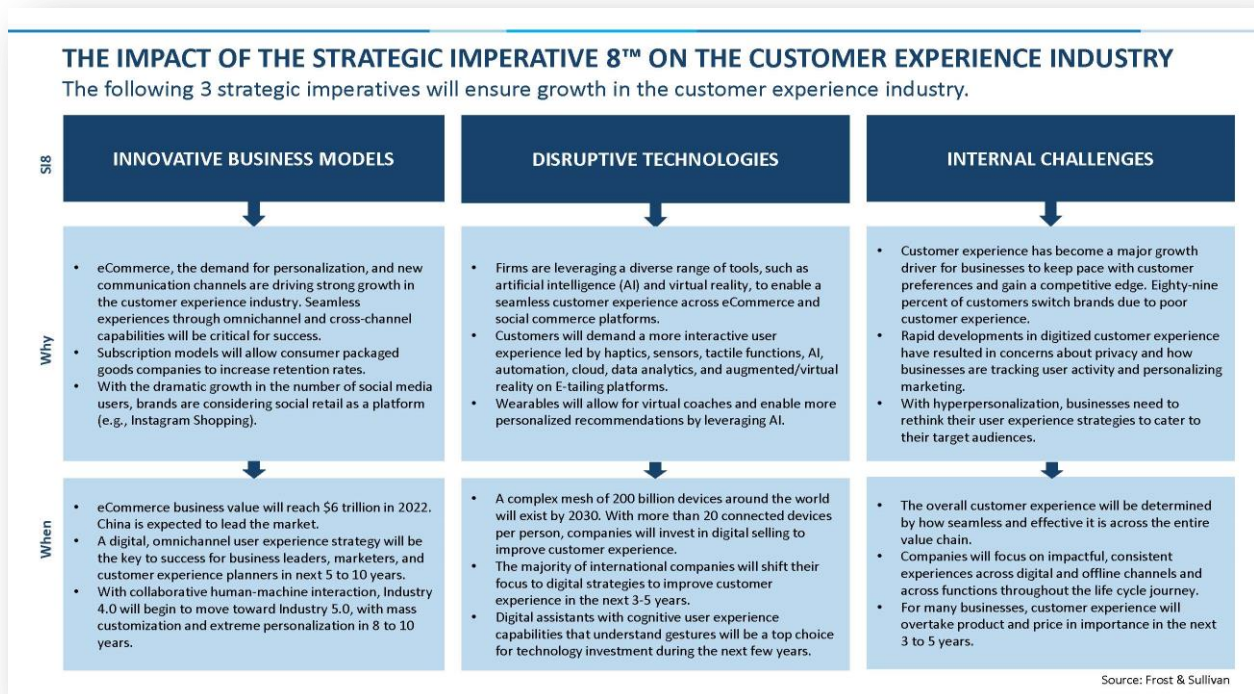
OneLink

Team. Culture. Solutions.

**2020 LATIN AMERICAN AND THE CARIBBEAN  
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE OUTSOURCING SERVICES  
NEW PRODUCT INNOVATION AWARD**

## Strategic Imperatives

Frost & Sullivan identifies three key strategic imperatives that impact the customer experience industry: innovative business models, disruptive technologies, and internal challenges. Every company that is competing in the customer experience space is obligated to address these imperatives proactively; failing to do so will almost certainly lead to stagnation or decline. Successful companies overcome the challenges posed by these imperatives and leverage them to drive innovation and growth. Frost & Sullivan’s recognition of OneLink BPO is a reflection of how well it is performing against the backdrop of these imperatives.



## Best Practices Criteria for World-Class Performance

Frost & Sullivan applies a rigorous analytical process to evaluate multiple nominees for each award category before determining the final award recipient. The process involves a detailed evaluation of best practices criteria across two dimensions for each nominated companies. OneLink BPO excels in many of the criteria in the customer experience outsourcing services market.

AWARD CRITERIA	
<i>New Product Attributes</i>	<i>Customer Impact</i>
Match to Needs	Price/Performance Value
Reliability	Customer Purchase Experience
Quality	Customer Ownership Experience
Positioning	Customer Service Experience
Design	Brand Equity

***Driving Digital Innovation in the Face of Challenges: OneLink BPO***

In a challenging landscape, OneLink BPO (OneLink) continues to impress Frost & Sullivan and demonstrates a commitment to innovation that propels the company forward. Founded in 2013 and operating in six countries (El Salvador, Guatemala, Colombia, Nicaragua and Mexico, Brazil) out of 16 locations, OneLink helps organizations to improve end-customer experiences and usher in a new wave of digital transformation. Developing new solutions for clients, assisting clients to map and pursue digital transformation journeys, and leveraging novel innovations that drive internal and client efficiencies, OneLink constantly drives towards improvement. While rebalancing voice and digital services, OneLink remains impressively committed to uplifting its Incredbyles, its diverse employee base. OneLink is one of the fastest growing service providers in Latin America, exhibiting an 82% growth in three years (2016-2019) while the overall market grew by 9.8% in the same period. As a result of successes, despite the difficulties of 2020, OneLink still expects to see 2020 year over year annual revenues to grow by 25.3%.

As the outsourcing services market continues the long-term trend towards digital transformation, where voice services are declining and clients are rebalancing in favor of a diverse digital portfolio, the COVID-19 pandemic forced the ecosystem to convert almost the entire breadth of operations. In the course of the global pandemic, customer experience service providers (CXSPs) have seen divergent impacts, services for telecommunications, high technology, digital services, and healthcare clients have seen business flourish while large accounts in travel, hospitality, or manufacturing have seen dramatic drop-offs. Concurrently, outbound activities have suffered significant cuts while inbound customer service and technical support functions have witnessed growth. While the pandemic shaped business in 2020 in wholly unpredicted ways, long-term trends toward increasing automation and fewer seats devoted to pure voice service continue. At present, voice-based interactions remain the largest share of business for many CXSPs, but the trend toward commoditization continues at the same time automation and omnichannel engagement become more important.

End-customers demand fast and frictionless service and omnichannel interactions in a personalized fashion. Across industries and sectors, businesses recognize that customer experience is becoming the primary and driving factor influencing customer loyalty and a main differentiator defining success or failure. While enterprises feel pinched by cost pressures, CXSPs must reexamine their own part in supporting businesses and satisfying end-consumers. Simultaneously, the massive move away from office deployments and toward working at home agents (WAHA) has tested CXSP's abilities and continuity plans.<sup>1</sup>

### ***Creating a Digital First Team to Drive Innovation***

Astutely recognizing an opportunity for progress, OneLink reorganized its operations to create a standalone Innovation Unit which supports digital transformation. Composed of almost 100 individuals in subgroups for customer journey mapping, a customer experience lab, and a design consultancy, the team brings together efforts to generate and share efficiencies and cost reduction opportunities. Functionally, the Innovation Unit builds upon developments in robotic process automation (RPA), virtual intelligent agents, self-service interfaces, and analytics. Undertakings through the Innovation Unit are future-focused and non-voice services that remove friction from the end-customer experience, introducing and improving digital capabilities, with interactive voice response (IVR), deflection systems, as well as chat and self-service interactions. In many cases, the company's initiatives in the Innovation Unit reduce the client's cost and required working hours, which impact OneLink's revenues but yield greater wallet share and healthier margins. OneLink is seeing rapid adoption and success with the

*"In collaboration with the operations team, who understands the client's needs, the Innovation Unit is actually proactively diagnosing and building solutions to streamline services."*

**- Sebastian Menutti, Industry Principal**

Innovation Unit, reporting that in 2019 approximately 3% of interactions for large accounts were digital and that in 2020 that number climbed to around 30% with indications showing it will continue to grow tremendously. In collaboration with the operations team, who understands the client's needs, the Innovation Unit is actually proactively diagnosing and building solutions to streamline services. In the near future, the Innovation Unit will offer instances to leverage speech analytics and new

knowledge management systems, bringing forward better tools for Incredbytes to deliver faster and better service. In a broader perspective, Frost & Sullivan commends OneLink for making such a significant effort to bring novel ideas to customers that propel efficiency and serve and build stronger relationships overall.

### ***The Right Service at the Right Time***

OneLink is investing in efforts to serve emerging verticals and born-digital companies, such as electronic commerce, financial technology, online delivery, with efficient technologies that allow Incredbytes to focus on the higher value interactions. Unexpectedly, these are the exact companies that experience booming demand in the midst of the pandemic and have issues ramping up service under unforeseen conditions. OneLink's two-part vision thus fits into an acute need for many companies, meeting

<sup>1</sup>*Automation and Work-at-Home Transforming the Customer Experience Outsourcing Services Market in Latin America and the Caribbean, Forecast to 2025, (Frost & Sullivan, October 2020).*

increased demand with automation while also providing highly capable Incredbyles to attend to the more complex, higher value interactions.

While advancing new automation and self-service technologies, OneLink does an exceptional job of focusing on knowledge management and training Incredbyles to furnish higher-touch solutions. Where automation can execute many of the relatively simple and repetitive tasks, the Incredbyles provide the emotional intelligence that defines the end customer experience in another way. In its onboarding and coaching, the company teaches Incredbyles to focus on the customer and not the process. Quality assurance and coaching at OneLink serve to cultivate confidence and educate Incredbyles who then build empathy and relate emotionally to the end customer, improving the overall customer journey.

### ***Handling the Pandemic with Agility***

As the COVID-19 pandemic unfolded in early 2020 and spread across the globe, OneLink admirably began preparing early and moving aggressively to secure the safety of the Incredbyles and ensure

*“OneLink reporting low infection rates among Incredbyles, practically zero client attrition, and persistent high customer satisfaction scores attest to striking success despite the sudden disruption.”*

***Nicholas Baugh, Best Practices Research Analyst***

business continuity. First, the company spared no effort to protect its employee base. OneLink decided it would be better to overreact than to underreact, and sent all employees to a WAHA model across the board before the virus had hit some geographies. Throughout the pandemic and the drastic changes, OneLink has prioritized continued engagement, developing a mobile application to provide employees

accessible support for work-related information or technology issues as well as self-care. Similarly, the company revamped quality assurance and coaching methods and models to continue the positive engagement between supervisors and Incredbyles.

Secondly, but importantly, the company built on previous investments in digital channels and automation to ensure business continuity and customer relationships. OneLink has scaled up volume for clients experiencing sudden increases in demand, as well as to provide proof of concept on the efficiency of automation for some customers previously reluctant. The company provided hardware for Incredbyles that complies with relevant security and encryption standards and ensured that connectivity at home remains secure. The hardware includes encrypted virtual private network reconnections, network monitoring and web filtering, and multifactor authentication. For sensitive data, such as payment information, the company deployed out its own solutions (e.g., dynamic digital payment links, credit card IVR, and RPA for desktop that masks credit card information). The company plans to retain approximately one-third of its Incredbyles in a WAHA model, when the pandemic eventually passes. OneLink reporting low infection rates among Incredbyles, practically zero client attrition, and persistent high customer satisfaction scores attest to striking success despite the sudden disruption.

### ***Cultivating Unique Talent and an Engaged Team Culture***

A significant portion of OneLink’s success traces back to the talent the company attracts and the culture-building and caring it devotes to employees. While the outsourcing services space commonly conjures images of high burnout and churn rates in employees, OneLink reports a low 2-3% attrition rate,

translating into less retraining time and a mature staff that yields consistent results. Moreover, the company updates the training curriculum and onboarding procedures for Incredbyles proactively and continuously. Prioritizing engagement that serves OneLink as well as clients, the company implores employees to offer suggestions how to make improvements in process, on products, and with technology.

Competing with larger outsourcers, OneLink not only appeals to up and coming individuals but also draws away talent from the others owing to its organizational structure, people-focused culture, and unique opportunities. The company has moved to 100% virtual recruitment in the course of the pandemic and this actually continues upon preexisting efforts to attract savvy and in-demand talent. Competition for top talent, in many countries in the region, is intense amongst outsourcing services organizations. OneLink impresses in the empowerment and investments it makes in employees. A remarkably flat organization, the company operates with comparatively little hierarchy and a wide amount of engagement in making decisions and defining direction. Further, OneLink empowers its Incredbyles with prospects for advancement and access to decision-making that are tightly controlled in other organizations. It is not uncommon for young account managers to achieve million-dollar responsibilities and openings to shine in this culture of opportunity.

In addition to prioritizing promotions from within the company, OneLink also impressively maintains a “She Leads” initiative to raise up top-performing females to management positions. The company realized the disparity between the numbers of women at the management level (34%) and the overall employee base (56%) and decided that retaining top female talent was not just the right thing to do but the smartest business decision. OneLink expects to bring women in management up to 38% for 2021 and continue improving.

### ***Relationships with Customers Built on Transparency and Flexibility***

Frost & Sullivan commends OneLink for going above and beyond in its transparent relationships and flexibility with customers. Over a challenging year, and before, OneLink has worked collaboratively with enterprises to build solutions and practices that generate savings and help devise frictionless end customer journeys. The C-level team is both exceptionally accessible for clients as well as closely involved in the operations and performance across the organization. This entrepreneurial style enables the company to make decisions and move quickly. This flexibility serves OneLink well to react to a crisis and engage clients and provide suggestions and ideas to improve operations, communicating on a weekly, monthly, and quarterly basis. Moreover, OneLink developed an entire system for internal analytics, OneBox, an aggregation of data sources that allows deep visibility and rich context around customer sentiment. A significant advancement, OneBox supplies the company and clients with real-time information about how myriad variables and metrics relate and affect one another over time. OneLink manages each of its client-partner relationships with an exemplary level of transparency. Consequently, OneLink maintains the trust of its clients: when offering recommendations based on solid data, but also admitting mistakes and devising strategies to correct them when necessary.

## Conclusion

---

As enterprises search for new ways to smooth customer journeys and meet rising expectations, outsourcing service providers must deal with cost pressures and the long-term trend away from voice services while still demonstrating scalability. Recognizing both immediate and long-term trends, this company has taken a bold step to create an entire Innovation Unit to drive digital transformation initiatives and develop solutions that deliver efficiency and productivity for clients. An unmatched move in the market, OneLink BPO (OneLink) focuses on supporting digital transformation and improving the end-customer experience through new technologies and comprehensive strategies. The company's investments in new approaches allow its employee base of Incredbyles to focus on the more complex task that require emotional intelligence and understanding. When faced with the COVID-19 pandemic and disruptions, OneLink reacted swiftly and spared no effort to secure Incredbyles and business continuity and actually experiences impressive growth and success in 2020.

With its drive for innovation, proactive problem solving, and focus on transparency, OneLink BPO earns Frost & Sullivan's 2020 Latin America and the Caribbean New Product Innovation Award in the customer experience outsourcing services market.

## What You Need to Know about the New Product Innovation Recognition

---

Frost & Sullivan's New Product Innovation Award recognizes the company that offers a new product or solution that uniquely addresses key customer challenges.

### Best Practices Award Analysis

For the New Product Innovation Award, Frost & Sullivan analysts independently evaluated the criteria listed below.

#### *New Product Attributes*

**Match to Needs:** Customer needs directly influence and inspire product design and positioning

**Reliability:** Product consistently meets or exceeds customer performance expectations

**Quality:** Product offers best-in-class quality with a full complement of features and functionality

**Positioning:** Product serves a unique, unmet need that competitors cannot easily replicate

**Design:** Product features an innovative design that enhances both visual appeal and ease of use

#### *Customer Impact*

**Price/Performance Value:** Products or services provide the best value for the price compared to similar market offerings

**Customer Purchase Experience:** Quality of the purchase experience assures customers that they are buying the optimal solution for addressing their unique needs and constraints

**Customer Ownership Experience:** Customers proudly own the company's product or service and have a positive experience throughout the life of the product or service

**Customer Service Experience:** Customer service is accessible, fast, stress-free, and high quality

**Brand Equity:** Customers perceive the brand positively and exhibit high brand loyalty



