

## CCT in Practice

# Customer Service Centre nears 'utopia' - customer satisfaction increases, cost-to-serve decreases, cross selling improves

### Company Overview

Neopost is the fastest growing supplier of mailroom, document & logistics solutions, with more than 800,000 customers worldwide covering all market sectors. Neopost is the number 1 supplier in the UK and Europe.

With a direct presence in 18 countries, 5,500 employees, and a turnover approaching 1 billion euros, Neopost has enjoyed increasing growth and rising margins.

Neopost serves the UK market from its headquarters in Romford and eight further branch offices, employing approximately 600 people in all and 100 within its customer service centre. Over the past ten years, turnover has doubled to nearly £100 million.

Neopost's mailroom solutions:

- Weighing & franking machines
- Automated mail opening
- Folding & inserting machines
- Printing & mail consolidation

### Issues

- Neopost had invested in an online portal (MyNeopost) and a Siebel CRM system and wanted to leverage these tools to both reduce call volumes and improve the customer experience.
- In a difficult market, Neopost wanted to explore cost reduction measures within the customer service centre, but wanted to ensure that any efficiency savings didn't damage customer satisfaction.
- How could analytics & insight improve customer centricity?
- Staff reductions were likely as a result of technology investment. Would morale be impacted - and customer service levels too?

### Solution

- IPT for headquarters - Avaya Aura Communication Manager running across a Cisco Catalyst 65xx series LAN
- Avaya Call Centre Express multi-media contact centre; CTI integration to Siebel CRM for 100 agent customer service centre
- Speech recognition IVR based on Avaya Voice Portal
- Progressive outbound dialling using Avaya Proactive Contact
- Verint Call Recording

### Benefits

- Progressive dialling introduced with no impact on agent attrition; generated £210k in first year savings
- Self service has reduced call volumes by 28%
- 200 credit card payments/day are fully automated
- 82% caller success rate through IVR
- ID&V application has saved 12 x FTE or c.£260k/year
- WFM has directly contributed 7% productivity gain
- Net promoter index (cust sat) increase of 15%



## Background

Neopost designs, manufactures and sells a broad range of solutions that enhance the management of 'mail flow'.

Their clients include businesses big and small in the corporate, public and professional sectors, as well as postal operators and parcel carriers.

In Europe, Neopost is the leading name in mailroom solutions - with more installations, more customers and more experience than any other mailroom supplier.

Their customers within the UK engage with Neopost via online and telephone based channels, routed through the Customer Service Centre.

The Customer Services team is made up of the following teams:

- Telesales team selling supplies such as ink, envelopes etc, and a further "Autostamp" Telesales team selling entry level franking machines to new clients;
- Customer Service contact centre made up of 3 x cross trained teams. They provide a 'one-stop-shop' to customers addressing issues such as machine breakdowns, billing enquiries and Credifon queries (credit management software that records available credit on every client franking machine);
- Call Despatch team is responsible for

booking breakdowns in with the correct engineers;

- Telemarketing team makes sales appointments with new prospects and existing customers;
- An artwork team develops the bespoke franked image for each customer.

## A Vision for Customer Centricity

As the UK market headed towards recession, Warren Tait, Customer Services Director at Neopost, realised that this was a business risk, but also an opportunity to re-engineer the processes and technology that Neopost deployed in the provision of customer service.

"I knew that we would come under pressure to reduce costs, but customer satisfaction performance must remain at the heart of any decision making", explains Mr. Tait.

"We'd previously invested in a Siebel CRM solution, and had developed a client web application called MyNeopost", Mr Tait continues.

"I started to consider how we might leverage what we already had to make us more efficient and yet to enhance the experience for our customers, to be more 'customer centric'."

Mr. Tait began to document a number of issues that he would summarise as the

"CTI Project" & present to the Group Board as part of a 3 year planning process:

- Reduce incoming call volumes by pushing customers to self service via the web or a voice portal;
- Improve customer contact reporting, forecasting and scheduling
- Deeper insights into customer contact and behaviour that would inform improvements in process efficiency and overall customer service performance;
- Update the telephony platform to a more stable technology and introduce multi-channel contact centre capability;
- Integrate telephony with CRM to provide screen popping to enhance customer experience.

The final consideration was how to enhance outbound contact but there were concerns about the impact on staff attrition if dialler technology was introduced.

To summarise the scope of the "CTI Project", Mr Tait explains:

"In a difficult trading market, I wanted to show an approach to reducing 'cost to serve' over time by leveraging CRM and integrating telephony, with an ROI over the planning period. But equally, I wanted to improve the customer experience."

"We originally chose CCT as our solution partner after presenting them with a significant opportunity to suggest improvements to both opex and customer service quality. Although we already had some of the technology components in mind, CCT were able to fulfil all of our requirements with their response. Their proposal ticked all the boxes, showed achievable ROI, and with CCT's professional team at the helm we were comfortable that this was the overall solution to take us forward."

Warren Tait  
Customer Services Director  
Neopost

## From vision to Board approval

A number of existing suppliers of Neopost's voice and data solutions were invited to review their operation in order to provide an initial, high level design and budgetary costings. Solutions from Cisco, Alcatel and Genesis to Neopost's "CTI Project" were presented.

CCT met with the Customer Service and IT Teams and followed that up with an audit of the customer service centre.

"We met CCT and were impressed with their initial presentation. Their portfolio, contact centre experience and project approach gave us confidence that they could be the right partner to overhaul our voice and contact centre technology for the UK operation", explained Mr Tait.

"CCT moved quickly to undertake an initial evaluation of our business and presented their proposal and technology recommendation, based on Avaya & Verint, in time for us to present the project to the Board for approval", continued Mr Tait.

"CCT worked hard to show ROI for the different project elements and suggested phases to help us balance investment and risk, while all the while focused on our objective to enhance our customer experience."

## Project elements and results

The overall solution covered IP telephony and LAN, multi-media contact centre, speech recognition-based IVR, blended outbound dialler and call recording. In future phases, other elements of workforce optimisation such as WFM, Speech Analytics and customer surveys will be deployed.

### Leveraging the Siebel eBusiness Application

Integrating the telephony and CRM application was central to the project. Using standard 'Avaya CT for Siebel' connectors, Neopost agents can now place, receive and transfer calls with full access to customer data held within Siebel. The screen popping capability allows Neopost agents to provide a more personalised service to inbound callers.

It also supports preview outbound calling for sales, service and collections, delivering a 'click-to-dial' facility from within customer records which increases agent productivity. Agents logged into Siebel are automatically logged into a specific skill group in the contact centre.

### Reducing call centre demand via Speech Self Service

Neopost has deployed a self and assisted service application, using the Avaya Voice Portal, to drive down call volumes and to make more use of existing web-based

self help facilities.

Neopost receives c.100 calls per day from customers wishing to know how much credit they have left on their franking machines. Each call took 2 minutes, including the ID&V. These calls have now been fully automated.

Customers also call to pay for additional franking machine 'credits' via credit cards, which also requires ID&V. Now, 200 x credit card payments per day have been automated.

Overall, results show:

- Self service has reduced call centre demand by 28% over 18 months;
- FTE savings of 12, or c.£260k/year (staff were redeployed or leavers not replaced).

While these savings are impressive, Mr.Tait offers some advice:

"We identified the processes that were best suited to self service and more than 80% of those callers complete the process within the IVR application now.

"With IVR, we're effectively always open and now provide a 24x7 service. However, we forced the automation on our customers and should have spent more time to explain our plans prior to implementing them."



### Automating outbound dialling

Around 30 agents within the team were making outbound calls, associated with sales and collections mainly. The Avaya Proactive Contact application provides Neopost with preview and progressive dialling options that have significantly increased contact rates and improved agent utilisation.

To support inbound call peaks, thresholds can be set within Avaya Proactive Contact to allow outbound agents to take inbound calls, with excess inbound calls passed to specified blend agents. When the blend agent finishes the call, they are presented with another inbound call if there is one, or the next outbound call.

Mr. Tait outlines the significance of the dialler aspect of the project:

“The ROI potential of the outbound element of the project was compelling. We’ve been able to realise the same level of contact but with half the number of agents. That has led to an effective annual saving of more than £200k.”

### Did Customer Satisfaction increase?

Neopost uses “Net Promoter” benchmarking as a tool to assess customer service performance and gather feedback. It gave them the

perfect tool to accurately track whether the CTI Project had had a positive effect on customer service delivery.

“Net Promoter scores how well we implement postal rate changes and how well we process the addition of funds to franking machines,” explains Mr. Tait.

“In the months after go live, our scores dropped, which we attributed to customer surprise following the introduction of ‘self service’. After 18 months, our scores are 15% ahead which we’re immensely proud of.”

### Has cost to serve been reduced?

The original presentation to the Group Board indicated that the CTI Project would deliver Opex reductions over the 3 year planning period. Following an outlay of >£500k, Neopost realised savings within 15 months.

### Did Employee Satisfaction increase?

Neopost appreciated that a technology project which could lead to headcount reductions, but that provided the potential for improvements in customer satisfaction, needed the support of the remaining employees within the team to make it work. Consequently, they have focused heavily on the softer side, improving the contact centre environment, providing training and incentives. (In the final analysis, natural

attrition has accounted for the headcount reductions).

As a result, “employee engagement scores” within the department are among the highest in a recent internal European benchmark survey.

### Next Steps: Delighting customers

Neopost realises that in the current market, it is not enough to merely satisfy customers – the goal must be to delight them. Mr. Tait suggests:

“It’s about Neopost delivering the best possible service to clients. We’re an installed base business with 100,000 clients and don’t need expensive consultants to tell us that serving customers well, cross-selling and upselling, creating an environment of trust and partnership, creates loyalty.”

Neopost will implement elements of the Workforce Optimisation suite such as workforce management, quality monitoring, performance management and speech analytics.

“We want to improve our processes, and will use mass analysis of customer interactions to inform our next wave of improvement. Analytics makes everything tangible. We’ll use customer insights to understand customer contact across every channel and continue to drive our standards up.”

To find out how the team at CCT can help you to realise customer service improvement, simply call or email us...

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