

Case study: More than just a training tool — Using a LMS to unify systems and improve processes

(Februarie 2010)

Constantly being frustrated by recurring inefficiencies and inconsistencies in the tracking and implementation of product and process training, as well as the way the processes are utilised across the different sites in the centre. A 500 seat locally outsourced virtual contact centre recently realised it needed to integrate its quality assessments, training systems and performance management processes into a single, cohesive whole.

This case study describes the unique approach Siyandza Skills Development took to assisting the centre in seamlessly integrating their processes, boosting the take-up of self development initiatives by staff, while still cutting costs.

Required to provide a centralised, one number, and point of contact for a very large client base (in excess of 4 million users) means that efficiency and streamlined processes are critical for this centre.

What's more is, the duties of the contact centre agents often extend well beyond just the "fielding of calls", and processes originally held and owned by pure back office functions, gradually evolved to become owned and managed by the contact centre itself. Furthermore the standard contact centre management functions needed to be integrated, so that "Ops", "Support" and "Back office" could track, report, and react with efficacy.

Measurements such as the call duration needed to be minutely monitored and the quality of every conversation needed to be assessed and continuously tracked, if the centre was to achieve a real value-add for the organisation.

As is often the case for large, new and rapidly evolving contact centres, a distinct lack of integration between the various divisions of the company and centre grew up around an ever expanding customer base; — for example between the Quality Inspectors (QIs) who review completed calls and rate personnel on their performance, the team leaders who manage the personnel and the call agents who handle the calls would find themselves in unwarranted conflict over seemingly minor issues.

This lack of coordination and coherence was creating a challenging bottleneck and hampering both the organisation's efficiency and its ability to measure the return on investment of its training programs.

Some Root Causes

Contact Centres can serve as a platform for job creation and training. A large part of growing and developing contact centre agents depends on assessing their ability and performance and providing suitable feedback channels between the various levels.

Yet, the fact, that the QIs in this centre worked "off-site", meant that the assessing of calls and the providing of feedback was done in a disconnected, roundabout way. This resulted in laborious, manual reporting of agent performance levels and real difficulty in accurately gauging the effectiveness any training delivered, leaving team leaders, agents and inspectors feeling "somehow removed from the process".

What is more, in order to fulfil certain requirements including assessing and tracking 2% (approx 500 calls p.m) of all calls received for quality assurance purposes the centre also needed to ensure that the correct number of beginner, intermediate and advanced agent calls were being analysed and that the performance reports were being regularly conducted in a proper manner.

These problems are common with many contact centres, but were in this case exacerbated by the need for specific customised solution at the quality assessment, training and performance measurement levels.

Learning Management Systems (LMS) and performance management systems must be linked to employees' Key Performance Areas (KPA) and to each other to be truly effective. The complexity of linking solutions from three different providers can prove challenging in the contact centre environment.

Next: [Part 2: Relieving the Bottleneck, Rolling out the solution and the immediate benefits](#)