

Call Center Times

Over 12,000 Downloads Monthly! October 2011 Newsletter

Managing The Time Crunch: Getting Proactive About Performance Management

**By Ric Kosiba, Ph.D., President, Bay Bridge
Decision Technologies**

Improving Corporate Communication: Tips to Implement in your Contact Center Today

**By Laura C. Jollay, Marketing &
Communications Coordinator, GCS**

Why Recognition STILL Matters

By Madison Performance Group

Analyze Customer Satisfaction With Standard Call Center Tools

**By Ric Kosiba, Ph.D., President, Bay Bridge
Decision Technologies**

Holiday Planning Made Easy with At-Home Agent Self-Scheduling Tools

By Bob Webb, VP, Pipkins, Inc.

Four Key Strategies for Building Emotional Connections with your Customers

**By Diane Berenbaum, Senior Vice President,
Communico Ltd.**

New Approaches To Customer Management

By Rob McDougall

How Do You Rate As A Boss?

By John Tschohl

**Customer Service: Practice what you preach
By Erika Blanchard, Social Media
Coordinator, VIPdesk**

Anticipation

By Teresa Sinel

**Employment Opportunity: Samsung
Electronics America, Inc. - Hiring SEA_Call
Center Training Manager**

**Reach Decision Makers at Call Centers –
Today!**

**Leading Providers of Call Center Products
and Services – A Call Center Times' Guide**

**Leading Providers of Call Center Products
and Services – A Call Center Times' Guide**

**The Social Media for Customer Service
Summit - October 27-28, New York**



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 STRA-TACTICAL Approach

By Kathleen M. Peterson
Chief Vision Officer, PowerHouse Consulting, Inc.

Customer Experience strategy has been cited by executives in multiple surveys as “very important or critical.” This is the case for 90 percent of respondents to a 2010 Forrester survey and 80 percent in a Gartner survey. Eighty percent of executives surveyed also want to use Customer Experience “as a form of differentiation.”

Needless to say, Customer Experience is a major form of differentiation from the consumer perspective. Whether it be cost, quality, or emotional differentiator ... most modern day consumers base continued brand relationships upon their “experience.”

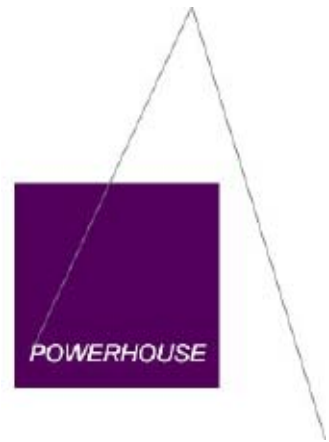
Why is this news? Why is the Customer Experience emerging as a “new” strategic element? Perhaps the Customer Experience focus is due to the executive level coming to terms with the modern day consumer taking on more of a power position in terms of choice, channel preference, and lust for recognition and customization. Consumers have the ability to expose their experience globally with the emergence of social media. Think of Dave Carroll’s “United Breaks Guitars” video on YouTube which now has over 10 million views (YouTube really is a sort of “must see TV” for the ages!). If you haven’t seen the video you really need to. Here’s the link: (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5YGc4zOqozo>). Just for the record, there are many, many customer “testimonials” available on every conceivable social media site. The fact is that consumers are hijacking market control from the enterprise!

So what to do? First, executives need to adopt a “STRA-TACTICAL” approach to creating the desired Customer Experience. STRA-TACTICAL (a term I coined to use with our clients) is the ability to address both the strategic and the tactical components of the desired Customer Experience. Time must be taken to provide a clear and exact definition of the elements, components, drivers, etc., of the Customer Experience. I continue to find this quite an enlightening and valuable exercise!

Step One of the STRA-TACTICAL exercise is to corral the C-Level to participate in the activity. I never cease to be amazed at organizations that “scoff” at the C-Level being asked to lend their voices to the development and documentation of these elements ... especially considering the fact that the C-Level is the ultimate influencer in an enterprise’s ability to deliver on the Customer Experience. If the C-Level is excluded from the development of the Customer Experience elements, the leverage for change will be lacking.

This first step is quite simple in its structure, but complex in execution. It requires a simple question being poised (mind you, this is not a survey; it is a facilitated conversation). “Define what will be our Customer’s Experience” is the way the question is poised in David Norton’s book *Strategy Maps*. What follows typically is the 30,000 foot answer: “Quality,” “Great,” etc. Generalization is typically the norm.

The facilitator must then ask, “What does that mean?” For example, “Tell me what quality means in terms of the Customer Experience.” Often, this is where the silence is a bit stunning. However, so is the yield. That is why an experienced facilitator is a requirement. A bit of encouragement may be needed; the objective is to continue to dig until *identifiable and actionable behaviors*



RANTS & RAVES!

Randomly Timed Musings

have been identified.

The descriptors identified must align to the enterprise's key focus areas. If your company is all about price (think Wal-Mart or even generic drugs) ... efficiency, expense, error reduction, etc., become paramount. If quality and luxury are your company's experience drivers ... quality drivers must be documented first, with price/cost, efficiency, etc., organized around the higher value. When a hierarchy is not established, the risk of having "mismatched" focus across the enterprise is likely to damage the brand and ultimately the experience.

The conversation continues by identifying the requirements to achieve the stated objectives: "What must we DO to accomplish this strategic outcome?" Hence, the tactical is addressed with the strategic players. This same conversation needs to take place with representatives from the C-Level to the Cube Level.

Step Two is to identify the OBSTACLES to achieving the desired Customer Experience. Far too many organizations are hog-tied to infrastructures that simply are inconsistent with strategic goals. At the heart of many obstacles (in my humble opinion) are budget practices. As in any community these days, those with the most money (i.e., budget allocations) tend to be the biggest influencers and often the biggest obstacles. After all, certain types of cross-functional alignment could lead to elimination or consolidation of various business units that put the fiefdom at risk ... hence the "stall," "objection," and "rejection" of process improvements. There seems to be a subliminal and widespread management practice that budget allocations must NEVER be put at risk, regardless of improvement forecasts. I often find that organizational silos are really a reflection of budget allocation and contribute to the barriers and organizational obstacles in delivering an effective

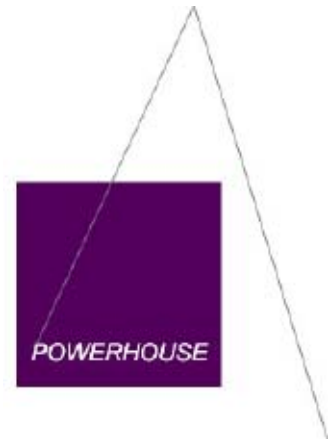
Customer Experience. Again, only the most senior levels of leadership are in a position to break this damaging pattern.

Consider the design many companies have around the handling of customer contacts. One group has the web, another retail, another email, another voice, another social media, and on and on. Each invests in its own technologies, managers, staff, etc. They do, however, all reside on the "Customer Contact Continuum." They are all potential touch points for the customer. We must ask: *What exactly is the benefit to the customer of this internal segmentation? Where is the single place for the company to store, view, and act on valuable customer information on history, preferences, etc.? Are we forcing the customer to engage with disparate entities to resolve problems?* Customers need to repeat their stories to multiple parties because information is not shared across the enterprise. I hardly think that any savvy strategy for Customer Experience would include these experiences; yet they are frighteningly common. My view is that enormous disconnects occur when strategy and tactics are NOT aligned ... putting the Customer Experience in jeopardy.

Step Three is to document, distribute, and determine specific organizational factors that could cause complications; then determine how to overcome such obstacles.

.....

When documenting the Customer Experience elements, it is important to keep it simple. Remember that simple is NOT easy; it just looks that way. Refine content to the point of being specific enough to be actionable, yet broad enough to be applicable to each business unit. The document should be organic ... one that grows without fertilizer ... if you know what I mean! It is a natural component of growth to morph and change as maturity and



RANTS & RAVES!

Randomly Timed Musings

knowledge is gained. Hence, the document should not look the same in Year Three as it did at inception.

Distribution of the STRA-TACTICAL plan is really a Change Management initiative. We must be cognizant of the fact that cynicism among employees is often rampant. The obstacle here is that employees will respond with the equivalent of an eye roll when direction is delivered from a one-way platform ... leaders speak and subordinates listen. This model simply does not work when it comes to adoption of new and different activities.

Rely on the initial inclusion activities to fuel the distribution. Master the art of ASK vs. TELL. First, ASK the business units if they see their input in the document ... they will, if it has been done properly. Once agreement is reached on the accuracy of the Customer Experience elements, ASK how tasks, activities, and behaviors will need to change to achieve results. Secondly, document what the business units perceive as obstacles, what skills employees will need to deliver, what learning must take place, what cross-functional relationships need to be enhanced, what technologies are needed, and how they feel is best to measure results.

The yield in the STRA-TACTICAL approach may often be a major finding that could ROCK the enterprise. The Gartner survey identified the following organizational *complications*: metrics vary across business units, employees are cynics, customer power is rising, nobody really knows who actually owns the customer experience, and IT is seen as a large part of the problem. Cultural changes around silos and cross-functional alignment can only be addressed at the highest level of the organization. These types of misalignments are rarely resolved laterally ... hence the reason this article began with getting the C-Level involved in a STRA-TACTICAL view of the Customer Experience.

While there is so much more we could go on about regarding the Customer Experience, we must focus on *the merge of strategy and tactics*. While the front line must be guided by Customer Experience strategic elements, it must also be equipped with the proper tools, technologies, processes, and cross-functional relationships to execute. And that requires operational and organizational obstacles to be identified and eliminated.

In a perfect world, a Chief Experience Officer (perhaps a new definition for the CEO title) is in place with the know-how, influence, and support to break down silos; allocate budget dollars to the most necessary elements; corral technology investments to assure seamless adoption and process support; and enhance knowledge sharing, data mining, customer analysis, and learning opportunities. The list could go on and on ... *What would your list look like?*

The time is now to get moving on creating your Customer Experience STRA-TACTICAL plan. One more thing; the activities described here should NOT take an army of people or months of analysis. The process needs to be efficient and effective. We have assisted in this activity for many clients ... so if you are having challenges, feel free to call! If you have enjoyed the benefits of this type of activity, we'd LOVE to hear that as well.

*"Strategy without tactics is the slowest route to victory.
Tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat."
Sun Tz? c. 490*

Instant Address Verification



Save data entry time, improve customer service

Easily integrate the **Data Quality Suite** into your call center operations to prevent incorrect, incomplete or fraudulent mailing addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers from entering your database in the first place.

The Data Quality Suite will:

- Validate and correct addresses in real-time
- Ensure accurate delivery and billing information
- Reduce undeliverable goods and shipping costs
- Save time in data entry
- Improve customer relations

Data Quality
Suite

Multiplatform

Available as
Web service
or APIs

BEFORE

john smith iii phd
melissa data corp.
22382 Empresa 92688
7145895200
john@800miAL.com

AFTER

Melissa Data Corp.
John Smith III PhD
22382 **Avenida** Empresa **Ste 100**
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA 92688-2112
949-589-5200
John@**melissadata.com**
Delivery Indicator: Business
*Highlights indicate added and/or corrected data.

NCOA^{Link}
Web Service
available

Get a FREE TRIAL at:
MelissaData.com/dqs or call 1-800-MELISSA

MELISSA DATA[®]
Your Partner in Data Quality



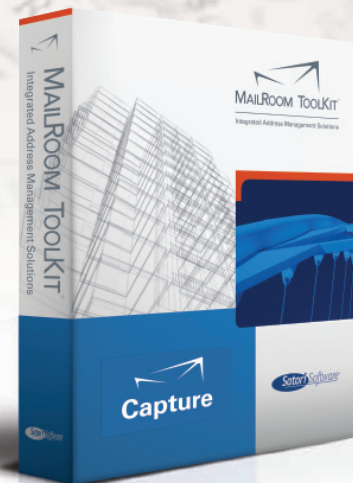
Quick Addressing Improved.

Brilliant!

Empower your contact center staff. With Capture they can quickly and accurately enter full addresses into all types of forms with the fewest possible keystrokes. Provide better customer service and improve the overall quality of your contact database — no more misspelled or invalid addresses.

Introducing **MailRoom ToolKit Capture.**

- ▶ Innovative search finds the right address quickly
- ▶ Automatically switches between multiple address forms
- ▶ Easy-to-use interface improves efficiency
- ▶ Out-of-the-box installation and intuitive field mapping reduce IT burden



**Call 800-553-6477
today for a free trial**

Ask about our competitive pricing.

Get ready to put the 'quick' into Quick Addressing.



Simply Powerful Data Quality Solutions
www.satorisoftware.com

Call Center Cubicles



We absolutely recommend Interior Concepts. Interior Concepts impressed us in every way. We found their customer service, quality and pricing to be the best, and our employees are so happy with their new cubicles!
- Hinda Khoury, Works & Lentz Inc.

- MAS Certified Green • Competitively Priced • Made in the USA • Lifetime Warranty • Designed to Maximize Space



 **Interior Concepts™**
solutions that fit.



Complimentary Space Plan: www.interiorconcepts.com/complimentary-space-plan/



www.etechnic.com

**INCREASE ONLINE ORDERS,
LOWER OPERATIONAL COSTS &
IMPROVE CSAT WITH ETECH'S
WEB CHAT SERVICES.**

DELIVERING INTELLIGENT SALES & SERVICE SOLUTIONS



CHAT SALES



CHAT SERVICE



**CHAT QUALITY
ASSURANCE**



**CHAT BUSINESS
INTELLIGENCE**



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

Contact Us Today To Learn More!

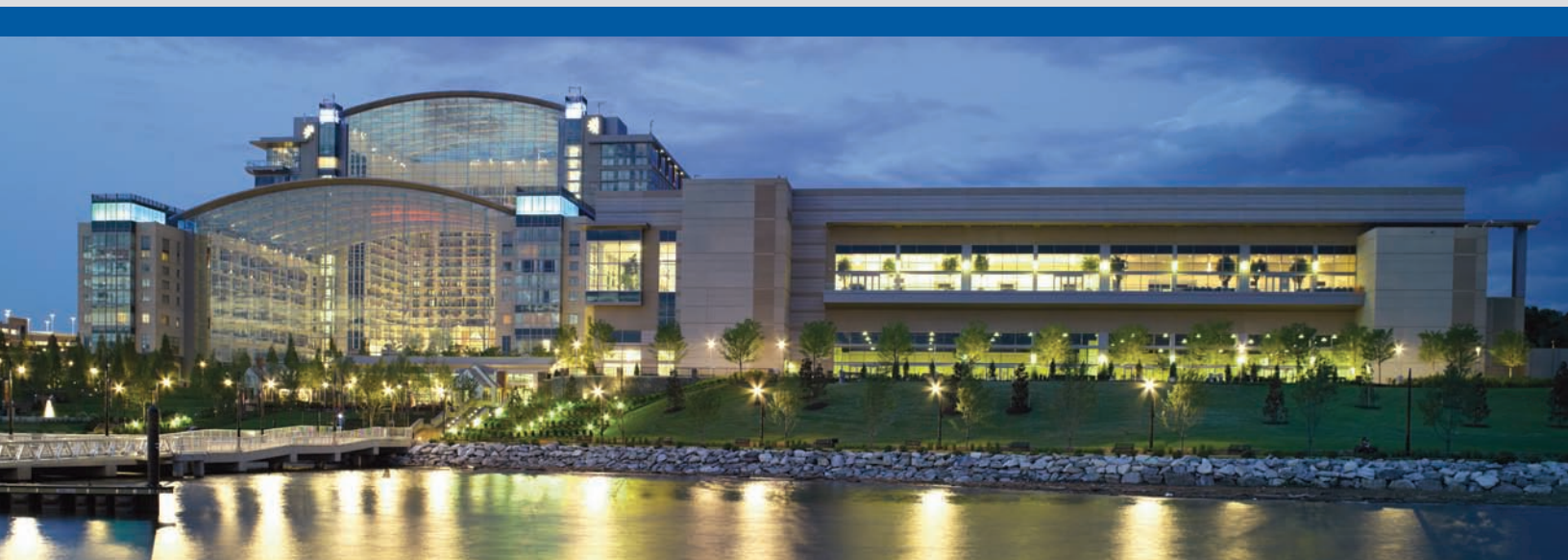
Call Us: **936.371.2640**

Email Us: **info@etechnic.com**

Visit Us: **www.etechnic.com**



2011 ATA WASHINGTON SUMMIT



SAVE THE DATE • OCTOBER 10-12, 2011

The 2011 ATA Washington Summit will be held at the beautiful Gaylord National Hotel and Convention Center on the Potomac River.

- Discuss FTC & FCC Updates
- Tackle Labor Issues
- Understand Self Regulation
- Connect With Representatives

Contact centers are more sophisticated than ever and professionals like you have questions that require informed decisions.



American Teleservices Association

www.ataconnect.org • 317-816-9336

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!

_____ '2011 Call Center Book of Lists Directory':

- ◆ Over 2,000 Call Centers Listed
- ◆ Each Call Center has at least One Decision Maker Listed
- ◆ Includes bonus technology leads - (Speech Technology, Recording Solutions and ACD information)
- ◆ Approximately 1000 E-mail Addresses
- ◆ The Directory is in CD-ROM (Excel Spreadsheet)
- ◆ FREE Quarterly Updates

Cost: \$425

_____ Vendor Directory: Your Company's listing will be included in the Vendor Directory, on our website, www.callcentertimes.com, for the next 12 months.

Cost: \$399

_____ Buyer's Guide: Your Company's listing will be included in the Buyer's Guide, on our website, www.callcentertimes.com, alongside your logo, for 12 months.

Cost: \$517

_____ Corporate Logo Promotion (Website):

Cost \$500

_____ Corporate Logo Promotion (Newsletter):

Cost \$500

_____ Monthly Newsletter Advertisement:

Cost: \$275

_____ Classifieds Advertisement (60 Days):

Cost: \$275

Webinars/Webcasts, Seminars, Call Center Space Advertisement, etc.

_____ Job Posting (job posting will run on our website until filled):

Cost: \$275

One Time Fee Per Posting

Simply check the applicable column(s) and return by fax to (972) 395-9205. Quality of the database is guaranteed.

Testimonials from past and present customers are available upon request. Please note all transactions are final.

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