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National Association of Call Centers

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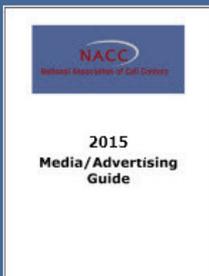
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Quote

"Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can."

~ Arthur

Ashe

Reports from the NACC

The NACC has been burning the midnight oil

In This Issue . . .

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Meet The Members: Revisit Our 1st "Meet The Members" Subject, Kim Hileman

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



One of the first members interviewed for this "Meet the Members" feature was Kim Hileman. We first introduced Kim in September 2013 and this month we are revisiting Kim and her contact center career. I have personally known Kim for 15 years and consider her to be the consummate customer service professional. Economic conditions have recently changed Kim's employment status and since I often receive calls from NACC members in search of good customer service professionals to join their contact center, I wanted to make sure NACC members and the subscribers to our newsletters know that Kim is available. Kim can be reached at kahileman@gmail.com or by phone at 218-590-5582. Her LinkedIn profile can be found at www.linkedin.com/pub/kim-hileman/86/ba/23b.

NACC: Let's start by reviewing your background in the customer service industry.

KH: I began in this industry calling magazine subscribers in order to renew their subscriptions. We also had a market research division and in between sub renewals, I also helped with survey calls and tabulation. Once the company began buying trade shows, it was decided that we needed to offer inbound customer service. So, from that point, I answered calls and hand-wrote registrations 4 hours a day and spent the remaining 4 hours getting authorization numbers from the credit card companies. My how times have changed! In 1997, we had grown to the point of needing to combine two separate departments, publishing and expositions, and I created and led the call center that would service customers from 30 publications, 54 tradeshow and conferences and over 200 electronic products and websites via inbound & outbound call and email. Quite the fete from where I started!

NACC: Are there any particular experiences or accomplishments that you consider to be highlights in your customer service career?

KH: There are so many events that could highlight my career it's hard to pick one or two. I think the fact that I was willing to work in any capacity at any location & time provided the most opportunity for both personal & professional growth. One of my strongest memories was working in New York City after the first World Trade Center bombing. The Javits Convention Center is a giant structure of concrete, marble and glass perfect for hiding potential bombs and causing mass destruction. As we set up for one of our shows, we continued to get bomb threats. The threat would come in, we'd evacuate the building, the police and bomb dogs would search until the all clear could be given and we'd go back to work. After what seemed a hundred of these in one day, we collectively decided that in order to get our jobs done, we'd come up with a code name. If the threat was called in, we'd hear "Mushroom" (warped trade show humor!) on the radios and it was up to each of us to decide if we'd evacuate or not. Not one of us did, we got the show set up & open and more importantly, no one was hurt in the end.

NACC: What aspects of the customer service profession do you find most gratifying?

KH: I really enjoy being given the opportunity to help customers solve their problems or find ways to provide services & information to meet their needs. With such a wide variety of products and market segments, every day was different and there is nothing better than the satisfaction of a grateful, happy and better yet, returning customer.

NACC: As you enter this next phase of your career what do you want to accomplish?

KH: The sudden shock of being downsized was quite honestly traumatic. However once the shock wore off, it's much easier to see this as an opportunity to move on to the next chapter in my life. I've been given the chance to continue in the same vein or to reinvent myself. I'd like to remain in the customer service industry because I find it highly rewarding and it also provides an opportunity to be creative and collaborative, which I truly enjoy.

The NACC has been during 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](#)

[State of the Call Center Industry Report: 3rd Quarter 2011 Data](#)

[State of the Call Center Industry Report: 2nd Quarter 2011 Data](#)

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[State of the Call Center Industry Report: 3rd Quarter 2009 Data](#)

[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](#)

However, project management is also an interest for me. So is gourmet cooking but that's more a passionate hobby than a career choice, to my husband's continued glee.

NACC: What do you consider the three greatest strengths you bring to a potential employer in the customer service industry?

KH: I think my greatest strengths include the ability to build successful teams who take pride in servicing customers from all walks of life. I've worked with everyone from high end fashion designers and brands to veterinarians and automotive technicians. Everyone brought something different to the table and I learned from them all. In addition, there is no task too big or small. If it needs doing, let's get it done and done right. And finally, you have to do everything with heart. Yes, a professional demeanor & approach is necessary but at the end of the day, it's the people in all of our processes that matter the most. They shape your world and leave lasting impressions. I hope some would say I have done the same for them.

[Verint's User Group Meeting, ENGAGE: A NACC Member's Review](#)

Amanda Frantz, Customer Service Supervisor, Training & Quality Assurance, Springs Window Fashions, & NACC Member, amanda.frantz@springswindowfashions.com



I, along with two other colleagues, recently had the opportunity to attend our first ever Verint user's conference, which was held in Las Vegas 6/8-6/11. Like many of the attendees, we have Verint quality management and workforce management and we hoped to gain insight on the most efficient ways to utilize these solutions with our current applications in order to maximize value. We were also interested in learning about what the future may hold for our Verint solutions. We were not disappointed.

To kick things off each attendee was given a hardback agenda/notebook and the option to download an awesome event app, which included an agenda and access to networking and feedback opportunities.

The main focus or theme of the conference seemed to be customer analytics, engagement management and workforce optimization. Each day kicked off with a general session. My personal favorite was an inspirational speech by keynote speaker Erik Wahl, an internationally recognized graffiti artist, author and entrepreneur. Erik presented the concept to "unthink" or challenge your potential. He reminded us all that we often become institutionalized and settle into traditional thought patterns and lose our creativity. He reminded us that it's ok to fail. It shows you are trying. The important thing is to "fail fast, fail forward and auto correct". It was a message that I believe everyone there could connect to personally and professionally. On a professional note, it made me think of the many applications Verint has to offer and how we could use them to improve the future of our business and experience with our customers.

After the general sessions, everyone was dispersed to attend the breakout sessions of their choice. Breakout sessions were led by Verint users and Verint representatives. Over the week, the program offered something for everyone with each day having eight breakout session slots and a choice of 10-12 different topics and speakers per slot, adding up to approximately 90 choices! The only downside I found was that none of the sessions were repeated so attendees had only one opportunity to attend a particular session.

After the breakouts there were networking/user group opportunities for a number of different industry topics. There were seven of these networking opportunities throughout the week. I would have liked to have seen more of these offered.

I should mention that breaks and lunches also provided networking opportunities. On one of the days Verint had regions labeled on round tables in the banquet hall so attendees could network with others from a particular area. I thought this was a good idea but unfortunately it was under-utilized by attendees.

On the final evening of the event, there was a customer appreciation party – yet another networking opportunity. Throughout the event there was a solutions lounge and technology showcase open and available for attendees to see solutions from Verint and from Verint partners. on display. All attendees wore name badges that identified them as users, speakers or Verint employees so it was easy to get names and make new contacts.

Verint demonstrated their concern for the experience of Engage attendees by offering feedback opportunities after each breakout session. They uploaded presentations to their mobile app and made them available to attendees during and after the event.

Overall, Verint Engage was a very positive experience for me. The event was very well organized and filled with learning and networking opportunities. I would encourage anyone who is considering attending one of these user group events to make the effort to attend. My colleagues and I walked away on the last day feeling energized and confident in how we are currently using our existing tools, and how we will be able to implement new ideas in order to get even more from our Verint solutions.

[Don't Miss This Offer From Contact Center Pipeline Magazine!](#)

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

While I was attending Verint Engage in Las Vegas, I had the chance to meet and chat with Susan Hash, the editor of Contact Center Pipeline magazine. Many of you already know I write a monthly column in that magazine and am personally proud to be associated with it.

For those of you who don't already get Contact Center Pipeline, Susan has generously offered a free digital subscription to any NACC member or subscriber who would like one. All you have to do is go to www.contactcenterpipeline.com and click on the subscribe link. Enter the promo code "NACC" in the box and your invoice will show a total due of \$0.00 for your subscription. I encourage you to subscribe to this excellent industry publication and while you're on the site, be sure to check out my column, "The View from the Saddle."

[How To Calculate The True Costs Of A Call Center Agent](#)

Mark Fichera, CEO, OnBrand24 & NACC Member, mfichera@onbrand24.com

Are you a getting tired of reading blog after blog about, Omni-channel Customer Service, Voice Analytics, Measuring FCR, Gamification, etc.? How about if we do a little blocking and tackling for a change and look into true costs for a call center customer service agent.

As CEO of a Call Center Outsourcing company, I am often amazed at how prospective clients really don't have a true handle on what their current cost

per hour is for their customer service agents. It could be that they don't have all of the necessary information to calculate their true cost or they just use an oversimplified estimate that results in a distorted figure that grossly underestimates their true cost.

We have put together a spreadsheet that we'd like to share with you. I believe the calculated figures within the spreadsheet take into account the vast majority of costs that need to be considered in order to define your true agent per hour cost. Yes, we could go more granular, but you can reach a point of diminishing returns, so hopefully, this spreadsheet will help you find a balance.

The spreadsheet is broken into 4 distinct categories;

- Labor Cost
- Technology Cost
- Site and other Costs
- Management Team Costs

Based on the data you input into the Assumption section, the spreadsheet will calculate the total costs within each category as well as the total combined cost.

Let's take a look at each of these in detail.

Labor Costs – This is probably the easiest category to calculate. Enter the average hourly figure of your agents. The spreadsheet will automatically add 33% for Health insurance, workers compensation insurance, Taxes including, Federal Unemployment, Medicare/SS, State Unemployment and Vacation time. I do understand that every employee does not take healthcare, and state unemployment varies from State to State, but I believe 33% is a realistic figure for the average of your agents. If you disagree, just change the formula to the percentage you feel is appropriate.

Technology Costs – Here is a group that you will have to pry away from your IT people, but a critical component. We have allowed for two options regarding your ACD/phone System: Cloud based and Premise based. For Cloud Based, enter the per agent monthly cost. For premise based, enter the total cost of your system divided by 5 to represent the annual cost depreciated over five years. For PC software we have estimated \$350 per agent amortized over 3 years. For Long Distance Fees we have assumed \$100 per month per agent. For Servers and Routers, we have depreciated the total cost over 3 years.

Site and Other Costs – You will most likely have to ask your CFO/Comptroller/Owner for Rent, Utilities, Internet Access and Insurance costs. Regulatory Compliance is now something all call centers have to deal with. Enter your best estimate for the annual cost. Other expenses included copiers, printers and supplies are "catch all" categories.

Management Team Labor Cost – For Quality Assurance, we have assumed 1 Q/A employee for every 25 agents. Again, if you have a different ratio, just change the formula. Trainers are calculated at 1 for every 50 agents. Supervisors for every 15 agents. IT Support for every 50 agents. Recruiting and Interviewing is rather a difficult figure to pinpoint, so just enter an estimate. Attrition related costs, AKA, the silent killer, is calculated based on your attrition percentage and number of hours it takes to train a new agent.

This spreadsheet is not perfect, but we hope it will give you a better idea of how much it really costs to run a call center right down to the cost per agent, per hour.

To download a copy of the spreadsheet courtesy of NACC member OnBrand24, [click here](#).

[Answering The Challenge Of Regulatory Compliance In The Contact Center](#)

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

Compliance management is not a new issue in the contact center, but it is one that has taken on greater urgency since the economic crisis of 2007 – 2009. That crisis led to demand for greater regulatory oversight in a number of industries, most notably the financial services industry. The demand was answered by the introduction of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, typically referred to as Dodd-Frank. The act was signed into law in July of 2010 and is responsible for many of the changes in the U.S. financial services industry.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) of 2010 also led to new regulations in the health care industry, joining industries such as food, drugs, medical devices, tobacco products and many others that are heavily regulated. Today's regulatory environment has left many contact centers scrambling for ways to efficiently comply with these regulations and proactively prevent violations in the future.

In the past, regulatory violations were often investigated over a period of months with organizations being allowed to respond almost at their leisure.

Today's regulatory environment has replaced this relaxed attitude with an unprecedented sense of urgency. Compliance managers must now respond to complaints in a matter of days rather than months.

Nexidia's recently introduced Advanced Compliance Management offers a technology solution to the increasingly challenging task of working within the confines of today's regulatory environment. Based upon Nexidia's highly-evolved speech analytics technology, Advanced Compliance Management is radically changing the way in which the contact center proactively manages regulatory compliance.

Saddletree Research, recently wrote an analysis of Nexidia Advanced Compliance Management, including how it works and how it aids compliance managers in the contact center and elsewhere in the enterprise. To read this analysis, [click here](#).

Call Center Comics!





**MARY:
ON YOUR ANONYMOUS EMPLOYEE
SURVEY YOU MENTIONED TRUST AS A
CONCERN. WHY IS THAT?**

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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