

CLIENT INFO AT A GLANCE:

On Net Communications

<http://www.on-net-communications.com>

Industry: Call Center Outsourcing

Location of Headquarters:

Wolsingham, County Durham, England

Company Overview: On Net Communications is a complete multi-media Contact Center specializing in all aspects of customer relationship management (CRM).

Challenge Summary: Staying profitable in the highly competitive call center outsourcing field, while eliminating manual planning, estimating, scheduling and budgeting.

Business Value: By implementing the Monet Workforce Optimization Suite, the company was able to accurately forecast agent shifts, schedules and their associated costs. This increased profitability by 20 percent within a few months. In addition, by eliminating manual tracking via spreadsheets, the cost of campaign planning has dropped by 75 percent.

“Prior to Monet, our admin staff had to manually keep track of agent activity, campaign planning and calls volume trends. In terms of administration, we have reduced hours spent on campaigns by 75% slim-lining from 20 hours per week down to only five hours. Monet has reduced our center costs in a matter of days and you can simply use the system to produce center budgets by running a costing of all forecasted agent shifts and agent schedules. This has increased our profitability by 20% since the turn of the year.” Maureen Stanton, On Net Communications

Contact Center Uses Monet to Increase Profitability by 20%

Hours spent on campaign planning reduced by 75%

On Net Communications is a busy call center outsourcer located within the tranquil setting of Weardale in the northeast of England. Launched in January of 2004, it carries out work for various organisations but specializes in the Local Government and Education Sectors. This expanding company utilizes the most advanced multi-media technology and offers a full range of customer contact management services. The workload is currently split 60% outbound and 40% inbound. Over time, however, the ratio is shifting in favour of inbound call center operations.

Until a few months ago, On Net Communications utilized Excel spreadsheets to manage its internal operations. This involved repeated data entry and absorbed staff time. Further, human error became a fact of life due to the amount of manual keying and rekeying of information, schedules and campaign information.

“Administrative staff had to manually keep track of agent activity, campaign planning and calls volume trends,” said Stanton. “This was time consuming and inefficient – amounting to twenty or more hours every week.”

Campaign Planning

Planning and managing multiple campaigns at once was a real problem using On Net’s old-fashioned system. As a result, planning was done on a somewhat haphazard basis. It was purely driven by estimates, and the company had no real-time adherence/facility at all. Further, manual reporting meant long hours and late nights for team leaders.

As an outsourcer, On Net Communications recognized the need for a program to help plan and monitor numerous campaigns at the same time. It selected Monet by Left Bank Solutions, a Workforce Management System for small and mid-sized contact centers. The results were immediate.

“In terms of administration, we have reduced hours spent on campaigns by 75% slimming from 20 hours per week down to 5,” said Stanton. “Monet has also dramatically eliminated the chances of human error and inaccuracies we suffered before.”

Technology Platform

On Net’s technology platform consists of the following elements:

Adaptive Messaging, which manages all inbound and outbound contacts utilizing Progressive and Predictive Dialers, Contact Blending, Screen- Popping and Automatic Response Handling.

Call View, which produces automated and manual reports for any aspect of a campaign; Historical and Real-Time reports can be compiled in graphical, statistical and tabular formats and exported into any medium, for example, email, spreadsheet or web browser

Intertel Axxess, a resilient call handling platform, VOIP with an Intertel programming studio which allows the company to configure the telephony on a system wide basis down to the individual key sets.

Skill Map, which acts an interface with Intertel giving dynamic call routing to agent skill levels.

SQL Server 2000, a relational database management system that stores, manipulates and outputs data in various formats.

Monet 3.0, a workforce optimization system that effectively manages campaign forecasts including costs, staffing schedules and agent real-time adherence.

“We use Monet Workforce Management System Version 3.0 for forecasting, staffing, scheduling and reporting,” said Stanton.

According to Stanton, Monet 3.0 includes a wealth of features that help to reduce costs while heightening efficiency.

The Agent Occupancy feature measures how busy agents are. It is expressed as a percentage of logged-in time that an agent is actually busy in talk or wrap-up time. The capability to forecast, modify and monitor a center’s Agent Occupancy rates is displayed next to the current call history and service level objectives. This allows for even greater contact center flexibility during the agent scheduling and adherence process.

“The ability for contact center managers to incorporate, track and adjust Agent Occupancy rates within the normal scheduling activities is an important consideration.” notes Penny Reynolds a founding partner of The Call Center School. “Creating and monitoring the proper relationship between agent occupancy and service levels is the key to increasing both customer service levels and agent retention rates.”

The Monet Exception Planner enables the scheduling of recurring exceptions as well as mid-day exceptions. It takes countless exceptions into account when choosing shifts, and scheduling breaks. For example, a manager can utilize Monet 3.0 to schedule an agent to attend a training meeting from 11:00 - 1:00 on the second Friday of every month, or set up a rotating schedule where agents have different days off on alternate weeks.

The Monet Availability Calendar permits call center managers to see how existing exceptions affect staff availability. Managers can select any set of dates from the entire year and view agent requirements and availability, along with the number of exception hours, broken down both by agent and exception type. This tool is particularly useful when deciding upon and granting agent vacation requests, as well as scheduling training meetings and jury duty.

“Monet has given us the ability to plan 24 hour shift patterns which give a life work balance to our employees,” said Stanton. Monet automates the process of forecasting call volumes which has greatly improved service levels.”

Multi-Media Call Centers

Studies show that it is inefficient to permit agents to respond to email or fax in between calls. The most efficient call centers smoothly incorporate non-call activity into the daily call center schedule. As a result, their agents are more productive and the work environment is less stressful.

Monet’s Multi-Media Capability allows blended contact centers such as On Net to schedule non-call related activity. This capability, also known as “banding,” permits call center managers to schedule email, fax and other non-call traffic during off-peak periods. Additional functionality allows for agents to have blended schedules based by day of the week, skills sets available and max/min time slot objectives.

At On Net, for example, 90% of staff time is devoted to telephone, 8% to email and 2% to fax. Due to interest expressed by clients, short message service (SMS) or text messaging is also being introduced.

“We expect the percentage of SMS grow rapidly this year,” said Maureen Stanton, Managing Director of On Net Communications. “Monet’s Multi-Media Capability has enabled us to offer our customers sophisticated multi-channel call center capabilities.”

On Net uses additional features of in Monet 3.0 such as:

- Graphical roster report, a chart of agent schedules along with quarter-hour statistics like agent surplus/shortage
- Individualized shift creation for agents with special needs
- Sophisticated employee-level configuration options for non-call work assignment
- Monet Data Collector, an add-on for real-time integration, has added Nortel Symposium Call Center Server and Telephony @ Work to its’ list of supported interfaces.

“The Monet Workforce Management System reduced our center costs in a matter of days and you can simply use the system to produce center budgets by running a costing of all forecasted agent shifts and agent schedules,” said Stanton. “This has increased our profitability by 20% since the turn of the year.”

Affordability

Top of the line workforce optimization centers generally cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. That’s why they are typically found only in large contact centers. Monet 3.0 brings that level of sophistication to the small and mid-sized contact center at a price they can afford.

“The great thing about Monet is that it is an affordable way for us to offer services that rival those of the largest contact centers,” concludes Stanton. “In addition, Monet has enabled us to reduce costs by effectively managing staffing schedules which in turn has made it easy to predict campaign costs.”