



## *In Queue*

The fun, informative and interesting newsletter for  
the call center industry.

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### Scoreboard

*In Queue* circulation 18,832  
NACC members 3,525  
Calendar of Events Listings 23  
Job Board Listings 33

### In This Issue

Now We're Talk'n  
["Pimp Yo Controversy"](#)  
[Voluntary Industry Standards-One Perspective](#)

### Share the Knowledge

Send this newsletter to colleagues  
by clicking "Forward this email"  
below.

### Quotes

"When a thing ceases to be a  
subject of controversy, it ceases to  
be a subject of interest."  
-William Hazlitt (1778 - 1830)

### Fun Facts

Multiple sources have told *In Queue*  
that *Call Center Magazine*, the

### Now We're Talk'n

The purpose of the *In Queue* Newsletter is to be a discussion forum for issues and ideas in the call center/contact center industry. Timely, controversial, intriguing, it does not matter, if it affects the industry, we are interested in hearing about it and sharing it with you, the readership.

From the past several issues of *In Queue* we have received a huge amount of correspondence. Some of this communication highlighted issues we have missed, others called me on the carpet for some essays, while others have recommended readings, movie viewing and issues that readers like you should be interested in reading within this newsletter.

This issue of *In Queue* highlights two issues from this feedback. Essay one examines the "Pimp Yo Call Center" essay from two issues back while the second essay, written by Doug Smith, articulates why everyone in the industry should support the ATA's Self-Regulatory Standards. Future issues of *In Queue* will address some of the other issues and suggestions that have been offered as well as new issues that are appearing on the horizon regarding trends in the industry.

Thank you for reading, keep your emails coming, and if you have a passion for an issue related to the industry and want to share it with ~20,000 of your colleagues in this newsletter just let me know.

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### "Pimp Yo" Controversy

In the [Volume 2, Number 10, May 25, 2007](#) issue of *In Queue*, I wrote a lead piece titled "Pimp Yo Call Center." The essay highlighted an ad I received in my inbox regarding upgrading of phones for call centers. I applauded this company for thinking outside the box and trying something other than the old boring and worn out advertising patterns we see each day.

I received a number of emails from you suggesting that a) I have bad taste in ads, b) that the ad was stereotyping racial and ethnic groups, and c) that such hip-hop rap culture is insulting to women and other groups. To each of these emails I sent a response. In essence I told each concerned reader

highest circulation of trade publication for the industry, will no longer be printed but offered online only. Only a few weeks ago, the long time editor of *Call Center Magazine*, Keith Dawson, left CMP, the owner of *Call Center Magazine*, to work as an analyst for Frost & Sullivan. I wonder if this is a bellwether sign of change for the industry?

### Picture of the Week

I spent approximately 3 weeks in Europe on a family vacation in May and June. While there, I shot over 1100 pictures. I will begin sharing some of the better pictures with you with a little insights in each issue of *In Queue*.



The Coliseum, or more precisely the Flavian Coliseum, in Rome, Italy, was built around 70 A.D. and was two amphitheatres put together to form a new design. It was in active use for about 500 years. From the time it went out of use until not long ago, it was used as a quarry for the city of Rome. Why go dig out new marble and stone when you already have all of the materials you need just a few miles away?

I found The Coliseum to be smaller than I expected. Why? I believe this is because I grew up in Texas where football stadiums that hold 50,000 plus fans is not a huge accomplishment. However, this monument was built about 2000 years ago and has survived the rise and fall of empires. It is an impressive sight to see and walk through, even in the rain.

that the essay was intended to draw attention to new and more youthful culture for the call center industry and that if my essay and taste offended them I apologize. Moreover, I offered to each of them to write an essay for *In Queue*, free of editorial sanitation, that could take me to task for highlighting such an ad. Though some considered the offer, no essays to date have been received.

Let me make two issues crystal clear. One, if the essay and ad were offensive to anyone reading this, I apologize. Two, the purpose of the essay and the ad were to highlight how old and stodgy the industry is in its behavior and marketing. If the industry is to survive to attract and draw a younger generation, newer ads and a more youthful outlook drawing off current pop culture are necessary. In fact, when I was putting the title for the ad together, I had it originally as "Pimp UR Call Center." My daughters, much more pop culture savvy than me, informed me that "UR" is not "your" but "You Are" and gave me the correct lingo of "Yo" to connote the message. This clearly puts me into the old and stodgy category.

If anyone would like to discuss these issues, please let me know, and I will be happy to make room in the newsletter for divergent views.

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### Voluntary Industry Standards-One Perspective

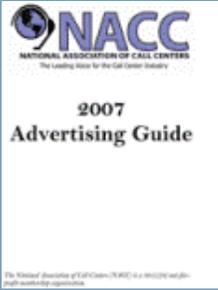
In the [Volume 2, Number 10, May 25, 2007](#), issue of *In Queue*, I briefly highlighted that The American Teleservices Association (ATA) drafted a set of regulatory standards for the industry and asked the readers for any feedback they had. Below is one point of view supporting the standards from Doug Smith.

Douglas Smith, Management Consultant

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Like many of you, I have been involved with the teleservices market for many years. I know that we do a good job of serving our clients and, that we consistently provide quality consumer interaction to millions of consumers around the world. However, I also recognize we have done so primarily because individual operators and in some instances the clients themselves, have demanded their operations conform to strict practices that do not abuse technology or the privacy and rights of the consumer.

We have all experienced "those damn telemarketers" remarks, which frankly, are uttered out of real frustration due to past and, to a lesser extent, current bad practices performed by a small number of participants in our industry. Several years ago, as the result of an escalated level of bad practices, federal and state legislators sent a shock wave through our industry. I believe this action also sent a wake-up call that if we don't start to regulate ourselves, government agencies will



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again enact regulations that will be more restrictive and more difficult to put into practice.

The consumer and certain regulators may believe that the regulations enacted by the FTC, FCC and states was new and innovative; but we know, that all teleservice providers and consumer-oriented enterprise contact centers have always adhered to the intended guidelines of this legislation. However, this is precisely the problem, we as an industry had no published standards or guidelines from which we can self-regulated.

As an industry, we need to present a united front and be more proactive with the regulatory commissions by demanding that the abusive firm be properly admonished and caused to cease operation until they can demonstrate compliance with best practices and guidelines embraced and supported by our industry. Furthermore, by subscribing to and demonstrating compliance with a published standard that incorporates best practice and operational guidelines, we establish a baseline that tells prospective client that his customers' and his firm's reputations are not going to be abused in the process of executing the contracted objectives.

The ATA has established a self-regulatory committee, composed of representatives from enterprise contact centers, BPO contact centers, and individuals with deep commitment to our industry. With the assistance of an outside legal firm, the committee has published a Self-Regulatory Standards, which incorporates the current legislation and best contact center practices into a comprehensive Standards. The Standards is written such that the regulations and best practices can be applied in the daily operations of a teleservices contact center; the document has taken the ambiguity out of the regulations enacted by the FTC and FCC as well as those of the various state legislation and created a clear and concise guideline.

Over time and with your input, the Standards will be improved, expanded and revised; however, for now it has established a baseline from which operators, clients, regulators and consumers can make more accurate judgments about matters of compliance, ethics and best practices. With a written and industry accepted standard, there should be little to no "gray area" with respect to compliance or ethical issues.

I urge the reader, whether you are an operator, client or consumer to become familiar with the ATA and more specifically, the Standards published by the self-regulatory committee. Better yet, become an active participant and work to make the Standards more meaningful and comprehensive. I especially urge the readers who are clients, i.e. these who are partnering with teleservicing outsourcers, to demand that your partners, whether based in North America or offshore, satisfactorily demonstrate to you that they operate within the guidelines of the Standards.

As one who makes his livelihood in the teleservice industry, I am relieved that the industry itself, through one of its primary



trade organizations, is taking the steps to self-regulate our operating practices and acknowledge the rights of the consumer.

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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.

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