

3 Strategies to make Outbound calling more effective



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Agenda

- Strategy One:
 - Prioritising Outbound contacts within a blended environment.
 - Making effective proactive contacts.
 - Better understanding the people you want to contact.

- Strategy Two:
 - What is AMD?
 - What is the 2 second rule?
 - The role of Compliance.

- Strategy Three:
 - Optimal agent utilisation through intelligent planning and intraday management.
 - Quality and Speech Analytics – what are our agents really saying?
 - Driving corporate strategies to an agent level through Performance Management.

Strategy 1

Call blending and intelligent data management.

- Call blending has always been viewed as a way to either cover exceptional Inbound call volumes, or to reduce the idle time of Inbound agents.
- Inbound and Outbound advisor skill sets are different, so why send an 'Outbound' call to 'Inbound' advisors?
- Providing a consistent experience, with a consistent skill set will help to improve overall performance.
- If you have a unified solution or CTI, CLI can be captured; if not an account number could be requested and looked up from the dialler but the purpose of the call is understood.
- Calling lists are optimised as return calls after Inbound contact do not occur and there are no requirements for intra-day do not call lists.
- Data integrity is maintained and accurate call outcomes applied to every customer record.

Call blending and intelligent data management.

- Understanding your customers is key to a campaign's success.
- Dialling strategies are based on data; granularity and depth of available data elements will determine the sophistication of what can be achieved.
- Knowing which number was called, the time it was made and the outcome can help inform future campaigns of the best time to dial.
- Reviewing demographic data elements such as age, location, recent activity, products held, gender, time since last contact etc... you can begin to predict customer attitudes.
- Whilst high touch industries such as collections can build a better picture of actual clients, lower touch channels typically have longer to contact the customer which builds a better picture of demographic behaviours.
- However consider what you deem to be success – is this simply RPCs or PTPs / Sales? The behaviour can be different.

Call blending and intelligent data management.

- Implementation does not need to be expensive:
 - Most contact centres have a data warehouse already containing the customer data and previous contact outcomes – to comply with OfCom you must have at least 6 months of detailed history today.
 - Introducing the data elements or scores may require change control, but should be relatively simple to achieve.
 - Building new or amending existing processes within the dialler can be done by the administration team.
- The data models need to be refreshed regularly as consumer behaviour is constantly changing.
- Your most expensive resource is your workforce and your most valuable commodity is your customer base, maximising agent productivity whilst maintaining or improving customer satisfaction is more critical than ever.

Strategy 2

AMD and the role of Compliance.

- AMD (Answering Machine Detection) technology was created to improve performance.
- Answering machine technology was quite basic to begin but AMD algorithms have had to evolve.
- AMD accuracy is controlled by how well the telephony hardware can detect sound energy on the line.
- OfCom regulations have now restricted the amount of time AMD has to operate; thus creating the 2 second rule.
- Why is this important? Lets look at a typical example of the process:
 - Off-hook: The call is answered either by a live person or machine.
 - 0.85 seconds: Typical time for a person to start their greeting after the dialled party picks up the phone.
 - 0.3-0.5 seconds: Typical time for the dialled party to complete the greeting.
 - 0.8-1.5 seconds: Typical silence after hello.
 - 0.1-0.5 seconds: The routing time.

AMD and the role of Compliance.

- To give AMD as much time as possible, some vendors have introduced a measure for ‘beginning of salutation’.
- The other regulation that needs to be considered when employing AMD is the calculation of false-positives.
- OfCom have made it clear that they expect businesses to perform their own testing to remain compliant.
- Testing neither has to be costly nor time consuming:
 - Create a test scenario where AMD outcomes are routed to a dedicated pool of advisors to confirm accuracy.
 - Consider devising a callback campaign; AMD calls are redialled and put through to an advisor to validate – however the redial needs to be within a limited time frame.
 - Whilst less robust, the latest regulations did permit routing the call to an IVR where it gave the customer an option to be put through to an advisor.

AMD and the role of Compliance.

- In conjunction with these changes the 24 hour rule was introduced.
- Whilst restrictive, intelligent contact strategies can mitigate the impact:
 - Switch the telephone numbers you attempt.
 - Consider running AMD only at certain times of the day and on certain numbers.
 - Where contact is critical, reserve these customers for your best contact times and leave AMD off.
- OfCom have increased the potential fines to £2M and as a result Compliance departments are now very aware of Outbound dialling.
- If they have not been involved with OfCom before, interpretation may not align with business needs.
 - As a result Compliance becomes forced and productivity can suffer.
- Even if Compliance are not currently engaged, they will be soon.