

# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CALL CENTERS

## IN QUEUE

### VOLUME 14, ISSUE 7



Welcome to the July 2019 issue of the NACC In Queue newsletter!

#### Employee Morale At Your Call Center

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*(Note: This article is another contribution from NACC member Mark Pereira. We appreciate Mark's support and encourage other members to contribute to the In Queue newsletter. We are open to any and all topic ideas. ~ Editor)*



When I started my call center career a few years ago, I was basically tied down to a phone and tackling one call after another with two breaks and a 30-minute lunch in which to catch my breath. This went on from 8am to 4:30pm daily and it was fine initially, but as the months went by, I started feeling down and reluctant to come in to work. My goal for joining this call center was to help people and keep learning, but morale among my colleagues was low and this impacted me and my purpose. Instead of feeling like an asset to the call center and enjoying what I did, I felt I was another gear or cog in the machine that seemed to be wearing out. The symptoms of low morale in the contact center often manifest themselves in a number of ways, including but not limited to:

- Absenteeism and turnover
- Decrease in customer satisfaction
- Low adherence scores
- Long average hold times and handle times
- Unmet service level agreements (SLA)

I have discovered in my career that some call centers take an approach like, "I give employees a paycheck when they come to work. If they choose to not do what they're supposed to be doing or not come in, I'll bring in someone who wants to work." That approach may work for a little while but I have also learned that rather than keep looking for new agents, it is more cost-effective to retain the agents you have already trained and have on board. Some of the ideas we have come up with to try to minimize agent turnover include the following:

- **Occasional thank you cards.** A small note or card of appreciation for their efforts or for coming in on a day that they weren't scheduled to, etc. We went to Michaels and purchased small thank you cards which costs about \$15.
- **Creating a call center fun committee.** We established a mix of the leadership team and agents who volunteered to participate in organizing morale-building activities, assist with training and so on.
- **Surveys.** We ask employees for ideas for training sessions, organizing an activity, or just getting general input from your agents. This lets them feel that their voice is being heard and counts. We do implement some of their suggestions if they also meet our business needs. We use Microsoft Forms to conduct surveys.
- **Surprise food events.** I borrowed a cart, purchased some yogurt, granola, fruits and juice and walked around the call center floor serving the agents breakfast on a Monday morning. The total cost was about \$34, and this served a total of 42 appreciative agents.
- **Recognize work anniversaries and birthdays.** I do handwritten cards to remember special days of the agents on my team,
- **Yearly or half-yearly charitable event(s).** For Christmas we divided the call center into teams to collect canned goods which were donated to Gleaners, a local charity.
- **Motivational posters.** I've been using a site called Canva to create and print a lot of the posters or material we use for our call center. You can also create a collage of pictures you've taken in your call center of daily activities or special events. These posters speak volumes to new hires.

I've focused on some of the ideas that I think are the most easily implemented for this article. I hope you may find some of these ideas useful for your own operations, and that you also find success in implementing some of these morale-building activities.

#### NICE Interactions 2019: A NACC Member Review

Barb Bleiler, Solution Development Leader, WPS Health Insurance, [barb.bleiler@wpsic.com](mailto:barb.bleiler@wpsic.com)

*(Note: This article is a contribution from NACC member Barb Bleiler. Stay tuned to hear more about Barb and her story in the future. Not only does she work full-time, she is the CEO of the NICE User Group (NUG), and she also recently completed her Bachelor's Degree after several years of part-time study while maintaining her career! Congratulations Barb! ~ Editor)*



The Experience Divide was the concept that was shared by NICE CEO Barak Eilam at this year's NICE Interaction Conference held in Las Vegas in April 2019. This three-day conference started with sessions that were dedicated to educational topics that provided attendees the opportunity to learn more about workforce management, call recording, quality management analytics, and more. The latter part of the day covered the more technical side of these topics. The day ended with a welcome reception for all. The next two days moved into full gear with breakout sessions, and featured keynote speakers.

Lori Brown, the Chief Experience Officer from the Results Company shared a great story as did Doug Klees, head of Global Customer Care from MoneyGram. James Cave, Senior Director, Omnichannel Customer Experience shared how at Macy's they use NICE's Predictive Behavioral Routing to ensure Macy's customer experience is unique and unforgettable.

I thought it was unusual that Ashton Kutcher was chosen to be the keynote speaker for this conference but was so surprised to learn that he is really into new technologies. He is especially passionate about new entrepreneurial technology. For example, he has been following Uber since its infancy and has created his own application called Thorn. I thought he was just an actor, but my opinion of him has definitely changed after his keynote.

#### In This Issue...

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- Altitude Software Expands To US Market
- Call Center Comics

#### Pearls Of Wisdom

"The moment we believe that success is determined by an ingrained level of ability as opposed to resilience and hard work, we will be brittle in the face of adversity."

~ Joshua Waitzkin

#### Reports From NACC

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: Aspect Software Enters Merger Agreement with Vector Capital: January 2019](#)
- [U.S. Contact Center 2019 Four Important Trends To Watch: December 2018](#)
- [Research Note: Verint Announces Intelligent Virtual Assistant and Chatbot-Driven Self-Service Capabilities: March 2018](#)
- [Research Note: The Return of Industry Employment Data Third Quarter 2017 Reveals Strong Industry Growth: February 2018](#)
- [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: July 2017](#)
- [NICE Introduces Nexidia Analytics: Omnichannel Analytics For The Contact Center: January 2017](#)
- [Text Analytics Market Update: April 2016](#)
- [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](#)
- [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](#)

I was truly excited to hear Chef Gordon Ramsey's presentation during the keynote session. Personal admission - I love the Gordon Ramsey shows. I watch them as I find that you really can find opportunities and lessons in every single episode for team building, leadership, and mentoring. I also get great cooking tips and a good laugh. This talk was just like his TV shows. Gordon shared what he learned growing up and the importance of perseverance and the pursuit of perfection. It was served up with his honest British perspective, and was dished out in a way that everyone could appreciate the taste.

A special luncheon was also held and awards were presented to best cloud implementation, best customer experience, best employee engagement, best business impact and rookie of the year. All companies participating for the awards were included in the luncheon. Award winning companies were photographed with their awards and this was shared during closing of the conference. David Swaisgood and John Lally of TTEC, and Tim Poot of Sallie Mae were individual NUG Star plaque winners. These individuals are Nice User Group members that were recognized for making individual contributions to the membership for 2018.

NICE Interactions provided a total of 200 breakout sessions so those attending with a group of people were able to spread out and cover multiple sessions. NICE also created a fantastic mobile application that allowed attendees to easily view which sessions to attend, and provide session feedback immediately after the session was over. Most memorable for me were the conference sessions that were set up like fireside chats. Really! The session rooms even had monitors displaying little campfires going during the sessions so we felt more like we were sitting around the fire and sharing information. I had the opportunity to conduct one of these fireside chats myself and included the toasting of virtual marshmallows!

NICE Interaction 2020 will be May 11-13 in Las Vegas at Caesars Forum Conference Center. NICE has already posted a Super Saver rate until December 31st, 2019. If you want the full three days, it will be \$1,150. The two-day pass will be \$1,050. After January 1st, the prices go up.

I'll be there, and hopefully I'll see you there too!

### Altitude Software Expands To U.S. Market: Automate & Personalize

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Altitude Software of Lisbon, Portugal is expanding its global footprint and has entered the U.S. market. Using its regional headquarters in Toronto, Ontario, Canada as its launch point, Altitude has established U.S. headquarters in Chicago, Illinois.

Altitude has been operating in the global contact center theater for over 25 years and today has 12 offices on four different continents and a partner network that numbers over 90 and growing.

Altitude offers both premises-based and cloud-based solutions for contact centers of all sizes, each providing a full complement of customer engagement features and a highly competitive array of traditional and advanced contact center functionalities. Omnichannel support, intelligent routing, customer scripting and an extensive portfolio of integrations with third-party applications and platforms are among Altitude's offerings.

Throughout its product line, Altitude brings an ability to handle the most complex of routing applications to contact centers of all sizes. Altitude simplifies routing through proprietary routing algorithms that eliminate the complexity and cost typically associated with advanced routing strategies.

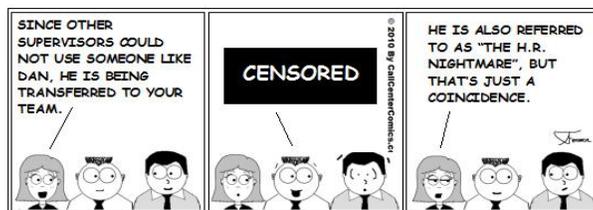
Altitude is among industry leaders in its focus on automation and the use of robotic process automation (RPA) to address both the customer experience and the employee experience. On the customer side, Altitude bots power its intelligent self-service for both inbound and outbound applications. The bots also have the ability to transfer a call to a live agent as required, staying with the call to help the agent as necessary and ensuring an optimal customer experience.

On the employee engagement side, Altitude bots work as digital assistants to agents. Altitude bots monitor agent activity in order to assist the agent in determining next best actions during a customer call. Altitude bots also work on the desktop in order to assist in onboarding and training of new agents.

All this adds up to a highly personalized customer experience, which is exactly what Altitude works to provide. As customer centricity continues to grow as a driving factor in the customer service profession, Altitude is well-positioned to serve the market. Add to this Altitude's commitment to agent empowerment by providing agents the right tools for the optimal customer and employee experience, and measuring performance metrics that truly matter and you have a recipe for customer service success.

While Altitude is new to the U.S. market, they bring with them a rich history in the global contact center industry and over 25 years of experience from which to draw. For more information on Altitude and its market strategy and product portfolio, visit [www.altitude.com](http://www.altitude.com).

- [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](#)
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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](#)



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