

Effectively Using Your Data for Customer Retention

A Special Report Sponsored by The Primas Group

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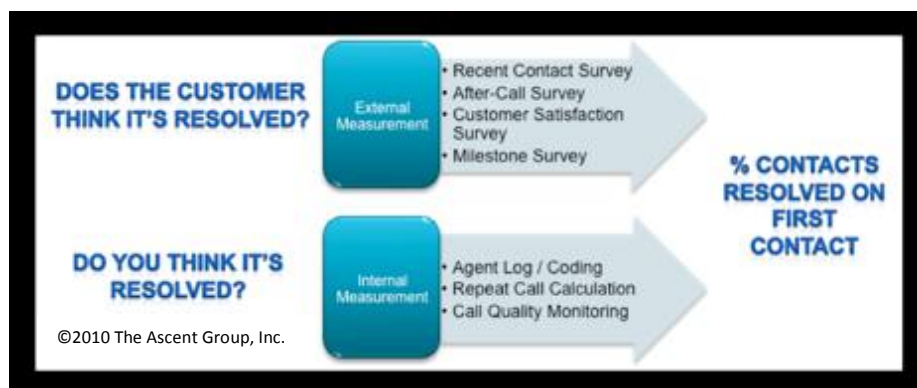
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First Call Resolution – Myths and Facts

First Call Resolution (FCR) remains a hot topic in the customer contact industry. Basically, FCR, or the correct execution of a FCR plan, is the ability of a contact center agent (also known as a Customer Service Representative or CSR) to completely fulfill the needs of the calling customer, the first time the customer contacts your center. Remember, your customers are more concerned with resolving their problem not your center's call resolution. Any interruption to this basic concept would mean that your FCR plan has failed, and of course you do have a plan in place don't you?



Customer satisfaction drops an average of 15% with each call back, the impact call backs have on your overall customer satisfaction and loyalty is enormous.

One key fact is that FCR can be difficult to achieve. There are many variables that even the best organized customer call centers struggle to overcome. However, a simple solution can be implemented:

- ✓ Gathering measurements – when do I start the process and when do I stop? Most calls today start with a front end IVR that will attempt to direct or even complete a transaction without the customer ever talking to a live agent. Although there is a considerable amount of negatives surrounding IVR usage, many customers today are enjoying the technological benefits of voice recognition IVR implementations.
- ✓ The use of centralized software (cradle to grave tracking) can help you understand why and how you may be losing customers on the first call. A bad IVR script or prompt, an agent who consistently transfers calls, or an agent with a high number of short calls (AHT

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- possible customer hang up) can all be seen visually in a management report.

- ✓ Agent training is essential with the proper knowledge of company procedures, a certain level of autonomy when appropriate, and a manageable CRM package that is not too complex - offering multiple CRM features may only confuse the end user agent. Matching agents to callers within their skill level is essential. For example, a platinum member should always connect with a highly trained agent with decision making authority.
- ✓ Agent desktop tools that can alert the agent in real-time to a repeat call customer and supply data to substantiate and assist the repeat call transaction is invaluable to effectively handling the customer in a preemptive manner.

Repeat callers typically account for 30%-40% of all incoming contact center calls.

Facts:

- Your customers may have a different perception that a transaction was completed on the first call compared to your CRM data or agent input.
- Repeat callers typically account for 30%-40% of all incoming contact center calls.
- In most cases, the data required to develop a FCR strategy already exists.
- Repeat callers can double or triple the cost of supporting your customers.
- FCR measurement criteria varies among different industries, there is no "perfect" solution that can be applied across the board.

Your customers will have moments of patience and many more of urgency, stress and insistence. The second call is just over the horizon. How are you going to handle it?

Myths:

- FCR only takes into account actual calls not multi-media contacts.
- Customers enjoy calling your center multiple times to resolve issues.
- Customers like to repeat the same information multiple times.
- Contact center agents look forward to talking to rude and abusive customers.

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Second Call Treatment – How to Manage and Retain Repeat Call Customers

We now understand that first call resolution is an important measurement, often difficult to achieve, and when not accomplished, adds additional and substantial costs to your operation. So what is the answer? How do I stop the repeat caller cycle? How can I retain my valuable customers?

Suppose you have already addressed some of the items discussed here like agent training, business processes, call reduction strategies, self-service options and CRM. All are important ROI areas applicable to your specific center needs. As mentioned, there is no one silver bullet and the odds are that you will always have repeat callers. Your customers will have moments of patience and many more of urgency, stress and insistence. The second call is just over the horizon. How are you going to handle it?

A 1% increase in first call resolution usually leads to a 1% increase in customer satisfaction.

A 1% increase in first call resolution leads to an average operational savings of \$276,000 per year.

FCR Rates Vary Across Different Call Types

Repeat call tracking is a powerful FCR measurement tool. It allows a business to define a second call treatment range, track FCR rates and automatically collect information (otherwise calls will be missed) that can be used to determine root causes of problems. For repeat call tracking to work, every call needs to be captured and the customer and the call reason must be identified. Repeat call tracking differs from other FCR measurements because:

- Relies on actual repeat calls.
- Provides FCR information on all calls, not just sample sets.
- Provides all associated information, including agent ID, customer name and number, call times and dates, call reason, call flow (transfers, abandons, etc.), and multi-call correlation.

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Primas' Evolution FCR – Second Call Treatment Solution

Primas' Evolution FCR is a new product solution that benefits companies utilizing customer contact centers by addressing issues involving repeat callers. It applies second call treatment that can direct repeat callers to the correct resource and provides important call information required to develop a repeat call strategy.

Implementing a second call treatment solution from Primas can yield the following benefits:

- Reduction in customer churn
- Improve revenue opportunities (in revenue generating contact centers), introduce up-sell and cross-sell strategies
- Proper alignment of customer to the correct resource (agent)
- Expanded data collection, tracking and reporting
- Increase agent productivity and satisfaction

The greatest benefits to second call treatment come from available technology that can locate resources more easily. By identifying a repeat caller within Evolution FCR, the repeat caller can be transferred to an agent with specific training or a managed queue with the proper expertise. This has the benefit of using the extensive efficiency and optimization technology within the contact center queues to optimize performance. Another way this can be achieved is by having the integrating software (the LinkScope engine from Primas, for example) perform a series of automated data "dips", to examine the database for the information needed to route the call to the proper agent. One benefit of Evolution FCR is the real-time notification to a CSR that a caller is indeed a repeat caller. The CSR can immediately see a real-time screen pop on their desktop with valuable customer information like:

- How many times the customer has called into the contact center
- Where the customer connected to (IVR, agent, transfer, abandon)

One benefit of Primas' Evolution FCR is the real-time notification to an agent that the contact is indeed a repeat caller.

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- Dates and times calls were made
- Customer name
- CSR name(s) that the customer had previously contacted

Knowing this information ahead of any CRM scripting or even CRM screen pop can dynamically change the way the CSR handles the repeat caller; special attention can be given to the repeat caller and can diffuse hostile interactions and even save a valuable customers business.

What Other Steps Should I Follow to Retain Customers?

You now have all of the data from the completed repeat call transaction and as far as you know, the customer is satisfied. How can you be sure? Invest in an automated IVR survey like the one that is included in the Primas Evolution FCR product solution.

A Post Call IVR survey captures the customer's impression of the call immediately after the interaction. FCR measurement is straightforward - the survey asks the customer if their problem was resolved while the call is still clear in their mind. A good post call IVR survey will tie the survey to customer information and call reason, so that you can resolve any issues with a specific customer or call type. Overall, you will be doing a better job if you close the loop to the very end.

A good post call IVR survey will tie the survey to customer information and call reason.

Automatic surveys can be conducted immediately after a repeat call is completed or at a timed interval after the transaction. The automated system will conduct the survey in a human voice and it can be a simple script or multiple questions. The shorter and more precise approach will yield the largest percentage of participants. You now have the perfect solution to measuring the customer's perception and reaction via management reports. Random sampling after a second call treatment will yield cleaner measurements because the agents will not know who is being surveyed, but the opportunity exists to survey every repeat caller.

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Conclusion:

FCR can be achieved but when it is not you must have a plan for second call treatment. Primas offers the perfect solution for identifying and handling repeat callers with real-time desktop agent tools, management reports and follow up surveys that can give you the knowledge you need to retain your valuable customers.

For more information visit www.primas.net or call 888-477-4627.

About the Author

Bob Brittan has more than 20 years of experience in best-practices consulting for data and contact centers with a focus on workforce and enterprise performance management. As a product manager, Brittan has brought many powerful combinations of products to market creating and transforming cohesive customer views into real-time performance and productivity metrics. <http://b2consulting.vpweb.com>