

Building loyalty through multi-level outbound

Learn how customer profiling and outbound text messaging made possible new campaign strategies that raised customer retention by 25% and an 8% uplift in employee engagement scores.

Summary

Specsavers applied best practice from other industries to develop a new multi-channel outbound contact strategy for their own business. Creating a data capture tool and adapting scripts has made it possible to improve the quality of customer contact information by 21%. This data is now analysed to build campaign strategies based on customer profiles, which use SMS and voice automation. Outbound calls are targeted on customers with a high propensity to cancel or who do not respond to other channels. As a result Specsavers retained £1.2 million in customer revenue and reduced outbound contact costs by 18% at the same time.

Key initiatives

Improving the quality of contact data

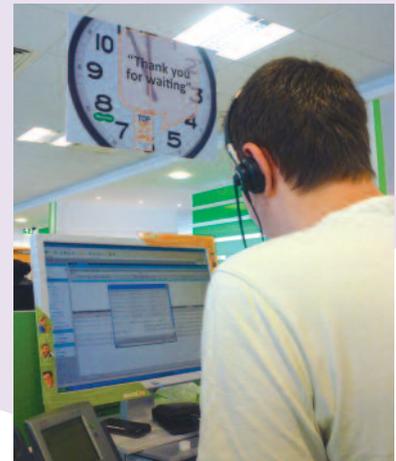
In 2009, facing intensifying competition and recognising the need to cut costs, Specsavers focused on the quality of contact data about its contact lens customers. Research by the contact centre's planning team identified that the lists were not necessarily up-to-date, however; specialists spent too much time leaving messages on answer phones or ringing invalid numbers. To combat this a bespoke data capture tool was developed and new scripts created for inbound and outbound teams, giving them a way to obtain contact details while on the phone. This improved data quality by 21%. "We spent time and money trying to get hold of people we were never going to speak to" "Cleaner data has made a real difference" "Right party contacts have increased".

Three steps to a multi-level strategy

By applying learning gained from Planning Forum best practice materials and industry peers, Specsavers segmented its portfolio of contact lens customers. The company then spent a month calling people within the different groups – using the cleansed contact data – to ascertain the best time of day to reach them. The creation of these new profiles was one of three ways in which the company overhauled its outbound contact strategy. The second was the introduction of cheaper contact channels – SMS and auto-voice messages – and the creation of a priority model (see diagram overleaf) which meant that if customers didn't respond to an SMS or auto-voice message reminding them to renew their prescription, they would receive an outbound call or a letter. The third element was to identify the customers who would benefit most from receiving a call. Together, these tactics increased customer retention rates by 25% and cut outbound contact costs – through more targeted dialling – by 18%. "There was no real science before" "Profiling used to be assumption-based" "The data capture tool captures reasons for non-retention".



Specsavers®



"We're speaking to more of the right people... We've been able to reduce our headcount because we have better data and are using our resources more effectively."

Danny McDonald
Planning and MI Manager

"We recognised there were opportunities to become more efficient. It's amazing to see the difference in retention performance."

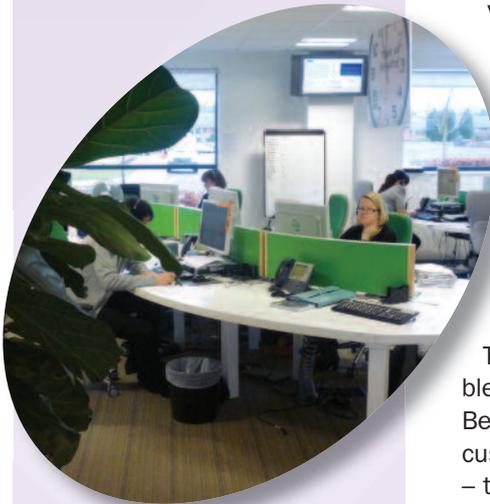
Jonathan George,
Head of Contact Centre Service

"We're speaking to the right people at the right time."

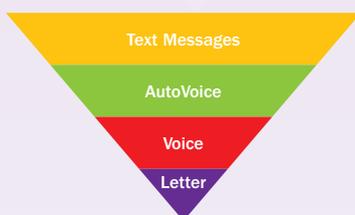
Kirsty Minter,
Outbound Specialist

Results

- Customer retention rates up 25%
- £1.2 million revenue retained as a result
- Cost per outbound contact reduced by 18%
- Quality of contact information held on customer database improved by 21%
- 10% reduction in FTE
- NetPromoter Scores up from 83% to 92%



Priority Model Multi Contact Strategy



“We’re now asking store managers: ‘what can we do to help you?’ and are addressing their issues. It was not just about telling specialists what to do, but explaining why we wanted to do it.”

Lee Bennington,
Training Manager

Stakeholder engagement in retail stores

Specsavers retail stores are shared ventures, 49% owned by private optician partners. Historically it was challenging to obtain relevant customer information for the head office to distribute to the contact centre. Training Manager Lee Bennington therefore invested significant time meeting with opticians to secure their buy-in for the new contact strategy and to ensure they fed the right information back. Time was also spent engaging specialists in the contact centre, to help them understand the need for the strategy and to better train them in customer retention. “The store network is very busy” “Give people the background and they’ll understand”.

Making the best use of technology

Specsavers hasn’t only spent time creating its new data capture, SMS and auto-voice tools. The company has also worked with IT third party Logicalis to develop workarounds for its Cisco Unified Contact Center Express system. These include an inbound post-call survey tool, which provides customer feedback and verbatims that are used to inform specialist training sessions, and a QueueBuster-style tool that gives customers the option of a call-back. These measures, together with the removal of the old IVR system, have contributed towards a 9% uplift in NPS. “We didn’t buy new technology. We worked with what we had” “Think about what you can do, not the hurdles” “Maximise what you’ve got”.

Blending drives work variety and productivity

The steps outlined above have been complemented by the introduction of blending in the contact centre to make better use of resource capacity. Because the planning team’s research showed that most contact lens customers prefer later calls, outbound specialists now work on Hearing Services – the hearing aid component of the business – during the morning and afternoon, moving to contact lens customers in the early evening. This has not only created contact centre efficiencies, but has introduced variety in to specialists’ working lives. Engagement survey results reveal an 8% uplift in the number of specialists that feel “the way we operate day-to-day enables me to be as productive as I can be”. “They’re getting more interesting calls” “It’s had a massive impact on me” “We’re getting more retains”.

“It’s important the specialists know why people are cancelling. The system shows them this. Because we’re dialling the right people at the right time, the customer has more time to speak to us.”

Michael Hanney,
Outbound Team Manager

“We didn’t want discussions with retail opticians to be viewed as a tick-box exercise.”

Dan Hardisty,
Planning Team Manager

“Cutting data in different ways is pretty revolutionary in our business. The catalyst was seeing other organisations ... and being motivated to make a step-change. We started testing profiling following a visit from the Planning Forum.”

Danny McDonald,
Planning and MI Manager

“Capturing the data makes the outbound job easier.”

Susan Glass,
Outbound Specialist

Founded in Guernsey 1984, **Specsavers** is the largest privately-owned optician in the world, with 1,300+ stores across the Channel Islands, UK, Ireland, the Netherlands, Scandinavia, Spain, Australia and New Zealand. It is also the largest retail dispenser of digital hearing aids in the UK. Employing over 17,000+ staff, 120 are part of the multilingual Nottingham contact centre, which uses CISCO and Logicalis as IT suppliers