



National Association of Call Centers

In Queue

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

Welcome to the August 2018 issue of the NACC In Queue newsletter!



Call Center And Telemarketing Operations Tip: Add E-Mail To Contact Strategy

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Any salesperson will tell you that it takes multiple touch points to book a sale. Depending on the [industry](#) and the type of product or service, it can take 7 to 20 touches before a prospect will buy from your company.

Imagine if each of those touch points were a phone call; the sales cycle would take forever. Adding email as a touch point can drastically decrease the sales cycle. Here are 6 best practices for adding email as an additional touch point as part of your overall marketing and sales strategy.

Best Practice #1 – Your call center should strategically pair outbound calls with email follow-up

One of the most important concepts when sending out email as part of an inbound or outbound call center campaign is to think through the prospect experience and make sure that the follow-up emails make logic sense to your prospect or customers. There are many types of emails that can be sent including Informational, confirmations and follow up emails. Make sure that at the right point in the script, you are sending out the right type of email to the prospect or customer.

For example: On a first or second call, the conversation might lead the call center agent to send out an email with some additional information on the product or possibly a URL for further research. On a follow up call where the call center agent is unable to reach the person, another email reinforcing the first email could be sent, explaining they had tried to call and wanted to make sure there were no additional questions. After the sale is complete, an email could be sent by the agent thanking the new customer for their time and hope they enjoy the product/service.

Don't send out an email just to be sending out an email. The email should reinforce the conversation that was just completed over the phone, or to help move the lead through the sales cycle. You may find that based on your work flow, an email would not be helpful.

Don't forget to plan for how to handle replies to those emails. Do you want the agents to handle those emails or should they go back to a central inbox that can be answered by several people? Focusing on how the email will fit into your current work flow will help answer these questions.

Best Practice #2 – Your call center should use automation for sending emails

Sending emails can be very cumbersome and time consuming if the call center agents do them one by one and lots of typing is required. In many instances, a call center agent can make 2 or 3 more phone calls in the time it takes to craft one email and send it out. Therefore, automating the process of sending email as a follow-up to outbound calls is vital. Reducing the amount of time an agent is spending on emails make the decision to use email that much easier.

Automation can be achieved in many ways. The dialer or CRM may have logic built in that on certain actions or changes to a record, and email is sent out. 3rd party software can also be used to help automate the sending of emails through integration with the dialer/CRM (APIs). Any way to automate the process means more outbound calls can be made which means more sales. It's a numbers game.

Best Practice #3 – Your call center should ensure consistency when sending emails

Just as it is important for agents to use the same script during an inbound or outbound telemarketing phone call, the emails that are sent out should also be similar. By using some type of application that is automatically sending the email, you will ensure that the emails will be free of misspelled words, that the email is formatted and looks professional, that there is no wrong information about the product and that they are sent to the right person. Having mistakes in the email could be a huge setback to making a sale.

In This Issue...

- Call Center & Telemarketing Operations Tip: Add E-Mail To Contact Strategy
- The Knowledge Management Slow Burn
- Call Center Comics!

Pearls Of Wisdom

"Being a giver doesn't require extraordinary acts of sacrifice. It just involves a focus on acting in the interests of others."
 ~ Adam M. Grant

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.

- [Research Note: NICE](#)

- [Introduces CXone - Fully Integrated Open Cloud Contact Center Platform: August 2017](#)

- [Research Note: Verint Introduces Knowledge Management Professional Knowledge Management for the Masses: Julv 2017](#)

- [NICE Introduces Nexidig 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](#)

If automation is not possible, setting up guidelines will be vital. The more guidelines that can be given to the agents means a better chance of having an email go out that will look professional and will lead to more sales or conversions.

Best Practice #4 – Your call center should use personalization in the email messages

I was trying to explain to my 11-year-old daughter the movie You've Got Mail and how many years ago everyone was so excited when they received email after logging onto the internet. These days, everyone is receiving too many emails. Most are seen as spam and deleted immediately.

One way to help avoid that is through personalization. Make the email unique so that it doesn't look like a robot sent it. This can be done through using the potential customer's name in the subject line or the salutation or make sure the agents use their name in the signature block. An email can also be personalized by adding a note about the phone call the call center agent was just on with the potential customer.

The more that an email speaks to a person individually, the better. Now instead of being deleted, the email will be read and hopefully the proper action will be taken, leading to more sales.

Best Practice #5 – Your call center should ensure deliverability of the emails being sent

There is no point in adding email to your call center program arsenal if the email never arrives. Although this one might seem obvious, you want to make sure your email hits the person's inbox, not the spam folder. There are several ways to combat this.

First, if you are sending email on your own behalf (meaning you own the domain), make sure that your email reputation is high. There are several resources out there that can help you see how healthy your domain is for sending email. If you are sending email on behalf of a client, make sure you have the proper SPF record and possibly DKIM set up so that email can be delivered properly.

Second, make sure to follow best practices in terms of your subject line. Avoid words such as Free and the use of symbols. Many spam filters will mark these as spam.

Third, avoid using images unless necessary. This is especially true for B2B selling since many businesses will have company policies in place to automatically block images or worse, the whole email. Some email providers may also block images if they are too large.

Last, there are companies that can analyze your emails and tell you what kind of spam issues you might have. Depending on the role email will play in your overall program, you may want to invest in one of these subscriptions.

Best Practice #6 – Don't forget the small stuff

During the process of setting up an email campaign as part of a call center program, it is easy to forget some of the smaller details that are still important. First, never overlook the pre-header text. This is the text that appears below the subject line in many email clients such as Outlook. This line of text can support the subject line and help entice the recipient of the email to open the email instead of just deleting it or worse, marking the email as spam. Including phrasing such as "Here is the information you requested..." or "Per our phone conversation..."

can help remind the recipient why they are getting the email.

Second, don't forget the power of the Name and Email address used in the From Email field. Stay away from email addresses such as noreply@. This will feel very impersonal and more like spam. If you can use the name and email of the agent that sent the email, great. Just don't forget about Best Practice #1 and make sure this works within your work flow. For many telemarketing companies, this is not practical. Instead, use a from name that will be easily recognizable by the email recipient. You might even add what the from name and email address are in the script so that the person knows what to expect. If there is a name for the department sending out the email, use that as the from name, such as [company name] Customer Service Desk.

Last, make sure you have a process in place to check for quality. Maybe this means having the agents send a test email to a supervisor or a quality assurance person, or maybe it means having the supervisor or QA person automatically Bcc'd on each email if it is an automated process. Either way, time should be taken to make sure that the emails are sent out properly, just like calls are monitored to make sure that scripts and other procedures are being followed.

Final Thoughts

While adding email to a call center program can feel like a daunting task, it is well worth it. Having the ability to send out an email, especially if someone being called is hesitant can be very powerful and effective. It's another tool for your call center agents!

Here at Quality Contact Solutions we build our own custom applications to send out perfectly formatted emails at the click of a button. We send emails on all kinds of outbound telemarketing campaigns, from appointment confirmations, to additional product details with links or follow ups when we are unable to reach the intended party. If you have any questions about how to build an effective email campaign, email me at rich.hamilton@qualitycontactsolutions.com.

Rich Hamilton is the Director of Marketing & Product Development for Quality Contact Solutions, a leading outsourced telemarketing organization. Rich works tirelessly to bring new products to the teleservices and call center market. Rich is also the creative powerhouse behind executing on a wide spectrum of marketing initiatives for the organization. In addition, Rich is a telemarketing compliance guru with a Customer Engagement Compliance Professional (CECP) certification to back it up. Rich can be reached at rich.hamilton@qualitycontactsolutions.com or 516-656-5105.

- [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](#)
- [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](#)
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- [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 Knowledge Management Slow Burn

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This past May, I received an inquiry from a NACC member who was looking for answers to content organization challenges she was facing in her contact center. To my mind, this was a classic case of knowledge management to the rescue!

As we typically do in response to member inquiries, I sent a group e-mail to all NACC members and asked them if they would share their knowledge management experience, including which solutions worked for them and which vendors they found to be competent knowledge management partners. Not only did I get a large number of responses from current knowledge management users, I got a pretty fair number of e-mails from other NACC members who told me they were also interested in acquiring knowledge management and would like to be in on the collective responses from those members who currently use knowledge management.

This level of interest in knowledge management led me to publish an article in the [June issue](#) of In Queue that outlines, in general terms, what a buyer should look for in a knowledge management solution. We supported our position with data from the 2018 NACC survey – a perfect example of why we need your survey support and participation every year.

Since that time, I continue to receive member questions about knowledge management and have also received calls from vendors that are getting into the contact center knowledge management market. In order to better address this high degree of interest in knowledge management, I have recorded a [podcast](#) on the subject with Verint's knowledge management guru, Kelly Koelliker.

Entitled "Getting Smart about Knowledge Management," the podcast is a 10-minute journey through the world of knowledge management and will give listeners a comprehensive overview of what to look for, and what to avoid, when shopping for and selecting a knowledge management solution for their contact center. [Click here](#) to listen to or download the podcast. I guarantee you'll find it to be 10 minutes well spent!



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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