

# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CALL CENTERS

## IN QUEUE

### VOLUME 14, ISSUE 8



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

This month's edition of In Queue exclusively features NACC member reviews of recent industry events. We appreciate the active involvement of our members and encourage others to submit reviews, opinions, or articles of interest on any industry topic.

#### Fun At The SWPP Annual Conference

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The 2019 Society of Workforce Planning Professionals (SWPP) Annual Conference was held in Nashville, April 23-25, at the Omni Nashville Hotel and Conference Center. Vicki Herrell, the Executive Director of SWPP, and her team worked hard to make it a fun experience in an environment tailored to growth, networking, teaching and learning from one another. It was my third year attending, and I feel like I've learned something new every time. Prior to leaving for the conference, I'd already planned my strategy regarding what sessions to target. I highlighted them in the SWPP Quality Assurance and Training (QATC) app on my phone. I knew I needed help with these two things:

- Translating workforce management concepts and data into "executive-speak"
- Learning how my group at U.S. Bank Global Fund Services could implement workforce management (WFM) for our back-office functions

I'd also be presenting a panel session on how to measure WFM success in partnership with two attendees and SWPP Board Members: Robert Dobson, Global Head of WFM and Reporting for StubHub, and Dick Spearin, President of The Call Center Consulting Group (and 2019 SWPP Lifetime Achievement award winner). We'd collaborated via WebEx prior to the conference, and I was looking forward to meeting them face to face.

#### Day one

The conference started bright and early Tuesday morning with registration, breakfast and keynote speaker, Justin Robbins. I'd had the privilege of seeing Justin speak at different conferences, and he was dynamic and charismatic as always. His presentation – "I Didn't Plan for This Mess" – covered customer expectations and how you can't win at the game of Contact Center. He also provided "MacGyver-isms" and six observations on how to navigate messy situations. My next session was "Selling Workforce Topics to the Executive Level." "Ah, here we go," I thought, "Just what I'm here for." This session talked about how the landscape of WFM is changing to become more sophisticated and integrated operationally – and how executives are saving a seat at the table to hear from WFM. The presenters also shared best practices on the following:

- How to know your audience and what they want
- How to present information by telling a concise, logical story
- What pitfalls to avoid and tips to implement to get to the heart of the matter: providing executives with line-of-sight to performance, projections, costs and return on investment (ROI)

After lunch, I headed to my next session, "Implementing VTO and Determining ROI." Voluntary time off (VTO) is something we'd started last year to offset overstaffing during our off-peak months. (In my realm, off-peak months are May through October, where we give offline time for growth and development and allow for people to use paid time off (PTO) to go home early. November through April are high volume months for us, and we often reduce the amount of offline time to put all hands-on deck.) I was interested in seeing what others were doing and getting ideas how we could improve. This session talked about determining a business's intended goal and outcome, tailoring your offering to those needs and wants, then reporting on it. Session presenters walked through how they set up their environments, what they learned and how they continued to work through the process and launch it outside their pilot groups.

My last session for the day was "How Gerber Life Integrated WFM Support to the Back Office." My department had been offering chat options and email, mail and fax servicing for a while, but hadn't formally started forecasting volumes or planning for our back-office offerings. This session gave some ideas around what specific information to gather. It detailed how each individual task is processed, how to identify gaps in that process to see if there are opportunities to streamline, how to discover any technological obstacles specific to paper handling and how to train operations and management staff on data analysis and reporting.

#### Day two

The last session I attended Tuesday segued nicely into my first morning session Wednesday, "Extending WFM to the Back Office." Clearly, I wanted to get a full-on perspective from as many experts as I could. This session dove into even more detail pertaining to the back office. It gave additional insights on forecasting, scheduling, workload management and reporting of back office tasks. I felt confident I'd taken enough good notes out of these sessions and gotten some ideas to take back to my organization around integrating WFM into the back office.

Afterward, I was excited to attend my next session, "Making Use of Your WFM System – Flex Scheduling." I was interested in getting ideas and learning about other organization's successes and opportunities regarding flexible scheduling, as this was something we'd already been doing in our own contact center at U.S. Bank Global Fund Services. I heard about Dish Network's foray into implementing flex scheduling for 14 pilot teams in their 7,000-agent contact centers – and what they learned, and are continuing to learn, throughout the process. Their pilot groups included work-from-home agents, an offering we implemented and are looking to expand in our own contact center.

After lunch and WFM Jeopardy, I headed to "How to Increase Employee Engagement." It was presented by NICE, the vendor we use for our scheduling and performance management software. They highlighted data on the cost of attrition per agent (\$12,000-\$16,000), the percentage of millennials and Gen-Xers that will leave their jobs within two years (millennials: 43%, Gen-Xers: 61%), the amount companies lose in productivity due to actively disengaged employees (\$483-605 billion every year) and the percentage of the American workforce that's disengaged (51%). There was also discussion about how a flexible working arrangement can enhance employee engagement and how important it is to get agent input and feedback.

An ice cream social with the sponsors came next, and after that, I needed to prepare for my own presentation, "How Do You Measure WFM Success?" For this, Bob, Dick and I hosted an interactive panel where we talked about our own individual WFM and business environments. We discussed our key performance indicators (KPIs) and gave measurement examples from within our own organizations. Then we fielded questions regarding what measurements might be the best fit for other organizations.

Everyone gathered that evening at B.B. King's Blues Lounge, just off Broadway, for some authentic southern BBQ, music and more networking. Downtown Nashville was bustling with activity for the 2019 NFL Draft and the Rock-N-Roll Marathon, and I enjoyed taking in much of the cultural ambience before heading back to the hotel to rest up for the final half-day of sessions.

#### Day three

I needed to be at the airport for a late morning flight, but I was still able to attend breakfast and one final session, "Developing and Delivering Effective Data-Based PowerPoint Presentations." The presenters talked through presenter roles, skillset, perceptions and barriers. Then they connected the dots between stakeholder expectation and data format and presentation. They informed us that executive time is precious and that leading with the most important information first – in a clear, concise manner – is key. The presenters instructed us to put ourselves in the executive's shoes when looking at data and ask: "How do I feel when I look at it? Confused? Informed? Curious? Questioning? Overwhelmed?" Finding out presentation preferences from your audience can go a long way toward providing information that tells a story in the way executives need it told.

Finally, it was time to go home, and on my taxi ride to the airport, I took time to ponder and process all the great information received. I celebrated my opportunity to contribute to the conference by sharing my own story and thought about how to share my experience with others. My primary takeaway, and the first thing I'll encourage others to do is this: if you have an opportunity to become an SWPP member and attend a conference in the future, don't walk – run – to the registration site. And if you can present your information, go for it! There is so much knowledge to gain, there are so many relationships to build, and there's

#### In This Issue...

- Fun At The SWPP Annual Conference
- Verint Engage 2019 Attendee Review
- Call Center Comics

#### Pearls Of Wisdom

"You aren't wealthy until you have something money can't buy."

~ Garth Brooks

#### 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: Omni-Channel 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](#)
- [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](#)

so much experience to tap into – I can promise you won't regret it.

I hope to see you at next year's conference, March 30 to April 1, 2020. Stay tuned for details at [www.swpp.org](http://www.swpp.org).

### Verint Engage 2019 NACC Member Attendee Review

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My team and I had the opportunity to attend Verint Engage again this year – second time attending for two of us and third time for another. The event, as usual, was very well organized/orchestrated from the excellent venue (Universal Studios – Lowe's Royal Pacific and Sapphire Falls Resorts) to management of the event, which was handled through "klik." Klik is an app (similar to previous years) where you could see all offered tracks and create your own schedule etc. on any device. It also sent reminders as well as real time communications on any changes to schedules etc.

Verint provided high tech name tag badges which were also your key to networking. All you had to do was hold your badge up to other attendee(s)' badge and press a button on the badge. It would then flash, letting you know that you connected with that other attendee. The other person's details then appeared in your app contact list. No more business cards!

Our goals in attending Engage 2019 were to benchmark against other users to ensure we are using our existing applications effectively/efficiently, learn about potential applications we're exploring, and of course network with users we can reach out to. We also managed to pick up a trick or two about best use of our Verint solutions along the way!

The event did not disappoint. Session track content was relevant, as always, and was primarily conducted by real users happy to share their success and pro tips on how they made it work. In addition to the session tracks, our Verint account executive reached out in advance to set up meaningful meetings/discussions to ensure we got the most out of the event. I would recommend it to anyone who has not been. If you're thinking about whether or not to make the investment in attending a customer conference, make that investment. It is worth it! We look forward to attending in the future.

*(And thanks for attending my Engage 2019 session on generational issues in the contact center industry, Amanda. Great to see you there, and I hope to see you at Engage next year! - Editor)*

- [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](#)



If you like this comic and would like to see more, write Ozzie at [callcentercomics@yahoo.com](mailto:callcentercomics@yahoo.com). The NACC appreciates Ozzie letting us use some of his comics in our newsletter.

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