

Call Center Times

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Get Creative with Quality Monitoring

By Connie Smith, Chief Evangelist, Envision

While most contact centers are using quality monitoring in the conventional way — recording and evaluating 8-10 calls per agent per month based on pre-determined evaluation criteria — some companies are taking monitoring a step further.

These companies have identified innovative ways to make the most of today's monitoring tools. Some of the following ideas may inspire you to get creative with quality monitoring.

Utilize quality monitoring to perform root cause analysis

Let's face it. Most contact centers today operate in a reactive mode as opposed to a proactive one. It's the nature of our business.

Contact centers find that they can't begin to take the time to identify and address issues that are causing problems because they are too busy putting out every day fires!

You can change this by listening to recorded calls while viewing screen capture

for the sole purpose of performing root cause analysis. Based on your findings, discuss ideas for resolving repeat issues though adjustments to your system, process, training and development adjustments.

An example is that you identify that agents have to scroll through pages of information to service a particular customer request. The solution is to create a shortcut to the information, which ends up saving 12 seconds per transaction. 12 seconds multiplied by 100,000 calls per month adds up to quite a savings. Or, perhaps you find that many of your customers are calling in because they can't find certain information on their monthly statement. In researching this you notice that the information is on the back page in the bottom left hand corner. You talk to accounting and they are able to re-position this information, which results in your calls on this issue dropping by 85%.

Utilizing quality monitoring to perform root cause analysis allows you to improve enterprise performance by defining problems quickly and accurately, streamline processes and preventing reoccurrence.

Utilize quality monitoring to catch your agents providing legendary customer experiences!

This type of creative quality monitoring is certainly a morale booster. If you want to improve agent performance, complement them on what they do well. Every time you catch agents going the extra mile, put their name in a hat for a weekly drawing. It doesn't have to be a big prize — a coffee mug or extra 10-minute break will bring a smile to agents' faces and give them something to look forward to!

Utilize quality monitoring for precision monitoring, or skill honing

Focus on a particular

skill as opposed to focusing on the entire evaluation that covers all areas such as product knowledge, customer service, soft skills and technical ability. You must first decide on what skill or skills you would like to hone in on. Be sure to involve your agents in this process. Then spotlight this skill during your evaluation process and develop a coaching plan, which will remain in place until the agent has successfully mastered the skill. Precision monitoring also referred to as skill honing allows agents to master skills over time. This concept is successful for contact center agents as repetition, builds confidence and competency. Precision monitoring can be performed individually, by team or by center. Prepare yourself for success, for people will master skills using this method.

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Monitor calls from the customer perspective

This is sometimes hard to do, as we are so close to the operation. The key is to listen to calls as if you are a customer who is calling your company for the first time. Did the agent sound like they were reading from a script or was the interaction personal? Did the agent who greeted you make you feel welcome? Did he/she understand the reason for your call? Was he/she able to take care of your issue/order? Was your interaction with the company poor, indifferent, good or excellent? Will you call the company back? Will you refer the company to your friends? You might be surprised to learn how the call sounds from this customer perspective.

Speaker Biography

Connie Smith has been involved in the contact center industry in various roles for more than 20 years. She has built operations and fulfillment contact centers from the ground up including multi-site, retail and wholesale, reengineered multiple site centers and built

one of the first true multi-channel contact centers in 1998 including integrated telephone, e-mail, Web chat and callback technologies.

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Would You Get an Award For The Way You Reward?

By Ray Hansell, CEO,
MaraStar Communications

We see people get awards on TV all the time. These days the award program most watched by movie goers over the years is probably the Academy Awards held in Hollywood each spring and attended by a host of celebrities and Hollywood stars/starlets.

The reason for their popularity is probably related to the need people have to be acknowledged and recognized for their achievements. To be so acknowledged by their peers

in a public forum for very specific achievements represents the penultimate in the performance art field.

However, the opportunity to acknowledge people in many other fields is there for each and every person who holds a position of authority over people.

The model for how to behave in such situations is certainly there for us to witness at many of these ceremonies and yet so often *in the corporate world, attention is mostly paid to the mundane or logistical side of things and very little to the personal.*

Plaques are purchased carefully and certificates of achievement are procured in advance, *but how much time is taken to care for the manner that employers use to acknowledge the person and the deeds they did to receive this honor?*

After all what provides the most motivation to the employee? Is it the actual award itself and the value of the gift that is received? Or is it the recognition that provides the stimuli needed to sustain their passion?

If you believe it's the latter then you should pay as much attention to how you actually perform this very important task as you do to the logistics of the task itself. The following story chronicles some of our experiences in awarding and rewarding employees.

"The Wall of Fame" – Case Study

RMH Teleservices was like a motivational laboratory where we as owners frequently experimented with a number of ingredients to find the right formula to motivate our employees.

Some of these worked and some didn't. Starting with what seemed to work, let me begin by reconstructing the story of our "Wall of Fame".

All of our clients rewarded us for superior results but they also wanted those results to emulate from consistent sales processes. In order to ensure this consistency they frequently required that approved sales scripts be read verbatim or close to verbatim. This of course posed a great many challenges not the least of these were how to inspire our



people when the challenge of the job was so tightly constructed by reading a script.

We arrived after much consideration with creating a training program that would help our people deliver “Great Performances” similar to the way actors and actresses perform a script. In a fashion similar to the acting profession we created a mechanism for evaluating and acknowledging “Great Performances” and then posted these recipients on a gold star on our Wall of Fame which was located prominently in each of our offices. In addition we acknowledged the recipient of the award in our monthly

newsletter so that employees from other locations could be made aware of the honoree’s accomplishments.

As a reward we presented them with chocolate Oscars and provided free movie tickets at AMC movie theaters so that they could see a version of a great performance on their own time. Overall, the representatives liked the rewards and liked the way their accomplishments were acknowledged for their peers to see. In addition, our clients liked the concept of creating a reward that supported their objectives and elevated the performance of their scripts to an art form.

However – It didn’t always work the way we planned it.

As we grew we gave some freedom to the local managers to select the representatives and before we knew it, one of the names appearing on the gold star was a person with borderline, if not problematic, behavior. In effect the Wall of Fame was looking more like a *Wall of SHAME*.

How did this happen?

Well as we questioned our local managers we found that rather than confront the bad behavior of some of the personnel, the manager thought that by rewarding them with a “Rep of the Month Award” this would

somehow turn their bad behavior around. Unfortunately, the old maxim – “Don’t Reward Bad Behavior” – or better yet – “What You Reward Gets Repeated” played out exactly.

What we did was immediately tighten up the criteria by which candidates were selected to virtually eliminate the arbitrary nature of the local managers decision.

We automated the process for gathering the data used to determine the selection and made it available to us in advance of the selection. We were, therefore, able to redirect the reward program by reforming the processes before it got out of hand.



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The lesson was that regardless of the good intentions we have as managers we need to pay close attention to the ways we implement a reward systems so that they continue to provide positive rewards for positive behavior. Sometimes even a simple inexpensive award or reward given in the right spirit and in the right way can mean the world to an employee.

What constitutes the right way? Well, here's a short list of rules I consider important in this regard:

Rule 1: THE GOLDBLOCKS FACTOR – make the reward match the deed. Too large of an award will create unreasonable expectations and too small will give the impression that you're a miser. Keep it just right.

Rule 2: SHINE A LIGHT ON IT – when possible present the reward publicly and give specific reasons for why the recipient deserves to be selected

Rule 3: TAKE CARE TO BE FAIR – make sure that the reward is implemented and administered in a fair and

impartial manner – nothing turns people off more than a rigged contest

Rule 4: KISS – “KEEP IT SIMPLE” – too many rules will only serve to confuse and de-motivate participants

Rule 5: “PUBLISH OR PERISH” – Publish in hard copy form, fax, email, or poster format and make peers/coworkers aware of the achievement. [Click on the image attached](#) to see an example of an animation we create and distribute at MaraStar to acknowledge employees.

Keep in mind that rewarding employees is one of the more positive aspects of managing people – you get to do something positive by acknowledging and applauding people who richly deserve to be so treated. SO...

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Simulation: The Next Best Thing to a Crystal Ball

By Rebecca Wise

Contact centers that have implemented skill based routing (SBR) technology, or are considering doing so in the future, may also want to consider investing in a crystal ball.

SBR, for all of its many benefits, creates several workforce related challenges that can only be solved by predicting the future. However, if the center's IT department has banned the use of crystal balls, as many have done due to high costs associated with maintenance, a workforce management system capable of simulating the center contact center's specific SBR environment is a viable alternative.

SBR Related Workforce Challenges

In SBR environments, traditional workforce planning methods result in

two primary inaccuracies: agent requirements and agent availability. When managers are unable to rely on the accuracy of either of these elements, their ability to ensure forecast objectives are met efficiently through appropriate staffing levels is eliminated.

SBR Challenge #1: Calculating Accurate Agent Requirements

In non-SBR (or “universal”) environments, the assumption is made that all agents in a particular group are equally equipped to handle the contacts for a corresponding group of skills. Erlang tools base their calculations on this assumption and, therefore, are sufficient to determine the staffing requirements for a non-SBR contact center.

SBR technology, however, makes it possible for contact centers to create a hybrid environment where agent skills sets and proficiencies overlap. To accurately forecast for this type of environment, projected multiskill efficiencies must be calculated in order to avoid overstaffing. Due to their



inability to predict the future, forecasting tools that rely solely on Erlang calculations will fall short when in an SBR environment.

SBR Challenge #2:
Accurately Reflecting Agent Availability

Accurately reflecting agent availability in a non-SBR environment is no big challenge. Agents in a department are typically dedicated to handle the contacts for a specific skill or grouping of skills, so it is simply a matter of dividing each agent's time across all the intervals they are scheduled to be available. Even a spreadsheet is capable of handling this task.

In an SBR environment, however, the task is not so simple. Some agents may be dedicated to handle a particular skill, but other agents may handle that skill plus three more. In fact, the combination of agent skills and skill levels in an SBR environment can be virtually limitless, which makes the task of predicting how much time they will spend on each skill seemingly impossible.

Predict the Future through Simulation

Fortunately, there is a solution to the workforce challenges created by SBR: simulation. In fact, the only way to accurately calculate requirements and agent availability in a contact center using SBR is through simulation.

In an SBR environment, Erlang based requirements provide a starting point, but they need to be adjusted to account for the multiskill efficiencies of the center's particular environment. Otherwise, requirements will be inaccurate. Unfortunately, multiskill efficiency is not just something that you can guess. It only comes through simulating the conditions that will be in place during the forecasted time frame for all of the interrelated contacts the agents handle.

Accurate agent availability is also something that requires simulation. It is not simply a matter of dividing an agent's time across the various contacts he or she is able to handle. The volume of each contact

must be considered as well the routing logic in place. In addition, the skills of the other agents and when they are working must also be taken into consideration. Only simulation makes it possible to accurately predict the percentage of time each agent is likely to be engaged in handling all of their various skills.

Choosing the Right Workforce Management System

Buyers beware. Not all workforce management systems that claim to work in an SBR environment offer simulation. And of those that do, not all are capable of mirroring the center contact center's exact environment. Some give you a choice of generic routing scenarios to choose from. Some allow you to choose from "best case" and "worst case" requirements. Others require you to have Nostradamus-like vision by making you input contact routing "ratios" for each agent. Warning: any system that requires its users to apply their personal intuition as it relates to the impact of SBR will only result in inaccuracies.

For contact centers both big and small that have deployed SBR technology, automated workforce management with simulation is no longer a "nice-to-have." SBR provides the perfect excuse to finally throw out that old Erlang calculator you got for free at a call center show in the late 80's. When looking at systems, here are some things to consider:

10 Requirements for Accurate Skill-Based Workforce Management

1. Capable of simulating the center's exact routing rules at both the site and the network level regardless of the specific ACD or routing platform in place.
2. Supports date specific routing rules making it possible to test the effectiveness of future routing scenarios.
3. Simulates date specific skills and skill levels of individual agents.
4. Uses the agent's schedule as part of the simulation process.
5. Provides options to schedule agents by skill profile or by seniority/ranking



within the group.

6. Supports both skill-blended and skill-blocked work assignments.

7. Displays interval level multiskill efficiency percentages for each forecasted contact type in order to gauge routing effectiveness.

8. Schedule management tool is capable of filtering agents by a particular skill or user-selected grouping of skills.

9. Automatically reflects the impact of schedule changes in the coverage line and projected results for all affected contact types.

10. Capable of intraday re-simulation in order to account for changes in projected contacts and/or agent availability.

For more information on skills based routing, download this pre-recorded Webinar at:

<http://w.on24.com/r.htm?e=21777&s=1&k=39ED2AACAC1CA4748721C6BA2125435>
[D](#)

About the Author

Rebecca Wise is a recognized expert in workforce management. She can be reached at rebecca.wise@iex.com.



Leading Through Change

By Kimberly King, President, InterWeave

As organizations begin the culture change to WOW performance, it is imperative to have strong mentors who can pave the way for a positive and successful evolution to WOW. In order to enable your organization's mentors to *"inspire others to continually strive for higher levels of performance through creative and strategic methods that are always focused to achieving your goals"*, you must help them move through the personal emotions that change creates so that they can effectively lead others. Here are some critical suggestions to share with your team to develop strong change management skills in order to assist the organization through transition and culture change.

COMMUNICATE UPWARDS, NOT DOWNWARDS OR SIDWAYS

During any type of change, it is natural to gain insight from your peers or to speak with people who report to you. When a change is first announced, most people react emotionally, not logically. If you are communicating to others based on emotion, you may be releasing some feelings that are not conducive to moving forward with new processes. Focus your communication with those above you for the purpose of understanding more of the reasons, results and ramifications of the change. Once you have information and feel comfortable with the direction, your communication downwards and sideways will be more logical in nature, rather than emotional. At this time your communication will assist the organization in consistently getting out the right message and helping others through their adaptation process. If negative or emotions escape, they are difficult to overcome later and may be

detrimental to the success of the organization.

HEAR OTHERS' CONCERNS WITHOUT FEEDING INTO THEM

You will be hearing many things during a time of change. Some information will be true, some will be assumptions, some will be misunderstandings and some will be created. Focus on what is being said and understanding the feelings. By asking more questions than making statements, you will be acknowledging the feelings of others without contributing to any true or false impressions. By asking strategic questions, you will also be helping others to assess their feelings and gain new insights.

ASK QUESTIONS

Times of change are not times to be silent. It is not advised that you stuff your feelings – simply channel them in productive directions. Ask questions and seek to understand everything you need to know. Do not be afraid to ask the same questions over and over. Management is there to



support the changes and help guide your journey to success.

NOTE YOUR FEELINGS AND ACTIONS

Change is definitely a process. Many times change invokes initial fears of inadequacy or uncertainty. Then you may feel confusion and may feel as though everything was going along just fine before and now you feel a sense of disorder or chaos. Then you may experience times of disappointment or anger because this was not your vision or your idea of how things should be. Then there are times of hesitancy as you try the new methods, but still feel comfortable with the old ways. Finally, there is acceptance. This is now time for the “new norm”. Things start to settle down and everyone falls into alignment with the new plan. Understand the stages of your feelings and ensure that you are moving in a positive directions through the continuum.

GATHER FOLLOWERS

Surround yourself with positive influences and

those who are successfully finding their way through the maze of changes. Look to them for answers and directions. Latch on to these change catalysts and follow their lead. They know the way.

EMBRACE THE OPPORTUNITY

Change is always a little scary because it is a place of unknown entities. Take time to explore the new picture and find where you feel comfortable in the grand scheme of things. Everyone must find their place in the new state of the organization. Look for opportunities of growth. Take this time to learn about yourself and explore your strengths. Seize this opportunity and look for ways to capitalize on the transformations. These changes may open up doors for you that you never knew existed. Seize this moment to drive your destiny!

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Call Centers Evolve to Fit View of Role

Three normal stages with gray areas

By Randy Saunders

How a company views its call center is crucial to determine the value of the operation, the need for how much and which technology, the strategy used and the evolution of the call center.

There are three normal stages of call center evolution—operational, transitional and strategic. Management's view of the role and goals of the call center shapes its future and whether it will transition into a unit that's in total harmony with the company's strategic plan and customer relationship data.

Operational Call Centers

These are the most basic and are primarily customer service oriented with little or no sales generation. Utilities are a good example of this stage. Customers contacting this type of call center can usually schedule installation, report trouble, check account balances, make



delinquent payment arrangements and, in some cases, pay over the phone.

Management views an operational call center as a cost center and not as a profit generator. Since labor costs comprise about 65 percent of call center operation expense, the goal is to provide customer service yet keep labor expenses down as much as possible.

Call avoidance with self-service is the strategy. Cost

containment is the goal. Call automation and information access by the customer are the normal techniques. Live-agent contact is expensive and management tries to reduce the amount of this contact. Better training plus quicker and easier agent access to account information can reduce call time and frequency. ROI metrics are all about reducing labor costs.

Operational call centers are effective when there's not

much competition for the customer. Competition, however, forces a transition into the second stage of call center evolution.

Transitional call centers

These call centers evolve from cost centers to profit generators at least in part. As with operational call centers, transitional call centers concentrate on customer service functions but add another dimension—sales.

Retailer call centers are good examples of the transitional stage. Customer service duties are handled along with sales responsibilities. New products and services, special offers, service upgrades, newsletter signups and more—customers and prospects learn about these when they call in.

Check on the status of your order and you'll learn about a new widget that relates to your ordered items. If you

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want to find out about store locations and hours, you'll also learn about special discounts that expire in a few days. We can take your order right now—credit card number please. Management's view of a transitional call center is much more than the "necessary evil" of an operational cost center. Their view transitions the center into a profit generator—a sales channel. Technology that allows the call agents to view the customers account activity and preferences and that provides a suggested script for the call offers is important to success.

This channel requires information from CRM packages and some type of knowledge management access. Agents need training in products and services in addition to salesmanship techniques.

Transitional call centers have the same need as operational call centers—to keep labor expense in check. That goal is more difficult to attain because better trained, knowledgeable call agents are crucial to success.

Smart technology and call agent analytics provide relief.

The goal at these centers is to service customers effectively while up selling and cross selling. The technology used needs to provide agents with the necessary information for successful customer interaction. ROI metrics focus on lower labor costs and higher revenue per customer.

Transitional centers generate profits and are an attractive customer touch point. But, how do they relate to other sales channels and company strategy?

Strategic call centers

From operational to transitional and now to the third stage—the call center transitions into a strategic operation that ties into all sales channels.

Strategic call centers provide customer service, drive sales and attempt to maximize customer satisfaction resulting in increased customer loyalty and a higher customer lifetime value.

The technology used should connect the call agent with the customer data from all company channels—knowledge management, CRM and smart technology like Knowledge Builder, which provides the agent with insightful information (client has purchased products X and Y and, therefore, probably is a good prospect for product Z).

In addition to a better customer experience and increased sales, strategic call centers emphasize call agent training and satisfaction as well. It's crucial to provide them with the necessary tools, training and a stimulating work environment. Performance management technology, quality control monitoring and coaching has a big role in strategic centers.

The more competitive the industry, the more likely the call center will transition to the strategic stage. Using technology that provides insight, training agents and using performance analytics, and maximizing opportunities per customer contact—all are requisites of

an effective strategic call center. Increased sales and higher customer loyalty are the likely result.

Evolution is a gradual process

At which stage is your call center? Is it operational, transitional, strategic or in a gray area between stages? Navigating the complexities of CRM and information flow takes time and investment in better technologies and training.

Analyzing current performance against the expected ROI from evolution improvements may lead your company to a "one step at a time approach." This provides some immediate ROI, which helps fund the next step. Unless your company is in a non-competitive situation, as competitive pressures increase, call center evolution becomes an imperative.

Randy Saunders is the marketing director for Cincom's Customer Experience Management products.





CASE STUDY

Company: Humana Military Healthcare Services

Location: Louisville, Kentucky

URL: www.humana-military.com

Industry: Healthcare

Products: Intervoice Voice Response System

Business Objectives

Deploy voice automation to manage company growth
Harness speech technology to reduce costs
Automate processes to gain competitive advantage

Solution

Intervoice voice automation system selected for its flexible, scalable platform

Results

350,000 calls handled per month
\$1.3 million annual cost savings due to automation
Call automation eliminates need for 25 full-time employees

“With Intervoice speech and touchtone call automation we’ve eliminated the need for 25

additional full-time employees, saving the company \$1.3 million per year.”

- John Jones, director of technology innovation, Humana Military

Humana Military Healthcare Services Armed with Intervoice Company Saves \$1.3 Million through Voice Automation

Company Overview

Humana Military Healthcare Services (HMHS) was founded in 1993 to focus on military health care initiatives. It is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Humana Inc., one of the largest and most innovative health insurance companies in the country. HMHS administers TRICARE health plans to 2.8 million active-duty and retired military members and their families. The company strives to work collaboratively with its Department of Defense partners to deliver high quality, cost-effective, accessible health care services to the military population it serves.

Humana Military has grown substantially since its inception and has continued to earn new government contracts over the years and expand its services. In 2001, HMHS nearly doubled the size of its constituency by acquiring the Mid-Atlantic and Heartland regions. Today, the company serves constituents in ten states throughout the southern U.S. including Texas, Florida, Tennessee, Oklahoma, Mississippi, Alabama, Arkansas, South Carolina, Louisiana, and Georgia. HMHS is also the sole administrator for the Department of Defense’s (DoD) “bridge” health care program, insuring military personnel between military and private sector employment.

Business Objectives

As Humana Military enjoyed rapid growth and won new government contracts in recent years, the company needed to scale to meet the needs of additional beneficiaries—including military families, as well as doctors and health care providers. First deployed in 2000, Humana Military relied on Intervoice voice

automation and speech technology to meet the service needs of its expanding number of customers. “We believed that speech technology would provide another avenue for customers to interact with our company, leading to reduced call cycle times and ultimately improving customer satisfaction levels,” says Wanda Mabry, manager of interactive voice response development for Humana Military. “Our goal was to make it as easy as possible for callers to interact with the system.” Since deploying Intervoice, HMHS has rolled out hundreds of speech and touchtone applications in an effort to keep up with company growth while reducing internal costs, improving service levels and maintaining a competitive advantage within the health care industry.

Solution

Humana Military selected Intervoice in 2000 due to its flexible, scalable and reliable platform—along with its proven track record. Prior to Intervoice, the company received approximately



9,000 calls per month, most of which were directly handled by call center agents. “We used an external IVR vendor to handle a few touchtone applications, but knew this was not a long term solution,” says John Jones, director of technology innovation at Humana Military. “We selected Intervice because we believed they were at the forefront of voice automation technology. The platform gave us a scalable and flexible foundation upon which we could deploy speech and touchtone applications. We liked that we could develop the applications in house and customize them to meet our specific business requirements.” HMHS also liked Intervice’s unique “multi-box” architecture. “Each voice automation system stands on its own, which reduces the risk of system-wide failure and a potential negative customer service issue,” says Jones. In the initial deployment, HMHS utilized Intervice consulting services to help setup the applications. “We eventually sent Wanda to an Intervice training

workshop and she came back with all the tools and expertise to completely manage the system in house,” says Jones.

Humana Military has vastly expanded its Intervice deployment over the past five years and become a showcase for leveraging voice automation technology to improve efficiency and deliver outstanding customer service. Today, Mabry and her team manage an advanced speech and touchtone system that handles 350,000 calls per month (4.2 million calls per year).

With stringent government requirements, HMHS was required to give customers an option of speaking to a live agent. “We built an application to meet the Department of Defense’s criteria, giving customers a choice of speaking with a live agent or accessing our voice automation system,” says Jones. “Once a customer selects our voice automation system, that individual again has a choice as to whether they want to use touchtone or

speech. It’s a system that gives customers the power to choose how they wish to interact with us,” says Mabry. Even though HMHS does not require its beneficiaries to use the speech or touchtone technology, the company discovered that the majority of customers prefer dealing with an automated system.

HMHS developed touchtone and speech applications around three major self-service categories including referral inquiries, eligibility status and medical provider lookup. Customers access the referral inquiry menu to check on the status of a request to visit a specialist. They can also access the eligibility status menu to get benefits coverage information, determine the amount of their premium payment or learn about the types of medical providers covered in their plan. Eligibility status automation is very useful for health care providers. “An office manager can access the system and verify the eligibility of TRICARE patients scheduled for appointments the next day, for example,” says Jones.

“They can plan their day accordingly, figure out if those individuals are covered, and use the information to save time and gain efficiency.” The system also allows patients to use speech to find out if certain practitioners are in the network. “They can use speech to specify the specialist type, such as “pediatrics,” and the system will reply with a list of TRICARE pediatricians in their geographical area along with corresponding phone numbers and addresses,” says Mabry.

“Some transactions offered through the system are speech-only,” says Mabry. “In some cases, touchtone is simply not a viable solution.” For example, customers use speech to quickly get directions to a TRICARE Service Center office. “The customer simply says ‘directions’ and detailed instructions are provided to them through the phone,” says Mabry. Or, when health care providers call in to schedule a hospital admission for a patient, they use speech to indicate the reason for the hospitalization such as



“maternity,” “surgery,” or “medical,” as well as information about the location of discharge such “discharged home,” “skilled nursing facility,” “rehab facility,” “hospice,” or “another hospital.” A new program currently being tested will allow health care providers to setup outpatient referrals using over one hundred voice-recognized services such as: “cardiovascular surgery,” “MRI,” or “orthopedics”— and also record detailed clinical audio notes for HMHS nurses, which can speed up the approval process.

Humana Military also uses Intervoice to place automated outbound calls, enabling proactive customer service to further satisfy customers. “We’ve set up the system to conduct automated courtesy calls, telling customers their enrollment is complete and to be on the lookout for their benefits card in the mail, for example,” says Mabry. The system also places courtesy calls to remind customers that their payment is due or lets them

know their referral request has been approved. “We’ve had excellent feedback from customers on these automated call programs,” says Mabry.

Results

Humana Military is leveraging Intervoice voice automation technology to effectively manage growth, deliver outstanding customer service, reduce operational costs and gain a competitive advantage in the industry. “With Intervoice speech and touchtone call automation we’ve eliminated the need for 25 additional full-time employees, saving the company \$1.3 million per year,” says Jones. Intervoice has also helped meet HMHS’ company objectives of continuously improving customer satisfaction.

“We’ve been able to quickly scale and adapt to changing business requirements. The Intervoice platform allowed us to easily keep up with rapidly growing call volumes over the years,” says Jones. “It played a key role in our company’s

success.”

Jones also lauds Intervoice for its reliability. “The system has essentially been up and running flawlessly for six years. It’s extremely reliable, which is critical to delivering consistent service levels and keeping customers happy,” he says.



AROUND AND ABOUT

Data-Tel Info Solutions introduces Online Training Videos and Tutorials for Customers

Mesa, AZ — Data-Tel Info Solutions announced that customer training for their hosted call center solution, xSELLerator ASP, is available online.

To get unlimited access to the training videos, customers can simply browse to Data-Tel’s website (www.datatel-info.com) and enter their login information. Customers receive this login information once they have

subscribed to Data-Tel’s hosted service.

Once a customer is logged into the training, they are able to navigate through the xSELLerator ASP menus (Flash required) as if they were using the actual software. This feature gets the trainee comfortable with xSELLerator’s software interface and menus. Each menu item has a unique training video that shows the common use and functionality of the item. There are also “Quick Start” videos that showcase common procedures within the software, usually involving multiple menu items.

Data-Tel’s training videos will allow managers to get their call center up and running in a minimal amount of time. The automated videos will have no time or date restrictions, and have unlimited viewing ability.

###

Data-Tel Info Solutions offers Live Demonstration Webinars.

Mesa, AZ — Data-Tel Info Solutions announced that



they will be offering Live Webinars, twice a week, that will demonstrate their call center solutions.

The Webinars are normally scheduled for Tuesdays at Noon EST and Thursdays at 4:00 PM EST, but can be scheduled to fit individual needs.

The software demonstrations are conducted by experienced Data-Tel Sales Representatives that show the extent of the solutions' capabilities, as well as commonly used tasks. Question and answer sessions are conducted at the end of the Webinar.

Those interested in attending a Data-Tel Webinar may sign up on Data-Tel's website (www.datatel-info.com) or call the toll-free sales hotline at 1.888.926.1131. Webinar reservations can be made up to an hour before start time.

###

Introducing MAGIC® Workouts - An Interactive Tool to Improve Customer

Service Interactions

Communico is pleased to announce our new training tool, **MAGIC® Workouts**.

MAGIC® Workouts will help you:

Standardize the quality and consistency of interactions across all associates and service centers

Reinforce MAGIC training (or other customer service training) to extend impact

Assess your associates' ability to recognize an exceptional interaction

Measure individual, group, and overall service center performance

[Click here to view a product tour or take a free trial.](#)

An Interactive, Online Training Tool That Keeps Associates Engaged

MAGIC® Workouts is an online, educational reinforcement tool that helps increase the quality and consistency of customer service interactions. With Workouts,

your associates learn how to:

Handle customer contacts at a consistently exceptional level

Respond to questions from a new product launch

Handle difficult issues and complaints in less time

Identify their own strengths and weaknesses and learn specific ways to improve

Workouts are delivered, assessed, and monitored through a web-based application. The application is user-friendly and guides associates to:

Listen to audio recordings of simulated customer interactions. These sample interactions can be tailored to the types of customer contacts your associates handle on a daily basis.

Assess the customer interaction using your quality assessment form, our 33 Points of MAGIC, or a combination of the

two.

Receive immediate feedback on their assessment. Associates are invited to learn more about the assessment scale as it relates to each interaction.

Learn the elements of an exceptional interaction. Associates listen to a recording of how the same interaction could have been handled in an exceptional way.

Reports for Managers Provide Quantitative Measurement

Managers and supervisors can run on-demand reports to evaluate their team's performance. Reports allow you to track the progress of individuals and groups, assess your associates' ability to apply learning, and identify areas where additional training is necessary.

Customize Training for Greater Impact and Retention

Workouts can be tailored to your company's specific goals and needs quickly and



affordably. Customizing Workouts allows you to incorporate your company's best practices into the learning. The use of real-work situations makes it easier for associates to transfer skills and immediately apply learning to their daily interactions.

[View our MAGIC® Workouts product tour and sign up for a free trial.](#) Test out a Workout for yourself.

COMPANY: Communico Ltd.
www.communicoltd.com

For over 25 years, Communico has partnered with organizations and provided a range of training and consulting services help them build and sustain exceptional service cultures.

MAGIC® stands for Make A Great Impression on the Customer

PRICING: The cost to create workouts is based on number of Workouts ordered and customization needed. A package of generic workouts is available at a very

reasonable fee. There is also a licensing fee that declines as the number of users increases.

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JOB POSTING

SANDY CORPORATION IS LOOKING FOR A FULL TIME CALL CENTER ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

SANDY CORPORATION IS LOOKING FOR A FULL TIME CALL CENTER ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

Sandy Corporation, a Training and Communications company located in Troy, Michigan, is looking for a full time Call Center Account Executive with the following qualifications:

- Successful history selling Call Center services
- Excellent communication skills (written and verbal).
- Ability to work as integral part of a team.

- Excellent project management skills.
- Computer skills and ability to work with Microsoft Suite programs
- Ability to understand and explain call center technology
- Self starter with high level of initiative

Full time position with benefits. Relocation is optional.

If you meet these qualifications and are interested in this position, please forward your resume to Ernie Graham at ernie_graham@sandycorp.com.



EVENT

Join us at ACCE - The Global Gathering of the Contact Center Industry!

ACCE has become the place where the global contact center community comes together to learn from experts, share experiences from peers, and discover the latest technology solutions available to help their

business. Find out why 70% of Call Center Professionals choose ACCE as the one trade show they attend a year. www.ACCEicmi.com

Join us at ACCE - The Global Gathering of the Contact Center Industry! September 11-13, 2006 Washington State Convention & Trade Center, Seattle, WA
www.ACCEicmi.com



[Web Seminar Training with PHONE PRO "The Core Four" Customer Service Call Center Training Series](#)

Training available with the click of your mouse! **No waiting! Register now, and start your session [immediately!](#)**

If you have just a few folks on the phone that are in need of telephone etiquette soft skills improvement and onsite training isn't a fit for your budget, or if Phone Pro was recently at your facility but now you have a



few new hires that missed our onsite training classes, then we have the perfect fit for you - web seminars! While our onsite classes are the only way to receive customized training for the very best interaction and skill implementation, our web seminars are an excellent alternative for training smaller numbers of staff.

Telephone Etiquette/Customer Service Phone Skills

PHONE PRO's Web Seminars are a great way to get the basics of our training concepts taught to your staff in a convenient and cost effective format. **Presented by a Phone Pro trainer, each seminar is recorded and available 24/7!** Your staff will see the PowerPoint presentation on their computer and hear our trainer's voice through their computer. This

option puts you in the driver's seat for scheduling training for your staff! We are happy to offer this Customer Service series:

- **The Core Four:** A customer service series for frontline staff, which delivers the training concepts of our onsite Tele-Service program. Click [here](#) to learn more.

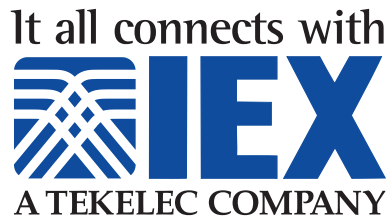
Each of the web seminars is **\$99 (or \$89 each if purchased in groups of 4 or more)** and is approximately **40 minutes** in length in order to allow enough time for a discussion afterwards.

Remember, one seminar can be viewed by several people at the same time! However, we strongly recommend that you keep the number of attendees to 1-5 people in order to ensure maximum attention, participation and retention.

[Click here](#) to view

course descriptions or register! We hope to "see you" online!

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