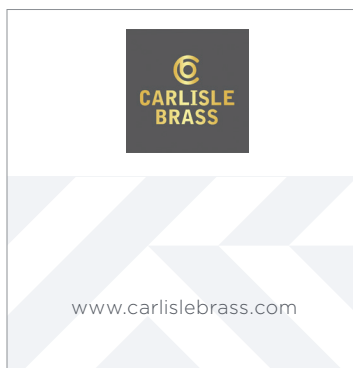




No Looking Back



Avaya Contact Center Select helps UK ironmongery supplier achieve its customer service ambitions

When Carlisle Brass sought to replace its contact center, it invited its team of long-serving customer service agents to help select the new solution. Avaya Contact Center Select was the unanimous choice, thanks to its usability. Since introducing it, the company has seen wait times cut in half and customer satisfaction increase. Reporting is transformed and a host of new insights have helped improve the customer journey, in line with Carlisle Brass and its parent company's ambition to be number one in the field for customer service.

Carlisle Brass's customer contact center was doing a lot of things right. Its team of 15 agents were dealing with 650 calls a day, taking detailed orders for next day dispatch of thousands of items of high quality door furniture. Its customers, from builders' merchants to individual construction businesses, were satisfied with the service and the company was growing.

But Carlisle Brass, part of the Arran Isle group of international building products companies, was facing a decision. The platform that had been in place since the contact center was first opened had reached end of support, meaning any outages took time to fix. With the company calculating that every day of downtime led to a revenue loss of £150,000, this had substantial business impact.



Challenges

- Replace an outdated contact center platform
- Convince experienced users that the new solution would help them improve service
- Reduce downtime, wait times and hand-offs
- Improve reporting and insight

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- Increased market share
- Wait times halved
- Customer satisfaction increased – along with agent satisfaction
- New insights to improve digital customer journey

While some at the company – such as digital lead Paul Gleave – were aware of the rich multichannel opportunities offered by newer solutions, its team of agents, several of whom have worked in the contact center for over two decades, loved the familiarity and simplicity of their legacy platform. Any replacement would have to win over this highly dedicated team.

Easy to use for all

The company began an extensive procurement process, first shortlisting potential solutions and implementation partners. Paul Gleave and some colleagues examined different options and quickly zeroed in on Avaya Contact Center Select. *“The Avaya system was very intuitive”*, he recalls. *“We could see straight away it met our core requirements.”* The next step was for Avaya to demonstrate the solution to the contact center team leaders; with the solution meeting with their approval, it was time for user testing. The feedback was instant: *“the agents told us it was actually easier to use than the legacy system and very logical. Even those who weren’t tech-minded saw its potential.”*

With the whole team on board, it was over to Avaya business partner CHES ICT to provide the solution, supported by IPNetix for implementation – who impressed Gleave with their knowledge and swift response to any queries. The new Avaya Contact Center Select solution, running on an IP Office platform, went live in Spring 2017 and the benefits were apparent from day one.

Enhanced reporting and customer insight

“The first thing that really changed was the level of reporting we were able to do” says Gleave. “We could view information about every aspect of our activity in near real-time. Previously it had taken us three days to

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“Calls from returning customers are routed – based on number recognition – to agents who they know.”

compile our monthly reports.” Importantly, the Avaya solution also offered greater flexibility to generate new reports as required. “The team leaders can now access the information they need themselves.”

The enhanced reporting gave Carlisle Brass a quantifiable insight into some concerns they had already identified – such as wait times and the fact that the old solution offered very little call routing capability. “Essentially, every call came into the same number, so sometimes agents would then have to pass it on to one of their colleagues with specific customer knowledge,” Gleave explains. “Now, we’ve been able to adopt a clearer channel strategy, that sees calls from returning customers routed – based on number recognition – to agents who they know.” This facility, which integrates with the company’s CRM system, has not only led to increased customer satisfaction but also proved popular with the agents themselves, who enjoy building a rapport with their regular customer contacts.

Wait times halved, downtime eliminated

This is one of several features of the new solution that agents have welcomed. Another is call recording, which Gleave says has “made a real difference to our coaching”, along with individual performance monitoring. The company now has greater insight into the workload of each agent, and can use recorded calls to help provide targeted training.

With the combination of better throughput and intelligent routing, Gleave confirms that average wait times for customers have more than halved.

Downtime, meanwhile, has become a thing of the past; the solution provided has resilience built in – with two similarly equipped sites ensuring there is no single point of failure. While Gleave is delighted to have this capability, which he views as “critical”, he also acknowledges that it’s not been needed yet; “the Avaya system is brilliant.” With ongoing support from IPNetix, there have been no days of downtime since implementation.

Supporting strategic change

The new solution is also proving an asset to other parts of the business, beyond call handling. “With Avaya Contact Center Select, emails come into the Agent Desktop and are logged in the same way a call is. This not only allows us to manage email traffic more effectively but also learn from the email content.” Gleave and his team have examined the questions that customers ask via email, and used this insight to improve web content and the company’s response to frequently asked questions.

Similar analysis of phone calls – using a simple coding system – has helped Carlisle Brass identify where customer queries could be answered online. “We were able to quantify how many calls we were getting about pricing and stock levels,” Gleave notes. “We used that to justify some changes to the website to ensure that information was easy to find and up-to-date; the number of calls related to these issues have dropped.”

That not only allows customers the flexibility to 'serve themselves', it also frees up agents to deal with more complex queries.



Competitive advantage

"It's an aim of the whole Arran Isle group to be number one in our field for customer innovation and service", Gleave reflects. "We know there is more we can do, particularly online with tools like web chat. The Avaya solution can help us deliver that and offer more connected customer journeys across channels."

But while Gleave is already looking to the future, Carlisle Brass can be satisfied with the present: a recent survey found that the company is already well ahead of the competition in terms of customer service - and since the Avaya solution was introduced, its market share has grown.

Solutions

- Avaya IP Office™
- Avaya Contact Center Select

About Carlisle Brass

Carlisle Brass is the UK's largest specialized developer of door and window furniture for residential and commercial properties, with annual sales in excess of £40 million. It was established in 1986 and now sells to over 50 countries worldwide. Supplying to trade only, its products are specified as standard by all top ten new home developers in the UK. Carlisle Brass is part of the Arran Isle group of companies.

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