

Garlands gives its contact centre advisors more control over their working days

Submitted by: Gray Associates

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Aspect Communications, a leading provider of enterprise customer contact solutions, announces today that Garlands Call Centres has improved the flexibility and efficiency of its workforce scheduling on one of its major client accounts by investing in Aspect eWorkforce Management software.

The new software enables Garlands to accurately forecast the volume of future customer contacts and then efficiently schedule customer service advisors, with the right skills, to campaigns so that customers receive prompt service.

The Aspect software has also given Garlands' advisors working on this client account greater control over their workday schedules, enabling them to view their own shifts and holidays and request changes to them. If advisors need to take time off at short notice, for example, they can put in a request and automatically receive a response without supervisors and managers having to carry out complex manual resourcing calculations.

The software went live in late 2004 and provides Garlands with a number of powerful features including:

- eSchedule Planner: software which automates the management of advisor schedules and enables employees to make changes to their own schedules
- Notification Server: automates the process of notifying staff about schedule changes
- Real-Time Adherence: provides managers with an at-a-glance view of advisors' activity in real time and compares it to scheduled activities
- Advisor Productivity: helps managers identify how advisors and advisor groups are performing (e.g. how many calls are being taken, wrap-up times, average handling times etc.)

"While it's important that we're able to accurately forecast future demand and efficiently allocate people to campaigns, it's equally important that we give our advisors the opportunity to influence what goes on in the workplace" said Chey Garland, Chief Executive of Garlands Call Centres.

"We have always encouraged feedback and ideas through our many clubs and quality-focused sessions. Now, thanks to the introduction of eSchedule Planner in this area of our business, we're also able to give our advisors a say in setting work day schedules in line with their own priorities."

Garlands has built a strong reputation in the international outsourcing industry as a people-focused business. In 2003, it received a 'Special Commendation for HR Excellence' at the HR Excellence Awards for its work in this field.

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About Garlands

Garlands is a leading UK provider of outsourced customer contact services via phone, email and the Web. In December 2004, it was named Marketing Magazine's UK Contact Centre of the Year.

Garlands' services range from customer service to outbound customer acquisition, debt collection, customer retention, technical assistance, cross-selling, upselling, staff accounts, activations, credit management, customer registrations, customer lifecycle management and many other back office functions.

It has a blue chip client list that includes leading businesses in the telecoms (mobile and fixed), utilities, Internet services, multi media entertainment, travel and financial services industries.

Garlands believes that people are the key to delivering superb customer service. It provides comprehensive and innovative programmes with a holistic focus to develop the skills of its staff - programmes that extend beyond the call centre and into the local community. Garlands Call Centres received a Special Commendation for HR Excellence at the 2003 HR Excellence Awards. Garlands was also named 'Tees Valley Company of the Year' at the 2004 Tees Valley Business Awards.

Garlands today employs around 2800 personnel and owns four prestigious contact centres, three in Hartlepool Marina and one in Middlesbrough town centre – with a new Contact Centre Village due to open in Stockton soon.

About Aspect Communications

Aspect Communications Corporation is a leading provider of contact centre solutions and services that enable businesses to manage and optimise customer communications. Aspect's global customer base includes more than two-thirds of the Fortune 50 and leading corporations in a range of industries, including transportation, financial services, insurance, telecommunications, retail and outsourcing, as well as large government agencies. The company's leadership is based on two decades of expertise. Aspect is headquartered in San Jose, California, with offices in countries around the world. Aspect's UK offices are in Stockley Park, Uxbridge, Middlesex and can be reached on 0800 ASPECT (i.e. 0800 277328).

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