



BPO BULLHORN

Straight talk. Smart insight. No bull.

Thursday, March 19, 2026

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Hello there

Last week, we asked where your time is actually going. The results:

- **67% rethinking workforce mix** – talent strategy is dominating the room
- **33% ensuring value from tech spend** – AI investment scrutiny isn't letting up

This week: 31% engagement. 96% AI failure rate. 33,000 jobs moved. One quarter. [Bullhorn 10](#) just dropped.

Next week: Reflections from Addis Ababa on Ethiopia's BPO ambitions on the ground.

Top stories:

- Zimbabwe launches BPO tax breaks to compete for global deals
- Bangladesh's 100K BPO workforce stalls after two decades of growth
- Salesforce turns CCaaS partner into competitor with native contact center

Let's get moo-ving! 📣🐮

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Editorial Team

Bullseye: The Essentials

Industry News

→ **Zimbabwe Launches Tax Incentives to Position Country as BPO Hub**

Zimbabwe's Finance Minister Mthuli Ncube launched the Business and Knowledge Process Outsourcing [operational framework](#), offering tax incentives to attract international service providers. The government will provide a 15% corporate tax rate (down from 25%), a \$1,500 annual tax credit per youth employee under age 35, and a Special Economic Zone designation for qualifying BPO facilities. Officials say the country will compete with South Africa, Rwanda, Kenya, India, and Mexico by leveraging its English proficiency, young workforce (60% under age 25), and strategic location within the SADC region.

Insights

→ **Bangladesh Call Center Industry Stalls After Two Decades of Unfulfilled Promise**

Bangladesh's call center and BPO sector [employs roughly 100,000 people](#), nearly two decades after launching in 2008-09, but has failed to evolve into the export powerhouse once envisioned. Industry leaders say rigid licensing requirements, English proficiency barriers, and internet reliability issues are slowing growth. The sector now faces additional pressure from AI automation, with executives warning that low-skilled call center jobs will disappear even as the technology creates opportunities for workers who can move into more skilled roles.

Technology

→ **Salesforce Enters Native Contact Center Market, Disrupting Partner Ecosystem**

Salesforce launched Agentforce Contact Center as a unified platform [integrating contact center capabilities](#), CRM, and AI agents natively rather than relying on third-party software and voice partners. The move creates

competitive tension with Salesforce's CCaaS integration partners, including Genesys, Vonage, and NICE. Industry observers compare the launch to Microsoft's Teams Voice offering, which businesses largely abandoned for third-party solutions due to functionality gaps.

Governance

→ FCC Proposes English Proficiency Rules for Offshore Call Centers

Federal Communications Commission Chairman Brendan Carr announced [**the commission will vote this month**](#) on proposals requiring offshore call center workers serving U.S. telecom customers to demonstrate proficiency in American Standard English. The rules would also cap the percentage of calls handled offshore, require disclosure when calls connect abroad, and allow customers to transfer to U.S.-based agents. The agency says bringing call center jobs back to the U.S. would significantly increase costs, with American customer service representatives earning \$1,224 weekly compared to \$93 in the Philippines and \$55 in India.

Vigilance

→ Telus Digital Confirms Breach as Hackers Claim 1 Petabyte of Data Stolen

Canadian business process outsourcer Telus Digital [**acknowledged a cyberattack**](#) after the ShinyHunters gang claimed to have stolen 1 petabyte of data from the company. Reuters verified samples of the stolen data include personally identifiable information from at least two dozen business customers and call center recordings. ShinyHunters says they accessed Telus systems using Google Cloud Platform credentials found in data stolen from Salesloft in 2025.

Media Field Guide

Video

The Truth About AI And The Mass Layoffs - [YouTube](#)

CNBC examines whether AI is actually driving mass layoffs or if CEOs are using automation as cover for cuts driven by economic uncertainty, tariffs, and reduced consumer spending. Between January and September 2025, companies announced 946,426 job cuts, though economists say corporate leaders may be deflecting blame from traditional economic pressures onto technology.

Why watch: challenges the AI layoff narrative with evidence that economic factors, not automation, are driving recent workforce reductions

Podcast

CX Today - [Spotify](#)

Rob Wilkinson speaks with customer service expert Shep Hyken about findings from his State of Customer Service and CX 2026 report that challenge assumptions about loyalty drivers. They discuss why product quality can outweigh service, why convenience often beats friendliness, and why customers still prefer phone calls for serious issues despite the industry's push toward automation and self-service.

Why listen: challenges common CX assumptions with research showing what customers actually want versus what organizations think they want.

Books

Dial In Your Leadership - [Amazon](#)

Former Navy SEAL Commander Jon Macaskill presents four non-negotiable leadership principles and a five-step process for catching yourself when leading on autopilot, drawn from 24 years of military service, including combat experience and personal failure. The book argues that small daily choices under pressure matter more than leadership theories, and that vulnerability builds team trust faster than maintaining a leadership mask.

Why read: battle-tested framework showing how self-awareness and authentic presence create loyalty that lasts beyond positional authority.

What media would you like to see more of? **Hit reply** and let us know. We'll give you a shoutout if we include it.

[Continue the conversation](#)

Resource Rodeo 🤠

Featuring NEW releases:

WEF Organizational Transformation in the Age of AI (White paper)

Insights from 450+ executives in the World Economic Forum's AI Transformation of Industries community examining how organizations embed AI across customer experience, operations, R&D, strategic planning, and talent. The report identifies five principles enabling scale: human accountability, end-to-end operating model redesign, scalable talent systems, transparency-driven trust, and disciplined experimentation -

[Download](#)

Also spotted:

- Deloitte State of AI in the Enterprise 2026 - [Download](#)
- CallMiner UK CX Landscape Report 2025 - [Download](#)
- Genesis GBS 2026 East & Central Africa GBS Benchmarking & Market Report - [Download](#)
- KPMG 2026 Global Third-Party Risk Management Survey - [Download](#)

Toro's Timetable

March

25 - [4th BPO Confex & Awards 2026](#) | Bengaluru, India

April

12 - [Customer Contact East](#) | Fort Lauderdale, FL

21 - [Customer Service & Experience West 2026](#) | San Diego, CA

May

7 - [Customer Experience Summit](#) | Boston, MA

11 - [CCW UK](#) | London

The Tail End

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Maistro UK Limited

Rowan House North 1 The
Professional Quarter, Shrewsbury
Business Park, Shrewsbury

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