THE FOUR PILLARS

OPTIMAL CUSTOMER *RETENTION & SALES*

CH Consulting *Group*

Expert Guidance • Proven Results

WHAT'S THE COST OF A CUSTOMER?

- New customer acquisition can cost **FIVE** times more than satisfying and retain customers
(Forrester Research, 2008)

- **$1.6 Trillion** = estimated cost of customers switching due to poor service in the U.S.
(Accenture Strategy Report, 2016)

- A mere 2% increase in customer retention can **lower costs by as much as 10%**
(Small BizTrends, 2016)

In case we haven't convinced you of the importance of customer retention, please allow us to just drop one more statistic here:

82% of companies agree that retention is *cheaper* to execute than acquisition.
(eConsultancy, 2015)

Now, if you are part of the 82% who agree, let's get started on optimizing your customer retention and sales efforts!

REAL COMPANIES, REAL CHALLENGES

To help demonstrate the method to our madness and what CH Consulting Group believes to be the 4 pillars to your success, we would like to walk you through a real-life scenario with a recent client of ours. Our client is a renowned customer experience provider for Fortune 500 companies, stacked with several award-winning contact centers across the globe. Our client provides contact center support for one of the largest telecommunications providers in the U.S. and was struggling greatly with customer retention performance. In fact, our Client was the bottom performing site out of the many vendors that were involved in the project.

As a result, our client decided to leverage the expertise of the team at CH Consulting Group to quickly and efficiently improve their performance with the contact center. We sent one of our senior Consultants who was tasked with observing and analyzing current state, and then coming up with a game plan to help bridge the gap between current state and an optimized future state.

RED FLAGS

Our time on site uncovered several red flags. These are not meant to shame our Client, but to shed light on organizational threats that can be found at practically any other company! Take a look at our findings and see if you can relate to any of these problematic issues—if you can, then hang tight because we can help you fix them!

PAIN POINTS

- Many of the Sales agents were transferred into a Sales role from a Customer Service role WITHOUT enough training to facilitate the transition.
- Supervisors and managers were not equipped to lead and manage the sales team nor were they on-boarded in a consistent manner that would help prepare them for success.
- Recruitment was not leveraging incentives nor the assessment tool to significantly change the profile of new hires.
- Leadership responsibilities were from a committee rather than one (1) appointed individual.
- There was no routine calibration between Client Operation team, Client Quality Assurance team, and Vendor.
- There was no change management process for staying current with process changes.
- The Client had many great tools in place, but was not using them correctly or even using them at all.

It was clear to us that our Client was facing a problem that many of the organizations we work with face: their contact center environment was service-focused with minimal emphasis on a sales. Our client, similar to many organizations around the world, had become so service-focused that they forgot how to run a skills-based, performance management-based environment that was conducive for sales success. This is not meant to diminish the importance of providing excellent customer service, instead it is meant to highlight the difference between service and sales and show why NOT knowing the difference can cost you.

THE FOUR PILLARS

Now that pain points and challenges were identified, we segmented our recommendations into four distinct pillars to help guide their tactical movement towards customer retention and sales optimization.

SALES TRAINING 101	SUPERVISOR AND MANAGER DEVELOPMENT	RECRUITMENT PIPELINE	FOCUS ON INCENTIVES
1	2	3	4

PILLAR #1: SALES TRAINING 101

Since many of the sales agents were transitioned in from a Customer Service background without proper sales training, we knew that Sales Training 101 was a critical first step. We developed a sales training curriculum that was focused on the conversation rather than a checklist. **The curriculum included the following key components:**

- Increased focus on building rapport
- Encouraging customer feedback
- Overcoming objections
- Quickly determining pain points, complaints, challenges, etc., and presenting solutions

From there, we provided "Train-the-Trainer" sessions so that the new curriculum could be rolled out to the team. As a result, the Sales Training 101 Module has been incorporated into New Hire Training and our data shows improvement compared to a 3-week prior average.

PILLAR #2: SUPERVISOR AND MANAGER DEVELOPMENT

Similar to the sales agent team, the supervisors and managers were also lacking in the training and tools they needed to succeed in their environment. In order to help facilitate supervisor and manager development, we laid out these key steps:

- **Ensure common understanding of goals and objectives of the job functions.** It is critical to make sure the supervisory team is on the same page as to what their role is and what is expected of them. This helped to clear up some significant misconceptions, and overall provided much-needed alignment.
- **Developed new on-boarding process.** Since supervisors were not on-boarded in a consistent manner, we developed an on-boarding checklist and timeline.

PILLAR #2: SUPERVISOR AND MANAGER DEVELOPMENT (CONT)

- **Enable SMART goal-setting.** When setting goals, make sure they are:

    - **Specific –** the more specific you are, the more likely you will attain that goal.
    - **Measurable –** this helps you identify tangible, measurable outcomes that will ultimately help you refine your goals and determine effectiveness of the tasks you set to reach your goals.
    - **Attainable -** this is where you let reality in and determine if you have the time, money, and resources to achieve the goal.
    - **Relevant –** what are the current conditions and realities of your situation? Thinking about your current situation and future state, you can determine the relevancy of your desired goals.
    - **Timely –** goals are great, but without a time frame they are just wishful thinking. It's important to have a plan with a timeline to help keep you on track.

- **Documentation examples -** We provided samples for the common coaching feedback in the "Supervisor Playbook" hosted on the local intranet.
- **Define course of action for common scenarios.** This helps to give staff guidance on how to handle specific situations in a way that best represents the company.
- **Daily priorities –** We developed a "Day in the Life of a Supervisor" one-pager that was laminated and distributed to all Supervisors.
- **Proper escalation –** The telecommunications provider had been changing guidelines for when calls needed to be handled by a support staff member, or even referred to the Vendor Manager. We ensured all Supervisors knew the current guideline and the required information to be equipped with before bumping a call up.
- **Daily scrum.** We borrowed a concept from the Agile development model and held a brief, focused "stand up" meeting with all Supervisors and Operations Managers to discuss the outliers on one key metric and ensure that coaching was taking place immediately to improve that performance.

Supervising on-boarding progressed significantly during our time on-site, which has contributed greatly to building core competency. In our short time there, we conducted over 60 individual coaching sessions with Supervisors and Operations Managers in addition to daily huddles with the Site Operations Director.

PILLAR #3: IMPROVE THE RECRUITMENT PIPELINE

In an effort to improve the agent candidate pool and yield high-performing agents, we developed this strategic recruitment game plan:

- Revise ads so that they better described the agent position and potential income.
- Leverage search optimization best practices for higher placement on Indeed, GlassDoor, etc.
- Updated the hiring profile, ensuring that the "desire to sell" candidate is being hired, rather than solely customer service mentality candidates.
  - This also included new interview questions, centered around sales abilities.
- Advertise bonus potential for agents and discuss in the interviews as well.

As a result of our recruitment recommendations, we found that attrition is slowing (Q1 weekly average was 6.8% weekly versus 4.1% weekly during Q2), and headcount is increasing. In addition, the outside perception of the position is improving. The client is no longer hiring every applicant and is turning away rehire candidates in favor of more qualified candidates.

PILLAR #4: FOCUS ON INCENTIVES

Sales performance, agent engagement, and customer satisfaction are more intricately intertwined than one may think. The key to optimal sales performance and increased customer satisfaction is, undoubtedly, agent engagement. But, how does one achieve that? There are several ways to go about it, but the pillar we want to highlight is the importance of incentives for your sales team. Employee awards, recognition, and incentives can be a huge motivator in the workplace and can transform the workplace culture.

To help our client, we provided the following recommendations which you may also find useful:
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- Ensure all levels understand earning opportunities. This means clearly and effectively communicating any contests, weekend spiffs, etc, that may be occurring so that your team gets engaged quickly.
- Celebrate the successes. We worked with the Client to spread bonus awareness like wildfire with agents and supervisors. This helps to create momentum, excitement, and a healthy dose of competition in your team.

Leverage incentives in the recruitment process. This ties back to Pillar #3. If done properly, using incentives during the recruitment as a "carrot" can help bring you the fastest rabbits!

REAL RESULTS

As a result of the initiatives we implemented using the 4 Pillars outlined above, we were able to get our client real results. The Client was on the verge of termination, but by leveraging CH Consulting Group differentiators such as an intimate understanding of back-to-the-basics sales knowledge and the technical and operational expertise needed to implement and drive these changes, the Client was able to improve their performance and experience critical KPI gains. Here is a quick recap of the results we produced for our Client:

- Within 30 days, our Client went from trailing the enterprise average for the carrier's most crucial KPI to exceeding it.
- After only one month on-site, our Client's team had two of the top three individual agent incentive earners and made up nearly 40% of the top 50. This is notable since these rankings were for thousands of agents spread across several vendors in their Client's program, with our Client only having about 10% of the total volume.
- Reduced attrition and increased headcount due to improvement of recruitment pipeline, incentives and sales training.
- Increased agent and Supervisor satisfaction due to increased time and effort placed into employee development, consistent on-boarding processes and training.
  - For example, there were no onboarding processes in places for Supervisors prior to our engagement with the Client. There were too many field promotions with no follow up, which led to job role confusion.
- Improved performance due to transformation of service culture to a sales culture.
- Recruitment focus on quality vs.quantity led to higher quality of agents hired.

CONCLUSION

Yes, new customers can be a sign of business growth, but not if you are losing more customers than you are gaining! Cultivating your current customer relationships will give your organization a better chance at increasing profits so it's important to make sure you keep that relationship intact. When you use the Four Pillars outlined in this white paper to guide your customer retention and sales operations, you are well on your way to optimizing performance, reducing costs,and increasing revenue.

Feeling overwhelmed? Not sure where to start? CH Consulting Group can help. We assist companies of all shapes and sizes with transforming their customer experience, from the inside out. We do a **360° View assessment** of your people, processes, and technology to provide you with an effective strategy and roadmap that bridges the gap between current state and the desired future state. Contact us at **info@thechcg.com** or **218-286-4006** with more information about your company and needs so that we can get you a free proposal.

About CH Consulting

CH Consulting Group is a business management consulting company that is comprised of a new nationwide team of Customer Experience Consultants who specialize in Omni-Channel Contact Center. We are Thought Leaders from multiple industries with more experience and a far-reaching network of contact centers in the space that can help support all our clients' needs. We help navigate the needs of our clients with a creative, holistic, and collaborative methodology, bringing a proven track record, the right tools, services, and processes to the table for both immediate value and long-term success.