



# National Association of Call Centers In Queue

The fun, informative, and unique newsletter for the call center industry

Welcome to the September 2016 issue of the NACC In Queue newsletter!



## Engaging With Verint At Engage 2016

Paul Stockford, Research Director, NACC & Chief Analyst, SaddleTree Research, [Paul.Stockford@nationalcallcenters.org](mailto:Paul.Stockford@nationalcallcenters.org)

Earlier this year I was fortunate enough to be invited to speak at, and attend, the Verint customer conference, Engage 2016, in Chicago. Joining over 1,200 other customer service professionals at the venerable Chicago Hilton in the downtown area, the event kicked off as it always does with early evening introductory and keynote sessions leading into an opening reception in the Verint Solutions Lounge.

The Chicago Hilton was the ideal venue for Engage 2016. Built in 1927 and recently the beneficiary of a total refurbishment and remodel, the hotel still featured many remnants of its storied past, including extensive ornamentation in public areas and a general air of class that isn't often found in the sterile environs of modern business hotels. It all added to the Engage 2016 experience and was the ideal launch point for the customer appreciation party at one of the hippest venues in Chicago, Morgan Manufacturing, which was transformed into a Chicago-style "speakeasy" for the event.

In between the fun, there was plenty of opportunity to learn. The conference featured eight separate track themes ranging from Customer-Centric Engagement to Improving Operational Efficiency to Understanding the Technology and everything in between. I counted more than 120 different sessions between the eight conference tracks as well as general sessions and user group meetings. There were plenty of networking opportunities at mealtimes, which were usually held in the Solutions Lounge, as well as during coffee breaks.

The highlight of the conference for me was the general session that featured Verint executives talking about the future of smarter engagement. Verint's five senior executives, including CEO Dan Bodner, spoke about how Verint built its business around Actionable Intelligence® and, more importantly, what it means for Verint customers. One of the speakers, Nancy Treaster, who is the General Manager, Strategic Operations for Verint's Enterprise Intelligence Solutions division inspired me to write about gender equality in the contact center industry in my column for the August issue of Contact Center Pipeline magazine. I encourage you to give it a read. You can find it [here](#).

Believe it or not, the most fun I had at Engage 2016 wasn't at the Morgan Manufacturing party, it was in the session I co-presented with Verint consulting expert Andrew Studee, who joined the company as part of its acquisition of Major Oak a few years ago. Entitled "The Contact Center of Today, 2020, and Beyond," Andrew and I took advantage of the opportunity to gaze into the future and talk about the role of innovations such as gamification, biometrics, artificial intelligence, and others in terms of the impact they could have on the contact center of the future. The attendees seemed to sense that we were having fun with the topic and were onboard

with us from the beginning. It made for a memorable morning.

Overall, Verint Engage 2016 was a well-run, interesting, informative, and entertaining conference. It was a first-class event from beginning to end. Then again, I wouldn't expect anything less from Verint.



## The Future Of Work

Michele Rowan, President, Customer Contact Strategies, [rowan.michele@gmail.com](mailto:rowan.michele@gmail.com), <https://www.customercontactstrategies.com/>



People in many parts of the world are changing how and where they want to work, and it is nowhere more evident than in the United States. Flexible working is the #1 new benefit being offered by employers, according to a recent survey conducted by the Society for Human Resource Management.

### In This Issue...

- Verint Engage 2016 From The NACC Perspective
- The Future Of Work
- SaddleTree Research Kachina Awards (And Why You Should Care!)
- Call Center Comics!

### Pearls Of Wisdom

"Dogs, for a reason that can only be described as divine, have the ability to forgive, let go of the past, and live each day joyously. It's something the rest of us strive for."

~ Jennifer Skiff, Author, *The Divinity Of Dogs*

### Reports From NACC

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.

- [Text Analytics Market Update: April 2016](#)
- [Kodak Alaris Launches AI Foundry To Deliver Artificial Intelligence-Based Solutions For The Contact Center: November 2015](#)
- [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 US](#)



Yes, technology continues to drive the pace, but growing in prominence, employees are raising their expectations for workplace-specific technology. Workers value cutting edge technology above most other perks, per the Work in Progress 2016 survey facilitated by Adobe.

While "working from anywhere " creates its own set of challenges, it is here to stay, led by specific segments and job functions where work is transactional in nature populations are large. So where are the big impacts, the high volume payoffs in virtual working? What are the pitfalls and challenges companies are facing?

Mobile, social, video, web conferencing and chat have all influenced the way that we get work done. While we still use email and we still use instant messaging, we are seeing many modes of interactions blending together, such as Slack, Yammer and Socialcast. Some business communication experts believe that we'll reduce the number of channels or modes we use to communicate, and automate more along the way (i.e. automations to manual monthly reports, expense reports, travel documents).

Highly transactional, densely populated work groups like contact centers have had exceptional results utilizing the remote working environment, both full-time and part-time. Companies maintain the exact same visibility of output of home workers as their in-house counterparts. For the most part, they use the exact same the same technologies. The only significant change is in digital tools that employees use to learn, and share knowledge/experiences, and these tools are being implemented in office anyway, because they're more efficient.

There are a number of incremental benefits that highly transactional groups are seeing from expanded use of the work at home model:

- Staffing and overall labor cost improvements (staggered start times, shorter shifts, and split shifts), reduce overall labor cost reduction by 15-25% (2014-2016 CCS Remote Working Benchmarking Survey).
- Disaster recovery and on demand staffing are both significantly more effective in managing volume due to inclement weather staffing shortages, and unplanned spikes in volume.
- Employee satisfaction is 10-20% higher, leading to better attendance (25% improvement in unplanned absenteeism) and employee retention (trends of 30% improvement 2011-2016, CCS Remote Working Benchmarking Survey).

On the downside, companies that invite workers in more traditional jobs to work remotely for some or all of their work schedule sometimes struggle to gain visibility of output, and find that collaboration can suffer. Both can be overcome, but it requires investments in technology, management muscle and cultural shift that a lot of companies fail to think through or plan for before the launch their remote working programs.

Customer Contact Strategies is holding a [Work at Home Conference in Laguna Beach, CA, November 16-17](#). It's two days of deep dive discussions on remote work, a number of great speakers/case studies, and really meaningful benchmarking.



## Introducing The Saddletree Research Kachina Award (And Why You Should Care!)

Paul Stockford, Research Director, NACC & Chief Analyst, Saddletree Research, [Paul.Stockford@nationalcallcenters.org](mailto:Paul.Stockford@nationalcallcenters.org)



This year my company, Saddletree Research, is introducing the Kachina Award for innovation in the North American contact center industry. Before you start rolling your eyes at yet another award program in the contact center industry, let me explain a little about this award and why you should care about who wins one.



Most awards in the contact center industry today are more like "Participant" trophies. In other words, everyone who submits an entry and pays the fee gets the award. That's why you will often see press releases from dozens of different companies that have all won the same award simultaneously.

There are other industry award programs that do recognize the achievements of a single vendor company over others, but there's usually a catch. Once such program offers a prestigious award for technology solutions vendors but the only way the winning company can publicize their win is to "license" the award from the conferring company at a substantial, typically five-figure, fee. In other words, if you wanna play, you gotta pay.

I'm explaining this to you because I've seen dozens of RFPs and RFQs over the years and just about every one of them asks the responding vendor company to list any industry awards they have won. This is why you should care about the Kachina Awards. There won't be a lot of them out there and you can be assured that those companies that win a Kachina Award have truly earned it.

The Kachina Awards recognize a single technology vendor for innovation in a single technology category. For this inaugural year, we have chosen six award categories:

- Innovation in Workforce Optimization (workforce management, quality management)
- Innovation in Analytics (Speech analytics, text analytics, desktop analytics)
- Innovation in Customer Self-Service solutions
- Innovation in Cloud Contact Center solutions
- Innovation in Voice of the Customer solutions
- Innovation in emerging technologies and/or new industry solutions

We tried to keep the categories manageable, along with the application fee. Every company in the industry, from the smallest startup to the biggest of the behemoths, can afford the application fee and that was the point. We want to make sure that everyone in the industry has a fair shot at a Kachina Award.

[Growth For The 2014 U.S. Contact Center Industry Employment: March 2015](#)  
[- 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](#)  
[- State of the Call Center Industry Report: 1st Quarter 2011 Data](#)  
[- State of the Call Center Industry Report: 4th Quarter 2010 Data](#)  
[- State of the Call Center Industry Report: 3rd Quarter 2010 Data](#)  
[- State of the Call Center Industry Report: 2nd Quarter 2010 Data](#)  
[- State of the Call Center Industry Report: 1st Quarter 2010 Data](#)  
[- State of the Call Center Industry Report: 4th Quarter 2009 Data](#)  
[- 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](#)

Kachina Awards submissions will be evaluated by a panel of five independent judges, including one who is an NACC member, with the winner in each category determined by consensus. Besides me, the other four judges are:

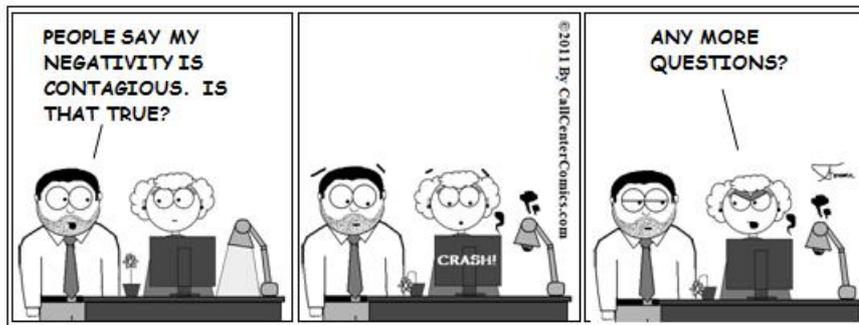
- David Butler, PhD, Professor, University of Southern Mississippi and Executive Director, National Association of Call Centers (NACC)
- Renee Maler, Principal, Philosophy PR + Marketing
- Jim Lavery, Vice President, Contact Centers and Credit Services, Desert Schools Federal Credit Union and longtime NACC member
- Linda Harden, Publisher, Contact Center Pipeline Magazine

For more details on the 2016 Saddletree Research Kachina Awards, please read my current Contact Center Pipeline magazine column which you can find on the Saddletree Research website [here](#).

The Kachina Award will not be an easy award to win. It has to be earned, but those who do win will have the satisfaction of knowing that they have achieved something special.



## Call Center Comics



If you like this comic and would like to see more, write Ozzie at [callcentercomics@yahoo.com](mailto:callcentercomics@yahoo.com) and visit his website at <http://callcentercomics.com> 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.

### Did You Know That NACC...

Offers several types of membership opportunities. [Click here to find out more...](#)

Offers a job board where top employers & candidates go to find their next call center rock-star! [Click here for more...](#)

Offers classifieds for your contact center space, furniture, and just about anything else you can think of. [Click here to sneak a peek...](#)

Offers the ability to [advertise with NACC](#). [Click here to view the NACC Advertising Guide](#) where you can view our channels and prices.

To advertise with the NACC, please contact the NACC at: Tel: 601.447.8300 | Fax: 601.266.5087 | Email: [Click Here](#)

To view past issues of In Queue, please [click here](#).  
If you would like to contribute to In Queue, please reply to this email with "Contribute" in the subject line.  
© 2016 National Association of Call Centers

Get Social with us  

Our Contact Information: Paul Stockford, NACC, 100 South 22nd Ave, Hattiesburg, MS 39401  
Tel: 480.922.5949, [paul.stockford@nationalcallcenter.org](mailto:paul.stockford@nationalcallcenter.org), [www.nationalcallcenters.org](http://www.nationalcallcenters.org)

[Click to view this email in a browser](#)

If you no longer wish to receive these emails, please reply to this message with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line or simply click on the following link: [Unsubscribe](#)

---

NACC  
100 South 22nd Avenue  
Hattiesburg, MS 39401  
US

[Read](#) the VerticalResponse marketing policy.

