



TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANY TRANSFORMS HIGH-VOLUME CALL CENTER

BELGACOM

/// CASE STUDY



Belgacom set out to improve its Directory Information Service's outdated workforce management system. The solution implemented by EDS, an HP company, dramatically reduces average call response times, enables call centers to handle more calls without increasing staff and boosts employee job satisfaction.

CLIENT PROFILE

www.belgacom.be

Belgacom Group is a leading Belgian provider of integrated, high-speed telecommunications solutions that combine fixed and mobile telephony, the Internet, and television.

Industry:

Communications, Media & Entertainment

Headquarters:

Brussels, Belgium

Annual Revenue: EUR 6.1 million

Employees: 18,180

Business Needs Addressed:

Growth
Productivity

Belgacom sought productivity gains for 500 call center agents

Belgacom's National Information Service - also known as the phone number "1207" - is one of Belgium's best-known call center services. Operating out of several satellite call centers across the country, 500 agents provide clients with phone numbers and other information for individuals, companies, administrations and healthcare services. These centers collectively receive thousands of calls daily from people who expect immediate assistance. Providing this complex service requires a continuous staffing presence, efficient planning, and the optimal allocation and follow-up of agents sharing the fluctuating workload.

Economic realities prompted the Directory Information Services division to seek competitive advantage by optimizing staffing costs and efficiencies rather than focusing on its technical infrastructure. It became clear that Belgacom's existing call center workforce management system needed to be expanded with additional real-time capabilities. That is why, in 2002, the division chose EDS to help.

Analysis tools monitored and optimized productivity in real time

EDS began implementing a fully integrated workforce management system. This system accurately forecasts the number of calls expected daily, and during each 15-minute increment throughout the day. This information can then be used to ensure optimal workload distribution and provide integrated, real-time performance monitoring.

With the new system in place, EDS integrated three new workforce-management and back-office support modules: the queue management information system monitors work volume and service levels in real time, and analyzes call center agents' performance; the ad hoc reporting tool lets users design, view and print customized reports; and the SAP-HR interface module automatically transfers agent information from the workforce management system to the Belgacom payroll system.

DRIVING EFFICIENCY WITH A VIRTUAL CALL CENTER

The system's workforce modules make it possible to determine staffing levels based on historical data related to call volume and desired service levels. They create schedules based on forecasted work volume and distribute workload among call centers based on various rules. These modules compare the actual work volume each day with the forecasted work volume for that day, and based on the results, adjust the timetables and rearrange call center workload distribution.

The office modules in the system also enable manual service adjustments and where necessary, assess agents' performance and view historical reports.

Service featured

- Applications Development Services

Economic realities prompted the Directory Information Services division to seek competitive advantage by optimizing staffing costs and efficiencies rather than focusing on its technical infrastructure.

Once the systems were in place, EDS helped the division migrate existing data into a common workforce database, ensuring consistent performance and data from each satellite center. The disparate call centers could now effectively operate as one virtual call center under a single workforce governance model.

Knowing downtime for the "1207" call centers was not an option; EDS took extreme care to minimize the impact to the ongoing daily operations during the conversion. Plus, Belgacom worked with EDS to set up mirrored data disks with automatic backups to help guarantee continuous access to the most up-to-date information and keep downtime to zero.

With the new system ready to launch, Belgacom and EDS organized training sessions to fully prepare workforce administrators to use the new system.

Solution cut average response time from 30 seconds to less than three

For the "1207" information service, getting an agent on the line quickly is crucial. Today, the average call response time is under three seconds, compared to 30 seconds before the workforce management system was installed.

The accelerated response and handling times do more than just improve customer satisfaction and keep impatient clients from hanging up and looking for other solutions. Increased efficiency means more calls can be processed with fewer agents, boosting revenue and reducing costs.

By accurately forecasting the number of calls expected, distributing workload effectively and monitoring performance in real time across one virtual "1207" call center, Belgacom can employ half the number of local workforce administrators. The system also eliminates administrative tasks like recording attendance, processing promotions and pay raises, and calculating overtime because that information is transferred directly to the Belgacom payroll system through the electronic SAP-HR interface link.

And optimizing the work volume per agent contributes to their overall job satisfaction. In fact, this may well be Belgacom's most important competitive advantage. Biannual evaluations, which take into account personal preferences, fair division of work and competitive salary, have shown that employee satisfaction is very stable. In the competitive world of call centers, this is a very important advantage when it comes to retaining the best employees.

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