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call center industry

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Our Contact Info:

Paul Stockford
Research Director
National Association of Call Centers
100 South 22nd Avenue
Hattiesburg MS 39401
Tel: 480.922.5949
paul.stockford@nationalcallcenters.org
www.nationalcallcenters.org

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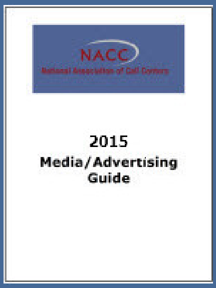

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Quote

"You may not realize it when it happens, but a kick in the teeth may be the best thing in the world for you."

~ Walt Disney

Reports from the NACC

In This Issue . . .

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- Call Center Comics!

Meet The Members: Annette Miesbach, inContact

Paul Stockford, Research Director, NACC and Chief Analyst, Saddletree Research, Paul.Stockford@nationalcallcenters.org

This month we're taking this feature in a different direction and meeting Annette Miesbach, who is the Product Marketing Manager with inContact in Salt Lake City, UT. Although Annette is not technically an NACC member since only those who work in a management position in a contact center can be members, the company she works for, inContact, is a supporter of the NACC. That's why we thought we would take a detour off our usual interview route this month to chat with Annette.

NACC: Although our readers won't know this, I detect a distinct German accent as we speak. Tell us a little about where you're from originally.

AM: I was born and raised in Germany, in the Munich area, with the exception of a year in the US while in high school and another year in Spain while in University. I moved to Canada with my husband almost 15 years ago. What was meant to be a temporary assignment with a contact center company in the Toronto area ended up in our getting settled down and deciding to stay in Toronto. I joined inContact almost 2 years ago as a Product Marketing Manager. I do work from the home office most of the time, with travel to our headquarters in Salt Lake City and Marketing related activities across the US thrown in for good measure. The setup suits me to a T.

NACC: How and when did you find your way into the contact center business?

AM: While studying languages (French and Spanish) at the University in Munich, I branched off into Web Marketing and Web Content Management early on with a part time job for a large German communications company in Munich. After graduating from University, I found that I enjoyed my part time job enough to make it my full time calling. When moving to Canada, I transferred to a contact center company, initially as a web content manager. What I learned about contact centers intrigued me (and it still does!), so I dug deeper and started understanding more and more about them, until I eventually took on a Contact Center Product Marketing role. And I've never regretted it in the last almost 15 years… There's so much going on, there's constant change and growth, new ideas, new approaches – the contact center industry has yet to have a dull moment!

NACC: What is your role at inContact?

AM: I'm a Product Marketing Manager, responsible for product related marketing activities of inContact's cloud-based contact center solutions. My focus is on multi-channel and omni-channel routing, reporting and contact handling, as well as published programming interfaces and packaged integrations.

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Playing The Gamification Game

Paul Stockford, Research Director, NACC and Chief Analyst, Saddletree Research, Paul.Stockford@nationalcallcenters.org

I first learned of the concept of gamification in the contact center about ten years ago during the first Saddletree Forum organized by my company and held in Carefree, AZ. The founder of the first gamification company I became aware of was a delegate to the conference. Looking back, I now wish I'd had him as a speaker because he was an early leader in a very promising contact center market segment.

Loosely defined, gamification is something nearly all of us are familiar with in one way or another. Such common programs as frequent flyer and hotel frequent guest programs can be considered gamification because they recognize and reward people associated with the business. In the contact

The NACC has been burning the midnight oil and typing until our fingers are sore to bring out reports to our members. Each is listed below. If you are interested to see what we are writing about, click on the links below and download the executive summary of each. If you like what you see, join the NACC so that you can view these reports and others that will be coming out soon on our website. These reports will ensure that you know the latest trends in the industry.

HireIQ Candidate Optimizer Disrupts The Status Quo, Powers Revolution In Customer Service Human Capital Management: May 2015

Verint Jumps Into The Gamification Game: April 2015

Research Update - Strong 4th Quarter Tops Year of Growth for the 2014 U.S. Contact Center Industry Employment

Geo-Fencing: Expanding The Contact Center Boundaries?: November 2014

Neural Phonetic Speech Analytics: The Brains behind Nexidia Interactions Analytics 11.0: July 2014

Nexidia Pushes Speech Analytics Envelope with Nexidia Interaction Analytics 11.0: July 2014

The Time is Now: Workforce Optimization Becomes Reality for the Small-to-Medium-Sized Contact Center: July 2013

Finding the Silver Lining in the Contact Center Cloud: May 2013

The At-Home Agent Movement - A Benchmark Quantitative Analysis: January 2013

State of the Call Center Industry Report: 2nd Quarter 2012 Data

State of the Call Center Industry Report: 1st Quarter 2012 Data

Contact Center Mobility Study: May 2012

State of the Call Center Industry Report: 4th Quarter 2011 Data

State of the Call Center Industry Report: 3rd Quarter 2011 Data

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State of the Call Center Industry Report: 1st Quarter 2009 Data

North American Contact Center Industry 2008-2009: The Year in Review and a Look Ahead

State of the Call Center Industry Report: 4th Quarter 2008 Data

60 Ideas in 60 Minutes: 2008 Session

60 Ideas in 60 Minutes: 2007 Session

center, gamification offers agents recognition and reward for exemplary performance. The recognition and rewards are often found in the form of leader boards and basic awards. While these programs have found acceptance in the contact center over the past decade, changing demographics are forcing change in the way the industry thinks about the implementation of gamification.

As the millennial generation begins to comprise a greater percentage of the contact center workforce, joining previous generations of workers who also enjoy the challenge of gaming, management will have to find ways to keep these workers engaged while improving performance and optimizing the customer experience.

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Disrupting The Agent Turnover Routine

Paul Stockford, Research Director, NACC and Chief Analyst, Saddletree Research, Paul.Stockford@nationalcallcenters.org
Kevin Hegebarth, Vice President Marketing, HireIQ, Kevin.Hegebarth@hireiqinc.com

(Note from Paul: As you know, I closely follow changes in contact center employment. Despite the economic challenges of the recent recession, the contact center industry continues to grow yet personnel turnover remains the plague of the industry. Kevin Hegebarth is a longtime business colleague of mine and an authority on employment strategies and tactics so I asked him to co-author this article with me. For a complete analysis of HireIQ's recent breakthrough in managing agent turnover, referenced in the following article, NACC members may download my most recent Research Note at the website, www.nationalcallcenters.org.)

With annualized contact center industry personnel turnover of about 30 percent, the revolving door of contact center employment has negative effects on company financial performance as well as customer retention efforts. Agent turnover costs the industry $4B (that's Billion with a "B") annually. That's approximately the gross national product of the island nation of Barbados.

This seemingly intractable problem is one of the biggest, most persistent challenges that our industry faces and no investment in technology or process innovation can mask its impact on customer satisfaction, employee engagement, and overall customer service performance. Change has to occur at the front-end of the agent lifecycle – the recruiting and hiring process. And it appears HireIQ Solutions has become the catalyst for that change.

HireIQ has disrupted the manner in which contact center organizations hire agents. Through their clever use of audio analysis, which they call Audiolytics, and Candidate Optimizer, their machine-learning, predictive analytics engine that uses client-reported business outcomes to automatically identify likely excellent performers early in this hiring process, companies are now able to make substantial progress in their fight against attrition and improve their center's performance to boot. The recently published Saddletree Research analysis of this breakthrough is available for download to NACC members at the website, www.nationalcallcenters.org.

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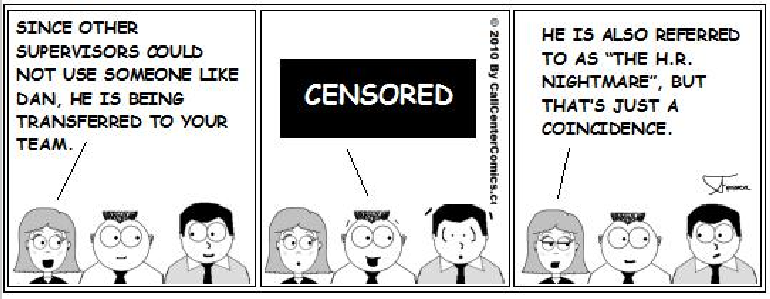
Call Center Comics!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