

**‘Brand’ inbound calls? Increase Customer Satisfaction? Monetize the Contact Center? Wow!**

The Chief Strategy Officer (CSO) at one of America’s largest retailers was intrigued to find out how they could brand incoming calls from customers to:

Sound

1. increase store traffic
2. engage customers & increase brand image,
3. provide offers that make customers feel special & appreciated,
4. boost revenues & profitability in new ways - -

- - with a low-cost, patented technology that required minimal integration.

*CallSpace promised to do all of these things. But could it deliver?*

**Background**

The retailer had over 1,000 stores spread across North America, each of which took calls from customers. In addition, the company had four dedicated contact centers. There was no consistency of branding or messaging across these call recipients. People calling one location might hear pop songs while others heard a locally recorded message from an assistant store manager.

In addition to homogenizing and elevating the branding of inbound call messaging, there was a real opportunity to leverage the time callers spend in queue to stimulate customer engagement and add to revenues. The CallSpace system did not add to wait time, but it turned existing wait time into loyalty-building opportunities in a totally new way.

When a call comes in, the caller’s ANI (caller’s number identifier) is used to comb through the CRM database. If there are records tagged to the caller, then the system uses the caller’s prior behavior and buying patterns to determine which pre-recorded message should be directed to him or her. Thus contact center managers, working closely with marketing and sales colleagues, provide a superior, personalized customer experience that enhances brand *and* revenues for the company.

*These exciting capabilities got the attention of the CSO and his colleagues.*

**Decision Point**

The Marketing department reviewed the opportunity and declared CallSpace a welcome new “branding engine for the phone channel” that should enhance the company’s brand in the eyes of customers, if used properly. The contact center saw it as a way to boost engagement and satisfaction with the call experience. Sales and senior management saw it as a way to increase revenues by giving targeted offers to move merchandise in a more effective way. All saw the ability to tailor and personalize messages as a way to build engagement and loyalty in the customer base. The opportunity to show thought leadership by transforming “dead time” on the phone into major benefits was also compelling.

**Technical Aspects and Launch Experience**

The retailer anticipated issues in implementation, given their plethora of legacy phone systems, many of them very old. “Alexander Graham Bell’s phone was still being used in one of our stores” the CSO joked. CallSpace was tested on their newer VOIP system to begin. Messages were created, recorded and made available for use.

There were a few launch issues caused by their phone system, but since CallSpace sits beside existing systems and does not require complex integration, the application was installed fairly quickly. Once installed, it worked without glitches. The CSO waited for complaints, but none came.

The retailer noted that the system only kicked in when there was actual wait time (i.e. if there was an immediately-available agent then the CallSpace system could be bypassed). Also, the system was very agile: messages could be easily switched by operating managers and the system could be turned on and off at will.

**User Experience and Feedback**

Customer time in queue immediately went from being un-managed to being part of a consciously-constructed customer experience. Callers began hearing carefully-crafted messages, assembled with several factors in mind, including: company mission, company branding objectives, and content tailored to the interests of the caller - - as guided by the CRM information in the company’s database.

Managers did A/B testing, with and without the system, and they noticed a measurable improvement in customer satisfaction when the system was used.

Of particular note was the ability to send a text message coupon to mobile devices while the customer was on hold. Leveraging this satisfier at a point they already had the customer’s attention was a big plus.

**Value derived**

The retailer regularly conducts about 3 million customer satisfaction surveys each month and management knew that “highly satisfied customers” had 3-4% more revenue spend than other customers. The retailer believed the number of “highly satisfied customers” would increase over time through using CallSpace.

Management considered selling the wait time to others. For example, they could have approached some of the clothes designers they carried with an offer to feature their products in the messages. This would have been a nice, totally new source of revenue. However, at a cost of just a few cents per message, managers calculated that they would get a superior return by using the capability themselves (especially to send tailored text message coupons). Thus, at least for the moment, keeping things “in house” optimized their usage of CallSpace.

**A Calculation and a Conclusion**

The CSO and his colleagues were pleasantly surprised how a few cents per call could transform the user experience in so many ways, resulting in higher satisfaction and sales, along with superior branding. The average Cost per Call in the retail industry benchmarked at $6.84(\*), so CallSpace increases the cost by less than 1%. Given the increase in revenues associated with the CallSpace initiative, the return on investment is extremely high.

Branding, loyalty, sales, profits. CallSpace was something totally new, valuable, low-cost and easy to install. The CSO’s conclusion: “I am definitely a big fan!”

*(\*) Source: BenchmarkPortal. This case study was written by BenchmarkPortal in conjunction with CallSpace. ©2017 All rights reserved.*