

Customer Profile

Oklahoma Natural Gas

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma USA

<http://www.ong.com>

ONEOK 1999 Revenue: \$808 million

Employees: 1,380

NYSE: OKE

"With unregulated sectors of the utility business becoming increasingly important, it is vital for us to get to know our customers better through our interactions with them. Realizing the full potential of Nortel Networks Symposium Call Center Server is just a glimpse of what Nortel Networks can provide us as a fundamental solution of larger eBusiness and customer relationship management [CRM] endeavors."

—Scott Shepherd, Manager of Customer Service, Oklahoma Natural Gas

Background:

- Oklahoma Natural Gas (ONG) is a subsidiary of ONEOK natural gas regulated utility, which owns 15,000 miles of distribution pipeline in Oklahoma, the nation's third largest gas producing state—ONEOK is the parent company who also owns 10,000 miles of pipeline in Kansas
- Founded in 1906, ONG offers service to 80 percent of Oklahoma's population, supplying energy to more than 800,000 residential, commercial, and industrial customers
- Impending deregulation of gas utilities will bring increased competition with electric companies as an energy resource—Deregulation will force ONEOK and other gas utilities to seek new ventures in unregulated operations, including natural gas exploration, production, processing, and marketing endeavors, in addition to the natural gas distribution done today
- As ONEOK reaps an increasing percentage of its revenues from new, unregulated business opportunities in gas utilities, ONG's contact center will begin to experience increasing customer interaction volumes

Goals:

- Service and retain its fixed customer base, and tap unregulated niches to leverage gas utility expertise in a non-regulated environment
- Uphold established commitment to excellent customer service and maintain customer loyalty through improved call routing and comprehensive reporting functionality
- Implement a flexible contact center platform that would accommodate agent additions and customer growth in upcoming non-regulated gas exploration and production opportunities
- Replace Meridian Max with the skill-based routing of Symposium Call Center Server to segmented queues, offering additional options for customer interactions through more knowledgeable agents
- Manage regular flux of customer traffic patterns throughout the day, week, and year with detailed reports regarding contact center activity, so that contact center is appropriately staffed

Solution:

- Customers call the contact center for various reasons including questions about billing, bill payment plans, change of address, or to activate service
- An IVR front ends all calls coming in to ONG's single contact center, and sends each call into Nortel Networks Symposium Call Center Server, depending on the option selected through the IVR
- If a customer calls for any issue other than automated account balances and due dates, calls are automatically directed to one of 80 agents operating from 11 designated skill-sets in the contact center
- The majority of customer interactions are inbound calls, 98 percent of which are resolved immediately with ONG contact center representatives

"As a regulated utility, we have a fixed customer base spanning 80 percent of the entire state, relying heavily on the availability of our contact center representatives. Nortel Networks Symposium Call Center Server equips us with the skill-based routing and reporting we need to distribute various customer demands and maximize our manpower. Right now, we want to service our captive customers as quickly and efficiently as possible, because when customers are given the opportunity to choose utility providers, we don't want them to have to look any further afield. We want them to choose ONG."

—Scott Shepherd, Manager of Customer Service, Oklahoma Natural Gas

Rollout:

- Oklahoma Natural Gas consolidated its two contact centers and deployed Symposium Call Center Server in under three months

Results & Benefits:

- Supervisors benefit from Symposium-enabled reporting, both real-time and historical, to plan staffing according to traffic patterns, maximizing internal manpower and improving customer loyalty
- Contact center supervisors use real-time displays showing individual agent skill-sets, call duration, and customer wait time to immediately resolve problems and make adjustments, improving internal efficiency
- Through Symonview, agents see the number of calls waiting in their queue and each customer wait time, increasing efficiency and minimizing customer wait time
- The Nortel Networks Symposium Call Center Server skill-sets facilitate new agent training procedures by gradually adding new skill-sets over time, expediting the learning process and making new employees feel well-equipped to service customers
- Skill-sets utilized distinguish the various reasons customers call the contact center, informing internal departments of areas needing improvement, identifying opportunities to promote Return on Relationship—For example, if there is an overwhelming volume of customer concern regarding billing questions, the marketing department is notified that the design of bill needs improvement
- The skill-based routing of Nortel Networks Symposium Call Center Server ensures calls are directed to the correct agent immediately to handle each request, reducing customer wait time and improving customer loyalty

Future:

- Oklahoma Natural Gas plans to integrate CTI with Symposium Call Center Server to specifically identify each customer profile and address their needs on a priority basis, depending upon the nature of urgency and the payment history of the customer.

Tech Specs:

- **Hardware Platform: IBM**
- **Operating System: Microsoft Windows NT**
- **eBusiness Solutions: Nortel Networks Symposium Call Center Server**
- **Systems Integrated: Edify IVR, Symonview**
- **Production Date: 1998**
- **Number of Users: 80**
- **Interaction Volume: 108,000 customer interactions per month**

"The dynamic functionality of the Nortel Networks Symposium Call Center Server affords us the flexibility to use historical and real-time reporting to shift our staffing on an as-needed basis, proactively manage our contact center activity, and expand features as we grow our IT capabilities with CTI to prioritize calls. This high level of efficiency promises to deliver customer loyalty that will differentiate us as customer service becomes a competitive advantage in the utility industry."

—Scott Shepherd, Manager of Customer Service, Oklahoma Natural Gas

<http://www.nortelnetworks.com>



Offices

In the USA

Nortel Networks
4000 Veterans Memorial Hwy.
Bohemia, NY 11716
USA
Telephone: 1 800 4 NORTEL

Or:

Nortel Networks
2560 Orchard Parkway
San Jose, CA 95131
USA
Telephone: 1 800 4 NORTEL

In Canada:

Nortel Networks
8200 Dixie Road, Suite 100
Brampton, ON L6T 5P6
Canada
Telephone: 1 800 4 NORTEL

*Nortel Networks, the Nortel Networks logo, and the Globemark, are trademarks of Nortel Networks. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Nortel Networks reserves the right to make changes, without notice, in equipment design as engineering or manufacturing methods may warrant. Clarify, ClearLogistics, ClearQuality, ClearSales, and ClearSupport are trademarks of Clarify Incorporated. Product capabilities and availability dates described in this document pertain solely to Nortel Networks marketing activities in the United States and Canada.

©2001 Nortel Networks. All Rights Reserved. Published by Nortel Networks. Printed in the U.S.A., January 2001.