



THE IMPORTANCE OF AGENT ENGAGEMENT WHEN INTRODUCING A CONTACT CENTRE CEM SOLUTION

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Within ViewsCast, we run many automated customer experience measurement programmes within contact centres, for multiple clients. We have the technical capability to deploy Interactive Voice Response (IVR) surveys, SMS surveys and online surveys and all data is fed straight through to our online reporting platform, ViewsSummary in real-time. The different modes we have are used in various ways, although the main mode applied within contact centres naturally tends to be IVR, perhaps with the exception of the telecommunications market focusing more on SMS.

Throughout the last couple of years, we've seen a number of instances of high levels of engagement within businesses and contact centres with examples of contact centre managers, team leaders and agents being genuinely engaged and enthusiastic. Within these organisations, there is an eagerness to see the results as they come through in real-time and a hunger to know what the customer has said about them.



We've also however, seen examples of disengaged teams where the tool is viewed in a negative light. This is often symbolic of the culture within the organisation and is driven from the top down. Other measurement tools within the business may not be used constructively and hence, a CEM tool can quickly be viewed by the agents, as another stick by which they can be beaten.

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WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT?

To answer this question, it's worth looking at why the tool was introduced in the first place – usually to measure the level of customer experience being delivered and understand the pain-points, allowing for direct action to be taken for the better and understanding where agents are excelling and recognising this in some way.

Ultimately the goal is to improve the level of service being delivered, but it will not be possible to make any real positive change if your agents are disengaged. It is these individuals who will need to change, whether it be the friendliness of their tone, their First Call Resolution (FCR), speed of answer etc... It's worth noting that in some cases, the changes needed are more process-driven and potentially out of the agents control, but in most instances, your agents will be needed in order to change things for the better. Without their engagement & buy-in, they're not going to do this.

METHODS TO ENSURE ENGAGEMENT

If the contact centre does not have a strong positive culture to begin with, it can be hard to position something like this positively without agents becoming cynical and instantly taking against it. In this instance, it will be challenging to change this negativity but it must be attempted for the programme to have any real benefit.

Within all types of contact centres, the upfront communication is vital to the initial perception of the tool. It should be positioned as a positive tool carrying the following objectives:

- To gain an understanding of the overall level of service being provided to customers
- To reward/recognise examples of excellent customer service
- To retrain in the instance of below-par customer service
- To assist the agents in enhancing their skillset and developing personally



A new programme should ideally be endorsed by the top management within the business in order to ensure it carries the gravitas required to be embraced and used most effectively. Often companies label the programme with a brand name and produce supporting materials including posters, mouse-mats, pens to really drive awareness, expectation and the right messaging.

A further method of gaining the required buy-in upfront is to actively consult the agents in certain elements right at the very beginning, e.g. where they believe the pain-points lie / their ideas on a name for the programme upfront.

HOW TO ENSURE ONGOING ENGAGEMENT

Of course, what I've discussed above is mainly related to the upfront implementation; however it's fundamental that this continues as the programme runs on.

In my opinion, the most important factor here is to ensure consistent and regular feedback. With real-time data feeds, managers and

team leaders are able to implement changes immediately, but feedback should also be given frequently – if not immediately, then daily / weekly. This could be aggregated team level feedback within morning huddles or 1-2-1 feedback focusing on the specific agent in question.

A previous client of mine had a CEM solution within the contact centre. I remember asking her about how the data was fed-back to agents? She



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said it wasn't. I was both amazed and disappointed. Interestingly, this client had one of the lowest Overall Satisfaction scores I have seen.

Conversely, we currently have a number of clients with driven management and engaged teams working with the programme and in a number of cases, we have seen a direct improvement in the overall measures, such as O-Sat, NPS and FCR. Some of these clients display

real-time feeds on the in-house plasma screens showing the latest aggregated scores, some display verbatim commentary within the contact centres to enable agents to see what customers are saying about them. These types of behaviours help to ensure high levels of engagement and enthusiasm across the teams.

But the programme should also evolve over time. The survey should be revisited and re-designed as the business changes and moves forward. More and more these days, clients want multi-mode programmes incorporating a combination of IVR, SMS and online/mobile online, which is something we're able to accommodate. Implementing different methodologies for gathering customer feedback also allows a business to demonstrate to its customers that it is ahead of the game, forward thinking and actively interested in what the general perception is amongst their customer groups.

HOW WE DO IT AT VIEWSCAST

Within ViewsCast, we offer strong upfront support for our clients, assisting with implementation through joint presentations positioning the tool and helping all to understand how it will work. Our experience, particularly within contact centres, means we recognise the importance of this positive, transparent approach and its subsequent impact on customer satisfaction.

We also work hard with our clients to provide accurate analysis and interpretation of data helping them to feedback accurately and focus in on the key areas requiring attention.

IPSOS VIEWSCAST



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About Ipsos ViewsCast:

ViewsCast is a multi-modal, real-time, data collection and reporting platform. It allows businesses to manage customer feedback from multiple touchpoints such as the Contact Centre, Branch/Store and Online. Survey invitation methods can be tailored to the most convenient mode for customers and through offering such versatility, response rates are high. All data is immediately available for different users and through the addition of tools, such as Hot Alerts and Closed Loop Feedback, ViewsCast truly helps to drive action within our clients organisation.

About Ipsos:

Ipsos is an independent market research company controlled and managed by research professionals. Founded in France in 1975, Ipsos has grown into a worldwide research group with a strong presence in all key markets. In October 2011 Ipsos completed the acquisition of Synovate. The combination forms the world's third largest market research company. With offices in 84 countries, Ipsos delivers insightful expertise across six research specializations: advertising, customer loyalty, marketing, media, public affairs research, and survey management.

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