Keep calm and carry on: 5 Reasons for Intraday Scheduling in Contact Centers

Submitted by: PR Artistry Limited

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Statistically, the majority of contact centers still use manual processes to adjust their intraday workforce scheduling but why play a constant game of catch-up? Dave Hoekstra of Teleopti outlines 5 reasons to invest in real-time management to balance the workload, achieve service levels and mop-up agent idle time.

Intraday Management? Real-Time Management? Call it what you will. It is essentially the same thing by using automation to rebalance the workload and achieve customer service expectations while mopping-up agent idle time in one go. It's a real game-changer for contact centers everywhere. At least, it would be if more people used it! The reality is that 70% of contact centers continue to adjust their intraday Workforce Management (WFM) processes manually while one in four of them admit to measuring forecast accuracy at half-hour intervals(i).

In our highly digitalized world, it appears that too many organizations are failing to take advantage of automated technology. Fortunately, the latest WFM solutions with real-time management capabilities introduce an element of calm by dealing with the unexpected and maximizing agent time.

5 Ways to real-time management and real-time success

Good for employees, managers and the overall business, real-time management holds five keys to success:
1.Protect service levels – real-time management can automatically find the right-skilled, available people to close service gaps in priority queues and reschedule the workforce during the day. Unplanned changes in customer demand and last-minute agent absences can be overcome by rescheduling break times, lunches and moving people between different skills groups in a matter of minutes. These changes might only be small but they can make all the difference between meeting service levels during peak periods and losing valuable calls and customers, forever.

2.Maximize staff time to boost CX – with the ability to build flexible, efficient schedules, where quiet time is included for administrative tasks, along with the necessary 'travel' time between desk and training sessions, allows agents to spend quality time with customers. Keep agents on their toes using real-time technology to nudge those who are late back from meetings or breaks via an App on their mobile devices.

3.Enjoy year-on-year performance gains - by anticipating when staff won't be needed and releasing them for off-phone work or training to maximize contact center efficiencies and costs. Using technology such as intraday automation can increase company profitability where used, compared to non-adopters.

4.Relieve boredom, improve skills and reduce long-term attrition – when agents are busy and motivated they are likely to stay in place – essential when looking at employee churn rates. Use real-time management technology to benefit employees and close the Quality Assurance (QA) loop by prioritising training sessions during quiet times.

5.Create high-performing managers – automation frees up management time by eliminating the need for time-intensive analysis of performance data. A valuable business continuity tool, real-time management provides managers with all the dynamic data they need to prepare for the unexpected. Superior graphical reporting makes it easy to spot developing trends as they happen and to facilitate fast re-forecasting or last-minute optimization.

Finally, running a series of 'what if' scenarios can predict staffing needs for regular seasonal fluctuations like Christmas, upcoming new marketing campaigns and even help right-size the contact center to support your organization's long-term business and expansion programs.

Welcome to the future of bots

The latest Chatbots using Artificial Intelligence (AI), are reinventing WFM and intraday planning. They are rather like having your own WFM concierge, handling all processes related to schedule requests and offering intraday automation with AI-optimized employee self-service. The ability to analyze current staffing alongside employees' unique skills, schedules and preferences enable chat notifications to offer voluntary time off or overtime hours as appropriate. Using natural language processing, agents can interact with AI Chatbots and let them know if they wish to accept the schedule options. If they do, the bot simply submits the schedule request for them. AI Chatbots are the next generation of flexible intraday planning solutions that eliminate exhaustive manual monitoring and boost all-round success.

For more information on how to embrace automation and succeed in real-time, join three of Teleopti's product experts as they explore the future of Intraday Automation and AI, for Teleopti WFM and in general in a recorded webinar (https://www.teleopti.com/webinar/59690/intraday-automation-ai-individual) in which they discuss what it means for the individual,whether a planner,manager or agent.

Dave Hoekstra is a Teleopti WFM Evangelist

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About Teleopti
Teleopti helps organizations empower their employees to provide outstanding customer service through our cloud-first workforce management (WFM) software. We are a global team of innovators and experts focusing 100% on WFM, enabling companies with user-friendly automation and optimization of omnichannel forecasting, scheduling, and people management. Teleopti WFM supports companies' profitability by elevating operational efficiency, employee engagement, and customer experience. Since the start in 1992 we have grown our customer community to 100 countries, collaborating with partners worldwide, and today Teleopti WFM plans and empowers over 500,000 employees. For more information, visit Teleopti (http://www.teleopti.com)

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(i)ICMI – 'The State of Intraday Workforce Management in Today's Contact Centers' – 2018 Benchmark Research:

(https://www.nice.com/optimizing-customer-engagements/Documents/P2_349694_ICMI18_NICE_ExecutiveSummary.pdf)