



In Queue

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

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New US Call Center Legislation?

David Butler, Executive Director, National Association of Call Centers, David.Butler@nationalcallcenters.org

Late last week I received a call from a minority staffer of the US House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Committee. He was seeking information about the call center industry in general and wanted me to comment on the [HR 1776: Call Center Consumer's Right to Know Act](#). After spending a good amount of time briefing this staffer the conversation ended. The following day, I received a call from the majority staffer from the same committee. The first item I told this staffer was that I had already spoken to the minority staffer the previous day and did he want me to repeat the same information again? He said that he found me independently of the other staffer and "yes," he wanted to hear my thoughts, opinions and share the same data with him. After the phone conversation we exchanged emails and I started to send data to him in large files. What became apparent as the weekend bled into Monday was that the committee did not have a good solid data set on the call center industry in hand. The number of call centers, total employment, the change in call center employment over time, which call center sectors were growing, declining, etc. Basically, a vacuum of information as the starting point for the discussion regarding the HR 1776 bill.

Monday morning, the minority staffer emailed and asked me to testify before the committee on Thursday morning in Washington, DC. Scheduled on the witness list was a representative of the Communications Workers Union (CWU) who support the bill, the American Teleservices Association (ATA) who are against the bill, and a representative of the Federal Trade Commission (FCC) who would be charged with upholding the law if the bill were to be passed. The staffer said that I would add much value in three areas: a) I bring data to the table that the others have not, b) as an academic researcher on the industry I have instant credibility, and c) because I am predisposed to bias for or against the bill I can speak rationally about the pros and cons of the bill as it is written.

As I listened to the staffer's reasoning, I reflected that this is

and suppliers should examine the new *NACC Underwriting* opportunity in 2008 as evidence of their dedication to the growth of call center industry. See the [2008 Media/Advertising Guide](#) link below for more information.

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NACC Investment Portfolio

Stock	Price	Value	Change
NT	5.09	2.80	-7.20
NICE	29.97	7.46	-2.54
VRNT	21.85	8.92	-1.08
SYKE	20.39	10.73	0.73
WIT	11.30	7.54	-2.46
CVG	16.53	9.35	-0.65
TTEC	15.17	6.60	-3.40
ICTG	8.23	7.90	-2.10
APAC	2.11	9.55	-0.45
TOTAL		70.85	-19.15

Original Value start 11/6/2007
=US\$90.00 or US\$10.00 per stock.

Total Portfolio Value Now= \$70.85

The *NACC Investment Portfolio* squeaked out a gained the past two weeks of just a few cents keeping the portfolio near \$70.00. Sykes again was our friend staying in the black while APAC and Convergys are right around the corner to breaking event. Nortel is still the big disappointment having lost over 70% of its value since the composite began.

NACC Composite Index

the same value that the NACC brings to its members, sponsors, underwriters and others associated with us. Because we are associated with an academic institution (The Call Center Research Laboratory at The University of Southern Mississippi), that I am a tenured professor who has researched the call center industry since 1996, that we continue to collect solid, reliable, and unbiased data for the industry, and we are a not for profit organization, we are ideally suited to bring good information to you to make the best decisions possible for your organization. To this end, as part of our new membership drive for 2009, which begins in October 2008, we will offer those people who sign up for membership from October-December 2008 a copy of the written testimony regarding the bill submitted and presented to the US House Committee. Besides my expert opinion, I have called upon Paul Stockford, the NACC Research Director and head of Saddletree Research, to write a counter opinion which will not only be included in the testimony but will also be made available to early membership subscribers. This way the readers will receive two expert opinions which they can read and ponder and to help them make up their own independent decision regarding this proposed legislation. Stay tuned for our membership drive starting in October to receive this special and limited-time offer report.

What Price for Advice?

Paul Stockford, Chief Analyst, Saddletree Research and NACC Advisory Board, Paul.Stockford@nationalcallcenters.org

It's hard to put a price on good advice. Most of us will agree that at some point in our lives we received advice from parents or other important people that was priceless. You simply can't assign a dollar figure to it.

In business, advice often does come with a price tag. In the communications industry and in the contact center industry in particular, there are several resources out there that will provide advice for a price. In most cases the advice comes along with a research or advisory service that is priced in the tens of thousands of dollars. If this advice keeps one from making a bad decision or helps save precious time, it is often a reasonable price to pay.

As a contact center professional it is often hard to keep up with the changes that occur almost nonstop in the industry; changes in management strategies, hiring practices, market movements, technology introductions, product support, company fortunes and the list goes on. For those of us charged with making decisions in this dynamic industry, keeping track of changes and understanding what those changes might mean can be critically important.

At the National Association of Call Centers (NACC) we frequently receive correspondence that asks for advice. Among the topics recently received include understanding the market,

Date	Value	Change	Percent
11/6/07	100.00		na
12/5/07	94.38	-0.56	-0.60
1/15/08	80.89	-17.02	-21.04
2/13/08	75.56	-1.98	-2.63
3/12/08	65.47	-11.25	-17.18
4/9/08	68.98	1.06	1.54
5/7/08	77.31	3.14	4.07
6/4/08	81.51	2.93	3.60
7/2/08	70.28	-10.20	-14.52
8/13/08	65.57	-0.97	-1.48
8/27/08	68.24	2.66	3.91
9/10/08	66.55	-1.69	-2.54

The *NACC Composite Index* was down 2.54% percent with the rocky financial news the past two weeks.

Dow Composite	-2.03%
S&P 500 Composite	-4.03%
NASDAQ Composite	-6.90%
NACC Composite	-2.54%

The *NACC Composite Index* outperformed, by being the least worst, of all of most of the major indices. Not something to be proud of but to not be eaten by the tiger you don't have to be the fastest, just not the slowest.

Quotes

The government is unresponsive to the needs of the little man. Under 5'7", it is impossible to get your congressman on the phone.
Woody Allen (1935 -)

Picture of the Week

identifying appropriate technology, finding resources such as outsourcers, getting briefed on the latest hiring practices, tracking movements in labor markets, verifying the viability of particular vendors, understanding the lifecycle of certain products and many more. We do our best to address these inquiries without having a true structure around the inquiry process. That is about to change.

In October the NACC will be launching an inquiry service that will be part of the new membership program. Members will be able to forward their inquiries to the NACC web site and have them addressed by appropriate resources within the NACC. Having an outside, objective opinion to add to the mix when faced with a decision-making process can be invaluable. We intend to be that objective resource for NACC members.

We will also be creating peer groups among members that will be available, on a volunteer basis, for advice. NACC members can anonymously or otherwise post a question or ask for advice from other contact center professionals in their same industry. Member colleagues will be free to respond as appropriate, anonymously or otherwise, to share their experience regarding the matter in question. These peer groups will be monitored and managed by the NACC.

Anyone who has been or is a subscriber to any of the research advisory services in the market today can tell you that the type of services described above typically come with a hefty price tag, usually in the tens of thousands of dollars. We intend to include advisory services as part of the newly redesigned NACC individual membership, thereby formalizing the currently disorganized manner in which we address inquiries. We believe this is a unique service that will, along with the Call Center Lab at The University of Southern Mississippi, further differentiate the NACC from other industry membership organizations in the market.

Further details of NACC membership options and benefits will be published in the October issues of "In Queue."

Call Center Comics



This is a picture of a statue cleaning man in an orange shirt within the Tuilleries Gardens in Paris. What is funny about this picture is that the statue cleaner, as he is cleaning, is striking an almost identical pose as the statue. What makes it so French is that the man, while doing a meticulous job in the cleaning of each nook and cranny, was smoking a brown cigarette the whole time. Though he appeared to be ignoring the tourists around, by his actions it appeared that he enjoyed the attention and was quite a ham making it not a coincidence that his poses were similar to that of the statues.

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