



MARK YOUR CALENDARS...

BMMA EVENTS

RFC is the Executive Director of the BMMA, composed of leading broadband/DSL service providers and vendors with a focus on broadband marketing and business.



BMMA Hot Topic Calls

**Every 4th Tuesday - 12PM Noon Central
Via Conference Bridge**

BMMA members meet monthly to discuss current and relevant "hot topics." Recent discussions covered: effective retention initiatives; the digital home; advertising revenue from your portal; callerID on TV; segmentation.

Sample the value of the association by joining our next "open call" (August) where currently once per quarter non-members are invited to participate.

REGISTER NOW!

BMMA Fall Workshop*

**September 26-27, 2007
Birmingham, AL**

Join us for this **AT&T hosted**, 1.5 day event filled with roundtable discussions and networking with your broadband telco and vendor peers. **See page 2 for agenda details .**

** This is a BMMA member event.*

Join now and take advantage of our first-year prorated dues.

TO REGISTER visit :

www.researchfirst.com

Customer Satisfaction

BY ELLIS D. HILL

I had an unpleasant customer service problem with my cable company last week that got me thinking about customer satisfaction levels. This triggered secondary research comparing cableco and telco customer satisfaction levels. I found data from a survey performed by the University of Michigan/ACSI, which is consistent with proprietary research we have conducted for our clients. (This survey used automatic dialers to obtain 16,000 random responses on 200 companies in 40 industries. In each interview, the respondent is asked for their provider of each respective service and those responses are then compiled for the analysis.)

On the chart on page 5 (left) we see that as an industry, fixed telephone line service rated a satisfaction level of 70% whereas the express delivery industry

(FedEx, UPS, etc.) scored the highest at 81% followed by utilities and the postal service at 73%. Interestingly, full service restaurants tied express delivery for the top industry in customer satisfaction.

Fixed line telco service is the highest communications service being 2 points higher than wireless (68%), 3 points above satellite (67%), and 12 points above cable (58%). In fact, cable service is the lowest in this study of 43 industries and 200 companies.

Why is cable service the lowest of the communications group? Based on some of our own research, I believe there are several reasons. One is terms of their offers. Cablecos generally do an excellent job in providing simple easy to understand offers for bundles; however,

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SALES/CARE CHANNELS '07 HIGHLIGHTS

BY ANNA GIBSON

This year's sales seminar, held in May in Destin, Florida, was certainly one of the best ever. It was attended by sales channel, sales support and marketing representatives from twelve telcos across the US, Canada and the UK. The location was lovely, and the presentations, ensuing dialogue and networking were outstanding, all contributing to the very positive feedback on the seminar. Eight presentations were given by the service providers themselves. Topics covered a wide range of subjects pertinent to sales centers, including Compensation, Sales Effectiveness, DSL Sales, Selling a Complete Bundle, Alternate Channels, Launching a New Company, Call Center

Operations in the UK, Employee Engagement and the Mover Market. This wide range of topics was of interest to all in attendance and sparked great dialogue and information sharing. Following are highlights of two of these presentations.

The Mover Market

A major US telco shared strategies to capitalize on the 6+M movers per year that move within an ILEC's footprint. The challenge is how to capture new orders that may not have otherwise come to the

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BMMA Fall Workshop

BY STAN ROMERO

September 26 – 27, 2007

Birmingham, AL

Hosted by AT&T

Wouldn't it be great if you had someone you could talk to regarding your marketing and product plans who had already tried it all? Well, your BMMA member peers may not have tried it all, but collectively they have tried a great deal. So take advantage of that by coming to the BMMA Fall Workshop to hear what they have learned and share your knowledge in a friendly and cooperative environment.

Our BMMA Workshops are designed as an opportunity for our members to get together face-to-face and discuss the issues that are important to their marketing success today. That is why we surveyed each member company regarding the issues you want to discuss. We then designed the agenda to provide an opportunity for in-depth discussion of these important issues.

We'll cover issues like how to *maximize*

revenue from your broadband pipes. We'll discuss convergence and what the multi-screen revolution means to your services; how to grow revenue through e-commerce and portal and e-mail advertising in a way that customers actually appreciate; productizing support services and turning cost centers into profit centers.

We will talk about how to *sell more broadband pipes* by anticipating your competitor's next moves, evaluating DOCSIS 2 & 3 capabilities vs. ADSL2+ and FTTH, developing contingency plans based on your and your competitor's strengths and weaknesses, and extending your reach to pick-up that pent-up demand. We will review our benchmarking program changes and look at ways to reduce churn and improve customer satisfaction. We will also hear about how a new mover program can help us capture the move customers before they go to the cable companies.

We'll also share best practices relative to

increasing *marketing efficiency* - how to get the most effective message to the right target in a timely manner. We'll include roundtable discussions regarding segmentation and targeted marketing, bundle advertising to maximize the impact, banner ads and e-mail advertising, social networking tactics, etc.

So if you are into broadband services marketing, you will want to join us in September for the workshop that gets broadband marketing answers from the best minds in the industry to the issues the best minds are exploring. We pack a lot into two days - it will definitely be worth your time.

Stan Romero

RFC VP & BMMA Executive Director

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www.bmma.us



BMMA Fall Workshop

September 26-27, 2007—Birmingham, AL

Hosted by BMMA member:



Join your broadband marketing and product management telco managers and vendor peers for networking and shared best practice discussions on timely topics including:

- Competition—cable's next likely moves; competitive trends; retention initiatives
- Maximizing revenue off of the pipe;
- Broadband marketing efficiencies;
- Convergence—opportunities for increased stickiness & revenue;
- Churn benchmarking report.

Register today • www.researchfirst.com

The Dashboard for the Digital Home

by William Begy, Synacor

Now more than ever, helping your customers integrate emerging technologies to make their lives easier is critical to both your importance and your competitiveness. And of course, so is creating ongoing revenue opportunities.

The interconnected digital home is not a thing of the future. It's now. And it is increasingly coming to consumers via telcos—regardless of your size—who provide the high-speed data connections and the Web content your customers expect. From start pages, to e-mail, to top news stories, the place where they start their Internet experience is fast becoming the dashboard to their digital media and services.

Every day, technology updates and options are making it easier—and more necessary—to go beyond the basics. These options are quickly becoming the standard, and not considered above and beyond. By providing them now, telcos help make your customers' lives easier and better—thereby increasing your customer ownership in ways never imagined.

As more consumers look online, and are able to manage more aspects of their lives, the available technology makes it easier and more appealing to do so. The benefits

are tangible; from time-shifting away-from-home television/DVR programming, to the place-shifting of managing their home-phone voicemail and wireless phone features, to personalizing their homepage with local news, weather and other information. Your customers need to be able to simply sit down at their PC and with a few keystrokes or clicks, tell their phone, their TV, and other handheld devices what to do and when to do it.

Even the simplest start-page customization helps a consumer feel more in control. With a product like Synacor's portal platform, customers log on, and with a single sign-on, they are at their personalized page in seconds. They are welcomed by name, and can instantly know from their personalized local weather and entertainment information whether to grab an umbrella or what movie to go to that night. They can even manage free and paid content with household management tools, making the family's Internet experience safer.

For telcos, these abilities are a means to an end. Customers who are vested in these types of services are less likely to churn. Additionally, we've found that 70% of all end user activity (of those that have web portals) is performed through the start

page. This drives not only stickiness, but actual revenue as well, in the form of search and advertising dollars.

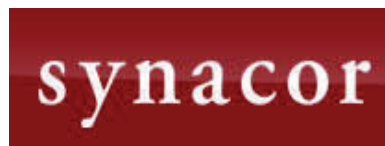
Companies like Synacor do the "heavy-lifting" for telcos, enabling authentication of users with single-sign-on benefits and aggregating billing on the monthly statement. And this ability to access and control a plethora of content helps subscribers to manage their digital life. They can enjoy enhanced, personalized, relevant features—ultimately increasing their satisfaction with their telco service.



William Begy is a National Sales Executive with Synacor, an Internet tools and portal provider. Its technology platform provides private label portals, premium online content and email collaboration suites to broadband services providers.

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Simplify and Execute - Desktop Integration

by Michael Garner, Afni

Today's customer service professional uses a wide variety of applications and tools to serve the customer: CRM systems, line-of-business applications, knowledge management systems, scripting, email, chat, legacy systems, etc. As a result the CSR's desktop has become cluttered and non-productive, which fosters costly operational inefficiencies and headaches for both the CSR and the customer. More time should be focused on the customer and providing a first-call resolution than on navigation through a labyrinth of computer screens and applications searching, duplicating entries and performing multiple logins.

The Desktop Conundrum

The CSR faces multiple and, sometimes, continual logins; they are often faced with cumbersome and manual workflows; and we see the "swivel chair" as replication of data entries are made back and forth between systems. As a result, average handling time increases, training costs rise, there is a loss of focus on the customer and lost cross/up-selling and, all too often, higher agent turnover.

Call center executives are charged with getting, keeping and growing profitable customers. To that end, we are concerned about quality, serving our lines of

business more effectively, maximizing the value of current investments, and helping our organization meet strategic goals. The obstacles continue to be time and cost to resolve issues for customers and the continued low offer and close rates on new products and services.

Desktop Integration

By far, the most powerful tool the CSR uses is his/her desktop – making the integration and thus simplification of the desktop one of the more important agent effectiveness initiatives. By delivering a single point of access to mission-critical information, an integrated desktop gives the CSR an intelligent view of the customer, streamlining the interaction and delivering a more profitable customer experience.

Enabling the CSR

In any desktop integration, the key is to look at the desktop from the point of view of the CSR. A workflow that may seem logical to a programmer may not flow in the "real world." Therefore, the integration team needs to see the world from the CSR's point of view.

The objectives for enabling the CSR are:

Turn many into one. You must integrate disparate user interfaces into a single interface. This eliminates the

need to "search" for information and replaces data overloaded screens with data that is aligned for the workflow.

Single customer view. Developing a single view of a customer using information from all available sources provides a consistent experience to the customer.

Apply logic and business rules to data. Complex business rules can be applied to data in compliance with workflow rules. It also allows easier identification and prompting for every up-sell opportunity.

Workflow activity visibility. An integrated desktop gives real time visibility to transaction statistics; will alert for predefined conditions, events or activity; and assist in forecasting based on work activity.

Desktop integration allows the CSR to talk about what can be done for the client, it helps simplify the message and aids in order processing. The result: lower expenses; increased revenue.

Summary

An integrated desktop is a key element in shortening calls, improving customer interactions, taking better advantage of cross- and up selling opportunities and providing a consistent experience to customers. The technology alone does not ensure results. It needs to be combined with the proper training and coaching.

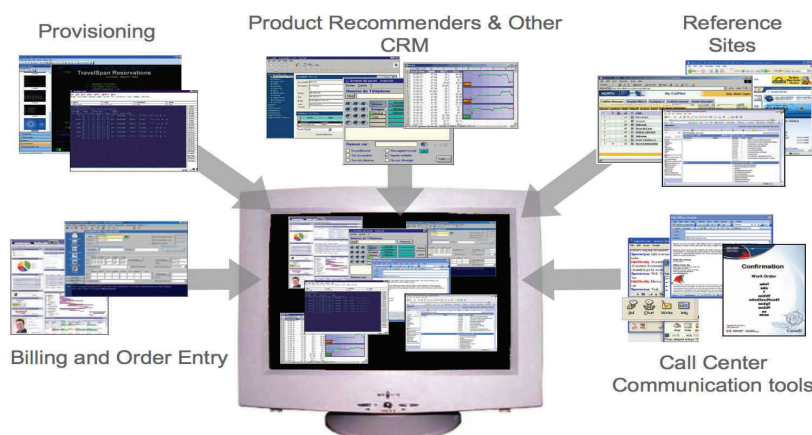
Simplify the desktop and your CSRs can execute on the mission to get, keep and grow profitable customers.



This guest article was provided by Michael Garner, VP of Call Center Services for Afni, Inc. For more than 70 years Afni has provided tailored call center, collections, insurance and debt purchase services to the nation's leading companies .

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The Desktop Conundrum



CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

(Continued from page 1)

the terms are not easy to find nor clearly stated. For example, one company offers basic cable, high speed, and telephone service for \$33 each, all of which may be purchased for \$99. This is the good part. The bad part is that it is not clear what the price goes to after the introductory period nor is the term of the introductory period clearly stated on the marketing collateral. When the referenced number on the collateral is called, the service reps must search to find this information. It appears that the duration and standard price differ by market area.

Another reason for the low cableco customer satisfaction level is their price increases over the last several years. This is due to the fact that most cablecos basic service is not subject to state or federal regulators. In addition, cablecos use contractors for the installation of high speed and telephone service. This usually means a non-standard installation method, non-standard vehicle, and a lack of branding on their vehicle and clothing, which may make some customers uncomfortable.

The telcos, while having higher satisfaction levels than cablecos, have been steadily slipping in recent years. The chart below (right) shows the industries fixed telephone satisfaction levels steadily dropping from the low 80s to the current 70% from 1995 to 2007. The exception to this trend is Qwest, the long distance provider that acquired US West in 2001, after which

time the US West philosophies raised their satisfaction levels to become one of the highest fixed line telephone companies in customer satisfaction today.

The drop in telco customer satisfaction levels may be an indication of reduced spending to increase net profit and hopefully increase stock value. Is this lack of spending a short term view that forsakes the longer term success, profitability, and possible viability of the company? Most of us would agree that the acquisition cost for a new customer is much higher than the cost of keeping a current customer. Research First has seen acquisition costs range from \$58 to \$125 per new customer. What is the cost for saving a customer or better yet retaining the customer? Some companies have created save desks or save centers. Would this cost even be required if customer retention were not an issue due to high satisfaction levels? So are we spending money to fix something that should not have been broken to start with? Perhaps it makes more sense to spend money to improve activities such as order completion time, average speed of answer or the average handling time on calls, to improve help desks, or improve repair times. This may be through the use of technology or increased human resources.

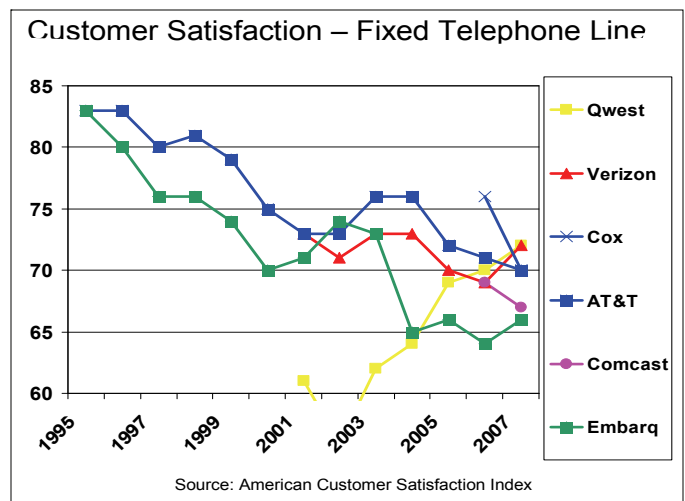
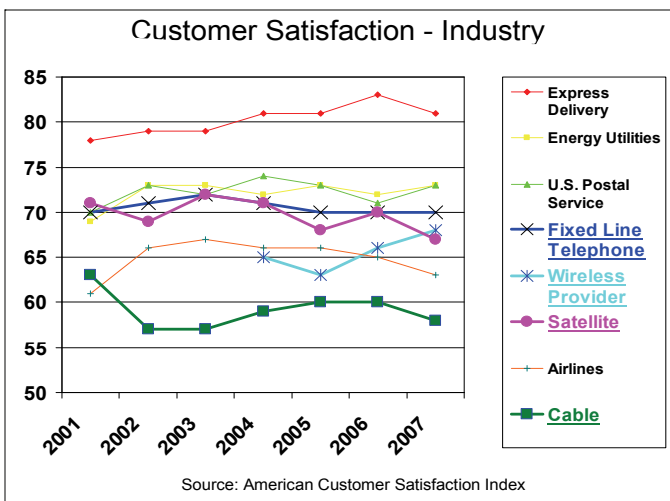
When reviewing the industries and their respective satisfaction levels there seem to be some common traits present among the highly rated industries. Express delivery services and utility companies are two industries where customers receive

what they expect. With express delivery companies packages and letters are delivered as promised with very few exceptions. Utility companies deliver power everyday with few outages at a price that customers know will not be changing.

If we look at the other end of the scale we see cablecos and airlines rated lowest in customer satisfaction. In the case of cable service most would agree that there has been a history of chronic outages and customers have come to expect price increases regularly. With airlines customers are disappointed with late flights, cancelled flights, increased fares, and they even fear being captured on a tarmac for hours at a time. In other words these companies are not keeping their promises.

So it seems that a workable formula for satisfying customers would be to find out their expectations of service, fix things internally so those expectations can be met, make the promise to the customer, and then keep the promise. This will result in improved customer satisfaction scores and ultimately a more successful company.

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SALES/CARE CHANNELS 2007

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ILEC. What partnerships, programs and projects can an ILEC undertake in order to capture a competitor's customers during the move process? Additionally, what can an ILEC do to keep their customers during the move process? The timing is critical as the move window is a vulnerable time when customers evaluate their existing relationships with providers and their portfolio of products and services.

Moving remains the highest-risk event for ILECs as 50-60% of customers switch wireline, broadband, and/or PayTV providers at this time. In addition, 30% of movers disconnect their landline entirely without setting up new service. Using alternate channels is a significant opportunity to reshape the mover's experience. The key is to impact the customer's experience early, which will be crucial in the ILEC's ability to provide bundled products.

This ILEC sees opportunities in several areas: retention call center optimization, partnerships with utilities, realtors and lenders, an ILEC disconnect transfer model, an MDU

moving strategy and a media plan.

Employee Engagement

Another major ILEC shared the key elements of employee engagement (12, The Elements of Great Managing, Wagner & Harter) and how each has contributed to this Director's sales channel successes. Results include the lowest attrition rate in the company, highest sales per rep, highest employee satisfaction and highest customer satisfaction.

Key elements include:

- I know what is expected of me at work.
- I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right.
- At work I have the opportunity to do my best every day.
- In the past seven days, I have received recognition.
- My supervisor or someone at work seems to care about me as a person.

- There is someone at work that encourages my development.
- At work, my opinion seems to count.
- The mission of my company makes me feel my job is important.
- My fellow employees are committed to quality work.
- I have a best friend at work.
- In the last 6 months, someone at work talked to me about my progress.
- This year, I have had the opportunity to grow and learn.

The key strategy that surrounds all of these 12 tenets is to create a work community. People will feel good about their contribution and as a result improvements will follow.

Next year's seminar will be in May and the dates will be announced later this summer. I am sure it will be another great event.

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