

## CALL CENTER MANAGEMENT – MEASUREMENT BASICS

# Call Center Optimization

**Maintaining productivity in a call or contact center is a difficult balancing act.**

### Leveraging Human Resources

Most call centers have some form of metrics for quality service, average length of call, and customer wait times. However, many fail to look deeper at the root causes and tackle the actual reasons for the inbound calls in an attempt to reduce the volume of inbound calls. Additionally, many organizations fail to implement a proper staffing model which often results in low productivity, wasted resources, and costly employees who could be utilized in other areas of the organization. The main function of the call center is to keep callers satisfied while minimizing call duration; essentially helping the caller as quickly as possible and moving on to the next inbound call which is a difficult balancing act.

### Measure, Measure, Measure – The Key to Successful Call Centers

The most important feature of a successful call center is the ability for Management to measure the characteristics of each inbound call. Traits such as time received, wait time, who answered it, reason for the call, length of call, and volume of calls are all critical to implementing a successful call center.

Categorizing the calls is an important measurement in understanding types of calls and the reason for calls. By separating out the reasons for calls, an organization can make changes upstream in the operations to eliminate or reduce the most frequent types. These will not only help with reducing overall call volume, but also with customer service as the questions or concerns would have already been answered or addressed previously in the process.

Individual Representative call statistics is another very important measurement for both productivity and performance. Reviewing employees' call stats such as average talk time, number of inbound calls handled, time on duty, and availability are critical to ensuring each Rep is productive while working. Organizations often encounter customer service and availability issues when these metrics are not reviewed regularly with Reps and Managers.

## Cross Training – Flexibility to Leverage Employees

Every call center experiences fluctuations in the volume of calls throughout any given day. When call volumes are low, employees are not being utilized and could be productive completing another function or task. Cross training employees in other areas or to complete other functions in the organization allows Managers to reallocate resources during periods of low call volume and keep employees fully utilized.

## Erlang C Calculator – Optimizing Employee Resources

An Erlang-C calculator is a tool utilized by many organization to help determine how many call center employees they require based on incoming call volume, average call duration, and desired service level (% of calls answered within a given time interval). Using historical call center data, the Erlang C calculator can tell the organization the number of employees needed on any given day and specific time frame. By using this tool, a call center can ensure they are adequately staffed to handle the anticipated incoming call volume and meet their service level requirements.

SUNDAY		0:00	1:00	2:00	3:00	4:00	5:00	6:00	7:00	8:00	9:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00	19:00	20:00	21:00	22:00	23:00	Total
Seasonality	Forecasted	0.11%	0.05%	0.04%	0.04%	0.03%	0.05%	0.13%	0.23%	0.23%	0.35%	0.41%	0.36%	0.42%	0.46%	0.38%	0.32%	0.36%	0.50%	0.35%	0.38%	0.30%	0.29%	0.16%	0.16%	6.09%
Number of Agents required for Inbound		3	2	2	2	2	2	3	4	4	5	6	5	6	6	5	5	5	7	5	5	5	4	3	3	99
MONDAY		0:00	1:00	2:00	3:00	4:00	5:00	6:00	7:00	8:00	9:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00	19:00	20:00	21:00	22:00	23:00	Total
Seasonality	Forecasted	0.09%	0.04%	0.03%	0.02%	0.05%	0.08%	0.18%	0.37%	0.46%	0.92%	1.15%	1.25%	1.22%	1.15%	1.17%	1.29%	1.38%	1.19%	1.06%	0.93%	0.68%	0.53%	0.28%	0.21%	15.72%
Number of Agents required for Inbound		10	4	4	2	6	9	20	41	51	102	128	140	136	128	131	144	154	133	118	104	76	59	31	23	1754
TUESDAY		0:00	1:00	2:00	3:00	4:00	5:00	6:00	7:00	8:00	9:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00	19:00	20:00	21:00	22:00	23:00	Total
Seasonality	Forecasted	0.07%	0.05%	0.04%	0.05%	0.06%	0.09%	0.14%	0.30%	0.41%	0.79%	1.04%	1.14%	1.14%	1.15%	1.31%	1.26%	1.53%	1.49%	1.24%	1.05%	0.75%	0.65%	0.43%	0.26%	16.46%
Number of Agents required for Inbound		7	6	4	5	7	10	16	34	46	88	116	128	127	129	146	141	171	167	139	118	84	73	47	29	1838

## Conclusions

Call centers, although unique and vary from company to company, all share common traits that are fundamental to their success. Continuously measuring call center statistics, following up with employees, cross training Reps, and implementing a staffing tool such as the Erlang C calculator will help optimize any call center. ✨