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*The Leading Voice for the Call Center Industry*

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THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI  
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# In Queue

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

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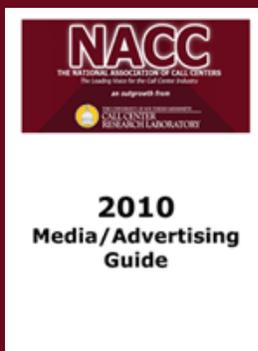
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## Underwriters

All leading call center companies and suppliers should examine the *NACC Underwriting* opportunity in 2010 as

## Willkommen; Swaagatam; Merhaba; Bienvenue; Bienvenidos; Welcome to 2010

David Butler, Executive Director, National Association of Call Centers,  
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The year 2009 is gone and I know many people are happy to see it leave. So welcome to 2010! I hope this year is successful for you. We at the National Association of Call Centers appreciate each and every one of you who are members of the association and those of you who want to be members but have yet to make the plunge. This newsletter started out a few years ago, with Volume 1, Issue 1, with just a few hundred readers. Now, starting 2010, we are over 53,000 readers and growing. This tells us that you enjoy what you read in this newsletter so we will give you 25 issues worth in 2010 and hope you will enjoy each issue. And at any time, if you are feeling nostalgic, you can read past issues for free at our archives by [clicking here](#).

Those of you who are members know that this is report season for the NACC, so in the coming issues of this newsletter you will see the executive summaries of some key reports including the State of the Industry Report: 4th Quarter 2009, the annual Summary State of the Industry Report for all of 2009, and the Year-End and Look Ahead report. These reports, plus many more, will be coming out in 2010, so if you have not yet succeeded on any of your New Year's resolutions, make joining the NACC the first one you meet. Information on membership can be found at <http://www.nationalcallcenters.org/membership.php>.

We look forward to serving you individually, and the contact center industry as a whole, this coming year.

## Good Riddance 2009...But What about 2010?

Paul Stockford, Research Director, National Association of Call Centers and Chief Analyst, Saddletree Research,  
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I doubt that there were many among us in the contact center industry that weren't ecstatic to bid adios to 2009. In my 20 years as an industry analyst I don't remember a worse year and while we at the NACC did our best to keep a stiff upper lip through the worst of it, we also had our moments of wondering when enough was going to be enough.

But now we see the mostly miserable circumstances of 2009 in the rear

evidence of their dedication to the growth of call center industry. See the [NACC Advertising Page](#) for more information.

## Share the Knowledge

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## NACC Investment Portfolio

| Stock        | Price | Value         | Change       |
|--------------|-------|---------------|--------------|
| NICE         | 32.55 | 8.10          | -1.90        |
| VRNT         | 18.60 | 7.59          | -2.41        |
| SYKE         | 25.61 | 13.48         | 3.48         |
| WIT          | 23.70 | 15.82         | 5.82         |
| CVG          | 11.52 | 6.52          | -3.48        |
| TTEC         | 20.05 | 8.72          | -1.28        |
| ICTG         | 16.44 | 15.78         | 5.78         |
| APAC         | 6.12  | 27.69         | 17.69        |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |       | <b>103.70</b> | <b>23.70</b> |

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

Total Portfolio Value Now= \$103.70, a new record and up a bit from mid December when we last reported the numbers. So far in 2010, things are looking good for the NACC Investment Portfolio. Only four of the stocks are trading below the original purchase price and those only down at most three and a half dollars. Those that are up are up at minimum three and a half dollars and some, like APAC, are up over seventeen dollars. So the portfolio is looking solid, above 100 dollars, for the start of 2010. Let us hope it continues to grow at a steady, and sustainable, rate this calendar year.

## NACC Composite Index

view mirror and look ahead to the uncertainty of 2010. While it appears that the economy has stabilized and we at the NACC await the fourth quarter industry data that will allow us to declare the recession in the contact center industry to be officially over, there are still a lot of questions about what the year ahead may hold for us as individuals and as an industry.

As usual, we would like to know what you are thinking about 2010 and, as usual, your thoughts and opinions about the year ahead will be shared with everyone in this newsletter over the next few weeks. To best gauge your attitudes toward the next year we turn to our favorite research method, the survey. We invite you to participate in our very brief survey, which will provide us with enough data to provide you a good feel for what you and your industry colleagues are thinking about what 2010 holds for the customer service profession.

To participate in our to-the-point survey, please go to <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/PLMDS3B>. Although we have no camcorders, iPods, Kindles or other gadgets and gizmos to give away to entice you to take two minutes to participate, we do promise to share the survey results with you and perhaps provide you with industry perspectives that you can't and won't find anywhere else. As a non-profit industry organization the only objective we have is to serve the contact center industry. Your participation in this survey will help us meet our objective while helping yourself to a better understanding of your professional peers.

As always, your anonymity is guaranteed and no salesman will call as a result of your participation. In fact, we don't even ask who you are other than demographic information that will help build a general industry profile. So, give us a hand with this survey and help yourself to some useful information at the same time. Thanks in advance for following this link <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/PLMDS3B> and providing us with your input. Watch for the results in future issues of In Queue.

## From the Trenches

### Becoming the Best: Assessing your Metrics and Reporting

Lori Bocklund, President – Strategic Contact, [lori@strategiccontact.com](mailto:lori@strategiccontact.com)

Since call centers have been around for decades, you might think that an article devoted to assessing metrics and reporting would be unnecessary. After all, every single piece of technology in the center spews out gobs of reports! In truth, the sheer quantity of data is mind-numbing. It's hard to zero in on the right metrics, package the data in a way that's useful, and produce information that leads to actionable and valuable outcomes. And it only gets worse as we add more media, technology and complexity to the center's operations. While I could write a whole series on this topic, I'll try to capture some of the high (and low) points to get you started on your assessment.

#### Defining the Scope of the Assessment

Metrics and reporting is much more than Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and the familiar set of real-time and historical reports produced by your ACD. It's the means through which you analyze business processes from end-to-end and measure the impact of your operations on customers, staff and the bottom line. As such, your metrics and reporting assessment must look at all media and all forms of contact – voice, voice mail, email, chat, IVR and web-based services. It might encompass links to outcomes in CRM, analytics, quality monitoring and

| 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  |
| 3/12/08  | 65.47  | -11.25 | -17.18  |
| 6/4/08   | 81.51  | 2.93   | 3.60    |
| 9/10/08  | 66.55  | -1.69  | -2.54   |
| 12/3/08  | 36.19  | 3.30   | 9.13    |
| 1/7/09   | 42.75  | 2.10   | 4.92    |
| 2/4/09   | 35.68  | -0.55  | -1.54   |
| 3/4/09   | 30.94  | -2.42  | -7.82   |
| 4/15/09  | 43.13  | 5.25   | 12.18   |
| 5/13/09  | 50.72  | 2.19   | 4.31    |
| 6/10/09  | 61.67  | 6.00   | 9.74    |
| 7/8/09   | 54.48  | -0.59  | -1.08   |
| 8/5/09   | 73.97  | 7.50   | 10.13   |
| 8/19/09  | 72.54  | -1.43  | -1.98   |
| 9/2/09   | 74.97  | 2.44   | 3.25    |
| 9/16/09  | 81.26  | 6.29   | 7.74    |
| 9/30/09  | 85.36  | 4.10   | 4.80    |
| 10/14/09 | 90.05  | 4.69   | 5.20    |
| 10/28/09 | 86.95  | -3.09  | -3.55   |
| 11/11/09 | 92.62  | 5.66   | 6.11    |
| 12/2/09  | 96.56  | 3.95   | 4.09    |
| 12/16/09 | 100.81 | 4.24   | 4.21    |
| 1/13/10  | 110.48 | 9.67   | 8.75    |

The *NACC Composite Index* was up 8.75% during this past three to four weeks since we last reported. The new index number is 110.48, a new high for the index. I am really enjoying reporting three digits on the left side of the decimal for the index.

|                   |       |
|-------------------|-------|
| Dow Composite     | 2.30% |
| S&P 500 Composite | 3.19% |
| NASDAQ Composite  | 4.38% |
| NACC Composite    | 8.75% |

The *NACC Composite Index* was up 8.75% during this calendar change period while the Dow was up only 2.30%, the S&P500 up only 3.19%, and the NASDAQ up 4.38%. This means that the NACC Composite Index was up double the highest comparative index during this period. Not bad, not bad at all.

### Quote

"Here it is, a New Year. We got to make some resolutions, as well as interest and tax payments in this joyful season. It's the start of a New Year of trials and tribulations, and if everybody that does anything gets caught, it will be mostly trials."

-Will Rogers

customer satisfaction surveys. And it considers how contact center information is supplied to, and used by, the rest of the enterprise to measure the center's value as a strategic asset.

### Common Metrics Issues

We've encountered a common set of problems as we've worked with contact centers around the country. As I list them below, they'll probably get you nodding your head or chuckling with familiarity. The best practices listed at the end of this article provide remedies to these problems.

**Issue:** Metrics appear to be "plucked from the air" without a clear relationship to the underlying business model. Examples: An executive sets the bar for service levels without a staffing model that makes the target attainable. A benchmarking devotee chooses categories and targets based on "industry standards," disregarding the distinct nature of the center's business. Agents are rated based on "calls per hour" even though they don't control call volumes or overages/shortages in staff to support it.

**Issue:** Metrics focus internally and don't resonate outside the contact center. Example: The Contact Center executive wants to elevate the stature of the center among her peers, but all she can talk about is service level, AHT and abandon rate.

**Issue:** Managers select metrics or establish targets that produce detrimental behavior. Example: Agents get marching orders to reduce their AHT, which they dutifully do, but first call resolution, quality and customer satisfaction all suffer.

**Issue:** Management talks from both sides of its mouth. Examples: "We're very customer focused. We want to deliver the best service possible." Or: "We want our reps to talk to customers about our new products/services." But performance reviews are weighted heavily toward AHT.

**Issue:** The company purchases sophisticated analytics and scorecard tools but doesn't invest the time and energy to use them properly. Example: Management is all excited about the promised ROI they'll realize when the new tools go into effect. But they didn't plan for supervisor time or coaching methods to work with reps based on the results. And no one takes ownership for changing the dysfunctional processes, improving systems navigation or performance, or making adjustments to training in response to the tool's analytical insights. They wind up with more reports, not better results.

**Issue:** Home-grown spreadsheets and databases are the refuge for people with inadequate and/or misunderstood tools. Example: A small army manipulates data in complex spreadsheets; "Joe" creates the vital daily report. The custom reports and manual processes are hard to scale, create an atmosphere of distrust and the potential for errors – while being a very expensive way to generate useful information. Everyone worries about what will happen if Joe moves to Tahiti.

**Issue:** IT manages system reports and CC Operations manages people reports, but never the twain shall meet. Example: IT notices a drop in IVR performance and begins working to resolve it, while the center fails to meet its service level for the day through no fault of its own.

### Apply Best Practices to your Metrics and Reporting

The key to success with metrics and reporting is to align the metrics with corporate and organizational accountabilities, define achievable metrics and ensure that they drive appropriate behavior. Use these best practices as you assess your metrics and reporting:

–Metrics are defined in support of the business goals, and accountability

## Picture of the Week



Continuing our tour of the Cascades. Where Crater Lake is now, Mount Mazama once stood. When Mount Mazama erupted and subsided about 6,000 years ago, the caldera now known as Crater Lake was formed. Now a National Park, the lake is famous for its deep blue, clear water, Wizard Island and the "Old Man of the Lake," a large tree that has been bobbing vertically in the water for about a century. Oregonians placed Crater Lake on the 2005 Oregon quarter.

## Reports from the NACC

The 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 images below and download the executive summary of each. If you like what you see, join the NACC so that we can send you these reports and others that will be coming out soon to ensure you know the latest trends in the industry.



is well defined and aligned within the center and its support partners. Make sure IT is part of the equation and that proper lines of communication are in place.

–Everyone understands the goals and can achieve them. They have access to appropriate information to manage performance. Use benchmarking as one input, not the whole story.

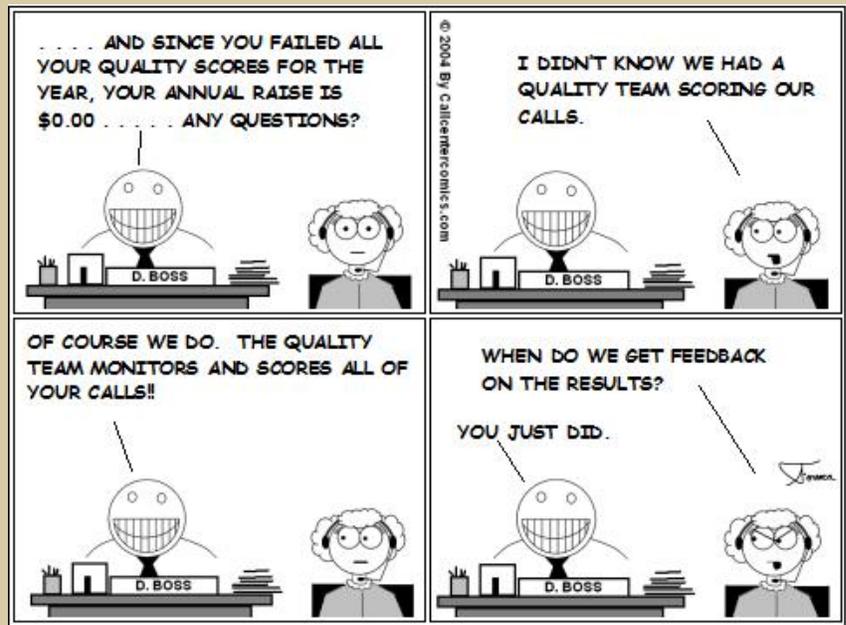
–Metrics include a few key items with targets, while other items critical to success are monitored for trends or anomalies.

–The center has a balanced view of performance across efficiency/productivity, customer experience, employee satisfaction and financial performance using metrics such as service level, handle time, utilization, adherence, quality scores, customer satisfaction, turnover, cost or revenue measures, self service rate, first call resolution rate and technology performance.

–Tools, processes and qualified resources are in place to assess performance and take action to optimize operations – tactically and strategically. [Note: You need the people, process, technology triumvirate to succeed with any performance tool.]

–Accountabilities are aligned, with senior staff focused on strategic goals while the staff in the trenches manages day-to-day operations.

## Call Center Comics!

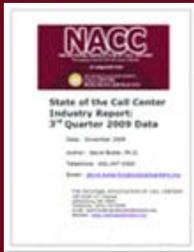
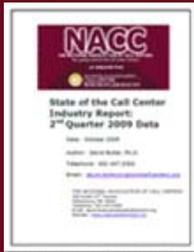
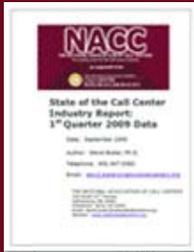
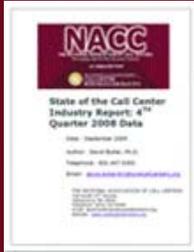


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