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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

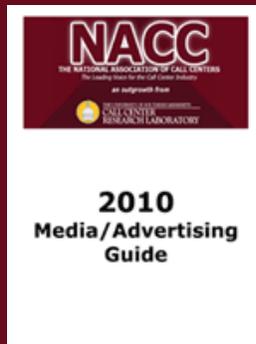
[David.Butler@nationalcallcenters.org](mailto:David.Butler@nationalcallcenters.org)  
<http://www.nationalcallcenters.org>

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## Underwriters

## Voice Rules!

Paul Stockford, Research Director, National Association of Call Centers and Chief Analyst, Saddletree Research, [Paul.Stockford@nationalcallcenters.org](mailto:Paul.Stockford@nationalcallcenters.org)

I recall reading research reports back in the late 1990s from esteemed analyst research firms claiming e-mail would be the dominant form of customer communications in the contact center by the year 2000. I was a bit skeptical but who was I to argue? These analyst firms are full of really smart people, aren't they? Isn't that why they make so much money?

Anyway, 2000 came and went and voice remained the dominant customer communications channel in the contact center. Now that 10 years have passed since those first forecasts were made by analysts who would probably deny ever saying any such thing if you could find them today, and we were all supposed to be e-mailing each other and ignoring the phone, we thought it would be interesting to see what communications channels are getting the most use in the contact center today.

In our 2010 survey of contact center professionals conducted over this past summer we asked which channels were supported in the respondent's contact center and the answers were as follows:

Voice	89.3%
E-mail	82.1%
Live web chat	27.7%
Social media services or forums	11.6%
All of the above	9.8%

As our survey results clearly illustrate, voice rules! 134 years after Alexander Graham Bell made the first long distance phone call from Brantford, Ontario to Paris, Ontario the contact center industry still understands that voice is the preferred customer service channel.

E-mail is no laggard, though. It has nearly caught voice and may, in fact, catch up to voice over the next ten years, only 20 years later than when all those analysts predicted that it would. What I found most interesting about these survey results, though, was the relatively high percentage of respondents supporting social media as a customer communications channel. The 11.6% of respondents supporting social media was actually much higher than I would have thought it would be.

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## NACC Investment Portfolio

Stock	Price	Value	Change
NICE	30.76	7.66	-2.34
VRNT	33.08	13.50	3.50
SYKE	19.36	10.19	0.19
WIT	13.78	9.20	-0.80
CVG	12.99	7.35	-2.65
TTEC	19.69	8.56	-1.44
APAC	5.99	27.10	17.10
TOTAL		83.57	13.57

The NACC Investment Portfolio was up again this month to \$13.57 profit. This is a slow and steady pace over the past few months reflecting on the growth beyond the recession. Sykes has joined Verint and APAC in the positive territory and the other stocks have closed some ground as well.

## NACC Composite Index

We were also surprised by the number of respondents supporting all of the communications channels we listed in the survey. We did some cross-tabulations and discovered that the majority of these respondents were in the telecommunications market, including wireless telecommunications, and had one contact center as opposed to multiple contact centers. That is a fairly narrow segment and clearly a market that tends to be on the leading edge of the adoption of new technologies. It is also a highly competitive market that often requires exceptional customer service in order to minimize customer churn.

I lived in the San Francisco Bay Area when the Loma Prieta earthquake struck in 1989. It took hours to get home from work after the ground stopped shaking and when I did finally step through the door I had only one service still working -- telephone service. There is something comforting about the reliability of the telephone network, so it is no wonder that so many contact centers still rely on voice as their primary customer communications channel. As I said, voice rules!

## From the Trenches

### Your Best Multichannel Customer Contact Strategy

Lori Bocklund, President and Maren Symonds, Consultant -- Strategic Contact, [maren@strategiccontact.com](mailto:maren@strategiccontact.com)

Today's multichannel customer contact landscape looks a bit like farm country - there are silos everywhere! Different departments own different channels; lines of business call the shots for their own set of applications. As web chat, social media, mobility, proactive outbound alerts, and more continue to push the boundaries of customer contact, the all too common troubles with non-integrated services can only get worse, impacting the company's efficiency and the customers' experience. Typical challenges include:

- Customers log in to different services using different IDs. [Is it a wonder that they have trouble remembering their passwords and call the center -- or stop using the service?]
- There are inconsistencies in services and user interface across the various channels.
- Few have systems that track customer interactions across channels. [Yes, we still need real CRM, and we need it to cover all channels].
- Transitions between channels are bumpy -- e.g., IVR to CSR, web to CSR. Customers who were mid-stream in a transaction often have to start from the beginning. CSRs may not know much about the services that their customers were trying to use and, therefore, can't provide helpful advice or take note of where customers are struggling.
- Reporting and analytics (if present) only address the individual channels and lack insight into the customer experience. First Contact Resolution doesn't get the attention that it's due.
- In the rush to get on board with social media, few are paying attention to the processes that create appropriate responses to customer posts.
- Channel enhancements are driven by the loudest advocate, not the customer's or corporation's needs.

It's easy to shrug your shoulders and resign yourself to the current state of affairs given the complexity of getting all the players on the same page. But when a recent study shows that customer loyalty is highly correlated with solving problems quickly and easily, it's time to get your act together. The need for cross-functional collaboration across the organization is very real, and the contact center can play a vital role in making it happen.

Top Six Things on Your Strategic "To Do" List

1. Secure executive sponsorship. This step heads the list as it is crucial for securing cross-functional collaboration. If you are fortunate to have an executive who "gets it," get him or her engaged early and often! This person is

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
3/4/09	30.94	-2.42	-7.82
6/10/09	61.67	6.00	9.74
9/16/09	81.26	6.29	7.74
12/16/09	100.81	4.24	4.21
1/13/10	110.48	9.67	8.75
1/27/10	97.93	-12.54	-12.81
2/9/10	94.57	-3.37	-3.56
2/24/10	99.36	4.80	4.83
3/9/10	107.55	8.19	7.62
4/7/10	109.39	1.84	1.68
5/5/10	99.95	-9.45	-9.45
5/31/10	98.29	-1.66	-1.69
7/6/10	60.63	-37.66	-62.12
8/4/10	68.28	7.66	11.21
9/8/10	64.78	-3.50	-5.40
9/29/10	71.85	7.06	9.83
11/2/10	73.72	1.88	2.55
12/1/10	110.90	37.17	33.52

The *NACC Composite Index* was up to 110.90 points this past month. We expect the index to climb slowly over the following months. This jump from last month is an anomaly, see more detail below.

Dow Composite	0.60%
S&P 500 Composite	1.04%
NASDAQ Composite	0.62%
NACC Composite	33.52%

The *NACC Composite Index* was up 33.52% this past month while the other indices were up 1 percent or lower. The reason why the *NACC Composite Index* was up so high was that the outstanding floating stock was readjusted. Since the recession and recovery there are a different number of outstanding stocks for these companies and the index has been adjusted to account for these new floated stock numbers thus the big jump this month.

### Quote

"A government is the only known vessel that leaks from the top."  
-James Reston

### Picture of the Month

- pivotal for establishing a multichannel governance council to prioritize channel development initiatives, identify synergies and points of integration, allocate resources, and track results. He or she will also provide visible support and reinforcement for people and process changes as you roll out your projects.
2. Get a clear understanding of your business strategy and how it impacts the multichannel strategy. Know your industry, markets, and customers and how various transaction types and channels suit their needs and preferences. Consider whether you should steer different groups toward different media or respond differently (e.g., faster) based on cost, value, or other factors.
  3. Conduct a baseline audit of customer contact. What do you offer? Who owns each channel/customer interaction? How much is each channel used? How does it perform?
  4. Engage all stakeholders in defining a vision for multi-channel customer contact. Identify the right channel(s) for each function/application by considering the level of effort for the customer to use them and the likely value the customer and corporation will gain from them.
  5. Take a critical look at your current technology, its limitations, and the requisite integration to support multi-channel efforts. Assess the level of effort to realize your vision by qualifying the development, deployment, and support costs for technology, process changes, and one-time and ongoing resource demands. [Be sure to account for training and skill requirements within the contact centers.]
  6. Build a 3-5 year road map for channel enhancements, channel integration, and new channel development. Note which gaps can be filled with process improvements and other low investment actions and which require technology enablers and/or significant cultural change. Address known areas of customer dissatisfaction as you build organizational momentum for your strategy.

## A First Look at the Web 2.0 Desktop

Paul Stockford, Research Director, National Association of Call Centers and Chief Analyst, SaddleTree Research, [Paul.Stockford@nationalcallcenters.org](mailto:Paul.Stockford@nationalcallcenters.org)

If you're a loyal reader of In Queue, you've probably figured out by now that I am very bullish on Web 2.0 services and framework in the contact center. More than social media services, Web 2.0 represents the next generation of contact center solutions. Web 2.0's open architecture provides a highly flexible framework in which to create and customize applications to suit needs ranging from the entire enterprise down to the individual level.

Figure 1 below is the prototype of the Calabrio One agent desktop that can be customized to fit the applications needs of the individual agent. In this preview of what the final release of the software will look like, the desktop is arranged in a way that makes sense to the agent and is easily customized via the use of web-based widgets as appropriate. Navigation is convenient and efficient, leading to an enhanced customer experience. Web 2.0 provides the flexibility to create the ideal desktop.

Figure 1: Prototype of Calabrio One Agent Desktop



A National Park Service Ranger raises the flag at the Death Valley National Park Visitor's Center, in August. Morning temperature was only around 90 degrees. Death Valley covers over 5,000 square miles and is the largest National Park in the Lower 48, also called the contiguous states. Many people make the mistake of calling the Lower 48/contiguous states the continental states, but this is inaccurate because Alaska is also on the continent. Similarly, many people mistakenly refer to the flag, when partially-lowered for mourning, as being at half-mast. But masts are on ships, so this should be called half-staff.

## 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.



Source: Calabrio

If you haven't already done so, I encourage you to download a copy of a paper that I wrote that discusses the value of Web 2.0 in the contact center beyond social media services. There is a link to the paper at the bottom of this newsletter and it can also be accessed by clicking on the Calabrio banner at the top of the newsletter. Calabrio sponsored the paper so there is no cost to you to access a copy and I believe you will find the information useful as you consider changes in your contact center in response to evolving customer care requirements.

## Call Center Comics!



If you like this comic and would like to see more write Ozzie at [callcentercomics@yahoo.com](mailto:callcentercomics@yahoo.com) and visit his website at [http://callcentercomics.com/cartoon\\_categories.htm](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.

## Sponsor Reports

Click on the image below if you would like to download a copy of this Web 2.0 report from Calabrio written by Paul Stockford.



**60 Ideas in 60 Minutes:**  
2008 Session

Date: September 2008  
Author: Sarah L. Baker, Ph.D.  
Telephone: 402-497-5300  
Email: [Sarah.L.Baker@nacc.org](mailto:Sarah.L.Baker@nacc.org)



**North American Contact Center Industry 2008 - 2009: The Year in Review and a Look Ahead**

Date: March 2009  
Author: Tom Swadlow  
Telephone: 303-447-8300  
Email: [tom.swadlow@nacc.org](mailto:tom.swadlow@nacc.org)



**State of the Call Center Industry Report: 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2008 Data**

Date: September 2009  
Author: Sarah Baker, Ph.D.  
Telephone: 402-497-5300  
Email: [Sarah.L.Baker@nacc.org](mailto:Sarah.L.Baker@nacc.org)



**State of the Call Center Industry Report: 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2009 Data**

Date: September 2009  
Author: Sarah Baker, Ph.D.  
Telephone: 402-497-5300  
Email: [Sarah.L.Baker@nacc.org](mailto:Sarah.L.Baker@nacc.org)



**State of the Call Center Industry Report: 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2009 Data**

Date: October 2009  
Author: Sarah Baker, Ph.D.  
Telephone: 402-497-5300  
Email: [Sarah.L.Baker@nacc.org](mailto:Sarah.L.Baker@nacc.org)



**State of the Call Center Industry Report: 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2009 Data**

Date: November 2009  
Author: Sarah Baker, Ph.D.  
Telephone: 402-497-5300  
Email: [Sarah.L.Baker@nacc.org](mailto:Sarah.L.Baker@nacc.org)



**Saddletree Research**

Date: March 29, 2010  
Author: Paul Stockford

## RESEARCH UPDATE

### Calabrio One Workforce Optimization Meets Web 2.0

#### Summary

On March 22, 2010, Calabrio, Inc., of Minneapolis, MN, introduced Calabrio One, the contact center industry's first software-based workforce optimization (WFO) suite in a Web 2.0 framework. New applications within the framework include Calabrio Call Recording 8.0 and Calabrio Quality Management 8.0. These applications provide the widgets required for full-time call recording, call monitoring, quality management, and performance management.

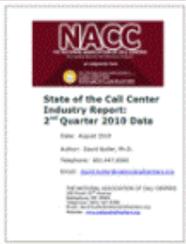
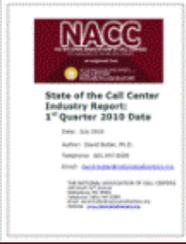
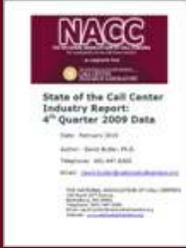
Announced simultaneously with Calabrio One is Calabrio Speech Analytics, the company's entry into the speech and content analytics arena. Using a phonetics-based approach to locate words or phrases within spoken audio, Calabrio Speech Analytics circumvents much of the complexity associated with speech analytics deployment by providing customers with pre-defined "quick start" templates. Quick start templates allow users to realize immediately the benefits of many basic speech analytics applications without the complex implementation process typically associated with a speech analytics deployment. Quick start templates can be used out-of-the-box or can be customized as required.

Calabrio Call Recording 8.0, Calabrio Quality Management 8.0 and Calabrio Speech Analytics are available for immediate delivery through Calabrio channel partners.

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