Since we implemented TouchStar Connect, we have gained the functionality that we needed to operate our business in an effective manner. We feel that TouchStar provides the most cost effective, value-for-money solution on the market.
Company Background

AA Warranty was founded in 2007 as a telemarketing operation of Motorway Direct, the UK’s fastest growing provider of warranty products to the motor industry. They had previously outsourced their telemarketing but felt they could facilitate greater control by bringing the function in-house. AA Warranty offers insurance products under license from the AA motoring organisation. In terms of their position within the contact centre industry, they operate within a niche – growth is expected within this niche over the next few years. The telemarketing operation has been created to ensure the company retains a competitive position as it looks to future expansion.

The Business Challenges

The business challenges faced by Motorway Direct and their AA Warranty operation predominantly involve finance and control issues. In terms of finance, the company wanted to eliminate outsourcing costs and reduce overall costs to a minimum. In addition to this, by bringing the telemarketing operation in-house, it provided a much higher level of control than the previous outsourced arrangement. A further business challenge is presented with the AA needing full details of all campaigns delivered so reporting is of primary concern. IT Director, Andrew Brown explained: “As we are operating within a sector that is unique to the contact centre industry, the challenges we face are also quite different. The outbound contact centre was set up to save money but to obtain real optimisation in terms of finance, the technology had to be right”. The AA Warranty telemarketing operation commenced with eight agents and at this stage, they realised that to obtain maximum efficiency, software would need to be purchased to ensure that value would be added.

Why Did AA Warranty Choose TouchStar?

1. Original Basic Power Dialler Solution Supplied by a Competitor of TouchStar Could Not Supply Necessary Functionality

The original objectives in sourcing a new system for the telemarketing operation were based mainly around cost minimisation as it was a new business. With this in mind, the company directors purchased what was considered the cheapest product on the market – an NMS Adaptive power dialler from one of TouchStar’s competitors.
Andrew Brown, IT Director, AA Warranty

However, it quickly became clear that the system did not have anything like the functionality a call centre required to obtain maximum efficiencies. Andrew Brown stated: “From the outset the system was not right. We simply could not get anything out of the system. In this business, the ability to produce real time and historical statistics is very important and as the telemarketing operation developed, it became apparent that this kind of reporting was required and the purchased system could not achieve this. We didn’t know what our agents’ performance was like and we could not manage campaigns effectively.” Andrew was equally dismayed with the system’s ability to handle large quantities of data: “Importing and exporting data was a complete nightmare. We could spend all day trying to sort this and wasted valuable time that should have been spent on other activities.” AA Warranty was also very unimpressed with the call recording facilities. Andrew went on to add: “The dialling system we bought did not have any recording so we had to use a third party system. And this became very ‘hit-and-miss’. Finding calls could take time and this was not acceptable if we had to deal with a complaint. If the system went down, it could take days to find out what the cause of the problem was.”

2. Value for Money Predictive Dialler

By the end of 2007, AA Warranty decided to look for a system that could deliver to their requirements. And at this point, they contacted TouchStar and a number of competing companies. Obviously value for money would remain a key objective in the new software purchase but more importantly, it had to be demonstrated that the solution would have all the functionality that was previously missing. It seemed that if they were to expand to more than 10 agents, a ‘predictive dialling’ capability would be desired.

3. Outstanding Customer Support with Business Benefit Focus

Andrew was very impressed with the presentation from TouchStar: “From the initial demonstration it was apparent that TouchStar Connect offered everything that we had been lacking with the CTI Power Dialler – the reporting, the recording, the ease of data importing, etc was all there. I also felt the guys who came over from TouchStar were extremely knowledgeable but just as importantly, were really friendly and down-to-earth and felt I could do business with them.”

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TouchStar’s offer of 24 hours support, 365 days a year was something Andrew felt was a major point of differentiation: “None of the other companies offered this – it seemed to us that TouchStar were the only solution provider that was really interested in us developing our business. Everything in their presentation was all about how different features on the system would be of benefit to us, not at list of every single feature the system had.”

4. Complete Solution with Robust Reporting and Call Recording

TouchStar implemented the fully compliant TouchStar Connect blended call centre system complete with ACD & IVR, intelligent scripting, call recording and reporting at AA Warranty in a matter of days. Andrew was immediately impressed with the productivity gains that resulted after implementation. He added: “TouchStar Connect was everything and more in terms of what I expected from a dialler – and had the vital robust reporting and call recording features that had been missing from our previous solution.”

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5. Scalability and Call Blending

The scalability of TouchStar Connect was made apparent when AA Warranty increased their operation to 30 agents soon after the initial installation. They are already planning to use the blended capability of the system to integrate inbound customer service elements of the business into TouchStar Connect.

6. Complete Solution Package and True Partnership

TouchStar has also provided network services (LCR) for AA Warranty as part of the overall solution. TouchStar provided the expertise of a network services manager who gives advice and tips on how to maximise efficiencies and save money on calls. Andrew agreed that having all their call centre needs served by a single supplier helped streamline their business processes and as time has progressed, the relationship has been solidified to a true partnership.

Implementation

Implementation was completed within the agreed timeframe without the need for any agent downtime. Andrew was impressed with the technical expertise of the team responsible for the installation: “I really felt straight away they knew what they were doing. They quietly went about their work which meant there was no disruption for the agents and very little downtime”. Once the system was up and running, the TouchStar engineers trained key staff and agents on how to use the relevant parts of the system. Andrew added: “The fact they didn’t just up tools and go once the system was installed was of real benefit to us as we needed to have things in place immediately. Since then, we have been on one of the monthly TouchStar training courses to fine tune our skills and have a monthly visit from a TouchStar Business Development Manager to make sure we are using the system to its full capability.”

Features and Benefits of TouchStar Connect

AA Warranty has experienced the following results and benefits since implementing TouchStar Connect:

- Their agents’ talk time has trebled.
- A huge increase in sales meant a very quick return on the investment.
- A system that fully complies with and exceeds all OFCOM, DMA and FSA regulations.
- The ability to report with detailed statistics from all campaigns in real time has made management of the call centre business more focused.
- Flexibility to build campaigns in a variety of sectors has allowed new products to be introduced.
- A seamless integration with their current customer service functions which meant streamlined business processes.
- Free training on an ongoing basis, has continually updated staff expertise.
- 24 x 7 x 365 UK based engineering support proving invaluable when requiring advice at any time of the day or night.
- An appointed expert business development manager to optimise use of the technology.
- A suite of value added services (including network services, cabling, headsets, data backup, data management, etc) has meant they have to make one single phone call to one supplier.
- Ability for further developments as their business grows.

“Since we implemented TouchStar Connect, we have gained the functionality that we needed to operate our business in an effective manner. We feel that TouchStar provides the most cost effective, value-for-money solution on the market.”

Andrew Brown concluded: “We thought we could achieve our objectives with a basic Power Dialler but it became clear that would never be the case. Since we implemented TouchStar Connect, we have gained the functionality that we needed to operate our business in an effective manner. We feel that TouchStar provide the most cost effective, value-for-money solution on the market.”