



In Queue

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

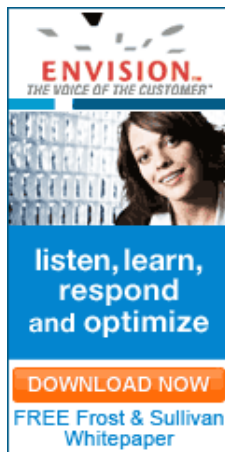
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Our Contact Info:

David Butler
Executive Director

National Association of Call Centers
100 South 22nd Avenue
Hattiesburg MS 39401
Tel: 601.447.8300
Fax: 601.266.5087

David.Butler@nationalcallcenters.org
<http://www.nationalcallcenters.org>



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NACC members 3,525
Job Board Listings 29

In This Issue

Why Pet the Cat Backwards?
Metrics or Market Share?
What I am Reading

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Why Pet the Cat Backwards?

All national level surveys within the US and overseas in the past year or two have indicated that people are enjoying their call center interactions less. What could prompt such a response? Maybe it is because most people have indicated that they like to talk to a person and hate a front end IVR with multiple options? Maybe it is that companies have increasingly moved to scripting for calls and after a while, the reps sound like they are reading from a script and not like they actually know who we are as customers. On the other hand it might be the endless responses of "I cannot help you with that," "We cannot do that," and "We are not allowed to..." that occurs as less and less responsibility is given to reps and more of their interactions with customers is de-humanized of personal real interaction. Repeatedly, year after year, call center awards go to companies that empower their reps on the phones to take care of the customers who call, to make them happy and satisfied. Why then has the industry, despite the noticeable excellence in the industry that have been showcased, going in the opposite direction? Yes, we know that most calls can be handled by automation, that an IVR is efficient at skill based routing and self-service, but so what, if the customer wants to talk to a live person because s/he believes that their issue is unique, then why not let them talk to a live person immediately and give them something positive to say about the industry in the future?

Metrics or Market Share?

Question-What is the relationship between a service level objective and a company's market share? Another question, does a service level objective of 70/30 change the profitability of a company compared to a similar company with a 90/10 service level objective? Even one more question, can a solid first call resolution policy create a higher share price for a publicly traded company? The answers to all three of these questions and many similar ones should be easily quantifiable, known to all professionals in the industry, and should be required reading for leadership in companies who desire to know what in the world their call center operations do besides answering calls from some of their customers. It is my firm belief that in order to further professionalize the call center

below.

Quotes

"Good design can't fix broken business models."

-Jeffrey Veen, Author of *Designing the Friendly Skies*



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Call Center Week is the largest case study driven call center event in the marketplace!

Fun Facts

According to the *Dubai Time*, on April 17th HDI Middle East and Africa has predicted that Middle Eastern call center positions will increase by 30 percent per year based on a variety of factors including competitive costs, multi-lingual residents, and tax incentives.

Picture of the Week



Flowing the wrong way? This is a picture of a main drain hole drainage system (a.k.a. man hole) on a street during a recent flash-flood event. Yes, that is water coming out of the drain hole like water fountain. I guess the main drain pipes were full.

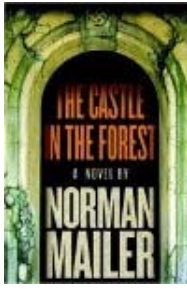
industry these questions and solid and reliable answers must be present. Without such basic business information, call centers will be relegated to the cost function on the books. Furthermore, to meet quarterly market demands, must be minimized over time. This minimization will only reduce annual budgets of call center managers and directors with increasing expectations to meet higher level objectives. This is somewhat problematic since it is clear that there is not a general consensus that increasing service levels, and associated measures, increases market share, share price, or profitability of a company. With this cycle, call center managers and directors will always be on the losing side of the equation.

There are exceptions, such as those company that have executives who inherently know that customer contact points can and should increase the branding of the company and should lead to existing and future sales of the company's products and services. However, these executives are few, and the burden should not rest on the executive's shoulders, it rests on the shoulders of the call center director and manager, to articulate in business terms (MBA speak) the value proposition in terms of money, market share, and share price, that the call center provides the company. This is not a report that can be run on an IVR, this is something that takes a person reflecting on the real value the call center produces for the company, knows the company's core skills and objectives over the next quarters and year, and can correlate how the call center and the company are working toward the same goal with each call. The method of sharing the information is not schedule adherence, it is in terms of money, which is the universal language of business.

What I am Reading

Norman Mailer is an author that I enjoying reading (see *In Queue Vol. 1, number 8*). Mailer's most recent book is *The Castle in the Forest*. This book has been touted as the first in trilogy. Considering that Mailer is in his 80s now, I hope he is writing fast.

The trilogy is focusing on the early life if Adolf Hitler. The story takes you from his grandparents, his father's upbringing, his mother's history and the birth and death of his siblings. Along the way, the narrator, which you find out later is one of the devil's angels, gives hints of what events could create such a monster as Hitler. Not only is the book well written and captivating, the narrator and author pull you into the story. As a reader you want to know what events in Hitler's early life could have formed him into the monster he became. Could others be out there with similar histories creating people like Hitler? Or was Hitler just born evil? The author is clever enough to play with the readers. At one point Hitler's father is teaching a young Adolf about bee keeping. After a long winter one hive is weakened compared to the other hive, and so as not to weaken the total colony, one hive is gassed and



Norman Mailer's *The Castle in the Forest*

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Tel: 601.447.8300

Fax: 601.266.5087

E-mail:

David.Butler@nationalcallcenters.org

destroyed. Immediately the reader leaps from the gassing of weaker bee colonies to the gas chambers that the Nazis used against Jews, gypsies, and others they deemed undesirable. However, immediately after this event in the book, the narrator tells the audience that this bee event and the Nazi gas chambers are not at all related to one another. Immediately the reader then takes the narrator at his word, but then you pause, and say "Wait, this is an angel to the devil who helped to form Hitler, can he be trusted?" With this thought, it makes you, as a reader, question everything more than once. This ambiguity makes the story great and is evidence of Mailer's genius with storytelling.

If you are interested in purchasing Mailer's book *The Castle in the Forest*, an image of the cover linked to Amazon is to the left.

To view past issues of *In Queue*, please [click here](#).

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