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THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI
CALL CENTER
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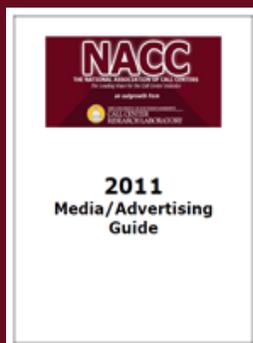
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Where Did *In Queue* Go in January?

Paul Stockford, Research Director, National Association of Call Centers and Chief Analyst, Saddletree Research, Paul.Stockford@nationalcallcenters.org

I hope you missed us last month when your January issue of *In Queue* didn't arrive in your mailbox. I was going to try to think of a clever excuse for the missing newsletter but the truth is we were so busy getting ready for this year that the publication deadline passed us by before we were ready for it. The NACC is gearing up for several changes in 2011 and in order to accomplish what we hope to do this year, we needed help. We are now working with B2B Net Az (www.b2bnetaz.com) to help us with this newsletter and with database management, freeing us to focus more on research and other activities in the future.

We're now back on track with our publication schedule and as the NACC continues to grow, we hope you'll stay with us and come along for the ride.

Is Younger or Older Better When it comes to Contact Center Agents?

Paul Stockford, Research Director, NACC and Chief Analyst, Saddletree Research paul.stockford@nationalcallcenters.org

There are conflicting theories in the contact center industry about the desirability of different generations of workers as agents. Some believe younger agents are preferable due to their energy and enthusiasm. Others believe older workers are more reliable and their tendency to remain with a job for longer periods creates a better customer experience. These theories were tested for accuracy in a recent study conducted by FurstPerson of Chicago, IL (www.furstperson.com).

FurstPerson looked at data from more than 156,000 call center applicants and discovered that 22 percent were 40 years of age or older. Interestingly, when the applicants were separated into groups of applicants for brick-and-mortar contact center jobs, 18 percent were 40 or older compared to at-home applications where 32 percent age 40 or older. These data suggest that the at-home applicant pools tend to be composed of significantly more people who are 40 or older.

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NACC Investment Portfolio

Stock	Price	Value	Change
NICE	32.86	8.18	-1.82
VRNT	34.66	14.15	4.15
SYKE	19.77	10.40	0.40
WIT	13.27	8.86	-1.14
CVG	14.21	8.04	-1.96
TTEC	22.16	9.64	-0.36
APAC	5.69	25.75	15.75
TOTAL		85.02	15.02

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

FurstPerson's research confirms that older workers do indeed tend to remain in jobs longer than their younger counterparts. Baby Boomers, defined for the purposes of this research as those aged 50 to 67 years of age, were 9 percent more likely to stay longer than their Generation X counterparts, defined as those aged 29 to 49 years of age, and 11 percent more likely to stay longer than their Generation Y counterparts, defined as workers younger than 29 years of age.

The question remained as to whether these older workers also provided customers with a better experience. To test this theory FurstPerson turned to Customer Satisfaction (CSAT) scores collected from post-call surveys. Interestingly, there were no significant differences between generational groups' CSAT scores, regardless of tenure. More mature agents will likely stay in the job longer, but they may not produce a better customer experience.

The results of this study indicate that call centers need to remain data-focused when screening and placing talent. Using existing data from your company in the pre-hire process is the most effective way to improve the quality of hire and produce the desired customer experience. For more information on this and other employment studies, go to www.furstperson.com.

Make a New Year's Resolution for a Successful Remote Workforce Program

By Brian Hinton, Principal Consultant - Strategic Contact For NACC "From the Trenches" - January 2011

2011 may well be the Year of the Remote Worker. The technology is available and affordable and there is a ready pool of workers. The benefits have proven compelling for a broad range of organizations. It may be time for *you* to begin a program, or tune and expand an existing one.

Strategic alignment

Start by setting goals for a remote workforce that align with and support your overall operations strategy. Considerations include:

- Expanding the recruiting base
- Accessing higher caliber applicants
- Retaining valuable employees
- Lowering the wage scale
- Reducing facilities costs or future requirements
- Covering scheduling gaps or expanding scheduling flexibility
- Supporting disaster recovery

Work with your executive sponsor to secure cross-functional buy-in. HR will need to adjust their recruiting, hiring, and personnel management processes. Training, QA, and other support services will need to adjust their processes to serve remote workers. IT will implement and support the technology that enables your remote workforce processes. Teamwork is a key to success.

Personnel Selection

Develop recruiting or selection criteria specific to remote workers. Their skills and temperament must include these characteristics:

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
2/1/11	108.73	-2.17	-2.00

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 a anomaly, see more detail below.

Dow Composite	6.97%
S&P 500 Composite	7.76%
NASDAQ Composite	7.73%
NACC Composite	-2.17%

The *NACC Composite Index* was up 33.52% this path 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

"Football is a mistake. It combines the worst elements of American life. Violence and committee meetings."
-George Will

- Self-disciplined and organized
- Capable of being their own first line of support for technical issues
- Demonstrate the capacity to protect confidential information per company policies
- Self-motivated and self-sufficient

Many remote workers value the convenience and flexibility of working from home and therefore may accept alternate work hours and compensation models. You may also choose to vary the types of contacts that these people handle. Whatever your decisions, make sure that you document any variances from on-site workers with an appropriate rationale.

Core Technology

The technology for remote workers includes a voice path (including phone or PC softphone, with headset), data connectivity, PC-based phone control capabilities (e.g., login/logout, workstate changes, queue visibility, reason codes, etc.), and PC or thin client with access to appropriate applications, databases, and knowledge sources.

A key decision is whether you provide the technology or make it an agent responsibility. Most companies supply and manage the technology to minimize technical difficulties, ensure compatibility, and manage voice quality and data security.

Personnel Management

All remote workers should sign a formal remote worker agreement which includes eligibility, workspace, and process requirements. If geography and cost work in your favor, bring remote staff into the home office for onsite training and coaching or team meetings. If not, explore other options such as web collaboration, conference/video calls, computer-based training, and eLearning.

Remote workers should be held to the same standard of excellence as their onsite counterparts. Extend your existing quality monitoring program to your remote workers and ensure you include screen capture with the voice recordings. As with on-site staff, make sure that the remote agents have visibility into their goals and progress toward them. Ensure your metrics include critical performance criteria and accountabilities such as schedule adherence.

Think carefully about the tools and processes you'll use for communication and collaboration. Instant messaging is a "must have" tool, which can be further augmented by conferencing and web collaboration tools. Remote workers have the same needs for coaching and peer-to-peer interaction as their on-site counterparts.

Following these remote workforce best practices can ensure 2011 is the year you have a successful remote workforce program.

Aspect Targets Customer 2.0 with Aspect Unified IP 7

Paul Stockford, NACC Research Director and Chief Analyst, Saddletree Research
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Who or what exactly is "Customer 2.0"? According to the folks at Aspect (www.aspect.com), Customer 2.0 is the next generation of consumers. This is the generation that expects a collaborative, multichannel experience when contacting customer service. We agree that this is an accurate description of the multi-tasking, always-connected preferences of the generation that is

Picture of the Month



With snowstorms beginning across the nation and summer a distant memory, let's return to the land of the midnight sun. In this case not Alaska, but Russia. This shot of a purple flower and small house is at a dacha near Petrozavodsk, Russia. Though the picture was taken around 10am, the sun does not ever really descend in the middle of the summer, but rather takes a dip beneath the horizon around 2 or 3am, a far cry from the limited daylight hours much closer to the winter solstice.

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.



reaching maturity. Aspect has designed their latest contact center release, Aspect® Unified IP® 7, with this consumer in mind.

A blended inbound and outbound solution, Aspect Unified IP 7 unites a comprehensive set of customer contact channels including voice, web, e-mail, instant messaging and the often-overlooked short message service (SMS). For the enterprise, Aspect Unified IP 7 offers contextual routing and manageability, which provides users the ability to centralize contact distribution and create a virtual queue across the enterprise. In addition, Aspect Unified IP 7 also routes calls to connect the customer with the best skilled agent resource regardless of where that resources is physically located.

Aspect has designed Unified IP 7 to leverage existing infrastructures, avoiding the rip-and-replace syndrome that often accompanies new product introductions. This is a highly desirable trait given our current state of economic recovery. Aspect appears to have done their homework when creating Aspect Unified IP 7. This is a well thought-out product that is likely to hit the mark with Mr. or Ms. Customer 2.0, who will undoubtedly appreciate the collaborative customer service environment that it provides.

Call Center Comics!



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.

From Customer 2.0 to Web 2.0

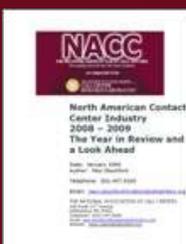
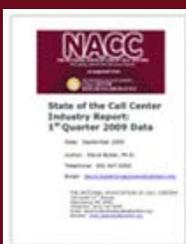
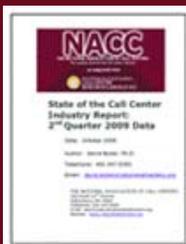
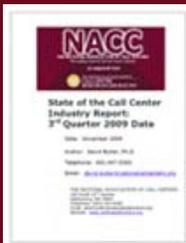
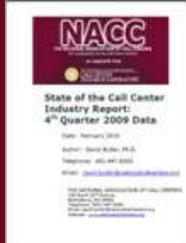
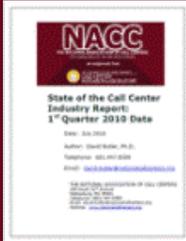
Paul Stockford, NACC Research Director and Chief Analyst, Saddletree Research paul.stockford@nationalcallcenters.org

For those of you that haven't already done so, this is a reminder to download the paper I wrote on Web 2.0 in the contact center. More than just social networking, Web 2.0 is poised to revolutionize contact center technology and the art of customer service. To get a copy of the paper, click on the Calabrio banner at the top of this newsletter or click on the image of the paper, below.

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.



 **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.

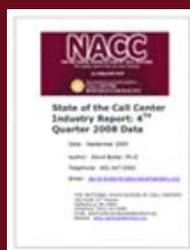
Announced simultaneously with Calabrio One is Calabrio Speech Analytics, the company's entry into the speech and content analytics arena. Using a phonetics-based approach to locate words or phrases within spoken media, Calabrio Speech Analytics circumvents much of the complexity associated with speech 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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