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National Association of Call Centers

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call center industry

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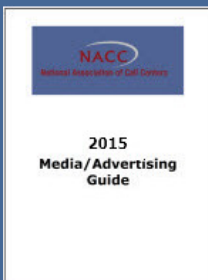
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Quote

"Opportunities are like sunrises. If you wait too long, you miss them."

~ William Arthur

Ward

Reports from the NACC

The NACC has been burning the midnight oil

In This Issue . . .

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- **New Research: Gamification & Revolutionary Breakthrough In Agent Recruitment & Selection**
- **Call Center Comics!**

Meet The Members: Amanda Frantz, Spring Window Fashions

Paul Stockford, Research Director, NACC and Chief Analyst, Saddletree Research, Paul.Stockford@nationalcallcenters.org



This month we're catching up with Amanda Frantz, Customer Service Supervisor – Training & Quality Assurance at Spring Window Fashions, LLC, in Montgomery, PA. Amanda is part of a group of contact center professionals at Springs Window Fashions that are becoming increasingly active in the NACC. I'm also looking forward to meeting Amanda and some of her colleagues at an upcoming contact center event, as we'll chat about in this interview.

NACC: How and when did you begin your career in customer service?

AF: I started my career at Springs Window Fashions in 1999 as a front line customer service representative.

NACC: What is your role today at Spring Window Fashions?

AF: My role is overseeing training and all aspects of quality in our contact center including things like data management, work instructions, self-paced product training modules, accuracy reporting/analysis, order management, quality monitoring and coaching, workforce management and communications to our contact center.

NACC: That's quite a varied background you've got. How has your experience in all of these areas played into the way your career has shaped?

AF: Over the years I have held many roles: customer service representative, buddy trainer, trainer, quality lead and now supervisor of training and quality. The first hand-knowledge of those roles has given me the experience and expertise for where I am today.

NACC: Given your varied background, is there any particular aspect of working in customer service that you'd say was your favorite?

AF: My favorite part of customer service is simple – providing the best experience for the customer.

NACC: What do you think customers really want when it comes to customer service?

AF: To provide friendly, reliable assistance whenever needed - before, during & after purchasing goods and services. Customers will go to who provides not only the best value but also the best service.

NACC: How did you discover the NACC? What sparked your interest in being a member?

AF: I was introduced to the NACC by Bill Hartline, Director of Customer Service at Springs Window Fashions, LLC, in Montgomery, PA.

NACC: One day I'm going to get Bill to subject himself to being in this feature! In the meantime, I'm looking forward to having the opportunity to meet you at the Verint Engage customer event this month. How often do you attend these types of customer events? What do you find to be most beneficial about customer events such as Verint's?

AF: This is actually my first user's conference and I'm very excited for the opportunity. We've had quality monitoring for some time and recently implemented workforce management. Looking to learn as much as we can about best practices and efficiencies in WFM and QM as well as learn more about other technologies including, but not limited to, speech analytics, real-time analytics and back office solutions. I'm also looking forward to being

The NACC has been burning the midnight oil and typing until our fingers are sore to bring out reports to our members. Each is listed below. If you are interested to see what we are writing about, click on the links below and download the executive summary of each. If you like what you see, join the NACC so that you can view these reports and others that will be coming out soon on our website. These reports will ensure that you know the latest trends in the industry.

[HireIQ Candidate Optimizer Disrupts The Status Quo, Powers Revolution In Customer Service Human Capital Management: May 2015](#)

[Verint Jumps Into The Gamification Game: April 2015](#)

[Research Update - Strong 4th Quarter Tops Year of Growth for the 2014 U.S. Contact Center Industry Employment](#)

[Geo-Fencing: Expanding The Contact Center Boundaries?: November 2014](#)

[Neural Phonetic Speech Analytics: The Brains behind Nexidia Interactions Analytics 11.0: July 2014](#)

[Nexidia Pushes Speech Analytics Envelope with Nexidia Interaction Analytics 11.0: July 2014](#)

[The Time is Now: Workforce](#)

[Optimization Becomes Reality for the Small-to-Medium-Sized Contact Center: July 2013](#)

[Finding the Silver Lining in the Contact Center Cloud: May 2013](#)

[The At-Home Agent Movement - A Benchmark Quantitative Analysis: January 2013](#)

[State of the Call Center Industry Report: 2nd Quarter 2012 Data](#)

[State of the Call Center Industry Report: 1st Quarter 2012 Data](#)

[Contact Center Mobility Study: May 2012](#)

[State of the Call Center Industry Report: 4th Quarter 2011 Data](#)

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[State of the Call Center Industry Report: 2nd Quarter 2009 Data](#)

[State of the Call Center Industry Report: 1st Quarter 2009 Data](#)

[North American Contact Center Industry 2008-2009: The Year in Review and a Look Ahead](#)

[State of the Call Center Industry Report: 4th Quarter 2008 Data](#)

[60 Ideas in 60 Minutes: 2008 Session](#)

[60 Ideas in 60 Minutes: 2007 Session](#)

part of a network of other users.

NACC: What do you like to do when you're not at work?

AF: Spend quality time with my wonderful husband and three beautiful children ages 19, 11 and 5. They keep me very busy!

NACC: What are some of your favorite family activities?

AF: We like keeping busy and having fun. We live on a farm so taking care of that is a year-round activity for us. We have beef cows, horses, and chickens. Most recently my son took on a project of hatching some baby peeps and they're hatching this week. He has three so far! We also like going to the beach in the summer to get away.

NACC: Any advice for someone considering or just starting a customer service career?

AF: My advice is to be patient and keep a service-oriented attitude. Don't take it personally when you get that upset customer. Instead hear them out and put yourself in their shoes. You never know what the customer may have gone through before they got to you. A good acronym I learned years ago was LAF. Listen, apologize, and fix. There will be times when you can't fix it exactly how the customer wants. When that happens let them know why and provide them with a reasonable solution vs. a roadblock. They will appreciate the efforts you have made to hear them and try your best to help them.

You Can't CRM Your Problems Away!

Paul Stockford, Research Director, NACC and Chief Analyst, Saddletree Research, Paul.Stockford@nationalcallcenters.org

Back in the day, CRM was the cure for all that might have ailed your contact center. Given the benefit of time and wisdom we know that no longer is true. There are many challenges that your CRM software simply can't tackle.

In terms of productivity and customer service, there are still unexplored frontiers in the contact center that are beginning to capture the attention and imagination of the industry. One such area is the agent desktop.

The top five technology solutions that are in demand in 2015, based upon the results of the survey the NACC conducted at the end of last year and the beginning of this year, are illustrated in the table below. The table specifies the percentage of respondents who indicated that they would be evaluating each solution for purchase during 2015.

Technology Solution	Respondents Who Will Purchase in 2015
Customer Survey Software	34%
Desktop Analytics	32%
Speech Analytics	28%
Recruitment/Hiring Software	27%
Text Analytics	25%

Source: National Association of Call Centers (NACC)

Given the high industry interest in better understanding the Voice of the Customer (VoC) and optimizing the customer experience, there's no surprise that customer survey software is in high demand this year. The surprise in this year's results is the high degree of interest in desktop analytics. This demand for desktop analytics indicates a general industry understanding of the productivity potential that can be unlocked by better understanding what's going on at the agent desktop.

I recently recorded a podcast with Mike Garner of Cicero in which we discuss the emergence of the agent desktop as a factor in the customer service efficiency equation. It is available for download on the NACC website, <http://www.nationalcallcenters.org/Podcasts/you-cant-crm-your-problems-away.html>. I encourage you to take ten minutes and give it a listen. You're bound to walk away with some new ideas.

If you're not familiar with Cicero, be sure to visit <http://www.ciceroinc.com/>. The company isn't a household name in the industry yet, but they soon will be. This is a company with some innovative ideas and run by some great people. I don't say that about many companies in the industry today and the NACC isn't making a penny from this recommendation. That in itself says something about Cicero. Learn more by downloading the podcast at <http://www.nationalcallcenters.org/Podcasts/you-cant-crm-your-problems-away.html>.

New Research: Gamification & Breakthrough in Agent Recruitment/Selection

Paul Stockford, Research Director, NACC and Chief Analyst, Saddletree Research, Paul.Stockford@nationalcallcenters.org

I wrote about the availability of a couple of new research papers in the May edition of this newsletter but in case you missed it, be sure to download and take a look at these papers I recently authored.

The first paper covers the topic of gamification. While gamification hasn't exactly been setting the industry on fire, it is still an interesting topic and one that will gain increasing attention as the millennial generation continues to comprise a greater percentage of the contact center workforce. My interest in gamification at this point is based upon the unique approach that Verint is taking to gamification. Verint Gamification offers narratives that make the agent a participant in the game beyond just rankings and standings. Games can also be customized based upon corporate culture, geography and other factors.

The paper I wrote about Verint's approach to gamification can be downloaded from the website, www.nationalcallcenters.org, with a member ID and password. The same is true of a paper I recently authored covering what I consider to be one of the major industry breakthroughs, if not the industry breakthrough, of the last 15 years.

With annualized contact center industry personnel turnover of about 30 percent, the revolving door of contact center employment has negative effects on company financial performance as well as customer retention efforts. Agent turnover costs the industry \$4B (that's Billion with a "B") annually. That's approximately the gross national product of the island nation of Barbados.

This seemingly intractable problem is one of the biggest, most persistent challenges that our industry faces and no investment in technology or process innovation can mask its impact on customer satisfaction, employee engagement, and overall customer service performance. Change has to occur at the front-end of the agent lifecycle – the recruiting and hiring process. And it appears HireIQ Solutions has become the catalyst for that change.

I have written extensively about this revolutionary contact center solution and again, the paper is available for download at the NACC website. I encourage you to take the time to understand what HireIQ Solutions has developed and the impact it can potentially have on the contact center industry.

Once you've read the paper I think you'll agree with my prediction that it will no longer be "business as usual" when it comes to the agent recruitment and selection process. This is revolutionary stuff. Be sure you stay on top of this innovative development.

For further information about HireIQ Solutions, please visit www.hireiqinc.com. Follow HireIQ on Twitter at www.twitter.com/hireiqinc.

Call Center Comics!



If you like this comic and would like to see more, write Ozzie at callcentercomics@yahoo.com and visit his website at http://callcentercomics.com/cartoon_categories.htm or just click on the comic to take you to his page. The NACC appreciates Ozzie letting us use some of his comics in our newsletter.

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