

The Newsletter of the Toronto Chapter of the International Customer Service Association

Message from the President

Hello Everybody,

Welcome to 2010! We made it. It's a new year and a chance for new beginnings. Does everyone have a strategy in place for the next 12 months?

We have a plan at ICSA Toronto Chapter that should make this year more exciting and make the association more accessible for our members. I invite you all to join us on February 18th for a breakfast networking session on the secrets to Insourcing and Outsourcing. All registration fees will be donated to the Haiti Relief Fund, and as many of you are probably aware, the Government of Canada will match our donation, so whatever we can raise will be doubled. This event will be a great chance to meet other association members and council members, and give you valuable information and advice on managing contact centre operations.

On Saturday, January 23, I had the privilege of appearing in a Globe and Mail article, "Union defends supposed sleepy TTC worker." Here is the link:

<http://m.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/union-defends-supposed-sleepy-ttc-worker/article1441784/?service=mobile&page=1>.

I am quoted at the end of the article. I also appeared on a CBC Radio talk show on January 25 in response to the Globe and Mail article. I was happy to be contacted by both organizations. ICSA Toronto Chapter has gained some excellent exposure recently through the media. I'm hoping this trend continues!

Continued please see next page...

Upcoming Events

Check our website at www.icsa.on.ca under events for full details and registration information.

Train the Trainer

February 11th-12th, 2010

This program is designed to help you hone the key skills needed to create and deliver courses that truly improve employee job performance. This is a very practical, enjoyable and worthwhile program that will not only develop new trainers but also enhance the skills of those who are already training.

Please Reply no later than Thurs, Feb 4th, 2010

For more information, [click here](#).

RSVP To: Dolly Konzelmann

Phone: 905-477-5544 Fax: 905-940-1278

Email: dolly@icsa.on.ca

"Outsourcing or Insourcing: Secrets to Success" Networking Seminar & Panel Discussion

February 18th, 2010

Determining the best option for contact centre operations is a monumental task and a wrong decision can have serious complications on efficiency and an organization's bottom line. Join us for a presentation and an open panel discussion on everything you need to know about outsourcing and insourcing. Be prepared to ask our experts questions!

Please Reply no later than Friday, Feb 12th, 2010

For more information, [click here](#).

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ICSA – TC NOW ON TWITTER!

Follow us at www.twitter.com/icsatoronto to stay up to date and informed on all our upcoming events

...President's Message continued from previous page

So what exactly does your 2010 strategy consist of? I came across a SearchCRM.com article a few weeks ago that asked the question: "What are customers looking for in customer service?"

Here are the six most popular answers:

1. Agents who can make decisions
2. Knowledgeable agents
3. First call resolution
4. Respect
5. Empathy
6. Fair resolution

How many times have we been on the phone from the customer side with an agent who didn't practice any of these? It's not a very pleasant experience. But the opposite has an amazing effect, doesn't it? When we speak with an agent who satisfies each of these customer needs, we are thrilled. So, when assessing your contact centre/customer service department's effectiveness, make sure they cover the basics and you'll notice a difference in customer satisfaction.

Have you marked May 14th on your calendar yet?? We're hosting our Annual Customer Service Conference that day. I hope to see you there! More details will follow in this newsletter.

Here's wishing you a great 2010!

Regards,
Dolly Konzelmann
President, ICSA-TC
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Training, Consulting, Recruiting
–we have you covered!
Customer Retention – Impact to your organization
Call us at 905-477-5544.
Or email dolly@icsa.on.ca

...Upcoming Events continued from previous page

1-Day Customer Service Certification **February 19th, 2010**

This customer service course is a certificate-granting one-day workshop that will give your employees the building blocks they need to enhance their career in customer service and obtain world-wide recognition as a Customer Service Professional.

Please Reply no later than Friday, February 12th, 2010

For more information or to register, [click here](#).

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Effective Email Writing

March 5th, 2010

This half-day session will teach you how to structure and write concise, effective e-mail messages that clearly make your point and satisfy your reader or motivate your reader to act—provide feedback or take other appropriate actions.

Please Reply no later than Friday, February 26th, 2010

For more information or to register, [click here](#).

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Conflict Resolution

March 11th, 2010

Learn how to defuse conflicts and tense situations when dealing with customers and co-workers. More details to be posted on the website shortly.

Please Reply no later Thursday, March 4th, 2010

For more information, [click here](#).

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...Upcoming Events continued from previous page

Service that Sells Certification Program March 22nd-23rd, 2010

This program helps Customer Service Professionals develop the skills and motivation they need for cross-selling and up-selling.

Please Reply no later than Thursday, March 15th, 2010

For more information, [click here](#).

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Mind Mapping

April 9th, 2010

This one-day program will allow you to record and recall customer and client information clearly and easily without having to search through files every time you speak with them. This will increase the amount of time used to solve your customer's problem. The result: your customer feels much more valued.

Please Reply no later than Thursday, April 2nd, 2010

For more information, [click here](#).

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Leadership Certification Program

April 15th-16th, 22nd-23rd, 2010

Perfect for managers, supervisors and team leads, this four-day session will focus on highly effective and innovative concepts, tools, techniques and how to utilize them to lead a world class service department.

Please Reply no later than Thursday, April 8th, 2010

For more information, [click here](#).

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Annual ICSA-TC May Conference May 14th, 2010

This year's version will be a one-day conference with several inspiring and influential speakers within the customer service realm. Get all the latest information, ideas, trends and best practices from the experts of the industry. Keep checking the website for updates.

For a registration form, [click here](#).

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Dealing with Difficult Customers Certification Program

June 10th, 2010

This one-day customer service certification course has special emphasis on dealing with difficult customers. Topics covered include understanding customer expectations, profiling difficult customer situations, dealing with customer objections, a model for effective complaint resolution and how to use assertive techniques and positive language to diffuse difficult situations, creating a positive customer experience and creating a win-win situation.

Please reply no later than Thursday, June 3, 2010

For more information, [click here](#).

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Sponsored Events

We offer a discounted rate to our members and subscribers, contact us for more details.

IQPC 2nd Customer Self-Service Summit

Location: Miami, FL

Date: February 22 - 24, 2010

ICSA "The Power of Service"

Location: Atlanta Omni Hotel and Conference Center, Atlanta, GA

Date: September 18-21, 2010

The Newsletter of the Toronto Chapter of the International Customer Service Association

13th Annual Customer Service Conference “Customer Experience Excellence” May 14th, 2010

ICSA Toronto Chapter is pleased to present the 13th Annual Customer Service Conference entitled “**Customer Experience Excellence**” on May 14th, 2010.

Take a look at our exceptional lineup of speakers:

Speakers and Topics

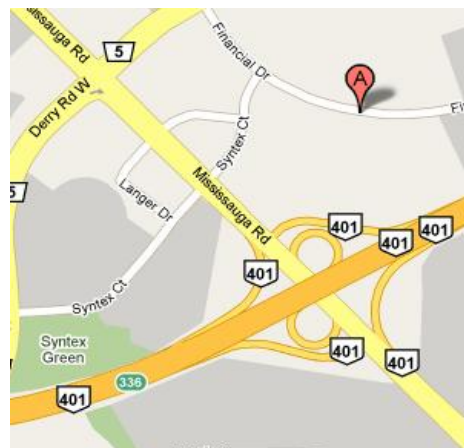
- Corey Atkinson, Creating Exceptional Experiences
- Stephen Gaskin, Employee Engagement
- Alex Gellman, Work-Life Balance: Realizing Your Dreams
- Jack Green, Contact Centres – Failure to Thrive
- Social Media and Customer Service (Speaker TBD)
- David Soock, Leadership Rocks



In addition, we will conduct a panel discussion consisting of four experts discussing current customer experience challenges!

Location

RBC
6880 Financial Drive
Mississauga, ON
L5N 7Y5
(Click map for link)



Time

8:00am – 4:30pm

A few Vendor and Sponsorship opportunities are available as well. Please contact us for more details.

This is the biggest ICSA event of the year in Canada. Don't miss out on the opportunity to network with other customer service professionals, hear what's going on in the industry and discover ways to improve your organization! And as always, there will be plenty of door prizes.

The registration form is available on our website. The brochure will follow shortly.

We hope to see you there!



Bilingual Customer Service Manager (French/English)

Salary up to \$95,000 + Bonus!!!

Join an organization that truly values their employees and provides terrific benefits and perks! Enjoy paid days off in recognition of perfect attendance, stock options, RRSPs, opportunities for professional development and a recognition program for outstanding performance!!!

Our client, a dynamic company in the Financial Sector that is dedicated to providing exceptional Customer Service seeks a **Bilingual Customer Service Manager**. You will provide leadership and direction to the customer service department in customer retention efforts after the sale (inbound). If you have excellent management skills and experience within the **insurance industry**, then we would like to speak with you!

Responsibilities:

- Manage all service, processing and telephone functions in the customer service department and ensure that they operate according to contractual obligations and best practices.
- Establish goals for customer retention in partnership with Senior Management using service interactions and levels of service performance metrics to ensure a competitive position in the marketplace.
- Monitor reports to ensure that quality, production and retention standards for the customer service department are met.
- Inform senior management on the status of service levels, workflow and any issues.
- Resolve customer issues that are beyond the scope and authority of the customer service supervisors.
- Develop business relationships and communicate with business partners, vendors and internal departments regarding customer service issues.
- Control operating budget and manage expenses and revenues generated for and by department.
- Forecast the impact new products and procedures will have on contacts by customers in order to develop budgets and staffing plans, with review by manager.
- Provide leadership and performance management for the team.
- Keep management informed on status of service standards, workflow issues, problems incurred with customers or employees and any other issues that may impact the department or company.

Skills and Qualifications

Fluency in spoken and written **French & English**

Experience in the **insurance industry** required

Demonstrated relevant customer service experience

University degree or equivalent work experience

Solid leadership and management skills in a customer service environment

Excellent interpersonal and communication skills

If you are qualified for this role and feel that it is a good fit for you, please submit your resume (.doc) to JTCresume@bagg.com quoting job: "**Bilingual Customer Service Manager**". Please provide a contact number where you can be reached between 9:00am and 5:00pm, Monday to Friday.

Full Time Customer Service Representative

ICSA-TC has a client who is looking for a Full-Time Customer Service Representative for its Customer Service department located in Toronto, Ontario.

As a Customer Service Representative your responsibilities will include:

- Accurately and efficiently process inbound and outbound customer calls
- Accurately and efficiently process customer orders through mail correspondence
- Accurately and efficiently handle customer correspondence via email communication
- Ability to dispute and resolve customer order and charge discrepancies via chargeback processing, or Canada Post claims
- Encourage sales through up-selling, cross selling and substitute selling techniques (save the sale)
- Accurately present information to all general and product related inquiries
- Accurately and with a sense of urgency, process and add value to incoming customer sales calls
- Possess a strong attention to detail
- Respectful of customer information and confidentiality
- Other duties as required

As a Customer Service Representative you are:

- A professional with telephone skills and excellent communication skills
- A team player
- Adapt well to a busy and changing environment
- Independent and proactive in resolving issues
- Take initiative

To qualify for this position you must possess:

- 3-5 years customer service, retail or call centre experience
- Comfortable selling and upselling
- Strong sense of professionalism in dealing with customers
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills
- Excellent computer skills and proficient in Microsoft Office
- Good understanding of Internet applications and how they work
- University degree or College degree

To apply for this position, please email your resume to info@icsa.on.ca.

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7 Innovations to Reinvent Phone-Based Customer Service

White paper by eGain Communications Corp.

Until the mid-1990s, the phone channel accounted for most business-to-customer communications, complementing in-person, fax, and postal communications. Then, the advent of the Internet and the World Wide Web and the subsequent adoption of broadband communications led to an explosion of business-to-customer communications through electronic channels such as email, chat, web collaboration, and web self-service.

Driven by the dot-com boom and generational changes in channel preferences, businesses started focusing on e-channels for customer service, building channel silos in the process. With phone customer service being labor-intensive and phone infrastructure being inflexible and expensive, businesses optimized e-channels and let phone service deteriorate. According to a 2007 Forrester study¹ of business and IT executives, 57% of survey respondents thought that their company's phone customer service was average, below average, or poor.

However, while some research studies indicate that e-channel communications have surpassed phone communications in volume², the phone continues to remain popular both as a preferred single channel for some customers and transaction types, and as an important part of the multichannel mix for many others. In fact, a 2006 survey of US and UK consumers by Accenture³ showed that 82% of respondents continued to use the phone to get assistance.

Today, innovations across technology, process, and people such as VoIP, customer interaction hubs, multidimensional knowledge management™ and multishore sourcing models have re-configured the economics and flexibility of phone customer service. As most companies struggle to find ways to provide superior customer service experiences, a

savvy few are already grabbing the “low-hanging fruit” that has been there for the taking—the clunky old phone channel! By innovating in the phone arena, while integrating with other channels, these companies are enhancing brand loyalty, extending their competitive advantage, and reaping operational benefits.

1. VoIP

The compelling business value of VoIP has triggered a re-evaluation of the call center infrastructure in many enterprises. Chronicled in numerous articles and white papers, the business benefits of VoIP are many and include the following:

- Cost savings from combining the phone and data infrastructure
- Ability to leverage VoIP infrastructure and the ease of implementing virtual call centers across multiple sites and remote agents including at-home and outsourced agents
- Improved infrastructure and agent utilization, and ease of management
- Improved customer service experience

Companies should carefully assess the benefits and suitability of VoIP to their organization as an important step in reinventing phone customer service. VoIP case studies are widely available, but this paper will not focus on success stories in this area.

2. End-to-end call process automation

Businesses have invested in call logging systems for many years. While these systems are useful, they have become disconnected data and process silos that do not integrate with call resolution or case management systems, knowledge bases,

service fulfillment workflows, and non-phone interaction channels such as email, chat, SMS, and web self-service.

The results: Increase in call handle time and repeat calls, increased escalations and call transfers, poor customer service experience, non-compliance with interaction regulations and best practices, failure to deliver on promised service levels, and ultimately reduced customer loyalty.

With integrated call tracking, knowledgebase, and workflows, agents are able to resolve customer inquiries and initiate follow-on fulfillment tasks, including escalations to subject matter experts, with service levels attached to them. Moreover, process expertise embedded in multidimensional knowledge bases (explained in detail later in the document) and integrated workflows ensure interaction and fulfillment compliance.

3. Customer Interaction Hub (CIH)

Consumers are increasingly using multiple communication channels to interact with the business and often times hop across channels in the process of completing a service transaction or resolving a query. As mentioned earlier, interactions through electronic channels such as email, chat and the web continue to increase, accounting for 49% of support inquiries in 2006. From a phone customer service perspective, call center agents that do not have a 360-degree view of customer interactions through non-phone channels, are simply flying blind. They have to “reinvent the wheel” with customers for creating context, resulting in poor agent and customer experience, and ultimately customer defections.

Integration with non-phone channels enables a complete view of customer interactions across channels including web self-service, and allows phone agents to start where the customer left off in the previous interaction for optimal customer experience and contact center efficiencies. Channel unification also helps increase service consistency and agent utilization across channels by leveraging universal queuing and routing, and centralized multichannel knowledge bases and business rules.

4. Multidimensional knowledge base™

Traditional knowledge management systems in the call center have delivered limited ROI since they are flat or one-dimensional, and have not been focused on all the critical areas that are needed for

business value maximization—content, access and process. A multidimensional knowledgebase takes a holistic approach to knowledge management, while enabling significant improvements in operational and strategic metrics such as first-call resolution, call handle time, sales conversions, reduction of unwarranted product returns and site visits, customer satisfaction, interaction compliance and brand loyalty to new levels. A multidimensional knowledge management™ system addresses and integrates critical success factors in knowledge management.

5. Phone-aided web collaboration™

Co-browsing the web with customers and prospects, while speaking to them on the phone simultaneously, is a powerful enhancement to phone-based customer service that can virtually match the quality and experience of in-person interactions. This innovation enables agents to help customers complete online transactions such as form filling and online shopping, while training them at the same time on how to use web self-service for informational, transactional and diagnostic queries in the future.

6. Multimodal web self-service™

Savvy companies know that one of the best ways to dramatically improve phone customer service is to provide exceptional web self-service. This will reduce the need for agent-assisted service for queries of low to moderate complexity, while allowing agents to engage in value-added conversations with customers and prospects. Providing exceptional web self-service requires the use of multidimensional knowledge bases, experience-centric user interfaces, multimodal content access supporting a broad set of content retrieval methods (e.g. FAQ, natural language processing, search, browse, guided help, chatbots), integration with back-office systems and active promotion of self-service, especially in the context of providing agent-assisted service (for example, when the customer is put on hold for phone customer service.)

7. Cloning the “best agent DNA”

Keeping phone agents up-to-date on best-practice interaction and service fulfillment processes, service compliance, contextual offers, and product

knowledge is an impossible task for most customer service organizations. It is even harder in virtual or outsourced or hybrid setups. Only a few “star” agents seem to cope and flourish in this demanding environment. As a result, service varies from agent to agent —the agent’s personality and skill largely determine the value of the interaction for the customer as well as the business. Cloning the “DNA” of these star agents can help dramatically

improve the effectiveness and efficiencies of other agents in the call center.

- 1 2008 Forrester research note: “Customer Service Best Practices Adoption” by William Band et al.
- 2 2006 SSPA benchmark data
- 3 2006 Accenture report: “The Customer Service Challenge - Creating the Perfect Customer Call.”

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Your Toronto ICSA Chapter would love to have you join us!

ICSA is dedicated to promoting the development and awareness of the customer service profession through networking, education and research.

Join our Toronto Customer Service Association (ICSA) and experience the most comprehensive package of membership benefits and services, the best networking opportunities and the most influential group of customer service professionals that you will likely know. ICSA gives you the power to connect!

For complete details, please visit our website: www.icsa.on.ca



The Toronto ICSA Chapter Newsletter

Please forward any submissions or suggestions to editor@icsa.on.ca



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Exceptional Customer Care Environments

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