

Impact 360 Success Story: Knology

CUSTOMER: KNOLOGY

INDUSTRY: Communications

SOLUTIONS AND SERVICES:

Impact 360™ Advanced
Workforce Optimization*:

- Impact 360 Workforce Management
- Impact 360 Quality Monitoring
- Impact 360 Contact Editing
- Impact 360 Competency-based Learning
- Impact 360 Scorecards

Impact 360 Quality Evaluation Optimization

ENVIRONMENT:

Nortel Symposium ACD

REGION:

Southeast U.S.

LOCATION:

West Point, Georgia

NUMBER OF AGENTS:

320

RESULTS:

- Improved adherence to 94 percent across all contact center departments
- Improved first call resolution by nearly 20 percent
- Reduced headcount by 30 percent
- Decreased call volume by 22 percent
- Added 10,000 minutes of productivity (4 FTEs) to contact center per week
- Decreased attrition by 55 percent
- Increased answer rate by 27 percent
- Increased revenue generation in the contact center by 50 percent in two years

OPPORTUNITY

Increasing pressure from competitors has prompted many businesses to focus on customer service as a key differentiator. Knology (Nasdaq: KNOL), a leading provider of interactive communications and entertainment services in the southeast United States, is meeting this challenge head-on by using Impact 360 Workforce Optimization to help deliver quality customer service in a fiercely competitive market.

Headquartered in West Point, Georgia, Knology serves residential and business customers and competes against well-entrenched cable providers. The company has made a name for itself by providing bundled cable, Internet, and voice services — a winning combination that has helped fuel steady growth in customers and revenue since the late 1990s.

This growth, however, presented significant challenges. The company operates nine divisions, or local offices, supported by a centralized contact center in Augusta, Georgia and the corporate office in West Point. Knology's contact center fielded calls using basic ACD technology and limited staffing. Scheduling was performed manually using spreadsheets and the Erlang formula, and quality monitoring was handled with tape recorders. Moreover, delivering service was complicated by the fact that all nine divisions had unique procedures in place, without any supporting documentation available online.

Knology measured performance within its contact center solely on answer rate. "The tape recorded interactions with customers provided a means of policing, not coaching," says Scott Evenson, Knology's director of customer care operations. "Without solid quality metrics, it was difficult for the company to identify specific areas in which to improve service."

According to Evenson, the addition of a new market in Florida pushed the contact center to its limits. "We were in a tough situation," he observes. "Our call volume increased dramatically, and our answer rate wasn't where we wanted it, even though agent occupancy was low."

Attrition began to climb as agents felt the stress of dealing with the surge in call volume. As the costs to serve customers escalated and first-call resolution rates declined, executives throughout the company took a hard look at the contact center. The time had come to take action.

SOLUTION

After a thorough operations review across all nine divisions, Knology selected Impact 360 Advanced Workforce Optimization to simplify scheduling, quality monitoring, and training within its contact center. The company made this decision after evaluating several vendors on a range of criteria, including solution capabilities, reputation, and cost.

"Selecting the software was the first step. The operations review led us to make some internal process changes, such as providing a hotline to the divisions so that the contact center could receive immediate assistance with urgent issues," Evenson says. "We also began measuring 'calls offered' as a percentage of each division's revenue-generation targets. In effect, this meant that the contact center began sharing the responsibility for the growing call volume with the divisions."

Additionally, Knology made a commitment to provide more offline training time for its service representatives. Evenson acknowledges that this strategy required long-range vision. "Essentially, we committed to decreasing productivity in exchange for higher quality, which we knew would ultimately increase first-call resolution." The company also instituted a bi-weekly call between the contact center and the marketing department to discuss upcoming activities and campaigns.

* At the time of implementation, the software and services were called eQuality® Balance, eQuality Now, Blue Pumpkin Director Enterprise and Performance Optimization Workshop. Since then, the solutions have been rebranded as Impact 360 and are offered by Verint® Witness Actionable Solutions™.

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– SCOTT EVENSON, DIRECTOR OF CUSTOMER CARE OPERATIONS, KNOLOGY

BENEFITS

Impact 360 Workforce Optimization provided Knology with immediate benefits, according to Evenson. “With more precise forecasting and scheduling, we made better use of agent time. Our headcount dropped from 430 to 300 full-time equivalents, even though our customer base is expanding. This had a dramatic impact on the budget.”

Impact 360 also has helped Knology improve its schedule adherence to 94 percent across all departments in the contact center. Because shrinkage is now forecasted accurately, the company has changed its staffing practices and scheduling. “Our contact center is a 24 x 7 operation that’s open 365 days a year,” Evenson explains. “Impact 360 has allowed us to be more creative with our scheduling — for example, we’ve implemented split shifts, and they allow us to staff appropriately to meet our workload.”

Evenson notes that first call resolution — which at one point prior to the Impact 360 implementation had plummeted to 63 percent — has improved steadily and now hovers at 82 percent. “We improved first-call resolution right away by scheduling agents who had the right skills. Then, we saw further improvement as we began coaching them based on their captured interactions with customers. We record five percent of all calls, and our agents are evaluated and coached on five to eight calls per month.”

Working with consultants from the Verint Impact Services, Knology developed a scorecard with five key performance indicators — including quality scores — that are tied to corporate goals. Agents

are given time to review their calls and scores with their supervisors, who are accountable for helping them improve their skills.

As part of its coaching and training program, Knology is using Impact 360 Contact Editing to create a library of best-practice learning clips from recorded interactions. Through Impact 360 Competency-based Learning, the clips are assigned to agents based on their scorecard results and supervisor observations. Evenson points out that the ability to deliver training directly to the desktop has added 10,000 minutes of productivity per week back into the contact center — equating to four full-time equivalents.

Knology has reaped considerable benefits from its investment in coaching. “Our attrition has decreased by 55 percent,” Evenson notes. “We found that giving people feedback and holding them accountable has encouraged the hard workers. As an extra incentive, our agents earn points for good performance. When they accumulate a certain number of points, they’re invited on a trip to a fun destination.”

For Knology, the investment in Impact 360 — coupled with internal process changes — has paid off. “Our answer rate has risen from a low of 69 percent to a high of 96 percent,” says Evenson. “The monthly recurring revenue contribution from the contact center has doubled over the past two years, and the center now saves \$1 million annually. Call volume has dropped by 22 percent while service levels are increasing. Knology’s stock has experienced phenomenal growth — and our contact center has been recognized as a key component of this success.”

About Verint Witness Actionable Solutions

Verint® Witness Actionable Solutions™ was formed as a result of Verint’s successful combination with workforce optimization provider Witness Systems. Our software and services enable organizations to capture and analyze customer interactions, improve workforce performance, and optimize service processes in contact center, branch, and back-office operations.

Verint. Powering Actionable Intelligence.®

Verint Systems Inc. is a leading provider of actionable intelligence™ solutions for an optimized enterprise and a safer world. More than 10,000 organizations in over 150 countries rely on Verint solutions to perform more effectively, build competitive advantage, and enhance the security of people, facilities, and infrastructure.



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