

CUSTOMER STORY

talkdesk® | 2U

**Use Case**  
Support & Sales

**Industry**  
Education Technology

**Integration**  
Salesforce

**Key Metric**  
34% Increase in  
Staff Satisfaction



**Challenge**

2U was running on a legacy on-premise system, resulting in poor call quality, lack of strong Salesforce integration and inflexibility that prevented their contact center from scaling with their rapidly-growing business



**Solution**

2U discovered Talkdesk at a Salesforce World Tour event and immediately recognized the benefits of a true cloud-native platform that integrates seamlessly with Salesforce, scales quickly and provides industry-leading call quality and reliability guarantees



**Results**

2U has scaled by 50x while successfully increasing agent satisfaction by 34%, contact rates by 12% and NPS by 5 points

## Digitally Transforming Higher Education

Many Americans often feel higher education is a huge life investment that is simply out of reach. Life happens, whether it's the birth of a child or working a full-time job to support yourself and those around you. These life-generated obstacles can make it difficult to pursue America's top degree programs.

2U, Inc. is headquartered in Lanham, Maryland and has 12 offices worldwide. They partner with the world's top colleges and universities to make higher education accessible to anyone, anywhere. Institutions like Harvard, Yale and Berkeley build out entire degree programs online using 2U's digital platform. "No longer do you have to quit your job, make sacrifices in your life or relocate across the country to partake in a top-tier program of your choice," says Brad Adams, COO, University Partnerships & Services, 2U, Inc.

2U's mantra is "No Back Row" -- the idea that regardless of whether a student is in the classroom or participating in 2U online degree program online, their experience is the same. It's 2U's mission to ensure elite universities maintain their world-class degree programs and that students have access to these programs and the necessary support to be successful.



Brad's admissions team follows up with prospective students who have shown interest in a particular university degree program and guides them through the entire enrollment process. On the support side, 2U agents assist students and faculty from a variety of angles, including tech support, placement assistance and other areas in the academic life cycle.

Agents are distributed across major cities including Washington D.C., Los Angeles, Denver, New York, Hong Kong and Cape Town, South Africa.

**“We were early adopters of Talkdesk because we really believed in the vision and the fact that it was the first truly native cloud solution that integrated with Salesforce the way we needed it to.”**

**– BRAD ADAMS, COO, UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS & SERVICES, 2U, INC.**

## **Giving Their Legacy System a Failing Grade**

Brad's team was running on a legacy, on-premises provider to power their customer experience. For a company that was blazing a new trail in higher education, it became quickly evident that running the support team on an inflexible and antiquated system was holding them back.

Reporting was significantly lacking, especially when it came to looking at basic metrics and identifying trends and problem areas in the contact center. “We couldn't tell what was going on, making it impossible for us to optimize our service,” says Brad. Lack of a robust IVR and intelligent routing made it difficult to connect students with the right university program representative. These complications were magnified when attempting to route a call about an issue unrelated to the admissions process, such as a technical support inquiry.

System unreliability plagued Brad's team as they faced many days where the entire system would go down, frustrating both agents and callers. When the system was cooperating, it was met with severe call quality issues including dropped calls, echoes and latency. An interface Brad described as “clunky” also made day-to-day work unpleasant for agents. As 2U rapidly grew by 50x, Brad's previous system proved to be too inflexible to support his agents and customers.

## Talkdesk's Cloud-Native Platform Passes the Test

Brad first came across Talkdesk while attending a Salesforce World Tour event in 2016. He liked the fact that Talkdesk was a cloud-native platform and not an on-premises solution like his previous provider. Agility and scalability were two attributes near the top of his requirements list, and adopting an enterprise cloud contact center built on a true microservices architecture meant he could have the flexibility he needed along with the system reliability and call quality he required.

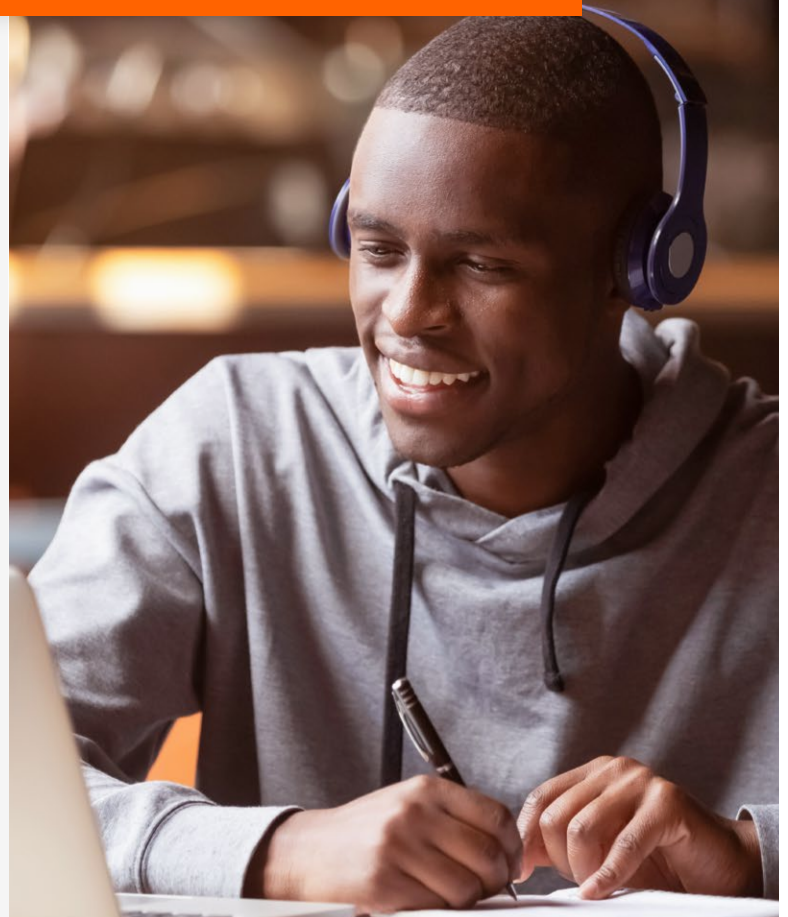
The inflexibility of Brad's previous system made it nearly impossible for him to successfully integrate his contact center with Salesforce. This past frustration made Talkdesk's strong Salesforce integration a major selling point. "We were early adopters of Talkdesk because we really believed in the vision and the fact that it was the first truly native cloud solution that integrated with Salesforce the way we needed it to," explains Brad.

**"We've had a 34% increase in staff satisfaction compared to our previous system."**

– BRAD ADAMS, COO, UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS & SERVICES, 2U, INC.

### Guaranteeing Agent and Customer Satisfaction

Talkdesk has helped Brad's team achieve results that were unattainable with their previous provider. Agent efficiency has greatly increased with Talkdesk because of a strong integration with Salesforce. By being able to get a quick and accurate look into a caller's record right as a call is coming in, agents are able to personalize conversations to a significantly greater degree. Talkdesk for Salesforce has helped Brad achieve a 12% increase in contact rates, since agents are now able to clearly see when their students are available. "Talkdesk is helping drive more substantive conversations with our students since they're able to pick up conversations right where they left off," says Brad.



Brad's agents are not only more productive using Talkdesk, they are happier. Brad explained, "We've had a 34% increase in staff satisfaction compared to our previous system." By giving agents a cloud-native solution that is inherently easier to use and provides them the information they need to have better conversations, agents spend more time being productive and less time struggling with a dated system. Brad has seen this increase in agent satisfaction translate to a 5-point increase in net promoter score, meaning the

students calling in are feeling the positive effects of interacting with happier agents.

Agent mobility has greatly increased since adopting Talkdesk. When agents had to work remotely on their legacy system, such as working the evening or weekend shift, they had to take their desk phone with them. The ability for agents to work wherever, whenever and only need their laptop and headset has greatly contributed to the increase in satisfaction within Brad's team.

**"We are partners to our universities much like Talkdesk is a partner to us, and that is exactly the alignment with our vendors that we're looking for."**

**- BRAD ADAMS, COO, UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS & SERVICES, 2U, INC.**

## **Giving Their Legacy System a Failing Grade**

Brad values the partnership that's been forged between 2U and Talkdesk. "Talkdesk treats us like a partner, not a customer," says Brad. This is important to him as he feels like he truly has a seat at the table when it comes to product development and company direction. A strong partnership also signals congruency between Talkdesk's vision and 2U's goals. "We are partners to our universities much like Talkdesk is a partner to us, and that is exactly the alignment with our vendors that we're looking for," says Brad.

When thinking about how he plans to deliver even better customer experiences in the future, Brad is excited about all of the new functionality in the Talkdesk platform. Brad is particularly interested in exploring Talkdesk Omnichannel as he's using multiple solutions currently to satisfy this area of his support strategy. After attending Talkdesk's industry conference, Opentalk 18, Brad says being able to tie all channels together is the single most exciting thing for him looking into the future. Brad looks forward to continuing to partner with Talkdesk to empower 2U's customers and agents alike: "Talkdesk is an incredible partner. Plain and simple."

Talkdesk is an innovative cloud contact center platform that empowers companies to continuously improve customer satisfaction. Talkdesk is easy to set up, use and adapt. A "visionary" in Gartner's Contact Center as a Service Magic Quadrant, Talkdesk offers ongoing innovation, superior call quality and instant integration to the most popular business applications. Over 1,800 innovative enterprises around the world, including 2U, Canon, IBM, Peloton and Trivago rely on Talkdesk to power their customer interactions.

**talkdesk®**