Best Practices Series

2017 CONTACT CENTER INNOVATIONS

The biggest innovation in contact centers this year is really a fully committed leap into omnichannel customer service. All of the new channels and technologies—like artificial intelligence for self-service and agents, co-browsing, SMS messaging, real-time chat, screen share, and visual customer enablement—are upping customer expectations across all markets. Of course, these are just some of the channels that need to be integrated into a central database repository to provide customers with a consistent experience regardless of the way they choose to interact.

In this month's Best Practices installment, our two guest contributors, eGain and Genesys, offer their recommendations for use cases that deliver tremendous savings and great service, and what you should consider if you wish to future-proof your contact center as new technologies and channels are rolled out down the line.

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CRM CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

5 Innovative Use-Cases for Customer Service Transformation

Customer experience (CX) innovation is no longer a luxury, with 89% of companies expecting to compete mostly through CX (Source: Gartner). Here are five examples of how you can innovate in customer service, and deliver winning CX.

GOODBYE, IVR MUSIC

Being put on hold for a long time is "extremely frustrating" or "frustrating" for 84% of consumers (Source: Accenture survey). But consumers need to fret no more, thanks to eGain's AI Knowledge! Customers waiting on the smartphone, after being put on hold in an IVR queue, can now get an SMS link to the right answer or to an AI-guided interaction that will take them to the answer. Importantly, you don't lose your place in the queue, just in case you still need to talk to an agent—rich self-service with a safety net! Who wouldn't want it but for rabid fans of IVR music?!

NO RETURN IS GREAT RETURN

When products are returned by consumers for apparently being "faulty," telecom and manufacturing companies eat the costs of replacing the product or inspecting it again for defects, no questions asked. Called "No Fault Found," this expensive phenomenon is often the result of contact center agents not being able to resolve customers' problems when they call for assistance in setting up or using the product. Here's the good news. Many of our clients are using our AI knowledge solution in the contact center to remotely troubleshoot and guide the customer to a resolution, reducing unwarranted returns in the process. For example, a leading telecom provider reduced handset exchanges and returns by 38% through effective problem resolution in their contact center!

ROLL THE TRUCKS (BACKWARDS)!

Dispatching service technicians to field locations to fix problems is expensive for manufacturers, utilities, and communication service providers. Called "truck rolls," these visits cost $150 on average (higher when high-skill labor is involved) and are often initiated due to the inability of the contact center to solve customer problems. Again, smart knowledge can help. For instance, a white goods giant and eGain client saved $50M per year by reducing unnecessary truck rolls through effective problem resolution in the contact center with eGain's AI knowledge. When the truck roll was inevitable, the knowledge tool also recommended appropriate parts so the problem could be fixed in the very first visit, improving First Visit Resolution (FVR).

CLONE BO AND DEION

As many readers might know, Bo Jackson and Deion Sanders were unique multi-skilled athletes who attained professional competence in multiple sports. As routine customer queries get handled by self-service systems, agents need to become like Bo and Deion. They need to become multiskilled, shift their value to a higher gear, turning into advisors. These days, 80% of contact centers use multiskilled agents with 50% looking to multiskill nearly *all* their agents (Source: Call Centre Helper). However, a robust knowledge and AI system is critical for successful multiskilling.

A leading multinational banking and financial services provider and an eGain client wanted to become the "go-to" bank in their continent. The bank's customer service process had become a complex web of phone and email contact points with hundreds of convoluted processes and disparate, siloed systems for knowledge, a recipe for poor customer and agent experience. The company had slipped to #3 in Net Promoter Score (NPS) among peers. With eGain's AI knowledge, the bank was able to transform customer and agent experience, while elevating NPS. Here is what it accomplished:

- Customer satisfaction ratings
  - #4 to #1 in helpdesk availability, #3 to #1 in knowledgeability of agents
- Customer effort transformation
  - 27 contact points for agent-assisted service were merged into two
  - 525 service processes were rationalized to 250
- Operational transformation
  - All agents now handle all customer queries (becoming the contact center's own Bos and Deions!)
  - Agent churn was reduced to <1% even as the agent pool was expanded 6x
  - Training time was reduced by half
  - Inconsistent and fragmented knowledge silos were consolidated to unified omnichannel knowledge

ALL ABOARD AND HEALTHY

When the Affordable Care Act (ACA) was introduced, health insurers wanted to quickly educate consumers and enroll them in plans. A leading health insurer and eGain client wanted to accelerate member acquisition and onboarding across its website and health insurance exchange (HIX) websites with real-time chat advice and collaborative online form-filling. With eGain's secure cobrowsing capability, the insurer helped tens of thousands of consumers compare ACA-compliant plan options, select the best-fit plan, and fill out enrollment forms. The solution ensured that the insurer could mask sensitive consumer information from agents, and allow only the consumer to complete transactions. Needless to say, the insurer has had healthy enrollment periods, thanks to eGain!

INNOVATE NOW

Visit www.eGain.com to learn more and http://www.egain.com/try-buy/ to start innovating absolutely risk-free! ■

About eGain
eGain customer engagement solutions power digital transformation for leading brands. Our top-rated cloud applications for social, mobile, web, and contact centers help clients deliver connected customer journeys in an omnichannel world.

GENESYS™

Visual Reality:
Cloud Contact Center Innovation with Omnichannel Screen Share and Co-Browse

We all know that customers want to interact with businesses in a variety of ways. They are quick to adopt new technologies and they expect the companies they work with to keep up. This consumer phenomenon has become the backbone of the omnichannel contact center. One system where all your data is centrally stored and accessible for agents to meet your customer where they are.

Just having lots of channels isn't enough though. As communication continues to change and multiply, customers become increasingly demanding. Customers won't be satisfied by the option to choose one of several interaction channels. Now, they may want to use multiple channels at the same time. We call these "multimodal interactions" because they could involve a phone call, a web chat and a co-browsing session on your website simultaneously.

Customer satisfaction has never been a simple equation. You've got to be able to address the needs of today and anticipate those of tomorrow. As you're planning how to keep your customers happy and engaged, start by focusing on these three key areas—investing in a software that can evolve, rapidly embracing new technologies, and being able to quickly drop a technology that isn't working.

GET A SYSTEM THAT ADAPTS

Make sure your call center software is a true cloud 2.0 solution. Steer clear of legacy systems built in monolithic architectures. Look for a platform designed with decoupled, scalable, independent services, called microservices, that work together to form a larger platform. This provides maximum reliability and scalability.

To keep up-to-date on the latest technologies, find a system that offers continuous deployment. This will ensure that your call center agents always have the newest tools at hand. Since customers are always changing, you must as well.

ADOPT NEW TECHNOLOGY EARLY AND OFTEN

People and organizations are drowning in data. But throwing numbers at your customers accomplishes nothing. People are wired to respond better to visuals. This is why visual customer enablement has become a competitive weapon for companies that invest in customer service.

Most recently, this has led to options like co-browse or screen share sessions. These allow agents to work with *and demonstrate* to customers while solving their issues—improving customer satisfaction and agent efficiency. Co-browse and screen share fortify your system and provide the personalized service customers expect and deserve.

In addition to improving your customer experience, co-browse and screen share reduce time to convert new customers to new products, lower sales and marketing cost-per-conversion, and decrease operational costs. An antiquated system, incapable of adding new tools without changes in infrastructure and pricy upgrades, holds you back.

Alternately, a call center system capable of adding new tools, like co-browse and screen share, automatically can get a leg up on the competition. Continuous deployment means new tools join the ranks with no disruption. The system seamlessly blends all customer communications and data—using consistent routing rules, unified reporting, and real-time visibility to deliver omnichannel performance that can future proof your contact center.

DON'T GET BOGGED DOWN

Not every new channel is going to take off. In fact, many will only last for their proverbial 15 minutes. After all, I don't know many people still using their MySpace page or a beeper. You've got to be able to move on to the next channel without being weighed down by old technology.

With a system designed for the future, you can keep up with rapidly changing customer expectations. Whether you're using today's modern technologies to create extremely personal and engaging interaction opportunities, or planning for tomorrow. The customer stays at the forefront. Because in a world where customers have unlimited options, they'll increasingly make decisions based on how companies make them feel.

BE READY FOR ANY FUTURE

Genesys has been among the leading innovators in communications technology for over 20 years. We invest heavily in research and development, and we're not about to stop. Look for new innovative capabilities in 2017. As with all PureCloud features, these capabilities will be available without customers having to upgrade, migrate, or take any other action. Get started with a 30 day PureCloud free trial and add co-browse or screen share to your omnichannel customer experience. ■