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Underwriters

All leading call center companies 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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Share the Knowledge

Send this newsletter to colleagues by clicking "Forward this email" at the very bottom and end of this newsletter.

Blog

"The longevity of many of the industry posers and pretenders continues to astonish me."

Hear this and what is being said in the [NACC blog](#). Just click on the words above to see the recent postings.

NACC Investment Portfolio

NACC Launches Readership Surveys

By Paul Stockford, NACC Advisory Board Member

With this issue we launch the first of what we expect to be several readership surveys that we will conduct in 2008. As you will see when you click on the below link, this initial survey is looking to get a high level perspective of your professional opinions and intentions as we go into 2008. The survey will take less than five minutes to complete.

I will be managing the survey process and want to provide you with some promises and assurances in exchange for your participation. First and foremost, individual survey results will be kept confidential and in fact, no contact information for respondents is requested or required. Your anonymity is guaranteed. No one will call you as a result of your participation – no salespeople, no one affiliated with the NACC, no one. Only David Butler and I will see the raw data from the survey responses and again, there is no respondent contact information associated with completed surveys. Sound different from other industry surveys?

Survey results will be fodder for future essays in the *In Queue* newsletter. You will be able to see how your attitudes, opinions and intentions compare to those of your colleagues and peers in the contact center industry helping you maintain a level of professional knowledge about the industry. I think it will be an interesting exercise, and I hope you'll find the results interesting enough to continue to participate throughout the year.

If you have any questions don't hesitate to contact me at 480-922-5949 or e-mail pstockford@saddletreeresearch.com. The deadline will be February 8 so we can report results in a timely manner.

To go to today's survey please point and click on this link:
http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=Ao51AuJqe5nJmE39L1mzrw_3d_3d

We appreciate your participation and look forward to sharing the results with you soon.

US Presidential Elections and Call Centers



The graphic above is from the data that the Call Center Research Laboratory at the University of Southern Mississippi collects and the NACC disseminates. If you look closely, you will see a dip in all of the lines. These lines represent the number of call centers opened, closed, expanded and contracted by quarter. The place where all of the lines dip is the 2nd and 3rd quarter of 2004. Why did this happen? We deduce that the heightened attention that call centers received during the 2004 US Presidential elections made companies delay their closing or contraction of call centers until after the elections since media

Stock	Price	Value	Change
NT	12.72	6.99	-3.01
NICE	29.81	7.42	-2.58
VRNT	18	7.35	-2.65
SYKE	16.07	8.46	-1.54
WIT	11.89	7.94	-2.06
CVG	15.22	8.61	-1.39
TTEC	19.41	8.44	-1.56
ICTG	8.75	8.40	-1.60
APAC	0.95	4.30	-5.70
TOTAL		67.90	-22.10

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

Total Portfolio Value Now= \$67.90

The bad news is that the *NACC Investment Portfolio* continues to decline. The good news is that the decline has slowed its pace. This past few weeks shows a loss from the previous two weeks, which is down significantly overall, but the decline was not as steep as the first few weeks of 2008.

NACC Composite Index

Date	Value	Change	Percent
11/6/07	100.00		na
11/8/07	94.62	-5.38	-5.69
11/16/07	94.94	0.32	0.34
12/5/07	94.38	-0.56	-0.60
12/26/07	97.90	3.53	3.60
1/15/08	80.89	-17.02	-21.04
1/29/08	77.54	-3.35	-4.31

The *NACC Composite Index* was down 4.31% over the past two weeks. This is a negative trend, but a much shallower drop than the week of January 15th where the composite dropped 21%. It is unclear if this slowing of decline indicates a bottom or if there is still room for this sector to decline. Considering that many companies are looking at their books the next few weeks will be critical in determining if companies attempt to expand, hold ground, or make plans for contraction given their existing stock price, shareholder expectations, and industry opportunities in 2008.

Other Composites Same Period

Dow Composite	-0.17%
S&P 500 Composite	-1.37%
NASDAQ Composite	-2.52%
NACC Composite	-4.31%

The *NACC Composite Index* is still down more significantly than the broader-based industry composites during the same period. This suggests that the call center sector is viewed by investors as softer and more exposed to the economic outlook than the broader markets.

Real Estate

attention could take a local event and make it national quickly. Similarly, many companies held off until the 3rd quarter, 2004, just before the election, to announce new jobs and expansions, potentially receiving high praise in the media for adding jobs. Note that just after the dip in the graph the blue line soars to new heights. This was the pent up demand for layoffs due to closings and contractions that was held off until after the election. The US Presidential election did not stop the closures and layoffs, it just delayed the inevitable for a few quarters.

Given this trend, we are watching the data we collect closely to see if the same effect happens in 2008 or not. In part this will depend upon the nature of the campaigns and the topics of focus. In 2004 the economy was perceived to be stronger than it is today, so will the combination of a US Presidential election and a softening economy lead to delayed choices in the 2nd and 3rd quarters of 2008 like they did in 2004? Keep tuned here to find out.

60 Ideas in 60 Minutes Round IV

For an introduction to the "60 Ideas in 60 Minutes" essays, or to read previously published rounds, please visit our archives and start with [Volume 2, Issue 22](#) of *In Queue*.

David Butler-If you have been in your current position in your call center for more than three years go find another position within your organization. Three to five year cycles are typical within a company and if you are there longer than that there is the possibility of being stuck in your current position at your current level. Whether you are a corporate-captive or a 3rd party call center provider the executives in your company need your knowledge. The more mobile you are from a call center to headquarters the increasing likelihood is for promotion through a call center in a career path. I am not suggesting that this is necessarily easy, but there are ways of letting the people higher up in your organization know that you are interested in a promotion which is good for both your career and the contact center in your organization.

William (Bill) Durr -Wow, David, you have just explained my entire career to me. Every three to five years somebody tells me it is time to move on [laughter].

I saw a great idea the other day in a contact center in the United Kingdom. They put up some real large panels of clear Lucite along one wall of their contact center. When quality assessors are reviewing a conversation and they hear the customer say something really positive about the company, a policy, or even more appropriately the agent they are dealing with these quality monitoring people take day-glow pens and write the quote on the Lucite panel. It is really colorful, they write it really large, and whoever is doing this in the center has beautiful handwriting. Let me tell you, it is a low cost, high touch idea to energize a contact center.

Penny Reynolds -I want to go further with the complaint idea earlier ([Vol. 2, Issue 24](#)). The group TARP has some very interesting statistics. As Gary was saying, 96% of people don't complain. The other industry statistic about that is that customers that never have a problem, never have an issue with your company, many have a loyalty-rate, a re-purchase factor, of around 80%. But those people who have complained and had it taken care of in a satisfactory manner, their repurchase rate loyalty factor is around 90%. So the people where you handle a complaint and handle it well are more loyal than if they never had a problem to start with. Now I am not suggesting that you go out and create a bunch of complaints, you can fix them an increase your loyalty rate. But what the key is there is to be sure that all of your staff understands how to handle a complaint call. There is a fantastic book that should be on everybody's bookshelf called "A Complaint is a Gift" by Janelle Barlow, it is a wonderful book. And I think one of the key ideas in the book is that a complaint is a gift. They are both telling everyone else and taking their business elsewhere or they are giving you the opportunity to hear it and fix it. It is really a gift and therefore the first step in handling your complaint call is to say "thank you." "Thank you for letting us know about this so we can do something about it" and you apologize and go through some basic steps. But you need to think about that complaint as a gift because it truly is.

Garry Schultz -I want to riff on the idea of the Plexiglas and putting customer comments up there. What we do in our operation, the glass that you find in the boardrooms, the glass that you find in the offices, the glass facing outwards and the glass facing inwards, we use those surfaces for keynotes. So if you come up with a new buzz term or initiative or such we write it in big letters, real large, on the glass. The agents as go by and see this every day and the messages are reinforced. The writing that tends to go on the glass tends to stay there week, after week, after week until we successfully execute on

If you are looking for a new call center location you should check out the [NACC Real Estate](#) page by clicking on this link to see some of the available existing sites.

Quotes

"A lot of people like snow. I find it to be an unnecessary freezing of water."
-Carl Reiner

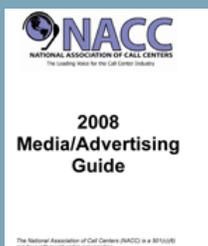
Pictures of the Week



Snow on the ground, on my palm tree, and in my herb garden in south Mississippi on 1/19/2008. Though not unheard of, the last snow fall was 1/2/2002 a few months after we moved here.

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Our [2008 Media/Advertising Guide](#) is available for downloading and viewing. Did you know we are one of the least expensive avenues of advertising in the industry? Click on the image below to download a copy. Read it over and see the great opportunities that await your company by advertising with the NACC.



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whatever that idea may be. So you don't need Plexiglas, though it is nice to have it as well, you can use any glass surface in the office, and again, the reinforcement effect.

Chris Crosby -How many of you guys are familiar with Wikipedia? About half of the room. Start a Wiki inside your contact center. It is free software and go to Wikipedia and type in "Open Source Wiki Software." What will happen is take that concept of collaboration and open sharing of information and apply that to different aspects within your contact center. So, if somebody wants to know what "service level" means inside your organization they go to the Wiki and it will build a lot of team collaboration, mind sharing, and it is a great resource to really get inside the heads of the people inside your contact center. I was amazed when I started Cisco 12 days ago and walked in and they have a Wiki. They started page four of our new reporting platform and it is an opportunity for us to go out and kind of do a brain dump of all the things we think are important to the rest of the organization. So now a sales person in the field can type in Latigent and go to the right page and know everything they need to know.

Kevin Hegebarth -I am going to take a bit of a different approach here. How many of you have implemented vendor hardware and software in your call centers? Every hand in the room should be going up. You all have products from third parties running in your call centers. How many of you are actively involved in those vendor's user groups? Only one hand went up. My suggestion here is that you get very, very involved in the user groups of the vendors whose products you buy. There are a couple of reasons for this. Number one, it helps your voice get heard in that vendor community-feature enhancements, new products developed issues with common products. It is a great way to network within that vendor's organization. It is also a fantastic way to network with other users of that vendor's product. Chances are if you are having a problem or having an issue and can't quite get that vendor's product to do what you want or need it to do there is somebody else in that vendor's community that has either had that same problem, have solved it (you can learn from that) or is having that same problem and y'all can solve it together and then go back to the vendor and say "here is the issue that we were having, here is how we solved it, would you make sure that all of your other users know about it?" We are firm believers in user community. It is not a single threaded interaction between us and our customers. Make good use of it.

Call Center Comics

CONTEST UNDER WAY! Ozzie, the artist behind call center comics, and me, want to hear your original ideas for call center comics (no drawing required, just creative ideas). The best entrees will be selected, drawn, and will appear in this newsletter. Forward this to your call center coaches and supervisors and tell them to form teams to come up with the best idea for a comic. It will be a great release and motivation builder for the beginning of 2008. Winning entries will be not only be recognized in this newsletter but I will also send that person (or team) a bag of goodies. Just submit your entries to David.Butler@nationalcallcenters.org.



If you like this comic and would like to see more write Ozzie at callcentercomics@yahoo.com and visit his website at http://callcentercomics.com/cartoon_categories.htm or just click on the comic to take you to his page. The NACC appreciates Ozzie letting us use some of his comics in our newsletter.

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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