

A banking industry case study

Digital Experts partner with human agents to deliver world class service

A large vehicle and asset finance company's contact centre offers support for a broad range of client support queries, from account queries to product information requests. To service the wide range of possible queries, specialized teams were established and the IVR system ensures upfront query categorization so that calls are channeled to the right agents.

The agents try to diagnose the cause of each customer query, and then attempt to apply the relevant procedural guidelines to resolve the query in line with company policy. Whenever an agent is unable to effectively resolve the query, they second tier the call to a small team of specialists.

Customers who opt to try self-solve their issue struggle to firstly locate the relevant information via the frequently asked questions and online knowledge base. This leads to increased frustration, that then spills over into the contact centre.

The challenge

The Contact Centre faced a number of cost and service quality challenges that needed urgent attention.

The varying call volumes across different query categories resulted in sub-optimal workforce utilization, with certain specialist teams being idle while other teams were overwhelmed. Given the specialized nature of the calls, agents could not easily be transferred across teams.

It took approximately six weeks to formally train new agents, with many agents taking a further three to six months to be deemed competent on the floor.

This lead time reduced the Contact Centre's reaction time when responding to changing customer demands.

A sizable percentage of calls was being sent to the experts in the second tier. This was a result of both the complex nature of most calls and the agents' fear of making a mistake, given the fiduciary requirements placed on giving advice.

Policy and procedure changed relatively frequently and agents struggled to keep up.

Free-text call reports varied dramatically in detail and quality, making follow ups and reporting very difficult.

The requirement

The management team was looking for a solution which would:

- + Create multi-skilled teams, capable of handling any call category
- + Increase first-call resolutions
- + Improve call reporting
- + Improve workflow management once an order is captured
- + Improve sales call reporting
- + Improve client satisfaction ratings
- Reduce the time needed to get a new sales rep performing effectively



The solution

The business decided to build a digital expert capable of augmenting all agents and enabling them to answer all known service queries at the level of an expert.

A small team of automation engineers worked with the contact centre service team to capture all the contextual decisioning logic that the few experts were applying in their brains – logic that is impossible to document or capture using decision-tree flows.

Over a few months, the team worked tirelessly and soon had every known service query captured within the brain of the digital expert.

The digital expert was then made accessible to all agents. As a call came in,

the digital expert would navigate the agent in context, helping them ask the right questions, offer the right answers and take the right actions at the right time, while also providing a detailed call report to prove it.

After navigating over two million customer calls, the digital expert is now set to offer customers digital self-service via the Bank's website and mobile app.

In addition, the Call Centre is looking to now partner the digital expert with a team of digital workers. These back-office processing specialists will ensure that all required system work is automatically performed, leaving the agents to focus on the customer conversation.

The results

Improvements within the key Call Centre metrics were seen almost immediately.

- VA First-call resolutions dramatically increased, as agents can resolve all known call queries themselves.
- VA Training reduced by 40%, primarily in the content areas focused on policy and procedural details. Training focus shifted to call-handling skills so agents could focus on optimizing the customer experience.
- VA Agents were capable of handling any query type so that they could be more easily deployed to meet changing call volumes.
- VA The decision-pathway summaries provided at the end of every call detailed every question asked, every answer given and every action taken. Free-text summaries were no longer required and the accurate call reporting lowered the quality-assurance risk. This data was used to provide in-depth call insights.

These results confirmed the power of partnering staff with a digital expert – one capable of navigating them through all known customer support journeys.



The benefits

The digital expert enabled the Contact Centre team to deliver a consistent, compliant level of service to all customers without the historic risk of varying agent knowledge and experience. No matter who answers the call, the customer will be asked the same questions, be offered the same answers, and experience the same outcomes.

Going forward, the business is looking to partner the digital expert with back-office digital workers. They aim to significantly reduce the workload on agents so they can focus on customer conversations, while their digital team take care of the call complexity and administration. In addition, the same digital expert can be unlocked across the self-service channels, driving down call volumes.