CASE STUDY

Office DEPOT

Building the Transparent, Agile, and High-Performing Contact Center

WEBSITES:
www.OfficeDepot.com

NUMBER OF CONTACT CENTER SITES:
34 across 4 continents

TOTAL NUMBER OF AGENTS:
Over 3,000

AVERAGE ANNUAL CONTACT VOLUME:
Over 20 million customer interactions

TRANSERA PRODUCT(S):
Office Depot uses Transera's Global Omni-Channel Contact Center SaaS offering

THE IMPACT

> Significant cost savings

> A centralized, global solution that empowers the business to perform better on many levels, including reduction in customer wait-time and improvements in service quality resulting in enhanced overall customer experience

> Lowered average speed of answer to 10 seconds

> Lowered call abandons to less than 1%

> Prior to using Transera, Office Depot performed around the industry average speed of answer of 30-40 seconds, with a call abandonment rate of around 3-4%.

When you're a global B2C and B2B enterprise with $16 billion in annual sales that serves consumers and businesses in 56 countries, it's critical that the customer experience be at the forefront of everything you do.

Delivering a quality experience through the contact center is necessary to compete. The team must deliver impeccable service levels for voice, email and chat, 24 hours a day, seven days a week including peak call times such as holidays.

Rethinking the Contact Center of Tomorrow

In 2006, Office Depot set out to strategically develop the contact center of tomorrow, including how best to operate profitably and effectively. Dan Cruceana, Office Depot, Inc's Director of Operations and Analytics, was part of a task force with members of varying backgrounds, including finance, operations, and technology focused on creating a contact center unconstrained by the technologies, processes and best practices of that time period.

"We were tasked to come up with a new business model that would take Office Depot's customer service into a new era," said Cruceana. "The challenge was how to operate in a complex global environment using resources deployed across multiple locations around the world."

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> "When we first heard about Transera, the proposition seemed too good to be true. At the time, their technology was new, but Office Depot, Inc. was looking for innovative ways to improve the customer experience through a centralized global center that provided operational efficiencies and cost savings, so we decided to try it. They customized a solution to fit our needs and the results speak for themselves."
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> **Dan Cruceana**
> Director of Operations and Analytics

Office Depot had multiple contact center sites: some in-house and others at partner sites. Site, team and agent performance management was distributed. Some sites used Office Depot contact center systems and reported their performance through them. Others were managed independently by partner managers with their own systems and performance reporting procedures. The company's size and distributed structure resulted in inconsistent performance management and reporting from site to site.

"We had our typical brick-and-mortar setup where we depended on legacy applications deployed on-premise," said Cruceana. "It was a challenge for headquarters to manage and control performance globally due to a lack of central visibility and transparency over operations."

The task force brainstormed on how best to manage the contact center, including managing team performance, globally and consistently across sites and partners. The primary objective of the team was to create a contact center with global transparency and agility.

Global Management

One key first strategy was to consolidate all queuing, routing, recording, monitoring and reporting activities. Transera was selected because it separated the application functionality of these requirements from the voice media itself. This had two key benefits:

- Offered Office Depot flexibility in terms of the voice carriers and equipment it used, from site to site, including a redesign of the voice network
- Allowed the business side to manage the application functionality so IT could focus on carriers and phone equipment

Transera was rolled out in less than 90 days. Its flexible cloud platform meant that Office Depot could scale on demand to meet business changes, and use its existing transport and telephony systems.

"As soon as we deployed Transera's platform, we noticed immediate improvements," said Cruceana.

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Centralized, Transparent Data

The most tangible difference Office Depot noticed when it switched to Transera's solutions was the richness of the customer interaction data which it was able to analyze and use to improve the customer experience in real-time. As a result, it built a state of the art command center including several digital displays that detail the calls coming into each center: call wait times, abandoned calls, and number of agents logged in and on calls at each site. Command center operators manage the center 24 hours a day to monitor operations.

In addition, the same data is available to each site and partner.

"Everyone is working with the same information worldwide," said Cruceana.

When the command center operators identify situations, for example, with the click of a button they are able to capture the data indicating the cause and drive actions for the appropriate team members. If it is an equipment, network or resource situation, everyone sees it right away and works together to solve the problem.

"Transera provides Office Depot, Inc. with a level of transparency and agility that it did not have with previous technology," said Cruceana. "Today, everyone has complete visibility into the data that details what is happening within our contact centers. And, we're able to act quickly to ramp up or down on staffing for responses to crisis situations or unexpected demand. This agility has made a significant impact on the company's bottom line."

Business Agility — The "Just in Time" Contact Center.

Using Transera's dashboards, contact center supervisors are able to make adjustments on the fly. In a couple of clicks, they have visibility into the status of queues, how certain teams and agents are performing, and where more resources may be needed to address specific issues, or if they need to enable or deploy resources – especially during peak call volumes.

"The application allows us to collect critical information that is analyzed and leveraged for insight so we can continuously improve our processes. We have volumes of records that are hosted, joined, processed, and analyzed in a structured

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> "Transera's solutions empower companies to do what's right for the customer – better, faster and more efficiently."

Dan Cruceana
Director of Operations and Analytics

way on one platform, which we can use to pin point specific insights that will ultimately drive actions," said Cruceana.

With a global reach and many agents across multiple call centers, Office Depot, Inc. is also able to optimize operations with Transera by taking and treating all calls in the same global queue. This allows for seamless shifting of traffic with no disruption to the business. Office Depot, Inc. manages its entire global contact center operations without any special on-premise equipment or capital outlay, simply by using Transera's cloud-based, Global Omni-Channel Contact Center SaaS offering.

In anticipation of events and programs that may cause spikes in calls beyond its staffing, teams are being trained from different departments on how to handle calls of specific types in case of emergencies. If an event occurs, overflow calls will be routed to these non-contact center associates at their desks to handle the customer interactions while working their day-to-day jobs.

"Transera unites technology and process by adapting to changes in the business process quickly," said Cruceana.

Performance Improvements

"With the improved visibility afforded by Transera, all of us can see the queues as they're building and determine what customers are waiting for while on hold. We can see the performance of the agents, teams and partners, including how well each agent is handling calls. Armed with this information, supervisors are able to coach and mentor agents and provide feedback to optimize the customer experience."

This visibility allowed Office Depot, Inc. to expand service operations while realizing significant annual cost savings by optimizing performance.

"We are now able to make the best decisions for our customers in real time," said Cruceana. "By using Transera's call-routing technology, we are able to match each customer with the best available agent without the need for any manual intervention."

This is because Office Depot, Inc. prioritizes being able to process and leverage data to perform two critical functions:

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1. Assess customer needs and value
2. Match that customer with the most relevant agent—as measured by agent performance

"The software solution provided by Transera makes it simple," said Cruceana.

Cost Savings and Industry-leading Customer Service Metrics

Today, Office Depot, Inc. manages more than 20 million customer interactions annually across 34 contact centers on four continents, with over 3,000 agents providing customer service to business customers.

Office Depot, Inc.'s contact centers average speed of answer is less than ten seconds and abandon rates are less than one percent.

"Since the implementation, we have been successful in lowering the average speed of answer to less than 10 seconds. We have also reduced the call abandonment rate to less than 1%. Prior to using Transera, we performed around the industry average speed of answer of 30-40 seconds, with a call abandonment rate of around 3-4%."

By using Transera, Office Depot, Inc. is now able to route interactions to agents, teams and partners who are performing well in similar situations. This has improved the overall performance of its contact centers, and greatly improved business outcomes such as customer satisfaction, sales and first-call resolution rates. Office Depot, Inc. has also been able to optimize business processes, such as new call routing strategies, scripting changes, customer prioritization, offers, target markets and proposed problem resolutions.

Transera's Global Omni-Channel Contact Center allows Office Depot, Inc. to operate in more advanced ways than the typical contact center, and that has been beneficial both for the company's bottom line and for its customers.

Building on the use of Transera, Office Depot has deployed a bold model for customer service support that's considered an industry model representing what it

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> "As soon as Transera's solutions are deployed, the benefits are realized rather quickly."
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> Director of Operations and Analytics

means to have a customer-centric contact center. By improving sales effectiveness, customer satisfaction and operational efficiency, Office Depot, Inc. has been able to deliver a better customer experience while realizing financial benefits.

About Office Depot

Office Depot, Inc. is a leading global provider of products, services, and solutions for every workplace – whether your workplace is an office, home, school, or car.

Office Depot, Inc. is a resource and a catalyst to help customers work better. We are a single source for everything customers need to be more productive, including the latest technology, core office supplies, print and document services, business services, facilities products, furniture, and school essentials.

The company has annual sales of approximately $16 billion, employs approximately 56,000 associates, and serves consumers and businesses in 56 countries with more than 1,800 retail stores, award-winning e-commerce sites and a dedicated business-to-business sales organization – all delivered through a global network of wholly owned operations, joint ventures, franchisees, licensees and alliance partners. The company operates under several banner brands including Office Depot, OfficeMax, OfficeMax Grand & Toy, Reliable and Viking. The company's portfolio of exclusive product brands include TUL, Foray, Brenton Studio, Ativa, WorkPro, Realspace and HighMark.

Office Depot, Inc.'s common stock is listed on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol ODP. Additional press information can be found at: http://news.officedepot.com.