

# Call Center Times

Over 10,000 downloads Monthly! End-of-Year 2009 Newsletter

## New Strategies for a New Global Economy:

### On or offshore, what makes sense and what doesn't?

By Ahmed Refky, Senior Vice President, Xceed

Offshore outsourcing is a proven phenomenon that makes business sense in terms of cost and efficiency and is a reality in all mature economies. However, there are varying degrees of success in achieving the balance between customer satisfaction, quality and cost.

The debate has always been whether to stay onshore or to go offshore; the reality is that neither offshore nor onshore are good for all service types. Both can offer advantages and benefits based on the objectives and goals that the specific company is looking for. Therefore, an ideal sourcing strategy is based on deploying a "global service delivery model" leveraging the benefits of various geographies and ensuring ultimate risk mitigation, and an optimum balance between client satisfaction, quality and cost.

"The World is flat" by New York Times feature columnist Thomas Friedman, conceptualizes the significance of global service delivery models, in IT enabled services and the BPO industry. According to Friedman the boom of "dot com" phenomena, has virtualized human interactions across all facets and created a "flat" (connected) world. Making talent for the first time in history, more important than geography in determining a person's opportunity in life and thus where businesses are located. With this in mind, looking into IT and BPO industry, it is to the best interest of businesses in these sectors to segregate IT enabled

services/BPO activities into components, with each component performed in the geography that guarantees the most efficient outcome. Certain types of services have to be onshore outsourced, and some of the already offshore outsourced services need to be brought back; while other types of services need to stay offshore to get the optimum benefits.

We believe that any market can be served domestically, more specifically the US market that is usually perceived as one of the largest markets that offshore outsource. For some types of services and/or clients an onshore model can provide an excellent value proposition that balances the relatively high cost of operation versus quality and customer satisfaction.

Offshore outsourcing to labor intensive markets like



# HERE ARE THE LOGOS OF THE LEADING PROVIDERS OF CALL CENTER PRODUCTS AND SERVICES...CLICK ON LOGO TO LEARN MORE ABOUT EACH COMPANY!





# RANTS & RAVES!

## Randomly Timed Musings

### Customer Experience - The Bottom Line on Financial Objectives

By Kathleen M. Peterson

Chief Vision Officer, PowerHouse Consulting, Inc.

The Customer Experience strategy cannot be provided at a loss if profitability, or even sustainability, is important to your organization. Customer Experience is at the heart of many, if not most of today's executive strategies; however it is execution that matters. Execution determines if/when objectives are met.

Strategic plans come complete with objectives of all sorts; of late financial objectives occupy center stage. Needless to say, this is an area to proceed with caution. Financial objectives exist at every level within the enterprise; poor or costly operational execution is deadly to these objectives. Effective operational execution however, is not an option, it is a requirement! We must acknowledge it is not easy and it is rare, especially according to a widely quoted study reported in

Fortune magazine that less than 10% of effective strategies are effectively executed, largely based upon operational execution approaches.

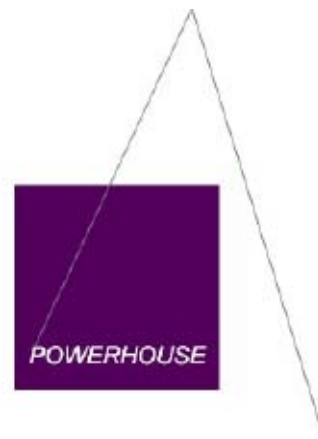
Financial objectives as well as strategic goals must be aligned, communicated, and adopted at each and every level. This seems like a "no brainer." However, there are many - too many - frontline customer interfacing parts of operations that do not understand financial goals and their particular role in achieving those goals.

*What to do?* Communication is a start and really the heart of the matter. Leaders at all levels are responsible for translating the financial language of the executive suite into the tactical, operational elements of each department. This remains something of an art form. We often mention the labyrinth to which customers are too frequently subjected, being bounced about and getting lost, while trying to do business. Staff also navigates a maze of operational silos and political minefields and performs specific tasks and activities that make up operational execution. These contribute to the cost and quality of the Customer Experience.

Communication is at the core of

successful execution. I never cease to be amazed at the Public Relations budgets dedicated to communicating to the outside world, with little or no budget allocated to communication within the enterprise. Sometimes, there is a level of over-confidence that the dissemination of information is done effectively. *This spells risk.* Remember the old telephone game. By the time the phrase is whispered to the last person it is barely recognizable from how it began. This type of communication deterioration is common, especially when a communication plan is weak or poorly crafted.

A communication plan requires some kind of feedback in order to acknowledge understanding and subsequent adoption of any initiative. When it comes to the communication of financial objectives, it may be a worthy exercise to ask leaders to document their understanding of how their business unit contributes and how they will report on contributions. Leaders down the line are able to use the same methodology. ASK for input. Generally speaking, the masses are much smarter than given credit for. They just need the opportunity.



# RANTS & RAVES!

## Randomly Timed Musings

When looking at financial objectives, the communication mission is to “keep it simple.” For example, provide definitions for terms like *Top Line* and *Bottom Line* - I found this definition below at [www.investopedia.com](http://www.investopedia.com).

“Bottom Line describes how efficient a company is with its spending and operating costs and how effectively it has been controlling total costs. Top Line, on the other hand, only indicates how effective a company is at generating sales and does not take into consideration operating efficiencies which could have a dramatic impact on the bottom line.”

Providing some definition, along with objectives, enables most individuals and departments to know that what they do impacts both additional sales and additional costs. It also illustrates the importance of operational efficiency gains to the overall financial health of the company.

Today the Contact Center is one of those departments with substantial customer contact - one where efficiency gains, selling skills, and impact on customer retention make a major contribution to the overall achievement of meeting financial

objectives.

When we look at Top Line growth, the Contact Center may be contributing via add-on sales or referrals to other parts of the company for products and services. Some Contact Centers are the “closers” for money invested in advertising campaigns and/or special promotions. If the Contact Center views itself as order takers only, failures occur. If Marketing neglects to communicate properly with the Contact Center regarding its campaigns, failures occur. If systems or processes introduce obstacles, failures occur.

Failures cost money and they compromise the Customer Experience. It is critical to identify Top Line activities that the business units are responsible for; let them tell you how they can positively impact these areas. Take it a step further. *Ask them what gets in the way.* Brace yourself! It could be BUREAUCRAP - silos, politicos, fiefdoms, etc. Only the senior level has the ability to smooth out the obstacles in this type of operational maze.

What about Bottom Line? Contact Centers are generally ripe for efficiency improvements. The key

is to take the time to identify areas with genuine, long-term returns. Ask the frontline of the Contact Center to reply anonymously to this question: “*What are the dumbest things we do here? How can we improve?*” You may well find seeds of inefficiency in the answers.

Taking action; providing necessary training; clarifying objectives; analyzing frequent, complex and critical tasks; improving processes and technology; and defining specific desirable behaviors for all contributors builds momentum for efficiency gains, improved sales, smoother processes, and better use of technology. These all contribute to the Top Line and the Bottom Line as well as to the Customer Experience.

Take this to the masses and get to work on connecting the Customer Experience to growth and profitability. In the long term this is what works!

*(#32, Customer Experience - The Bottom Line on Financial Objectives, November/December 2009)*

# "I'm not listening"



**Measure** agent service delivery.

**Train** agents based on actual customer experience.

**Listen** to the voice of the customer.

**Understand** customers perceptions of your processes and products.

- Automated post-contact survey solutions (IVR, email, chat).
- Real-time customer feedback, including voice messages.
- Clear, concise web reports by agent and team.
- Manager call backs, alerts.
- Incident/call back tracking.
- Customized to fit your needs and culture.
- Hosted. No software or hardware to install.

## 'Live' their experience.

Automated customer feedback that captures your call center experience.

Immediately.



800 634-5407  
www.mshare.net



## Call Center Training and Certification Programs

Service Strategies provides *Training, Career Certification, Consulting and Industry Standards* for customer service and support operations. We offer a wide range of public, private and **Online Training Courses** for call center and customer service professionals. Our online courses maximize your training budget by reducing per student costs.

- *Online Format Minimizes Training Costs*
- *Helps Staff Exceed Customer Expectations*
- *Gives Customers a Better Service Experience*
- *Certification Ensure Your Investment Pays Off*

### **Service Representative Course**

Introduces call center and customer service representatives to the fundamental principles and techniques required to deliver excellent service. The course is perfect for call center and customer service staff, call coordinators or service dispatchers. [Learn More](#) | [Register](#)

### **Support Professional Course**

Provides support professionals with the customer skills necessary to deliver high quality services in today's complex technical support environment. The course is perfect for from line technical and customer support staff. [Learn More](#) | [Register](#)

### **Service Impact! Series – Soft Skills DVD Training**

The Service Impact! Series includes training videos on DVD and a complete facilitator guide. The series offers an excellent way to supplement your training needs. Save 60% off the typical price of a training program. Choose a single topic or the complete series.

[Purchase Online](#) | [Preview](#)

### **Service Management Courses Also Available**

#### **Service Strategies Corporation**

858.674.4864 – Corporate  
800.552.3058 - Toll Free in N.A.  
[www.servicestrategies.com](http://www.servicestrategies.com)  
[info@servicestrategies.com](mailto:info@servicestrategies.com)

India, China, Philippines and lately the North African region with relatively competitive labor wage rates, is most evidently justified for long term projects that span several years and stipulate operation and human scalability. Only in such scenarios that offshore economies of scale can leverage the costs incurred as a result of high travel, labor training and project management, which are common costs, associated with offshore development models. However, cost is not the only driver to offshore outsourcing, it is the hunt after scalable pools of talents and skill sets is what has been fueling the off shoring industry.

The onshoring model on the other hand contends on services that can not lend itself to

offshoring, due to the sensitivity and/or complexity of the service components. Additionally there are the small to medium scale projects that an offshore model does not represent an added dollar value to it. The Government agencies are also another sector that has rising needs to outsource certain functions in an effort to elevate national service levels as well liberate resources to focus on core functions, yet are not able to offshore.

The cost benefits from the onshore delivery model more specifically in the U.S, are to further increase, after the US broadband stimulus adopted by President Obama administration early this year. So instead of setting up a contact center facility in New York or Washington DC



where the cost of living is quite high, a contact center facility can be relocated to a rural area of Iowa for instance that was initially under served by broadband prior to the broadband stimulus program.

From a BPO service provider perspective, research analysts firms like Gartner and IDC are vying the sustainability of the pervasive offshore outsourcing models that rests on a “labor intensive” approach. With the continuous boom of technology platforms that automate and merge processes the conventional outsourcing model could lead to futile human capital and scalability could reach a point of serious glitch. This reinforces the significance of creating “Global Service Delivery Models” that utilize geographies and technologies as well, mitigating the risk of reaching a complete halt of service delivery as technologies advancements abate the cost and human

scalability factors.

The hybrid service delivery model is in essence the ideal shore model with virtual platforms connecting all service delivery locations to guarantee maximum flexibility and seamless consolidation. Deciding on what will stay onshore versus what will go offshore and where; is as important as the initial decision of whether to outsource or not. Companies should strive to get the right mix of on and offshore strategies.

###

### **Avoid the ‘Chair Graveyard’**

By Jennifer Way,  
Interior Concepts

[jway@interiorconcepts.com](mailto:jway@interiorconcepts.com)

The purpose of this article is to help contact centers avoid the ‘chair graveyard’, the place where all of the broken chairs that nobody wants huddle together waiting to be

fixed or tossed out. The injured chairs waiting patiently to be fixed might have missing casters, broken controls, or arms.

To avoid the sickly grouping of unused chairs in your building, consider comfortable ergonomic and durable chairs when considering seating options.

If you have ever sat in an office chair for hours at a time you know that selecting a comfortable ergonomic chair is an integral part of a workstation, if you don’t, the body aches will prove it to you. Ergonomics with regards to seating means that the chair should be able to adjust to proper ergonomic positioning for a variety of users.

Typical ergonomic adjustments are height, seat depth, lumbar, and armrest height and width. Matching these adjustments to the user will allow them work comfortably and safely. If the chair cannot be adjusted properly it may cause a person to

work with improper arm, wrist, and back angles. This can cause musculoskeletal disorders, such as carpal tunnel, and back problems.

There are different levels of adjustability in chairs. Some of the types of chairs are basic, intensive task, and multi-function. A typical chair with basic adjustments will allow height and adjustable back depth adjustment. An intensive task chair offers many more adjustments, typically including back height adjustment, seat and back angle adjustment, and height adjustment. A multi-function chair will feature all of the adjustments of an intensive task but will add tension control, forward tilt, and an infinite tilt lock.

The type of center, multi-shift or single shift should also be considered. If multiple people sit in the chair, the chair should feature a multi-shift upgrade package for durability. The upgraded chairs will include larger casters with more weight



capacity, steel reinforcement, and a heavy-duty gas lifts. The chairs will hold up better over time for multi-shift environments.

For heavier employees, there are heavy-duty chair options available for up to 350 pounds and an extra heavy-duty option for up to 500 pounds. Heavy-duty chairs feature similar upgrades to a multi-shift package, but might have more steel reinforcement in the frames. The chairs look very similar to

other chairs, so they do not stand out on the floor.

An ergonomic or heavy-duty chair costs more than a basic chair, but considering the time and cost to repair chairs, purchase new chairs and make all employees feel welcome and comfortable, the cost difference may even out. Many chair companies offer warranties on single shift chairs and an extended warranty on multi-shift chairs. Chairs built specifically for multi-shift

environments or for heavier employees will result in fewer headaches down the road and help you avoid the 'chair graveyard'.

###

## UPCOMING WEBINARS

**12/3 Delivering Exceptional Experiences Across ALL Touch Points-** Presented by Lior Arussy, Compliments of Genesys- Creating and delivering exceptional customer experience is no longer the domain of the

customer service operation. Successful companies embraced the customer experience as an organization wide commitment. With such commitment comes the required infrastructure. While certain touch points learn how to treat each customer individually, others are still delivering a one size fits all process. In this session, we will explore the ways to bring customer experience principle and operation to every delivery touch point from product and shipping to back office

SIMPLIFY YOUR CONTACT CENTER

WWW.CALLFINITY.COM  
877-897-2962

**Callfinity**



and invoicing.

Participants will discover: • The Customer Experience promise to delivery gap • The obstacles to enterprise wide customer experience delivery • The impact on the individually unique customer on the experience delivery design • The relevance of multi channels on the customer experience delivery • Principles to design ALL touch points to deliver on the promise • The power of customer diversity

and how to embrace it [http://www.crmxchange.com/webcast/genesy\\_sdec09.asp](http://www.crmxchange.com/webcast/genesy_sdec09.asp)

**December 8 - Voice User “Intelligence” –Callers Demand Intelligent IVRs- Presented** by Nancy Jamison, Principal Analyst, Jamison Consulting and Voxify - A poorly designed voice user interface (VUI) is similar to a dinosaur facing extinction as nimbler and more capable speech-enabled, self-service applications become more

pervasive. Callers are more savvy and demanding than ever and the bar for merely “acceptable” is rising rapidly. Callers today expect and demand that self-service applications be capable, conversational and most importantly “intelligent”.

The new VUI is dynamic and adaptable. The new VUI gets callers to achieve their goals faster and more efficiently than the static VUIs of the past

by customizing the experience to what is known about the caller. The new VUI adapts to changing business rules and context to improve its interactions with future callers and to better meet the needs of the caller at hand. While the demands on your IVRs are growing, the economics have never been better. The added benefits of combining intelligence with a voice user interface doesn’t have to cost more nor take longer to deploy. The key is pairing the right

## Furnish your call center for optimal productivity.

Complimentary White Paper: [interiorconcepts.com/IC/Free-Info/](http://interiorconcepts.com/IC/Free-Info/)

- The design of agent and supervisor stations can impact productivity.
- Various studies have shown that color factors into worker productivity. You can make a statement with color while keeping the furniture and surroundings generally neutral.
- The traffic flow of the call center floor is one area that is often overlooked. For tips on maintaining flow, visit the weblink above.
- It has been proven that attention to ergonomics can reduce repetitive motion injuries and costs associated with absenteeism and productivity.



Contact us at: [interiorconcepts.com/IC/contact-us/](http://interiorconcepts.com/IC/contact-us/) or call us at 800-678-5550.





technologies with the right expertise.  
<http://www.crmxchange.com/webcast/user.interface.ivr/voxify.dec09.asp>

###

Back by popular demand: Communico ([www.communicoltd.com](http://www.communicoltd.com)) offers the following webinars for \$49.95/person/webinar :

**1) Developmental Coaching Pays Dividends**

Date: Thursday, December 10, 2009  
 Times: 10:00 - 11:00

a.m. or 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Most contact centers have partial or inconsistent coaching practices, or use an evaluative approach. In this webinar, you will:

Learn how to use the Developmental Coaching model to build on your employees' strengths and help them achieve new levels of success in tough times

Gain insight into QA forms and their impact on coaching and the customer experience

Hear from companies that invested in developmental coaching

Turn the down market into an opportunity to use a new approach that energizes associates, increases morale and yields measurable results

[Click here](#) to register or call 203-226-7117 for more information.

**2) MAGIC® E-Mail Writing: Make A Great Impression on your Customers with every E-Mail**

Date: Tuesday, December 15, 2009

Times: 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. or 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time

**Attend this webinar and you will:**

Obtain concrete, practical guidelines that can immediately improve the quality and readability of your e-mails

Identify the difference between a "MAGIC" and a "Tragic" e-mail

Understand how to adjust the structure of an e-mail to your audience and purpose

Discover the best way to deliver bad news in

**Call now at 1-800-831-8083**



**NorthwindsContactSolutions.com**



The Northwinds Team offers a Managed Services Program with an array of support services.

**Value Added Program Support**

- Virtual Call Center Platform
- No Integration
- Hosted & Managed Services
- Best-In-Class Applications
- Zero Investment
- 25 years of Client Service
- Support Green Initiatives
- Certified Work from Home

Note: Agent Programs Available





an e-mail

Discuss common “gripes” about e-mails and netiquette points to maintain a consistently high level of professionalism

[Click here](#) to register or call 203-226-7117 for more information.

###

### **Providing a Whole New Customer Experience by Extending the Call Center to the Mobile Device Mobile self-service provides help anytime, anywhere**

***Hetal Pandya,  
Director of Nuance  
Mobile Care at  
Nuance  
Communications***

Competition for new mobile subscribers is fierce. There are now more than 4.1 billion wireless subscribers in the world, and, according to International Telecommunication Union, worldwide mobile connections are outpacing population growth. Developed markets are embracing mobile technologies and have either

reached or are nearing 100-percent saturation. Many subscribers in these markets even have multiple devices and networks. This overwhelming market saturation indicates that the time has come for mobile operators to focus on how to retain their existing subscriber base – but how?

Against the current economic backdrop, more than ever before, businesses need to understand the significance of delivering a satisfying — if not great — customer experience. With churn rate approaching 40 percent in the mobile industry, there is a new emphasis placed on retaining existing customers by fostering loyalty through satisfying interactions. The risk of not doing so exposes businesses to accelerated customer attrition and hampers efforts to grow top-line revenue.

Nuance Communications’ own commissioned research, focused on customer self-service preferences, found that

60 percent of respondents are less than satisfied with their interactions with customer service departments and 72 percent of those respondents will take action by telling their friends and family about the negative customer experience. This reality places mounting pressure on subscriber retention, unless a company can achieve the perfect balance of low costs and high customer satisfaction. However, the secret to delivering a superior customer experience is actually very matter-of-fact; here are just a couple of basic truths that companies would benefit from keeping top of mind.

First, individuals by nature are task oriented; they just want to get a job done quickly and with minimal fuss. Those companies that give their customers the tools and flexibility to complete tasks themselves will benefit the most.

Second, most people do not like waiting in line; In this time-

starved society, people no longer want or expect to have to wait in a queue to speak to an agent about a transaction that only takes seconds to complete. Waiting on hold is particularly frustrating when it eats up minutes on a monthly calling plan.

Thankfully, technology has evolved so that the majority of call center transactions can now be successfully automated to provide customers with an experience that is convenient and where it is easy to resolve problems in a timely manner. By 2010, more than 70 percent of call center interactions will be via mobile phone, making mobile self-service a more compelling proposition than ever before.

Enter Nuance Mobile Care. The primary goal of Nuance Mobile Care – mobile self-service – is to provide consumers with personalized tools to help resolve common problems in a convenient, easily accessible manner directly on the mobile



device. To access mobile self-service, simply dial a phone number for customer service from a mobile device, the call is captured, and a visual experience is presented to a user on his/her mobile handset. The software enables customers to automatically resolve problems directly on their mobile phones by providing intuitive real-time information that enables them to pay a bill, upgrade their account, or perform diagnostic testing – all without requiring a live customer care agent. This functionality delivers the added advantage of avoiding “agent burnout,” by freeing-up call center employees’ time to focus on more complex problems and provide customers with help in a fast and convenient manner.

To illustrate the increasing demand for these services, a survey by market research company, Added Value, revealed a huge demand for customer service delivered directly on a

mobile device and provided evidence that empowering customers to resolve problems themselves reflected positively on the brand delivering the service. During a recent focus group, more than half of respondents (59 percent) said that mobile self-service would be their preferred channel of self-service, compared with only 34 percent who would choose to deal with a customer service agent.

Nuance Communications has conducted a number of trials and commercial deployments of Nuance Mobile Care in North America and Europe, and found that more than 60 percent of user problems were successfully resolved without having to speak to a live agent. Additionally, 90 percent of trial participants preferred this mobile self-service in comparison to IVR-, Web-, or WAP-based self-service. The results are promising in light of recent statistics in the Customer Experience Impact Report from Harris Interactive that

states that 81 percent of all customers stop doing business with a company because of a bad service experience.

Because self-service software solves most tier-one problems on the handset, such as account inquiries and service upgrades, contact centers can focus more of their time on complex problems that require a human touch. Customers can still contact a call center to speak with a representative if their issue is not resolved or if they prefer this approach to problem solving. Additionally, contact centers can avoid costly “agent burnout” because the number of unnecessary calls is greatly reduced. The resulting outcome leads to higher customer satisfaction coupled with lower costs for mobile operators and contact centers. This innovative approach to self-service is a promising development for call centers, customers, and mobile operators alike.

Mobile operators will continue to face the

challenges of tighter budgets and increased demands to provide high-quality services at a competitive price point. The secret to staying ahead in today’s mobile industry lies in understanding how customers want to engage with customer service and delivering the best possible customer experience in a convenient and timely manner. Ultimately, mobile self-service solutions, like Nuance Mobile Care, will be the industry-standard to help lower costs, increase customer loyalty, and extend the call center experience directly to the mobile device.

###

**Transform your Call Center into a Contact Center**  
**By Jeff Valentine,**  
**CEO, Callfinity**

Whether you’re a fan of the original Transformers™ cartoons and toys or the new CGI adventure, there’s no questioning the obsession many of us have with these giant robots that



transform into sleek vehicles. Although the premise of Transformers may be a bit of a stretch, the fascination with robots performing multiple functions is pretty justifiable.

Everyday life transforms, technology evolves, and businesses struggle to stay ahead of the competition. Transformation is

essential to survival, whether you're an Autobot trying to blend in with the humans or a corporation trying to stay in touch with its customer base. Staying alive means changing, adapting, and streamlining business processes.

Since the dawn of the internet, the telecommunications industry has been transforming. The way

that businesses can keep in touch with their customers has evolved into a combination of phone calls, email, live chat, and fax. Although your call center may be equipped to handle multiple communication methods, coordinating these efforts requires an ACD that can prioritize your business efforts on the fly.

By transforming your call center into a

contact center, your customers can get a hold of your agents no matter what their desired communication method. Better yet, contact center agents can reach out to customers at a moment's notice via email, phone, or live chat. With cell phone customers upgrading their T9 keypads for iPhones™ and BlackBerries™ with wireless web access,

## plum improves call center efficiency

by lowering costs, increasing automation rates, and enhancing customer satisfaction through a suite of IVR solutions including:



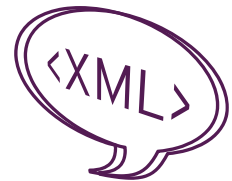
*Industry-specific, self-service voice applications that are easy to administer and deploy*



*Collection of real-time customer feedback via configurable phone surveys*



*Agent-assisted speech recognition that always understands your callers' spoken commands*



*Onsite or hosted VoiceXML IVR platform for developers*

All of Plum's IVR call center solutions are designed for maximum flexibility, scalability, and can be easily configured via a web-based interface. Contact a Plum consultant for a comprehensive ROI analysis.

**866-398-0657**  
+1-617-712-3000  
sales@plumgroup.com  
plumvoice.com/callcenter

 **PlumVoice**  
Automated Telephony Solutions



failing to keep multiple communication channels open can mean the difference between a customer for life and a former client.

If you're contemplating the jump from call center to contact center, Callfinity's ContextACD™ has everything you need. ContextACD's standards-based modular design interfaces with any PBX transforming your business into a customer communication hub. Traditional ACD

features like configurable timeouts, customizable hold treatment, and whisper announcements have been combined with queuing support for telephone calls, web chats, emails, faxes, and voicemails. This combination of queuing is called Universal Queuing™, and it's a Callfinity "first."

Universal queuing allows contact center managers (in their homes), that agent's assigned priorities determine which call, chat, email, fax, or

voicemail they are assigned. Once the task has been assigned, ContextACD provides a screen pop up to the agent using a standard web browser.

To further help businesses maintain a consistent communication center, ContextACD can be combined with Callfinity's ContextRecorder™ to record phone calls, live chat, screen activity - basically anything an agent is working on. This technology allows administrators to effectively train

employees across multiple communication platforms using real-world examples.

We may be a long way from shape shifting robots, but it would be foolish to ignore technology's hair trigger. Computers are outdated the second they hit the shelves, so just imagine how much your industry changes during your morning rush hour commute. In order to keep your business ahead of the curve, your contact center needs to be able to distribute and organize live chat,

## WHAT'S KEEPING YOU UP AT NIGHT?

High Turnover  
Costly Hiring  
Unhappy Clients  
Too Few Applicants

Ineffective Agent Performance  
Legal Compliance  
Inadequate Supervisory Talent  
Unfilled Seats



## LET ALIGNMARK HELP

### OUR EXPERTISE

- Talent Acquisition & Deployment
- Talent Development
- Talent Benchmarking & Certification
- Talent Affirmation & Differentiation

### OUR DIFFERENCE

- Recognized Pioneers & Leaders in the Field of Human Resources with Over 30 Years Global Experience
- Leading Industrial/Organizational Psychologists
- Top Technologists
- Call Center Expertise

### OUR CALL CENTER SOLUTIONS

- Technology-Based Sourcing & Screening Systems
- AccuVision Call Center Simulator to Select & Develop Agents
- AccuVision Supervisory Simulator to Select & Develop Supervisors
- AccuVision Training Series to Train Supervisors
- LeadersMark Web-Based Training for New Supervisors
- Knowledge and Skill Assessments
- Performance Management Training & Platform
- Call Center Consulting & Customized Solutions

## THE RESULT?

A partnership with AlignMark means ultimately that your call center achieves and sustains an impressive improvement in all the key operating metrics that define your success... call AlignMark today to learn more and get a head start on the much needed rest you so rightly deserve!



Website: [www.alignmark.com](http://www.alignmark.com) Voice: 800.682.4587 (x3525)  
Contact: [jmattone@alignmark.com](mailto:jmattone@alignmark.com)



email, fax, and phone.

ContextACD, combines the convenience of the easiest to use communication distributor with a web-based portal capable of keeping your agents occupied all day, every day, on the interactions you deem the most important. And since communication methods are always changing, Callfinity can keep your contact center updated with all the custom solutions you need to achieve business success. Upon first glance, you may assume ContextACD is a just a typical automatic call distributor, but with the ability to queue customer communications and force your agents to handle the right interactions at the right times, this robust solution offers much more than meets the eye.

About Callfinity: Callfinity provides the easiest to use telecommunications software, systems, and services to contact centers, service providers, and

enterprises. Since 1999, over 270 customers in six countries around the world have selected Callfinity's on-premise equipment and hosted services. For more information about Callfinity, please visit Callfinity's Web site at [www.callfinity.com](http://www.callfinity.com) or call (877) 897-2962 (USA) or +1 585-278-1940 (elsewhere).

###

## **INDUSTRY TIDBITS.....**

**Major US Insurance Company Selects Workforce Management Solution from InVision Software**

**InVision Software, a leading international supplier of enterprise-wide workforce management solutions, was selected by one of the largest commercial insurance writers in the US to implement a new cost-saving workforce management (WFM)**

**software for its contact center operations. The WFM system will bring operating efficiencies to the company's contact centers that will result in better adherence to service levels and lower operating costs.**

The insurance company employs hundreds of representatives in its North-America based contact centers. The representatives handle incoming claims calls from customers and provide technical support to agents – services that help keep the business strong and satisfaction high. The company is committed to delivering a great service experience and has therefore decided to implement a high-performance WFM software solution for the demand-oriented scheduling of its contact center agents.

"We are excited to continue our growth track in North America through our relationship with this new customer," said Peter Bollenbeck, CEO

of InVision Software. "We are looking forward to helping them improve contact center efficiency by putting the right people in the right place at the right time. The growing adoption of different channels of interaction in customer service – email, chat, SMS (texting), community bulletin boards and social networking – multiplies the planning requirements for the contact center management. Our solution InVision Enterprise WFM supports planners to cope with these new challenges in multi-channel environments ensuring service level adherence for all customer interactions – regardless of the respective communication channel."

The US insurance company selected the InVision Enterprise WFM system because of its user-friendly design and the depth of functionality the software provides. In addition to demand-oriented and optimized scheduling of its agents, the company



requested real-time adherence monitoring, enabling them to ensure service level goals are met throughout each day. At the same time, the employees' motivation and acceptance of flexible shifts is boosted by the module 'Infothek Inform' which alerts the agents to scheduled changes in activities, and to changes made to an existing schedule.

**About InVision Software**

InVision Software is a world-leading supplier of enterprise-wide workforce management solutions which enable companies to optimize their staff planning and scheduling processes. InVision empowers customers to reduce personnel costs, increase productivity, improve employee satisfaction and to boost revenue by leveraging better customer service. Founded in 1995 and based in Ratingen (Germany), InVision currently employs more than 220 WFM

specialists and has offices across Europe, North America and South Africa. InVision Software AG (IVX) is listed in the Prime Standard Segment of the Frankfurt Stock Exchange. Among InVision's clients are numerous international blue chip companies, such as ABN Amro, Allianz, BMW, Deutsche Telekom, IKEA, Sky and Vodafone.

**Further information:**  
[www.invisionwfm.com](http://www.invisionwfm.com)

###

**CLIENT SUCCESS STORY:**

*A2B Radio Cars:  
 Driven by the  
 Teltronics Call  
 Recording Solution*

**History:**  
**Client:** A2B Radio Cars  
**Industry:** Services  
**Solution:** Call Recording

A2B Radio Cars was established in 1991 and is now one of the largest Taxi

**AVAILABLE at [www.CallCenterTimes.com](http://www.CallCenterTimes.com)...**

Learn more about companies on the cutting edge of call center products and services....

<http://www.callcentertimes.com/Home/tabid/37/ctl/NewsArticle/mid/395/CategoryID/1/NewsID/33/Default.aspx>

View a description and logos of leading providers of call center products and services....

<http://www.callcentertimes.com/BuyersGuide/tabid/65/Default.aspx>

Read a synopsis of offerings from top vendors in the call center industry...

<http://www.callcentertimes.com/VendorDirectory/tabid/69/Default.aspx>

Contact the decision makers at leading America's call centers (as well as call center directors in Canada and the UK)....

<http://www.callcentertimes.com/BookofLists/tabid/64/Default.aspx>

###

Service/Private Hire Vehicle companies in the English Midlands with over 400 private hire vehicles operating across the Solihull and Birmingham International Airport (BHX) areas. A2B Radio Cars specializes in airport transportation from BHX and has developed a reputation for the reliability and quality service extended to passengers and car renters while operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

**The Challenge:**

Wanting to secure their reputation as a premier transportation service, A2B sought to effectively verify bookings and communication between agents and drivers. With the latest in interactive booking service technologies including web booking, IVR (auto phone) booking, and an agent driven telephone booking service, A2B was looking to enhance their approach with a call recording solution that could provide both security for agents and



drivers as well as consistency of service.

**The Situation:**

A2B required a cost-effective call recording solution that was both user-friendly and feature-rich to increase booking accuracy by verification of recorded customer calls as well as the ability to record radio transmission between their agents and drivers. Teltronics Call Recording solution gave A2B the ability to accurately measure call activities such as incoming, outgoing, and station-to-station calls across the call center, as well as all driver to call center dispatch conversations.

**Why Teltronics?**

Chosen for its simplicity and adaptability, the Teltronics Call Recording solution provides a converged VoIP and radio recording solution.

**The Results:**

With Caller Line Identity (CLI) display capabilities, the agents are now able to run

reports for any customer at any time, giving A2B a valuable insight into call volumes across their customer base. The solution also allows the Company to proactively manage staffing volumes for peak periods ensuring there are enough agents to provide superior customer service. Receiving more than 15,000 calls per week, A2B Radio Cars' use of the Teltronics technology guarantees customers book a taxi quickly and efficiently, and that the taxi reaches the correct address every time.

**Key Benefits to A2B Cars:**

- Exceptional analysis of call patterns and call durations
- Improved staff performance appraisals
- Recorded radio transmissions for potential driver disputes
- Efficient resolution of any customer disputes

**Customer Reviews:**  
"Teltronics' Call

Recording solution has enhanced our ability to complete bookings without contacting customers to confirm any missed details and liability for errors can be resolved without legal action," said Mark Skermer, Managing Director of A2B Radio Cars. "We chose the Teltronics solution because of the product capacity and the overall presentation from the Teltronics representatives. We are very satisfied with the service from Teltronics."

© 2009 Teltronics, Inc. Specifications subject to change without notice. Teltronics is a registered trademark of Teltronics, Inc. All other products mentioned are the trademarks of their respective owners.  
Part # 612-7082-0003  
Rev. A

**Author:**  
Candy Mizer  
Director, Marketing  
Communications

Contact: Holly Littlefield  
Sr. Marketing/Public  
Relations Coordinator

hlittlefield@teltronics.com  
941-753-5000 x7315

[www.teltronics.com](http://www.teltronics.com)  
**800.434.8358**

###

**Q & A with Steven Cramer...**

How Did A Former Call Center VP for Verizon Who Was A Major Advocate of Equipment Based, Premise Based Platforms Become One of The Biggest Advocates For Virtual Call Center Platforms? An Interview with Steven Cramer, SVP of Operations at Northwinds Contact Solutions

From the articles you have written and your posts on LinkedIn, you appear to be very passionate about call centers moving to managed service providers (hosted, virtual solutions). Why are you so passionate about the Virtual Call Center model?

My background in the Client Service industry goes back to the mid



80's with United Parcel Service and then with Verizon Wireless and Verizon International through the early 2000's. I have worked to directly manage the installation and restructuring of domestic and offshore Call Center locations to enhance the service offerings to my organizations, great opportunities and exciting! Along the way I experienced the many equipment based challenges and limitations and always

looked for a better channel, I think we have found that channel.

From my experience with Corporations, the objective is to provide the highest quality service at a reasonable price with great performance. Historically that meant that organizations needed to either invest in telecom equipment, facilities, and staffing or outsource to third party organizations. The options with

Virtual Environments have changed the game.

The Virtual Call Center Environment now enables organizations to virtualize or spread the work load over multiple sites or work from home offices. This relates to hard cost reductions of facilities, reduced labor costs, and increased performance. These opportunities directly impact the bottom line utilizing the same knowledgeable

team from your organization. Why wouldn't an organization virtualize?

You have some large, well known competitors in the market such as Five 9, Contactual, Angel and InContact. What makes you different from these other companies?

Our team works to customize solutions to each client, not a cookie-cutter approach. We provide a full service solution, not



## CUT COSTS & IMPROVE AGENT PRODUCTIVITY

DOW Networks understands the pressures facing today's inbound, outbound and blended call centers. Our hosted and premise-based solutions are built on open-source technology and provide the same features and functionality as proprietary call center platforms, but at a fraction of the cost. We also offer toll free numbers from 90+ countries and worldwide call termination, with quality routing and competitive rates.

To learn how we can help you, call **1.888.369.6389** or visit us online at **[www.downetworks.com](http://www.downetworks.com)**





just a product offering. We feel, as so do our clients, that our approach is the best fit to a changing market place.

A few examples of this can be found in our platform structure, we are Server based vs. PBX/IP. This provides a tremendous advantage to our clients since we can be flexible to their business needs and provide the scalability to meet the volume requirements. This is a HUGE ADVANTAGE over PBX/IP setups, they are restricted to the original platform design and structure, unlike the Northwinds Platform.

Your platform is not only a hosted solution but a managed solution as well. What exactly does a “managed” solution provide that a company does not get with a “hosted” solution?

The Northwinds Team provides each client the focused support required to make THEM successful in their business.

We support the full call center experience from procuring the toll free numbers and setup of the call center environment to supporting Work Force Management, Quality Control and our exclusive Certified Work From Home Program.

Our Team provides the Managed and Hosted package to organizations of all sizes: small, medium, and large. What does this mean to an organization?

“Managed Support” enables companies to leverage professional client support teams ( Work Force Management, Quality Analysis, or Performance Management teams) with Fortune 100 expertise. This expertise enables our clients the ability to compete on quality and performance within their industry.

Our solution gives them not only a dynamic, robust call center platform but the management support they will need to run their call center

effectively. In other words, Northwinds provides a comprehensive solution to each client.

Many companies have purchased equipment and software in order to have an Outbound IVR/VRU solution. What are the key benefits of your Outbound IVR and why should a company consider a hosted/managed solution instead of purchasing and managing an on-premise solution?

Our Virtual Platform requires no maintenance contracts, automatic platform upgrades are included, expert IT support, knowledge of the call center platform all with no capital expenditures! Our clients are excited about our product because our platform is flexible to our clients needs! The Northwinds platform provides the opportunity to communicate with tens of thousands of clients within hours, with a rated survey, and the opportunity to leave a

voice mail message! Why wouldn't an organization virtualize?

Written by Jennifer Wing, Independent Writer and Editor of [www.managedserviceproviders.biz](http://www.managedserviceproviders.biz)  
[jennifer@contentwriterseo.com](mailto:jennifer@contentwriterseo.com)

Contact Info For Northwinds Contact Solutions:

Darren C. Prine  
Director of Strategic Partnerships  
Northwinds Contact Solutions  
[www.northwindscontact.com](http://www.northwindscontact.com)  
[dprine@thenorthwinds.com](mailto:dprine@thenorthwinds.com)  
602-515-0395



**Global**  
Vision | Solution | Presence

## About Etech

As a global leader of customer acquisition and service solutions, Etech has a proven history of helping companies cost effectively acquire new customers and maximize profits by servicing and growing existing customers. For more than a decade, Etech has been a pioneer of introducing and supporting innovative business solutions. Whether applying our expertise to customer retention, monitoring efforts, or technical advancements, Etech delivers unsurpassed excellence.

## Online Chat Services

In the fierce marketplace that we live in, the customer is searching for solutions that are exclusive of the traditional call center experience. Online chat is rapidly becoming that experience and the primary medium for which customers choose to interact with businesses. According to Genesys Consumer Reporting, 63% of customers have stopped doing business with companies partly or wholly due to a poor call center experience.

Etech's award-winning chat service has a proven record in helping companies improve their customer service while providing significant savings to the bottom-line.

## Etech's Live Chat Benefits

- ✦ Improve Customer Satisfaction
- ✦ Reduce Average Handling Time
- ✦ Increase Revenue
- ✦ Reduce Cost
- ✦ Increase Market Share
- ✦ Shorten the Sales Cycle
- ✦ Reduce Call Volume
- ✦ Rapidly Resolve Inquiries
- ✦ Increase Customer Loyalty
- ✦ Increase Agent Productivity



## Live Chat Solution 24/7/365

Many companies are finding that customers are abandoning their web sites without purchasing their products. Complicated service orders, unanswered questions, and unexplained charges, have served as the greatest contributor in 60% of online visitors abandoning the checkout process. However, companies investing in chat programs were able to dramatically increase conversion rates and reduce their call volumes by more than 20%. Etech will show you how to increase revenue, improve customer satisfaction levels, and reduce your cost of acquisition.

### Our comprehensive portfolio of chat services include:

- ✦ Providing Business Intelligence
- ✦ 100% Digitally Recording Transcripts
- ✦ Increased Conversion Rates of Browsers-to-Buyers
- ✦ Data Analysis
- ✦ 24/7/365 Capabilities
- ✦ Secure Networking
- ✦ Robust Quality Assurance Solutions
- ✦ Real-Time Online Communications
- ✦ Fail-Safe Technology
- ✦ World Class Leadership Team
- ✦ Turnkey Outsourced Solutions
- ✦ Customer Satisfaction Surveys



## Contact Information

*Call us today to learn what Etech, Inc. can do for You.*

**Jim Iyob**

Vice President - Global Development

1903 Berry Drive, Nacogdoches, Texas 75964

Office: 936.559.2258

Mobile: 936.371.2640

E-mail: [Jim.Iyob@etechinc.com](mailto:Jim.Iyob@etechinc.com)

Visit us online @ [www.etechinc.com](http://www.etechinc.com)



# Call Center Times

tin# 75-2915747

P. O. Box 118451, Carrollton, TX 75011-8451  
Bus. 972-395-3225 Fax 972-395-9205

Dear Vice-President of Sales/Marketing:

## *Here Is How We Can Help Increase Your Bottom Line!*

\_\_\_\_\_ **'2009 Call Center Book of Lists Directory':**

- ◆ Over 2,000 Call Centers Listed
- ◆ Each Call Center has at least One Decision Maker Listed
- ◆ 900 E-mail Addresses
- ◆ Includes bonus technology leads - (Speech Technology, Recording Solutions and ACD information)
- ◆ The Directory is in CD-ROM (Excel Spreadsheet)
- ◆ FREE Quarterly Updates

Cost: \$425

\_\_\_\_\_ **Resource Directory/Call Center's Buyer's Guide:** This section of our website is the most elaborate advertising program that we provide: Your company will be profiled on our website, [www.callcentertimes.com](http://www.callcentertimes.com), for 12 consecutive months  
You will be listed in the Rolling Banner for 12 consecutive months

Cost: \$517

\_\_\_\_\_ **Monthly Newsletter Advertisement:**

Cost: \$275

\_\_\_\_\_ **Corporate Logo Promotion (Website & Monthly Newsletter):**

Cost \$500

Simply check the applicable column(s) and return by fax to (972) 395-9205. Please note that all transactions are final. There will be no refunds.

COMPANY NAME/ Contact/Address/Telephone/Fax/E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

MasterCard     Visa     American Express

\_\_\_\_\_  
Credit Card Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Expiration Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name As Appears On Credit Card (Print Please)    &    Signature

Regards,  
Nosa Eke, Publisher