

A Brilliant Black Friday

How Your Call Center Can Yield Record High Sales in Three Steps



*EXPERIENCE
DELIVERS SUCCESS.™*

There is no greater test of the convergence of consumers and technology than Black Friday, which marks the start of the holiday shopping season. An unparalleled opportunity to appeal to customers across a wide variety of enticements, Black Friday is the proving ground for large enterprises that have undertaken massive call center upgrades.

With enterprise expertise from Acumen Solutions, Black Friday 2013 was brilliant for our clients. Based on gathered metrics - call volumes rose over 50%, calls answered almost 80%, calls abandoned rate dipped to almost -40%, total orders increased close to 50% and total sales, a staggering 20%! One client was able to up-sell and cross-sell additional products on 15% of its calls!

Never had departments associated with solving problems generated record sales. Black Friday 2013 caused one Brand President to exclaim, "Absolutely fantastic! Better for our customers, great win by our associates and great for business!" But how did this revolutionary transformation come to fruition?

This white paper outlines a replicable path to Black Friday success for your company. You'll learn the following: how we guide clients to identify both the ideal call center experience for their customers, as well as the current challenges with their technology infrastructure; why choosing the right consulting and technology partners to help actualize their visions pays off; and, how the comprehensive solutions we implement to delight customers and streamline operations, also drives record sales on Black Friday.

Step 1: Identify the Challenges to Set Goals

Taking our learning objectives into consideration, let's focus on a client who believed that a customer experience transformation was long overdue. Legacy systems marginally supported their high customer support ticket volumes. A new solution needed to support a massive supply chain of diverse customers; multi-channel operations; and, a complex technology environment consisting of applications ranging from a payment gateway and a web order clearinghouse, to legacy order fulfillment and financial reconciliation systems.

The client focused its vision on dramatically improving customer experience and resolving four major issues:

- 1 Create consistency in customer experience** through each of the contact center channels. Reduce and mitigate the high-ticket volume and efficiently resolve cases.
- 2 Implement an individualized and 360 degree view of the customer.** The technology stack involved a large and diverse supply chain, which included product sales to retailers, distributors and direct to consumer purchases. The client kept in close view the millions of contact and order records and hundreds of call center agents working with LiveAgent, an integrated customer interaction tool.
- 3 The existing technology prohibited reps from the ability to understand** in near real-time what customers had purchased in the past and predict what they might be interested in purchasing based on past relevant buying data.
- 4 Delivering an enterprise solution on a complicated environment** that required near real-time integration with legacy applications and best-of-breed tools to up-sell and cross-sell products.

The existing infrastructure was ill-equipped to support the business goals. The call center needed new enterprise cloud technology to shift its approach from reactively solving problems and fulfilling product orders, to proactively addressing concerns, and creating and meeting product demand. With each interaction, the call center could focus on delighting the customer through a range of processes, including a full view of the customer history, efficient ticket management, a reduction of “hold” times and allowing reps to converse with customers versus simply taking orders and issues.

Agents could build trust with the customers by fully understanding and addressing their needs. Agents quickly learned that delighted customers expand the adoption of the client’s diverse products.

Streamlining customer-facing and behind-the-scenes services, and integrating with critical legacy applications, proved an ominous project, so finding an experienced consulting partner to implement an enterprise solution was pivotal. With Black Friday quickly approaching and the goals laid out, the client selected its partners.

Step 2: Choose the Right Consulting Partner and Technology Platform

Based on word-of-mouth referrals and a consistent reputation, the client chose Acumen Solutions. With over 1000 enterprise projects in its 15-year history, a top tier salesforce.com partner and a recognized leader in implementing complex call center projects to produce desired outcomes, Acumen Solutions brought unparalleled expertise, knowledge and enthusiasm to the challenges. And the choice paid off!

The Acumen Solutions team shared the stakeholders’ viewpoints that a well conceived implementation of Salesforce Service Cloud could resolve the client’s challenges, including proactive management and addressable metrics of the high ticket volume, reinventing the customer experience,

and creating new sales opportunities, specifically product up-sell and cross-sell opportunities. Acumen Solutions provided a detailed proposal outlining the solution.

As a globally recognized, Salesforce FullForce Master Partner demonstrating Service Cloud expertise with a dedicated Service Cloud practice, Acumen Solutions has proven, time and time again, the capabilities integral to the success of multifaceted projects. Our high customer satisfaction score, proven enterprise implementations, number of customer successes and Salesforce certified team of consultants with project experience underscore the value we bring to each opportunity.



*** Salesforce Service Cloud was selected over Siebel, because it had the tools to:**

- 1 Provide consistency across channels, including Cloud, Mobile and Social, thus proactively addressing every customer engagement approach.
- 2 Flexible and robust interfaces to integrate with internal, archaic/legacy applications.
- 3 Drive call center agent productivity, including a full view of the customer, detailed metrics and product up-sell and cross-sell.
- 4 Offer and measure unmatched customer experiences, such as tracking and providing a consistent level of service when contacting the organization through different channels for the same issue to premier queues.

* Source: www.salesforce.com

Through its sophisticated metrics and reporting engines, Salesforce Service Cloud could quickly minimize weeks of manual data collection into seconds. Salesforce also offered a suite of products on the AppExchange with which to integrate thus yielding a comprehensive, outcomes-driven solution. As this client's solution expanded into multiple channels across multiple call centers in various locations, Salesforce had the tools and Acumen Solutions, the expertise, to operationalize it.

By putting the right team and technology in place, the client could:

- 1 Increase customer loyalty and market share through the best customer experience possible through the call center
- 2 Create new cross-selling and up-selling opportunities through the use of new integrated technologies.
- 3 Revolutionize the existing business through operational and technical innovations.
- 4 Create new revenue channels and revenue increases from up-sell and cross-sell opportunities through the use of advanced integrated technologies.

Step 3: Deliver a Solution that Exceeds Expectations

Acumen Solutions had approximately 10 months to deliver an on time and on budget Salesforce Service Cloud solution at two main call centers and two overflow call centers, spread out across the country. This gave the client two months of additional experience with the solution before Black Friday 2013.

The right implementation partner will understand your business first, then bring the right changes that lead to higher levels of performance.

Acumen Solutions included detailed conversations with the client and Salesforce to map out a pre-launch before Black Friday 2013. A few items to consider include:

Conducting a detailed Requirements Workshop, including:

- Meeting with key stakeholders to become knowledgeable and really understand their business drivers and develop a comprehensive plan with buy in from critical decision makers.
- Reviewing the client's current system and key processes.

Designing a solution based upon:

- Business and technology fit/gap analysis, including devising a solution architecture and UI design.
- Meetings with cloud providers to understand current and roadmap functionality.
- An organizational plan to adopt enterprise cloud technologies, including governance and a product roadmap.

The most productive call centers have a full view of the customer, detailed metrics and provide various ways to up-sell and cross-sell products.

Implementation Planning

- Creating user stories with the client to consider multiple customer interaction scenarios.
- Sprint planning for development and testing.
- Release planning to provide transparency, as well as checks and balances during each step.

The total solution addressed each of the client's major challenges. The Acumen Solutions team took advantage of exceptional out-of-the-box functionality, AppExchange tools, and developed custom capabilities through Force.com.

Managing High Ticket Volume

Acumen Solutions launched the transformation with two business-to-consumer divisions of the company. Each customer's profile and buying history was powered by the implementation of Salesforce Service Cloud. As customers called in, call center agents reviewed their profiles, and were able to tailor product recommendations.

The predictive product recommendations, through AgilOne, allowed call center agents to cross-sell and up-sell in ways they could not have as easily conceived without the technology.

The solution included:

- A Full Multi-Channel deployment (IVR, Phone/CTI, Email-to-Case, Live Agent, Web-to-Case, Mail Order).
- Specifically, the multichannel deployment covered 9000 web orders per day, 1000 phone orders per day via IVR, Phone/CTI, E-mail to Case, Live Agent, Web-to-case, and Mail order.

Reinventing the Customer Experience

This was no small feat - the client's diverse supply chain includes supermarkets, retail and merchandising stores, as well as individual consumers who contact the call center. Its products are sold under various brand names, which adds a layer of complexity. With this in mind, our team created:

- A Customized Order Entry Wizard in Force.com to facilitate the success of Blended Agents (Case + Order takers). This included Shopping Cart, Smart Product Look-Up (Type Ahead Search).
- Capturing Interactions for all inbound customer inquiries and contacts with prospective or actual customers.
- Integration with the Payment Gateway for real-time Credit Card Processing, Credit Card payment, authorization, re-authorization and fraud checking.
- Integration with the client's (.Net)- web order clearing house, promotion and Item/Product system of record.

Creating Up-sell / Cross-sell Opportunities

One challenge was to drive revenue increases from up-sell and cross-sell opportunities as customers make contact with the call center more efficient.

- Predictive Product recommendations for the up-sell and cross-sell of products through AgilOne.
- We built a near real-time interface showcasing User-to-Product and Product-to-Product recommendations to allow real-time up-sell and cross-sell based on the past order history of customers.
- You could now track cross-sell and up-sell efforts by call center Agents and Item/Product.
- Acumen Solutions was responsible for all Salesforce related coding and configuration related to CTI.

What Our Clients Achieved

Our clients, including the one we highlighted, were focused on improving customer experience through their visions and partnerships. We measured core metrics integral to capturing the customer experience improvements before and after the implementation and learned that their call centers evolved from predominantly cost centers to improved profit centers.

The contact center reps could identify key attributes about the customer, personalize their communication, drive revenue increases from up-sell and cross-sell opportunities through seamless transactions and intelligent conversations, and resolve questions quickly and efficiently.

The right integrated technology solution, coupled with proper governance, training, improved business processes and agent accountability, significantly reduced ticket volumes and provided the ability to unleash the growth that their marketing efforts and product positioning had yielded.

Contact us Today to Plan Black Friday 2016

Acumen Solutions has the team, knowledge and expertise to revolutionize your call center. We will work with your team to develop a roadmap that will transform your call center into a Revenue Generation Center.

It's not too late to plan for a brilliant Black Friday 2016. Contact Acumen Solutions at sales@acumensolutions.com to discuss the possibilities with one of our experts.

About Acumen Solutions

Clients choose Acumen Solutions for one simple reason: our experience delivers success. Joining forces with our clients, our teams of strategists, subject matter experts, and engineers solve problems that can't be fixed by technology alone. As a Salesforce Global Strategic Partner, Fortune 500 companies trust us to build solutions that grow revenue and strengthen customer relationships. Our groundbreaking solutions in the public sector streamline operations and improve productivity.

We apply the same expertise to our unparalleled social responsibility program, generating sustainable impact across our local communities.

Engage with us at www.acumensolutions.com or follow us on Twitter @AcumenSolutions.