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THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CALL CENTERS
The Leading Voice for the Call Center Industry

an outgrowth from



THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI
CALL CENTER
RESEARCH LABORATORY

In Queue

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

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NACC Investment Portfolio

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

Paul Stockford, Research Director, National Association of Call Centers and Chief Analyst, Saddletree Research,
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Executive Summary

The North American contact center industry experienced a relatively quiet year in 2008, tempered during the second half of the year by increasingly apparent economic deterioration. Although it was not exactly business as usual, the industry as a whole did continue to grow as did many of the important segments within the industry.

Internet Protocol (IP) continued to make inroads into the contact center. A 2008 survey among readers of the National Association of Call Center's (NACC) *In Queue* newsletter revealed that about 41 percent of respondents currently use IP in their contact center. Surprisingly, the greatest interest in IP for the contact center is coming from those centers configured with 75 or fewer agent seats.

Workforce Optimization (WFO) also saw steady growth in 2008. Defined as a suite of products designed to optimize agent performance and including such solutions as workforce management, performance management, quality monitoring and e-learning, WFO has found its way into the contact center mainstream. Although the rate of WFO implementation has slowed since a burst of activity in 2005 - 2006, its demonstrable benefits and proven return on investment (ROI) maintained WFO's attraction as a desirable productivity tool in 2008.

For access to the complete report you need to be a member of the NACC. To join, click on the link below to get started
<http://www.nationalcallcenters.org/membership.php> < /font >

From the Trenches

Lori Bocklund, President, Strategic Contact, Lori@strategiccontact.com

This week, NACC is launching another new feature that we hope you'll find valuable - the "From the Trenches" column. This column offers bite-sized reflections on some of the real things happening in contact centers today, and gives you some food for thought that we hope is relevant to your world. The content is practical, and is based on work

Stock	Price	Value	Change
NICE	19.13	4.76	-5.24
VRNT	5.81	2.37	-7.63
SYKE	16.23	8.54	-1.46
WIT	6.81	4.55	-5.45
CVG	7.72	4.37	-5.63
TTEC	7.59	3.30	-6.70
ICTG	4.48	4.30	-5.70
APAC	1.48	6.70	-3.30
TOTAL		38.89	-41.11

Original Value start 11/6/2007 =US\$90.00 or US\$10.00 per stock. Then Nortel went bankrupt so we have adjusted the investment portfolio and now the new start value would be \$80.00 or \$10.00 per stock.

Total Portfolio Value Now= \$38.89 which is up pennies from the last two weeks. In an odd way, Nortel's demise actually helps the portfolio from a percentage point of view since the value is now \$38.89 of a new starting point of \$80.00 (48.61%) rather than \$38.89 from the original starting point of \$90.00 (43.21%).

NACC Composite Index

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
9/10/08	66.55	-1.69	-2.54
10/8/08	43.24	-13.67	-31.62
11/5/08	43.26	1.43	3.31
12/3/08	36.19	3.30	9.13
1/7/09	42.75	2.10	4.92
1/23/09	36.23	-6.52	-18.00
2/4/09	35.68	-0.55	-1.54

The NACC Composite Index was down this week 1.54%. This was a

going on with companies that are virtualizing, planning for or implementing new technology, creating home agent programs, tackling resource and performance issues, managing strained budgets, and more.

The Only Thing Certain is Change...and the Need for Change Management

Most companies manage projects by checking boxes on a project plan. They declare victory when the new system is in production, process changes are implemented, or the organization charts are redrawn. While it's all fine and well to celebrate milestones, they ought to save the ticker tape parade for a time when their projects demonstrate real value and their organizations are poised to sustain the changes made.

Change affects people. Call centers have lots of people. Call centers are changing all the time. And unfortunately, most people don't like change. So it's crucial to manage the changes each project creates - for individuals and the organization as a whole. Too often, leaders don't want to fund change management. They think it's too "touchy-feely," or they don't think it's terribly important. They think people will "just do it" because they say so, or the change is not that big, or the impact is minor and easily absorbed. Project sponsors adopt this attitude at their peril. Time after time, neglecting change management yields sub-optimized results - project delays, increased costs, reduced benefits, missed goals, and/or reversions to previous states (or worse!) after a few weeks or months.

I've been practicing and pushing change management for years. I've seen the difference it can make. If change management isn't part of the projects in which you're currently involved, or is pooh-poohed in your environment, you need to become an advocate for it. Find an approach that works for your company's culture, allocate the appropriate resources, and start applying it as early as you can - not just when things start going badly and you're trying to recover. You'll see the difference it makes. Over time, it will become an inherent part of your organization's program and project management. "Enlightened" companies are taking this approach and getting a competitive edge through the results their projects create.

Want to do some learning to get started? Check out www.change-management.com for free tutorials. Or search on Change Management in Google or Amazon and you'll find a wealth of web sites, books, and other resources that can help you become the advocate you want to be in your company.

60 Ideas in 60 Minutes-Round VI

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

Paul Stockford, the Director of Research for the NACC, asked me to serve on a panel at the ICCM Toronto call center conference in October this year after serving last year as well. Each panelist was given 1 minute to share their idea for improving call centers before the next panelist's turn. Stockford moderated and kept time for 60 minutes. We have recorded and transcribed the session. To view past rounds, visit our In Queue archive at the following link <http://www.nationalcallcenters.org/newsletter.php>.

smaller decline than two week ago where the index fell 18%. It appears that the stock market has found a bottom in the range of 8000 points on the Dow, but we are skipping along the bottom with some weeks of positive gain and other weeks of decline. Until the market shows a level of stability and the numbers show a growth trajectory, we can expect to be bumping long the bottom.

Dow Composite	-3.30%
S&P 500 Composite	-0.96%
NASDAQ Composite	0.53%
NACC Composite	-1.54%

The *NACC Composite Index* was right in the middle of the other indices this week. The Dow lost 3.30% while the NASDAQ squeaked out a small gain offset by the S&P 500's small loss. The NACC Composite Index was down 1.54%.

Quotes

"Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago."

-Warren Buffet

Picture of the Week



Yes this is a smiling Egyptian sarcophagus. Most sarcophagi you see have such a stern faces, but this one, in the Schonbrunn Palace museum in Vienna, Austria, looks

David L Butler- I would like to talk about the exit interview piece that was brought up earlier ([Volume 4, Issue 2](#)). The reality is people lie to you in exit interviews, and it does not matter who is conducting it. The reasons why they often lie is quite simple. First, they are leaving your employment and chances are they are attempting to get away from the organization as fast as possible. Because of this they're going to tell you whatever they need to in the shortest amount of time to leave. Second, if they are very disgruntled and they want to sit there and rip somebody during the exit interview, the reality is you're going to think "Ah" they're leaving anyway, they're disgruntled, can I really trust the validity of what they're saying? Third, is they may actually sit there dumbfoundedly and go "you're opening up to me now, you want feedback now, where was this openness six months ago whenever all this started?" The reality is I've found that hiring a third party person to handle exit interviews within the contact center and ensures that that anonymity is protected, gives the leaving employee a level of trust, they know that this person is not management and then the environment is set to start getting the feedback you are seeking. To avoid having to conduct exit interviews, you should hire a neutral third-party person to conduct focus groups within your organization regularly so that you can receive regular feedback from your employees and reduce the need for exit interviews since fewer people are exiting.

Samantha Kane -I'd like to talk about social networks for business. Social networks for business, looking at it from a call center prospective, has grown 72% in 2008, and it's going to grow 94% in 2009. Social networks for business are the way generation Y works. They have global social networks. They don't think twice about sharing the information. If you look at customer relationship management software and the linkages that where you want to go and find information, those linkages typically now are moving towards hyperlinks that go into social networks. If you look at Facebook, if you look at LinkedIn and how they are growing daily, Plaxo, all of those, you're going to see this huge teenager shift paradigm that will make how you work in your call center very different. How you train. Instead of e-learning it's going to be webcasting that captures frequently asked questions, it allows a real time streaming, and it's a new generational and the leader in e-learning is in Toronto Canada at Brainall Hall.

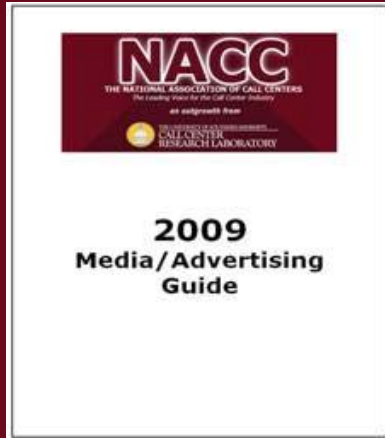
Barb Bleiler- "I am happy." How many of us just kind of take that approach when we think about how our team members are doing? It's really important to understand how your team members feel. Do you really know what motivates them? Do you know what de-motivates them? Do you have someone that really like to a certain type of work and really has a hard time with a different types of work and are you giving them work they really don't like? Do you know that? Are you aware of that? You know understanding what motivates your team is really an important key with your rep in understanding what makes them tick, what makes them happy, what motivates them, what gets them moving forward, what de -motivates them. Take the time to find out what happens because ideally the more you invest in them, they will reinvest in you. I understand it takes time up front and now we feel we don't have enough time, but if you take some of that time upfront and give that to them, they will give it back to you in the long run.

Beel Yaqub-I just want to build on the point that David mentioned earlier around self-service ([Volume 3, Issue 24](#)). Self service is a double-edged sword. You typically see organizations leaning more towards self serve channels because they tend to be cheaper to operate. Many organizations offer multiple ways of completing a transaction, this includes, face to face service, telephone banking (in addition to IVR), online banking, chat, email and so on. In some cases, companies tend to introduce ways to enable further functionality in order to attract clients to a specific channel. Each approach presents its

lively and happy. The collection of antiquities at the palace was originally the Hapsburg family's personal collection and the largest collection of such artifacts I have seen outside a major public museum.

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own set of challenges. An approach to consider would be Natural Progression, which allows the client to pick and choose which channel best fits their need at the time of the transition. You enable natural progression by making each channel more convenient and accessible to your clients. A client should always be able to reach a live person regardless which channel they choose.

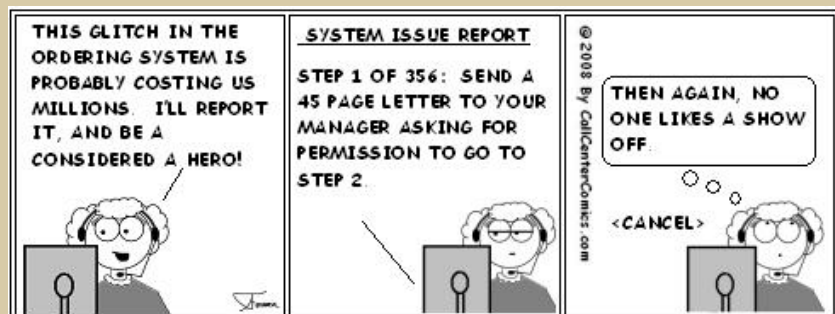
Vicki Herrell- swpp-vicki.herrell@swpp.org - A great activity to help your new hire/trainee learn more about your business is to have them go on a scavenger hunt. What your business does will help to determine what they are going to look for. Start with a list of questions that they can answer about your business. If your business has a retail store, you could go to it and have a big scavenger hunt inside the retail store and let them see how the customer feels in the retail stores. If you don't have a retail store, you can find things on the website that they can search for. You can score the questionnaire just like a quiz, and give the person with the best score a prize. It gives them a little break from the classroom and lets them find out more about your business while having fun.

William (Bill) Durr - I work with customers and prospects a lot and often I get more educated by them than they get educated by me. Another piece of education I got from a customer was that every time his team had a calibration session they invite two agents in so they can experience a calibration session. And as result of this they understand the quality monitoring process better than most any other organization that I have ever come across, they totally believe in it, and they are achieving great results.

NEW Call Center Comics!

This is the new comic that debuted within In Queue last week, but silly me forgot to link the image on the server, so many people just saw a blank rectangle image. So here it is again, in all of its realness for you to enjoy for the first time, again.

Keep an eye out for the new comics in the next few issues of this newsletter.



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.

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Your company logo here. To find out more, contact David Butler at David.Butler@nationalcallcenters.org.

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