

It Pays to be Resourceful

Successfully Managing Campaigns Beyond the Metrics

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In This White Paper

- The tools and means service providers employ to make an impact and troubleshoot problems.
- Benefits of outsourcing customer care and business processes to service providers.
- How service providers leverage key learnings for improvements.
- How to optimize resources to keep valuable customers.

Introduction

“A service provider that executes in the customer care environment can be instrumental in a client’s ability to deliver on its overarching strategic initiatives and brand promise. Ultimately, the net result of a mature and trusting relationship between a client and a provider offers great benefits to both parties.”

In the frantic race to stay ahead of the competition and margins, amidst the challenge of keeping stakeholders and customers smiling, today’s business climate demands that smart companies seek every edge conceivable. That heightened awareness is changing the role of third-party service providers in the business process outsourcing (BPO) industry. Increasingly the services rendered by third-party providers go beyond executing the fundamentals of contact center operations and involve a consultative role. Companies rely on providers for their experience, expertise and resources to address far-reaching issues, map strategy and implement programs. Their intent is to achieve short-term and long-term goals and, more so, realize their vision for customer service and BPO. Falling short of those goals can lead to customer *disservice*. “If you’re not doing a good job or at least on par with companies with good contact centers, you’re at a competitive disadvantage,” Frost & Sullivan contact center industry analyst Michael DeSalles told SearchCRM.com. Conversely, and significantly, a service provider that executes in the customer care environment can be instrumental in a client’s ability to deliver on its overarching strategic initiatives and brand promise. Ultimately, the net result of a mature and trusting relationship between a client and a provider offers great benefits to both parties.

Options and Actions

Ever marvel at the tools and equipment technicians lug into your home on a service call? Those hybrid wrenches and diagnostic devices that only a professional would have packed inside the truck? You put those tools in the hands of a pro, matched with the right know-how and the usual trial-and-error testing and complex problems are made to appear routine. As you sign the invoice and rue the service charge, you ask yourself, “Why couldn’t I do that?” Truth is, if you could do the repair yourself, you would. By hiring a professional, you are sparing yourself time and trouble, and doing all you can to ensure the job will be done right. Like service technicians, the best of the BPO providers have the resources and wherewithal to troubleshoot problems and anticipate opportunities for their clients. In the best cases, the provider

and the client develop a strong trust and common understanding as they work toward achieving their goals.

The following are some of the tools and means service providers employ to make an impact:

Process Improvement Business Case Plan

The client has a critical problem that requires major surgery, not bandages. The provider responds by drafting a process improvement business case plan that a) explains the cause of the problem, b) makes recommendations to resolve the problem, and c) documents the process improvement and calculates the return on investment that would result from adopting this strategy. The paper is an effective tool on several fronts: a) it provides insight to the client beyond the scope of his/her business interests, b) demonstrates that the provider has a keen understanding of the problem, thus, solid footing to make strategic recommendations, and c) serves as a documented case study for future reference.

Strategic Business Review

More than analyzing spreadsheets and pie charts, regularly scheduled provider-client strategic business reviews - be they monthly or quarterly - provide a great opportunity to discuss the future direction of a program, as well as requisite performance measurements. What are the client's focal points for the next three months, and what can the provider do to impact those objectives? What is the client's growth strategy and how can the provider assist in that endeavor? Answering these types of questions puts the client and the provider on the same page going forward.

Bench Strength

A deep bench can spell the difference for championship teams and successful companies alike, simply because it affords an organization options in its planning and execution. Service providers offer bench strength through the likes of Six Sigma Black Belts, certified professionals, training specialists (e.g., channel sales, leadership development) and "professional services" consultants. The presence of a professional sales training organization, for

example, might prompt a client to add a sales component to its customer service offering to generate more revenue. Further, Six Sigma Black Belts can be utilized to improve the efficiency of daily operations or perform in-depth analysis that leads to process improvements.

Knowledge Sharing

Service providers are in the unique position of being able to bring together leaders from different companies with similar customer types, challenges or objectives for an open exchange of ideas. These leaders are able to discuss common problems, shared experiences and best practices - producing valuable reference points and action items for both the leaders and the provider. Providers also have the capability of creating and hosting databases, portals and the like that store valuable information about effective practices, successful initiatives and key learnings that can be referenced on a client's behalf.

Business Intelligence

So many questions, so little time to answer them - unless the service provider can do it! Beyond managing account-level issues, leading service providers conduct research on behalf of their clients on topics such as industry benchmarking, competitive information and market data. While the clients use the research for decision-making purposes, it also serves as a learning opportunity for the service provider. Additionally, providers produce research papers that present new possibilities for the client to consider, such as tailoring their service to an emerging, lucrative customer base.

Voice of the Customer

Who knows better than the customer? No one. Who knows what is on the customer's mind? The customer service agent, of course - the message comes through loud and clear with each call, e-mail message and chat session. Shrewd companies cultivate customer feedback from their service providers in efforts to optimize the customer experience. Some companies take it a step further and include personnel from their provider in research and development functions, to the extent of participating in weekly meetings with the client or using new products to gain personal experience.

Big Picture Benefits

The examples in this paper illustrate that companies can benefit greatly by outsourcing their customer care and business processes to service providers that draw from a complete toolkit, a well of resources and a spirit of ingenuity. The benefits include:

- Process improvements, which can be leveraged across the organization - i.e., from one center to the next if services are divided among multiple providers or if services are split amongst internal centers and outsourced centers.
- Adoption of best practices. An objective point of view from the provider can lead to the introduction of best practices in areas such as recruiting, training, monitoring, coaching, reporting, etc.
- Entrée to knowledge. As the saying goes, "Membership has its privileges." Companies that outsource to reputable BPO providers gain access to a wealth of information accrued from experiences with comparable clients, similar issues, etc.

The Common Good

Ancient Roman dramatist Lucius Annaeus Seneca wrote, "The best ideas are common property." So it is in the BPO industry, where success stories and triumphs for clients become reference points and case studies for providers for use with their other clients. The following are ways in which service providers gain from deploying their various tools and resources on behalf of their clients:

- Key learnings can be leveraged to initiate process improvements or implement best practices across the organization.
- Tools - like a process improvement business case plan - can be used as benchmarks across the organization.
- Successful initiatives strengthen the relationship between the client and the provider and can lead to further business opportunities.

Customer Comes First

No one needs reminding that it's a tough world out there and not always fair at that. Customers demand more from companies and, in turn, companies demand more from their service providers. The reality is that every customer contact counts; any one could be a company's last, or only, opportunity to wow the consumer. One false move could lead to a lost customer, who shares the experience with family, friends, co-workers, cyberspace and so on. Fortunately, it works both ways, and positive experiences receive their due praise as well. With valuable customers at stake it is essential for companies to do everything possible to make them happy. That means optimizing resources to make a difficult task simpler.

About Sitel

Sitel is a global Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) leader that meets clients' customer care and transaction processing needs by providing world-class solutions from over 60,000 associates in 155+ facilities located in 27 countries.

Sitel provides clients with the strategic insight, scale and diversity of offerings to ensure the best return on their customer investment. For more information, please access www.sitel.com



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