OPPORTUNITY

H.M. Revenue & Customs’ (HMRC) core purpose is to ensure that every resident in the United Kingdom understands and receives monies they are entitled to and understands and pays what they owe, so that everyone contributes to the UK’s public service needs.

HMRC is responsible – under the overall direction of the Paymaster General and other UK Government’s Treasury Ministers – for cost effective and efficient administration of direct taxes plus child and working tax credits, national insurance contributions and stamp duties, together with the collection of student loans and National Minimum Wage enforcement.

To meet both internal controls and public sector requirements, HMRC reviewed its “customer contact” process – including those tied to growth in its contact centres, along with supporting processes and results. Previously, HMRC’s infrastructure operated strict office hours (Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.), along with a few helplines that provided general advice. At that time, customers were requested to put their requirements in writing, which led to longer process times and delays in HMRC being able to complete transactions.

Significant and Rapid Growth

At HMRC, the customer comes first. By readdressing the infrastructure, HMRC has seen significant and rapid growth over the last five years. It now operates a service that delivers 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., 7 days a week, 362 days per annum. “Business by Telephone” is the priority with Internet support for both the adviser and customer.

HMRC contact centres are responsible for handling customer telephone contact for the UK government’s taxes, and is now one of the UK’s largest networks of contact centres. Part of the operation was specifically formed to handle tax credits, which were announced by the UK government in 2000. Up to six million families are entitled to extra credits under this scheme.

The organisation’s contact centres handle telephone requests from the public for calls regarding child and working credits, which are channelled through a single telephone number. All HMRC centres are able to access and respond to these incoming calls, as they operate under a single virtual call centre model. Additionally, the centres assist the public in transacting their requirements – for example, eligibility for tax credits and updating changes in personal circumstances – through a single phone call, in which their details and all aspects of claims are confirmed.

SOLUTION

To ensure that HMRC maintains the highest service quality and support to the public, and as part of the overall contact centre infrastructure, HMRC implemented Verint® Witness Actionable Solutions® Impact 360 workforce optimisation software – and specifically its Impact 360 Compliance Recording solution. The software captures calls for over 9,000 advisers across 28 centres, handling approximately 50 million customer calls per annum across the UK.

Identifying Requirements

HMRC originally investigated implementing a voice recording solution for its contact centres to enable advisers to offer personalised, rather than general advice, and conduct “Business by Telephone” – where all calls are recorded with full auditability and stored for regulatory purposes. It was critical that HMRC advisers and the callers clearly understood payments to be made or benefits to be claimed. The Impact 360 compliance recording solution has enabled HMRC to ensure that there are clear records of all conversations completed in one single call.

* At the time of implementation, the solution was called eQuality® and delivered by Witness® Systems. Since then, the solution has been renamed Impact 360® and are offered by Verint® Witness Actionable Solutions®.
“The current implementation of our contact centre technology has enabled us to raise our level of customer service and has given us a broader view of the contacts that we have with our customers. However, the work that we do here is continually evolving and changes to the tax laws are often complex — meaning that understanding the different processes that are associated with these laws is not a simple matter. Therefore, it is our aim to make the process of working with the legislation as painless as possible and provide the information that our customers want as quickly and efficiently as possible. Verint’s technology is helping us move forward in the way in which we deliver our service to customers and achieve our goals.”

— KEIRON SANDERS, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, STRATEGY, PLANNING & RESOURCES, HER MAJESTY’S REVENUE & CUSTOMS

Leveraging the technology along with HMRC’s refined processes, customer criteria was met, including:

- Ease of access — with longer opening hours
- Accurate and consistent calls — conducted in a fair and friendly manner, yet professional, with the transaction completed in one call
- Cost effectiveness and auditability — as the taxpayer pays for the whole service

Likewise, HMRC was able to strike a balance between quality of service and assurance to achieve:

- High quality telephone and e-mail service for customers
- Properly processed and administered caller requests
- First call resolution — where advisers could easily deliver against each customer’s needs on first contact
- Service channel efficiency — promoting service touch points that encourage customers to use the preferred telephone and e-channels

Right from the start, Verint Witness Actionable Solutions helped HMRC identify systems and processes that required change. Verint highlighted the potential of installing a solution that could add further value by easily and selectively capturing interactions and replaying recorded calls to help team leaders coach and train both new-hire and tenured advisers. This has allowed HMRC to consistently maintain the required high level of service and support. It also has become a key HMRC requirement during the evaluation process.

BENEFITS

The Impact 360 Recording software — which was installed on top of HMRC’s telephony system — captures all calls into the organisation’s contact centres. The solution also includes a call tagging feature that can automatically tag certain data elements to a call — allowing it to be easily stored and accessed at a later date. This is particularly significant with compliance-related issues, such as handling dispute resolution. The information generated by the solution can be randomly selected by the HMRC contact centre team leaders to provide the broadest possible view of how the advisers are performing. In addition, it can be used to train and coach adviser teams.

For instance, to highlight examples of where specific queries are being handled in different ways by different advisers, best practice calls can be captured, stored and shared to demonstrate proper call handling, to help eliminate inconsistencies. With this level of intelligence, team leaders can identify specific training requirements to help optimise performance with HMRC advisers.

For advisers, the system has fundamentally changed the way they view their roles. They can now clearly and confidently provide the level of advice and service required for each and every customer transaction. In addition, there is greater scope and opportunity to promote new services to customers during a call. It also has enabled a consistent means for performance feedback to help them enhance their service delivery, as well as excel and grow in their positions.

Such is the level of satisfaction with the implementation of the Impact 360 Recording solution that HMRC continues to work closely with the company to identify additional ways in which evolving technology can be deployed to maintain and remain leading edge for the overall customer experience.

About Verint Witness Actionable Solutions

Verint® Witness Actionable Solutions® is the leader in analytics-driven workforce optimisation. Its solutions are designed to help organisations capture customer intelligence, uncover business trends, discover the root cause of employee and customer behaviour, and optimise the customer experience across contact centre, branch, and back-office operations.

Verint. Powering Actionable Intelligence®

Verint Systems Inc. is a leading provider of actionable intelligence™ solutions for an optimised enterprise and a safer world. More than 10,000 organisations 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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