

Making Workforce Optimization Sizzle to Deliver Better Customer Experiences

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Executive Summary

Increasingly, it's not the products or services that differentiate a company to its customers, but the quality and consistency of the customer experiences it delivers. This helps explain why 89% of companies expect to compete primarily on the basis of customer experience in 2016, according to Gartner. In order to provide customers with consistent service experiences across each of the channels they use, it's critical for contact center supervisors to be able to capture and understand customer interactions and have the ability to route customers to agents with specific skills that are best suited to assist with customers' individual needs. Delivering consistent service experiences is also a prerequisite for executing on business objectives. Sixty-six percent of customers switch companies due to poor service, according to Accenture. By contrast, companies that deliver consistent customer experiences beat other organizations in key areas of business performance.

For instance, a 2015 study conducted by Watermark Consulting found that customer

experience leaders outperformed the broader market in stock performance from 2007 to 2014. The cumulative returns for customer experience leaders in the study rose 107.5% while the S&P 500 Index gained 72.3%. Meanwhile, the stock performance for customer experience laggards over this time was just 27.6%.

The use of sophisticated technologies to better understand and respond to customer needs and behaviors can help drive customer satisfaction and business performance. State-of-the-art workforce optimization (WFO) software that's integrated with an automated call distribution (ACD) system and blended with speech analytics can allow contact center leaders to extract critical information from customer interactions and be used to optimize forecasting and scheduling, improve omnichannel interaction routing, identify coaching opportunities with agents to improve individual and team performance, and to measure quality in order to identify execution issues and opportunities for improvement.

Ultimately, these operational improvements can allow companies to deliver more intelligent and better customer service experiences. WFO tools provide agents the ability to grasp the full course of a customer's interactions and history with the company, enabling agents to deliver personalized and relevant support in the moment. Meanwhile, quality management tools enable both contact center supervisors and agents to assess and act on agent performance in order to continuously improve the actions that agents take to deliver consistent customer experiences.

"With speech analytics and other advanced WFO tools, contact centers are equipped to deliver superior results with less effort," says Chris Bauserman, VP Segment & Product Marketing. In the pages that follow, we'll describe in detail how cutting-edge workforce optimization tools and techniques are enabling companies to deliver exceptional customer experiences and strengthen business performance.

Four Ways That Workforce Optimization Drives Business Value

Agents and other customer-facing employees are pivotal in helping a company to develop and sustain strong relationships with its customers. Workforce optimization tools and techniques are integral in enabling companies to build and sustain strong customer relationships. Here are four ways in which the use of workforce optimization tools can enable companies to maximize their most important assets – their employees – and deliver rich customer experiences that foster business growth.



Improve the customer experience

World-class forecasting and scheduling technologies which utilize patented algorithms are designed to optimize workforce efficiency, thus ensuring that customer calls are being answered and customer wait times are reduced. In addition, quality scores that are drawn from WFO tools which are integrated with an ACD can be used to stack rank employees and be used for intelligent call routing. Therefore, when a customer connects with the contact center, the customer can be routed to the right agent with the right skills to handle a specific type of query (such as a billing or account question) based on first contact resolution (FCR) scores and other criteria. Meanwhile, quality management and speech analytics tools offered in a WFO suite can help contact center supervisors gain a complete understanding of the experiences that customers are receiving and identify coaching opportunities and other areas for improvement. Speech analytics can unearth hidden insights regarding customer complaints and comments that can be quickly identified and acted upon. Gaining access to such insights is critical since most businesses hear from just 4% of dissatisfied customers while the other 96% remain silent, according to *Understanding Customers* by Ruby Newell-Legner.



Strengthen the agent experience

Best-in-class WFO tools are equipped with multiple agent-centric features that bolster employee ownership and personal accountability. For instance, an agent dashboard allows agents to access recordings of customer interactions and to self-evaluate their own performance to identify opportunities for improvement. Plus, state-of-the-art workforce management tools ensure that agents can be involved in the creation and management of their work schedules. This includes the ability for agents to request preferred work hours to manage around appointments and events in their personal lives and to rank their preferences for work schedules and vacation time. Just like employees in other roles, agents want the ability to balance their work schedules and personal life to meet their needs. Indeed, 67% of employees surveyed in an Allstate/National Journal Heartland Monitor poll cite flexible work hours as important or very important in their choice of employer. Providing agents a stake in improving their personal performance and determining their schedules can strengthen employee engagement which can lead to better customer experiences and lower agent attrition.



Deliver better results with less effort

Achieving improved results doesn't mean that contact center staff has to work harder. Thanks to sophisticated WFO tools, contact center teams can instead work smarter. As customer behaviors continue to change, contact center teams require tools that can adapt to changing requirements and deliver the kind of service that delights customers and keeps them loyal. For instance, speech analytics tools can be used to understand the root cause of customer pain points and to identify process and performance issues with agents. "The combination of speech analytics and quality management tools offers contact center leaders an efficient and effective way to assess agent performance and take advantage of coaching opportunities while customer interactions are still fresh," says Bauserman.



Leverage the power of tight WFO and ACD integration

Many contact center leaders want to be able to upgrade to a new WFO solution but feel restricted due to investments that have been placed in the organization's ACD system. A cloud contact center platform that provides tight integration between workforce optimization and automatic call distribution technologies helps address these concerns while offering several advantages to companies. By relying on a single provider for both WFO and ACD, all software updates that are provided for either system are centralized into one location. Meanwhile, companies that use third-party ACD technologies can also benefit from integration with cloudbased WFO technologies. This union enables organizations to leverage the advantages of the cloud without having to re-engineer their contact center infrastructure, thus retaining their legacy investments in on-premise ACD systems. Plus, efficient call routing optimizes agent efficiency while historical ACD data can enable contact center supervisors to assess KPIs in order to improve workflows and allocate resources.

Advanced contact routing can ensure that the customer connects to the right agent to handle their interaction.

Scheduling Optimization Helps Airline's Customer Service Soar



The Challenge

One of the world's leading airlines conducted a data driven study to compare schedules generated by traditional workforce management (WFM) technologies available in the market. Disappointing results in schedule efficiency levels led the airline to team with its IT organization to pioneer its own proprietary technologies. Continued interest in improving schedule efficiencies and service levels led the airline to evaluate available WFM technologies to determine whether any are providing optimal scheduling capabilities.



The Solution

The airline elected NICE inContact CXone Workforce Management. CXone Workforce Management software optimizes total labor costs by creating schedules with the highest efficiency possible in a contact center environment. Proprietary optimization models and algorithms calculate the best possible fit between agents, skills, contact volumes, and servicing goals. Concurrent schedule optimization technology validates that work and off days, daily start times, break times, and other activities are calculated within individual agent schedules to align with the overall requirements of the airline's contact center.



The Results

CXone Workforce Management optimal scheduler has achieved 98.5% schedule efficiency while reducing excess agent hours by 73%. The software has also generated a 12% savings in scheduling costs compared to all WFM software evaluated by the airline, including its proprietary scheduling system. Schedules generated by CXone Workforce Management optimal scheduler have resulted in 100% elimination of agent shortages.

The combination of speech analytics and quality management tools offer contact center leaders an efficient and effective way to assess agent performance and take advantage of coaching opportunities while customer interactions are still fresh



The Transformational Impact of Gamification on Agent Performance

Keeping contact center agents motivated and inspired can be challenging. High call volumes and customer complaints can take their toll on agents. To help motivate agents and keep them inspired, a growing number of contact centers are turning to gamification. Competition can help bring out the best in agents. In the contact center, rewards and recognition can be granted to agents who succeed across a variety of categories, including first contact resolution (FCR), customer satisfaction rates,

cross-sell/ up-sell achievements, and other metrics. Gamification can have a significant impact on employee engagement and business performance. A Gallup study finds that companies with a highly engaged workforce generate 147% more revenue than companies with poorly engaged employees while experiencing 25%-to-65% less turnover. Gamification tools that are built into a WFO suite can set goals for agents to strive for along with leaderboards to track individual, team, and/or group performance

in near real-time. Gamification is a great way to motivate agents to improve their performance by recasting goals as awards. It's proving to be an effective way to increase agent engagement by making work more fun and ultimately to improve the customer experience.

Workforce Optimization: The Way Forward

Leading-edge workforce optimization solutions are designed to improve workforce efficiency as well as the customer experience. Extraordinarily accurate and patented forecast and scheduling technologies enable companies to staff the right agents with the right skills at the right times to meet customer needs. Meanwhile, a WFO suite that can extract critical information from customer interactions can provide contact center supervisors and agents with meaningful customer insights that can then

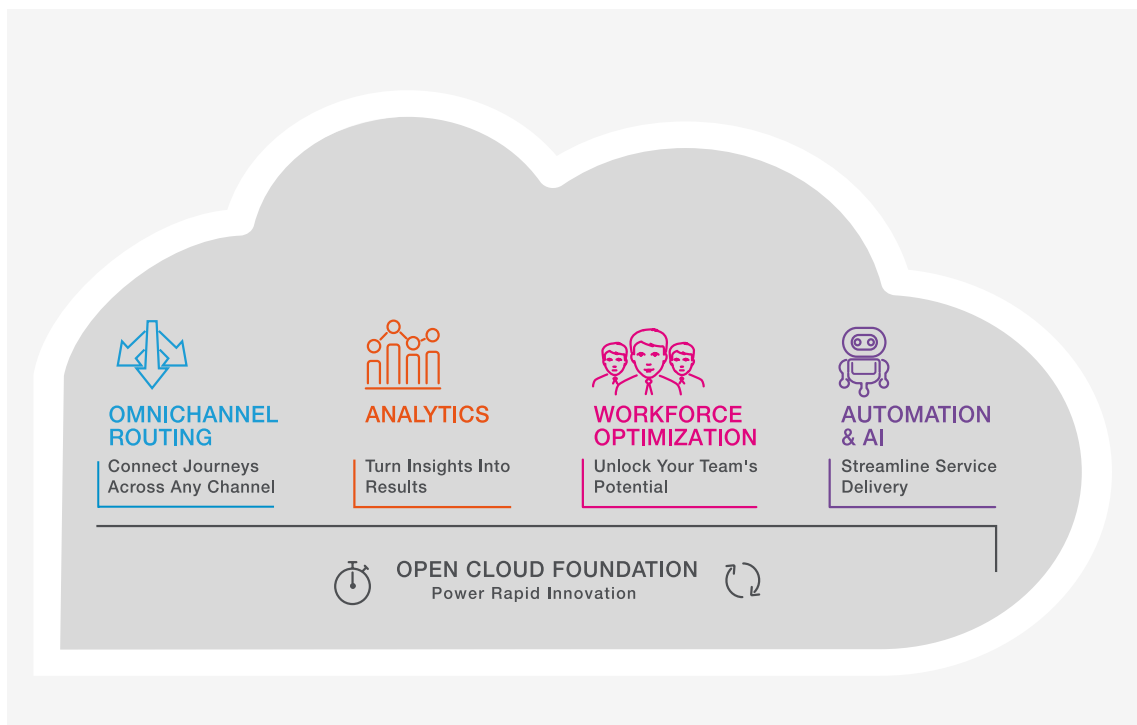
be used to act on coaching opportunities to improve agent performance. Continuous agent coaching has a multiplier effect. When agents feel valued and are provided training and other opportunities to improve their performance, they're more likely to be satisfied in their roles and productive. Plus, agents who are able to respond to customer queries more effectively are better positioned to deliver a more satisfying customer experience. Research repeatedly reveals strong correlations between customer

service satisfaction and loyalty. In the end, happy customers result in better business outcomes. WFO. Better agent experiences. Better customer experiences. A win-win for everyone.

[Innovative WFO technologies allow companies to transform their contact centers into high-performing customer experience centers](#)

Transforming One-on-One Experiences in the Contact Center

Cloud Contact Center - powered by CXone, the world's #1 cloud customer experience platform, helps organizations be first in their industry by powering exceptional experiences for customers and employees. CXone is the first and only platform unifying best-in-class Omnichannel Routing, Analytics, Workforce Optimization, Automation and Artificial Intelligence - all built on an Open Cloud Foundation. CXone helps organizations of all sizes be first and stay first, empowering your teams to move faster and work smarter. Be the first choice of customers, first to innovate, first choice employer. Only CXone delivers one unified experience, on one cloud native platform, along one proven path, from one leader.



About Atos

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Let's start a discussion together



About NICE inContact

NICE inContact makes it easy and affordable for organizations around the globe to create stand-out customer experiences while meeting key business metrics. NICE inContact provides the world's #1 cloud customer experience platform, NICE inContact CXone™, built on an open cloud foundation that is flexible, scalable and reliable for enterprise, small business, government and business process outsourcers. NICE inContact is a part of NICE (Nasdaq: NICE), the worldwide leading provider of both cloud and on-premises enterprise software solutions.