



National Association of Call Centers In Queue

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

Welcome to the February 2017 issue of the NACC In Queue newsletter!



Changes Ahead For The NACC

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

On January 1, 2017, the National Association of Call Centers (NACC) relocated from The University of Southern Mississippi (USM) to Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU). David L. Butler, Ph.D., the founder and Executive Director of the NACC, has accepted the position as the Vice Provost for Research and Dean of the College of Graduate Studies at MTSU.

After 16 years at The University of Southern Mississippi (USM) with a long, successful and distinguished career, Butler started his new career at MTSU on 1 January 2017. The Call Center Research Lab, which was founded at USM, will go with Butler to MTSU so that the decades long research does not miss a beat. The relationship between Butler and the NACC continues unabated and the connection to the university research environment also continues with the movement to MTSU.

We expect disruption to NACC operations to be minimal since I still manage the day-to-day operation of the NACC from my office in Scottsdale, AZ. Our initial challenge will be to replicate the services we received at USM with our new university affiliation. Other than that, we expect our research to continue uninterrupted and with only minor disruption to the availability of the NACC website, www.nationalcallcenters.org, as we update our background information. Our mailing address will remain the same.

Thank you for your continued support of our efforts at the NACC, and thank you in advance for your patience as we undergo this change which, we expect, will mean nothing but good things for all of us at the NACC, and all of our members, in the years to come.

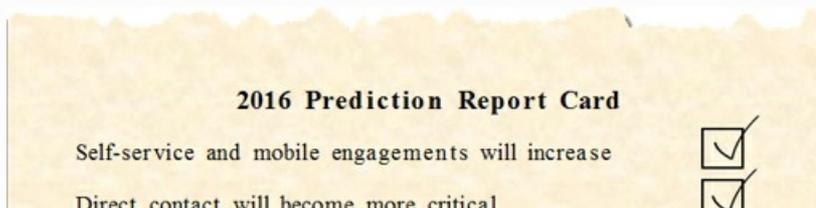


Five Predictions For Customer Care In 2017

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In recent years, Cisco has made predictions for the year ahead regarding the Customer Care industry. Last year, I made five predictions for 2016. You can read about them fully in my blog, but here's a quick report card:



In This Issue...

- Changes Ahead For The NACC
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- Analytics News
- Call Center Comics!

Pearls Of Wisdom

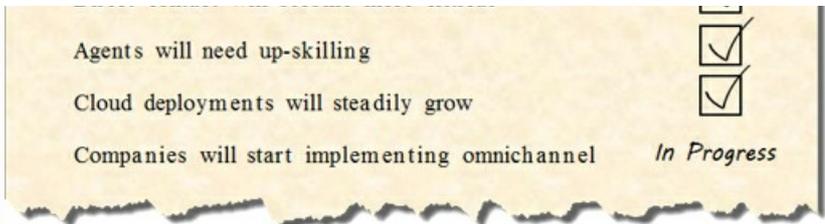
"Today I bent the truth to be kind, and I have no regret, for I am far surer of what is kind than I am of what is true."

~ Robert Brault

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.

- [NICE Introduces Nexidia Analytics: Omni-Channel Analytics For The Contact Center: January 2017](#)
- [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 U.S. Contact Center Industry Employment: March 2015](#)



I believe these predictions will continue trending through 2017. But there's more on the horizon. So, my team and I put together our predictions for Customer Care in 2017.

Companies will get serious about delivering a Connected Digital Experience. I introduced this game-changing concept in a [September blog](#). As increasingly more companies adopt our Release 11.5 contact center solutions, their Connected Digital Experience is becoming a reality. With it, they can now deliver contextual, continuous, and capability-rich customer journeys. Have you taken the time to view your business from your customers' perspective? I encourage you to try. Then consider how a Connected Digital Experience will delight your customers and differentiate you from competitors.

Chief Digital Officers will be more involved in customer-care decisions. Digital transformation has become a driving principal for companies of all sizes, and many businesses now have a Chief Digital Officer. Any holistic digital strategy must include customer care. CDOs recognize that customer care can be an organization's strongest differentiator, which is a basis for my prediction about connected digital experiences.

There will be a strong uptake in secure cloud applications for customer care. Direct contact between customers and agents continues to be more and more critical. When a customer calls, does your agent have everything needed to help? Including a history of previous interactions and insight from analytics? Cross-channel and multi-application integrations are best done in the cloud but must be secure. One security breach is too many. And cloud applications have to be usable as well as secure. Applications that have to punch holes through firewalls can be too cumbersome. There are better ways. The security key management in Cisco's [Context Service](#) lets you securely track your interactions with customers, across time and channels.

Customer care will extend further beyond the contact center. You don't have to confine customer service to traditional contact centers. It doesn't even have to involve agents. Business collaboration suites like [Cisco Spark](#) enable informal, automated team care with bots like [Cisco Spark Care Assistant](#). If you're using Spark, I encourage you to give it a try – especially because it's free to Spark Message users.

Uncertainty will drive businesses to reassess strategic contact center suppliers. We're all aware of the recent history of churn among key players in the contact center industry. And that churn is continuing. The typical pattern is that risk-averse companies diversify their platform choices early. Then, if one vendor begins to look risky, they quickly reconsolidate on a trusted vendor in a controlled manner. We might call these companies "early adopters" of risk mitigation.

Other companies wait longer before migrating from at-risk platforms or vendors. Although this can make business sense, it can also greatly increase the difficulty and costs of the eventual migration. We saw this with Nortel in 2009, Aspect in 2016, and now with Avaya.

The kind of questions to ask during these times are:

- Will support for existing hardware continue?
- Will maintenance costs rise?
- What about innovation? Is there a roadmap?
- How can an unstable vendor transform how businesses care for their own customers?

Whether you consider yourself an early or late adopter, be sure to ask yourself these questions if one of your strategic vendors is looking risky!

Our industry is constantly changing, from customer behavior, to the technologies we have to address it, to the vendors that offer solutions. Is your business keeping up?



Analytics Out Of Reach? Think Again

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On January 10, 2017, NICE made a significant announcement regarding contact center analytics that should mark the beginning of what we are calling "Analytics for the masses." Introduced on January 10th was Nexidia Analytics, the first generation of omni-channel analytics developed by the scientists at Nexidia. Readers will likely recall that Nexidia was acquired by NICE in January of 2016.

Nexidia Analytics adds another layer of analytics ability to the former Nexidia solution while greatly simplifying the process of using analytics. Typically managed by highly-trained analysts, analytics was segregated by channel, essentially creating silos of data for each channel. In other words, speech analytics was used to mine for customer data in voice channels, text analytics was used to mine for customer data in e-mails and web chats, and desktop analytics was deployed to measure time-and-motion activities on the agent desktop.

Nexidia Analytics is the industry's first omni-channel analytics solution, meaning it can mine for customer data across channels and unify the results in the type of reports that are the most meaningful to the user. With this new software and service, an interaction is simply an interaction regardless of the channel of communication.

Administration and management of Nexidia Analytics has also been significantly simplified. The skills of a trained analyst are no longer necessary as the analytics process is business driven with the actual analytics process managed by a drag-and-drop process, eliminating the need for specialized skills. The user channels

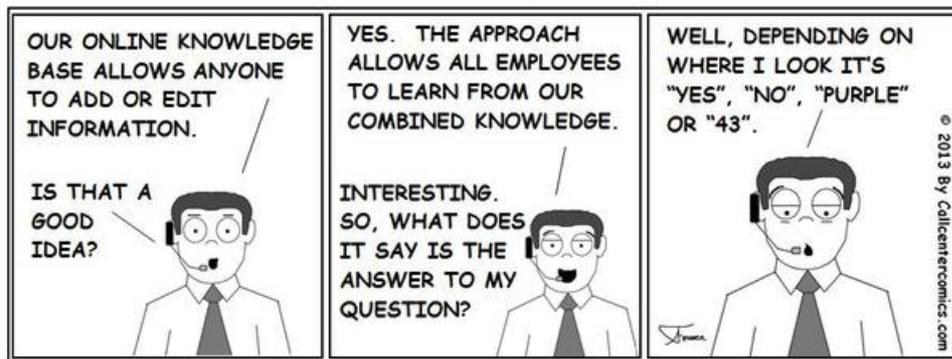
[Employment: March 2015](#)
[- Geo-Fencing: Expanding The Contact Center Boundaries?: November 2014](#)
[- Neural Phonetic Speech Analytics: The Brains behind Nexidia Interactions Analytics 11.0: July 2014](#)
[- Nexidia Pushes Speech Analytics Envelope with Nexidia Interaction Analytics 11.0: July 2014](#)
[- 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](#)
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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](#)

the business intent, drag-and-drop does the rest.

The ability to perform analytics across communications channel is, in this writer's opinion, a game changer and should be of great interest to the industry. Saddletree Research recently authored a research note covering this announcement, a copy of which can be downloaded by visiting the NACC website at www.nationalcallcenters.org.



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> 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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