

Call Center Software: The Possibilities are Endless

The call center represents your first line of communication with customers and potential customers. Whether you choose to outsource this service or to establish an in-company call center, this is one area in which quality is paramount and cannot be compromised. Clients' questions and concerns need to be dealt with courteously and effectively, and sales calls require careful handling - as some members of the public have grown wary of unsolicited calls due to the sheer bulk of such calls that they receive, it is imperative that these interactions are the very embodiment of tact, timing and effective communication. This is a tall order, but increasingly, there is software available that is tailor made to fill it.

Of course, the key to a first-rate call center has always been, and remains, effective human communication. That having been said, though, there are also many problems that can be solved by technology. In many cases, the right software can increase the efficiency of your call center so that many repetitive tasks are streamlined or even eliminated. Outgoing calls can be made much more efficiently, so that callers spend most of their time in actual communication with clients and potential clients on the other end of the line. The real value of any call center lies in the personalities and communication skills of the personnel; technology helps us display and utilize these assets. For example, software programs that allow us to use predictive or automated dialing free the caller from this repetitive and time consuming task. Call center software can set up voice messaging for direct marketing, leaving automated messages on voice mail and answering machines that are reached by this method. When a live voice answers, the call is transferred automatically to an agent. Think of the time this can save - call center employees are called into action only when they are needed. Studies show that there is little difference in customer response to an automated answering machine message as opposed to a live one, as long as the automated message is clear, concise and informative. Of course, in live communication, the human quality of the call makes all the difference. Call center software organizes things so that human ability is not wasted, but used to full capacity, without putting undue stress on the employee.

Speaking of employee stress - who in this day and age is not acquainted with the benefits of telecommuting or working from home? Many studies show that employees who work from home are often happier, more efficient, and show a greatly decreased rate of absenteeism. For the employer, too, this makes sense. Because modern technology makes it possible for us to maintain close and effective communication with employees who are working from home, this arrangement is often a win-win situation - greater satisfaction and decreased overhead costs. New call center software makes it possible for some call center employees to experience the benefits of working from home. In fact, in the near future, the virtual call center may become the norm - employees, equipped with the right hardware and software, will both make and answer calls from a home office, while staying in full communication with their co-workers and supervisors. Communication software will facilitate instant system-wide messaging, employees will be supported by software that enables and facilitates telemarketing, routing, predictive dialing, automatic dialing, and automatic messaging. At the same time, they will be able to stay close to their families, avoiding a costly and time-consuming commute.

The potential of call center software has barely begun to be tapped. In time, this software may allow the call center to move far beyond its present role as a sender and receiver of business related communication. To cite just one example, in this time of political uncertainty, quick and efficient lines of communication throughout a community are more important than ever. Call center software could, in an emergency, be called into service: picture an emergency alert system capable of reaching tens of thousands of households almost instantly. Far from being an alienating force, communication software has the potential to connect our growing communities in ways we might never have dreamed of. Innovative use of this technology will be both a challenge and a highly satisfying adventure.

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About the Author

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