Build.com Builds Exemplary Customer Service With Real-Time Visibility

CHALLENGE

Build.com fields approximately 200,000 calls each month, including 120,000 from new customers, and needed to ensure each contact is handled promptly and ends with each customer being delighted.

SOLUTION

Inova Performance Tracker web-based dashboards displayed on six large HD monitors keeps all employees – not just customer service reps – informed, enabling swift response to customer demand. Inova Performance Tracker gives customized and comprehensive views of contact center operations not available from out-of-the-box Cisco dashboards.

BENEFITS

- Affords self-management to agents to deliver superior service.
- Involves the entire company to "own" customer service responsibilities.
- Enables more effective leadership through informed decision making.
- Supports Build.com's culture of superior customer service.

Build.com, a Chico, California-based online retailer of over 700,000 building supplies, caters to consumers – both do-it-yourselfers and homeowners – and contractors in the building trades, and has grown in both size and reputation during its fifteen years in business.

Of its 370 employees, 150 of them man the single contact center that fields approximately 200,000 calls, including 120,000 calls from new customers, each month. Even with this high volume of inbound calls, Build.com focuses on the metrics that really make a difference in the delivery of its customer service.
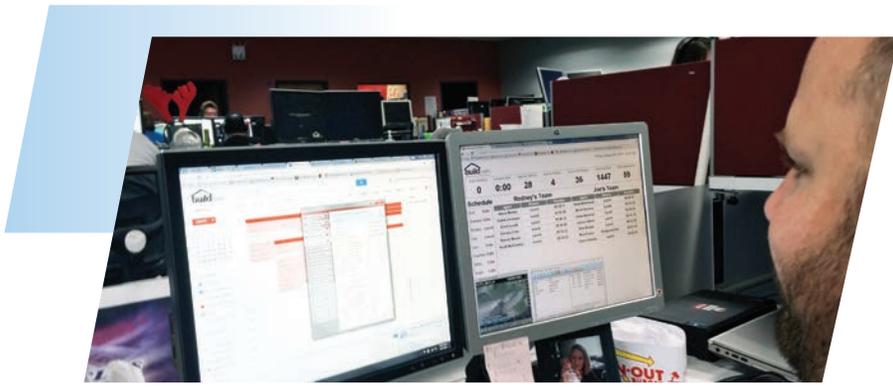
"Unlike most contact centers, we are not fixated on the time our reps spend on calls," says Dave Isherwood, Director of Sales for Build.com. "We encourage our agents to spend as much time as necessary to serve customer needs and build relationships."

Build.com encourages customer service representatives to build relationships with customers with whom they are working, eliminating the need for a customer to repeatedly explain a project or need to a different rep. It also empowers them to work through exceptions, giving them the freedom to resolve issues, rather than adhering to rote policies and strict hierarchies. This approach builds trust among its customers and consistently wins Build.com high marks for service among its customers. It also makes for a healthy work environment among agents who are commended for self-reliance, and for supervisors who can actually supervise rather than micro-manage.

"The visibility provided by Inova not only enables good decisions, but let's each individual on our team see the difference they are making."

— Dave Isherwood, Director of Sales, Build.com

Building Better Visibility

When Build.com purchased a new Cisco Unified Contact Center Express (Unified CCX) platform, it also looked to upgrade its existing contact center wallboards.

Isherwood, along with the company's director of information technology, considered a number of vendor options including the built-in Cisco dashboard. Build.com chose Inova Solutions' Performance Tracker®, a highly customizable web-based dashboard capable of displaying relevant real-time data throughout the contact center, including on-screen views for executives and center agents with line-of-sight difficulties, assuring everyone within the company is "on the same page."

Inova's LightLink® software – capable of capturing raw data from a number of business system sources – extracts the data supplied by Build.com's Cisco Unified CCX platform, translating and transforming it into actionable metrics for display on wallboards and desktops.

Inova experts worked closely with Build.com to customize a visibility solution that aligned perfectly to their needs. The six wallboards display key performance indicators (KPIs) for its nine teams, and the customizable colors, columns and graphical displays make it easy to determine center performance at a glance.

"Now I can be anywhere on the sales floor and see exactly what is going on," Isherwood reports. "I have visibility into the summary data, certainly, but I can also see in real-time team-by-team data and even the status of individual agents on those teams.

Knowledge is Power

While wallboards may seem only incidental to the operation of a contact center, the visibility they provide are critical to an operation like Build.com, which instills a strong customer service ethic not just among its reps, but throughout the company. Reps are free to structure their time to meet their responsibilities, knowing exactly the status of the operation without supervisor intervention – or admonishment.

For instance, when a customer service rep owes a customer an outbound follow-up call, but notices the team's high call volume, the rep can delay the call until any backlog of inbound calls has abated. When Inova Performance Tracker indicates a high number of callers waiting, alerts are sent and additional employees can jump into action, including vice presidents on up to the chief operating officer. This reduces the abandoned call percentage, a key metric that Isherwood and his team watch closely.

"The earlier we catch the spikes, the better off we are," says Isherwood, "otherwise the rest of the workday can be difficult."

Let Inova Display its Expertise

"Inova helped us think through what was important to see and built a solution that worked flawlessly…they exceeded our expectations." Build.com has not experienced any adverse issues with their wallboards. "They have been 'bulletproof,'" Isherwood says. Isherwood also appreciates the ability to make tweaks to the displays themselves, without the need to call in outside help.

But perhaps most important to a company that prizes its customer service over almost every other virtue, is fostering an environment of self-management where employees can be successful in making Build.com a success.

"We don't accept what is. When our team sees an opportunity to make something better, they do it. The visibility provided by Inova not only enables good decisions, but lets each individual on our team see the difference they are making." Isherwood says

With a growing business, a laser-focus on customer satisfaction, and a consistently high net promoter score[1] makes Build.com's culture one worth supporting.

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Inova Solutions

Since 1984, Inova Solutions has been helping contact centers improve performance through the actionable use of real-time performance metrics and consolidated reporting.

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