ACTIVEO

BEST SERVICE IS STILL NO SERVICE

LIVRE BLANC

WHITE PAPER

TABLE DES MATIÈRES

1. INTRODUCTION

Journal de bord du capitaine, date stellaire 2017 : The Best Service is Still No Service

Dans cette mise à jour du best seller *The Best Service is No Service : Liberating Your Customers From Customer Service, Keep Them Happy, and Control Cost* (Wiley/Jossey-Bass) de 2008, David Jaffe, Peter Massey et Bill Price se penchent sur les développements faits à travers le globe permettant de simplifier la vie des clients. La mise à jour en date stellaire de 2015 est consultable en annexe de ce document dans le cadre d'un point de vue vue rétrospectif sur les tendances (cf annexes en fin de livre blanc).

2. CONCEPT : LE TOUR DU MONDE

[David] Ici, en Asie-Pacifique, le concept « The Best Service Is No Service » est présentement repensé comme étant l'action de transiter au numérique (la partie « libre-service » d'un meilleur service) plutôt que comme étant l'action de passer à la réduction des contacts. Tout le monde parle d'omni-canal, mais ne semble pas comprendre qu'un plus grand nombre de contacts via plus de canaux n'est pas toujours une bonne chose. Notre définition d'omni-canal est une connexion simplifiée et transparente des canaux plutôt que simplement plus de canaux pour plus de contacts. Par exemple, nous voyons parfois encore des entreprises qui automatisent ce qu'elles devraient éliminer. Nous avons récemment vu une entreprise sur le point d'ajouter un nouveau processus numérique pour un formulaire qui ne devrait pas exister. La société recevait 90 % des données sur le formulaire et n'avait en réalité besoin que de deux informations mineures. Un autre exemple est une entreprise qui envoie maintenant des copies papier, des emails et des courriers pour un même processus saturant ainsi les canaux. Ils reçoivent donc beaucoup de réponses de personnes perplexes leur demandant sur quel canal elles doivent répondre.

Nous constatons que certaines entreprises commencent à comprendre que la facilité d'utilisation, la simplicité et le bon sens sont importants pour éviter les appels, les courriels et les autres contacts. Il y a actuellement plus de « laboratoires clients » qu'il y a quelques années. Cependant, nous voyons que ce que nous appelons les « fondamentaux » ne sont pas forcément bien suivis, voire omis, comme informer le client à chaque étape d'un long processus, « l'assommer de questions » en démarrage d'un parcours client et effectuer du marketing lié à la capture de données tard dans le processus. Les entreprises développent des applications mobiles en étant axées sur le format correct de chaque canal, ce qui crée ainsi des applications dont les processus sont complexes et longs. Ils ne semblent pas vouloir conduire l'amélioration des processus par la simplicité et l'agilité.

Si nous sommes d'accord sur une chose, c'est celle de continuer à observer les entreprises vouloir se débarrasser des emails non structurés. Elles reconnaissent que ce n'est pas si efficace pour la résolution de problèmes complexes et aussi coûteux qu'un appel téléphonique. Malheureusement, de nombreuses sociétés ont siloté les équipes par canal rendant donc plus complexe la vision globale. Dans nos modèles, nous pensons que les emails et les appels doivent venir ensemble et être gérés comme une véritable expérience omni-canale. Les conseillers des centres de relation client doivent être capables d'envoyer et de recevoir des emails. De nombreux emails sont mieux gérés en tant qu'appels, donc ils doivent être regroupés afin d'offrir un véritable centre de relations clients fournissant un portfolio de canaux d'interactions, y compris le chat, qui est un enchaînement parfait.

Les organisations semblent penser que le chat est une sorte de solution miracle, particulièrement dans le cadre de ventes en-ligne. Ce que nous avons remarqué, c'est que le chat a également besoin du même type de raisonnement que le concept « Best Service Is No Service ». Pourquoi les clients ont-ils besoin du chat ? Qu'est-ce qu'ils ne comprennent pas ? Comme avec les appels, l'opportunité est de comprendre et de supprimer les causes amont de contacts indésirables plutôt que de voir la « migration » d'un appel vers un chat comme une sorte de victoire. Dans notre analyse, nous avons souvent analysé qu'il coûtait presque aussi cher. Bien sûr, les clients apprécient le caractère immédiat et réactif du chat. L'automatisation offre désormais plus d'opportunités, mais nous revenons quand même sans cesse à la question « Pourquoi le client a-t-il besoin du chat ? ». Notre conclusion est donc qu'il existe encore beaucoup d'opportunités d'appliquer le concept « Best Service Is No Service ».

3. LES TENDANCES

La transformation numérique

[Peter] David, je suis d'avis que votre argument sur la facilité est au cœur de ce que nous vivons en Europe et en Asie. Les dirigeants de grandes entreprises subissent la vague de « transformation numérique » à grande échelle comme un trou dans la tête – et dans le portefeuille. Ils ont souvent simplement besoin d'embrasser les détails dans ce monde numérique et, comprenant les subtilités, ils peuvent voir où résident les problèmes qu'ils créent aux clients.

Une optimisation constante des conversations en ligne, mobiles, avec les bots, avec les SVI (Serveur Vocal Interactif) et, bien sûr, d'humains à humains, est requise. Votre approche de l'optimisation devrait démarrer avec un indicateur organisationnel : « Quel est le ratio des personnes qui améliorent vos contacts par rapport à celles qui s'en occupent ? » Quand cela atteint 1 sur 1, vous êtes sur la bonne voie. L'optimisation n'est pas quelque chose que vous terminez un jour ; cela nécessite beaucoup d'attention aux détails, de nombreuses ressources, pour au final rationaliser des efforts et des coûts. Ensuite, il y a une optimisation de l'apprentissage automatique ou machine learning, qui changera ce ratio fondamentalement... À lire, Bill, plus loin dans cet article.

La résolution par la gestion des connaissances

Les deux autres tendances que j'évoquerai brièvement sont :

a) la résolution par le biais d'un investissement dans les systèmes de gestion des connaissances ou knowledge management, et non dans le CRM. Cela a un impact bien plus grand et constitue la base essentielle pour la programmation des bots. Quelle est la question, quelles sont les questions de catégorisation, où obtenir les réponses ? quelles sont les réponses ? où procéder à leur publication ? Parallèlement à ces outils se trouvent les plates-formes des processus « glisser-déposer », qui changent fondamentalement l'échelle « temps réel ».

b) l'amélioration des connaissances à travers l'utilisation de l'intelligence de première ligne. L'intelligence libre et la capacité de questionnement et de curiosité des conseillers. Cette capacité non capturée n'est pas exploitée faute d'un dispositif permettant d'utiliser ces savoirs ; un dispositif qui produit un flux provenant de l'intelligence jusqu'aux résultats, générant des priorités et des changements collaboratifs dans tous les silos organisationnels. Nous travaillons actuellement sur ces projets chez nos clients partout dans le monde.

Les compétences dans la gestion des connaissances et l'utilisation de « l'intelligence des personnes » seront essentielles à la construction du futur déjà présent. L'un par lequel nous programmerons des bots, et les bots programmeront d'autre bots. L'intelligence artificielle et l'apprentissage automatique promettent une rapide amélioration de ce que le libre-service peut produire. Mais, pour le moment, il est encore question de comprendre comment bien faire fonctionner votre SVI, comment articuler votre site Internet et comment rendre vos conversations plus spontanées, plus émotionnelles. Comme l'adoption répandue de l'analyse de la voix l'a démontré, l'analytique sans analystes n'est pas grand-chose. En d'autres termes, l'eau est humide.

L'amélioration des connaissances : l'intelligence des personnes

Et le recours à l'intelligence humaine demeurera essentiel pour engager des conversations, ce que nous, en tant qu'êtres humains, nous continuerons à vouloir faire dans certaines circonstances. Qu'en pensez-vous, Bill ?

[Bill] Peter, je suis d'accord pour dire que, dans certains cas, la bonne vieille intelligence humaine est encore nécessaire dans les interactions humaines et est souvent la meilleure solution. Mais, ce que je vois, c'est la capacité à appliquer maintenant cette intelligence humaine pour fournir des modèles prédictifs et des solutions automatisées hautement efficaces.

Sur tout le marché nord-américain, nous constatons l'apparition rapide et viral de l'analytique, de la robotique, de l'intelligence artificielle, des mégadonnées et de l'apprentissage automatique pour développer et parfois remplacer l'intervention humaine. Ces nouvelles solutions m'ont montré que les principes fondamentaux de « Un meilleur service n'est pas un service » étaient précis et ont renforcé la nécessité de creuser plus profondément les données afin de confirmer le problème et de déterminer la façon de le résoudre.
Permettez-moi de partager trois exemples rapides, certains d'entre eux reprenant les observations relatives à l'omni-canal de David et votre insistance sur la gestion des connaissances.

4. EXEMPLES

Les bots de dialogue

1) Les chat bots ou « agents virtuels » commencent, après quelques échecs, à gagner du terrain. Avec la nouvelle génération de bots, les entreprises sont en mesure de proposer un outil d'interaction personnalisé et immersif à leurs clients, le plus souvent sur leur site Internet, leur permettant ainsi d'accéder à des données clés pour la gestion des connaissances et, par la suite, à l'aide de l'intelligence artificielle, de proposer des meilleures réponses aux questions (a) posées par les clients ou (b) qui auraient dû être posées par elles-mêmes, en tant que marque. C'est la 2e partie qui fait ressortir le pouvoir de l'analytique, qui aligne « les clients qui sont comme vous », « les situations similaires » et l'historique des interactions. Utiliser l'intelligence artificielle pour les bots permet non seulement d'automatiser le premier contact, mais également d'anticiper et de réduire le besoin d'un 2e et 3e contact.

Le pouvoir des mégadonnées

2) Conserver les meilleurs clients et les meilleurs collaborateurs dans les entreprises a toujours été un défi comportant beaucoup de suppositions et de recherches basées sur les opinions « d'un ami d'un ami » au lieu d'être basées sur des expériences et des données réelles. Grâce au pouvoir des mégadonnées, les entreprises peuvent maintenant, par exemple, extraire l'historique des interactions et des ventes non abouties et les clients actuels afin d'identifier les formules similaires, les tendances (telles que les réductions des taux des dépenses) et la combinaison des formules et tendances, et de produire une liste succincte des clients « à risque ». Elles peuvent par la suite utiliser un moteur de suggestions performant afin d'essayer d'isoler et de canaliser les clients à risque ; s'ils restent, le système « apprend » par le biais de l'apprentissage automatique que telle suggestion avec tel client a fonctionné à cet instant précis et donc que cette interaction sera donc essayée de nouveau (le processus opposé est également appliqué). Les entreprises peuvent donc non seulement conserver certains de leurs meilleurs clients ou de leurs meilleurs collaborateurs, mais peuvent aussi repérer les processus manquants ou déroutants, ce qui aide à expliquer les risques ainsi qu'à évaluer ces processus, et ce qui contribue à conserver encore plus de clients et de collaborateurs.

L'effet « boule de neige »

3) Dans *Best Service is No Service* et notre 2e livre *Your Customer Rules! Delivering the Me2B Experiences that Today's Customers Demand* (Wiley/Jossey-Bass, 2015), nous proposons d'utiliser le terme « boule de neige » pour représenter les contacts répétés. Les entreprises qui pourraient prévenir l'effet « boules de neige » dès le départ ou les faire « fondre » après le 1er essai produiraient ensuite un « Best Service » (les prévenir) et profiter d'une expérience client améliorée. Aujourd'hui, utiliser l'analyse de mégadonnées vous permet d'isoler les pages Internet, les schémas logiques de réponse vocale interactive et les conseillers à l'origine des « boules de neige » ainsi que de repérer les pages Internet, les schémas logiques de réponse vocale interactive et les conseillers ayant réussi à les résoudre ou à les réduire. Ces analyses permettent également d'identifier quels problèmes n'ont pas été résolus en une seule interaction et pour quelles raisons. Rechercher les causes fondamentales de ces deux axes améliore les processus évoqués par David et Peter.

En outre, l'analyse et l'apprentissage automatique ou « machine learnin » peuvent servir à prévenir les éventuels effet « boules de neige » et suggérer la façon dont aborder le client concerné à ce moment précis afin d'éviter les contacts répétés. Tout comme dans les modèles prédictifs que j'ai précédemment décrits, ceci constitue un moteur – automatique ou fourni par l'humain – beaucoup plus performant qui délivre en retour une déclinaison du « *Best Service Is No Service* » et du *Me2B* réussie !

5. ANNEXES

Star date 2015
**Whatever Happened To The Best Service Is No Service? Or
Why Aren't Contact Rates Falling InThis Age Of Omni-channel?**
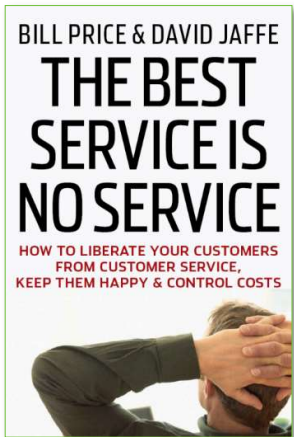
Bill Price (US), David Jaffe (Australia) and Peter Massey (UK) have been talking about and implementing *The Best Service Is No Service* ideas for over a decade. It's seven years since Bill and David's bestseller was published demonstrating how to engage colleagues all over the business to reduce customer effort. However, our observation is that contact centres around the world remain very busy places, still "coping with demand" from customers, rather than "challenging demand" using the Seven Principles of *Best Service.* Whether voice contacts are increasing or not, organisations have added social, chat, community and digital support whilst trying to improve B2C and B2B customer experiences.

Unfortunately customers have increasing knowledge and power in this "Me2B world", as Bill and David lay out in their latest book *Your Customer Rules! Delivering the Me2B Experiences That Today's Customers Demand.* So, how do ideas of *The Best Service Is No Service* and
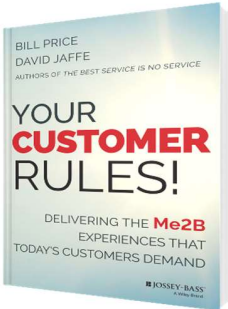
Me2B apply today?
In this assessment, Bill, Peter and David reflect on how demand management is possible in an Omni-channel world and what other issues are creating success for leading organisations in their geographies.

Q1: Do you think contact with organisations through manned channels is growing or falling in your country?

BILL PRICE: US VIEW

We see some sterling examples in the States where companies have embraced Best Service and reduced the rate of customer contacts, using metrics like CPO (contacts per order shipped) or CPC (contacts per customer). Largely they have achieved this by taking the customers' point of view and figuring out how to apply an FCR (first contact resolution) analysis for web interactions, the first place that today's customers go for information and for support, and by reducing repeat contacts in their contact centres.

Unfortunately, many more organizations are not enjoying lower customer contact rates, even as they grapple with tight budgets that make it hard to add new support centers or staff to handle the

burgeoning amounts of contacts. I would say that it's 70% up (stable to higher contact rates), and 30% down (lower contact rates).

DAVID JAFFE: Australian VIEW

It's a mixed picture depending on the industry and strategy of the companies. I've heard two of our major banks say that their contact centres and volume of call traffic is unchanged despite (or perhaps because of) the growth of self-service and other channels (and we'll discuss that again in the next question). We observe three key factors in whether overall contacts are falling:

1) The extent and quality of investments in self-service and other customer facing channels. Those who have created really effective self-service and self "sales" and embraced it in their product offers and pricing have had better results. Our two major airlines are examples of that in creating two good booking sites with price transparency and ease of re-use.
2) Whether organisations have approached demand management in the way we first proposed.
In Australia, we observe that over half the organisations we work with still don't have a clear view of what causes contact demand, so they certainly don't have a process to manage it. Even those who have demand reporting still seem to put responsibility on the contact centre rather than recognising where the issues really lie, so we'd estimate it's only one in five companies that have really tackled it
3) Approach to off-shoring:
Unfortunately, many of our organisations have been seduced by offshoring and think they have settled for "lower cost of contact » rather than "less contact". One large utility referred to it as "mess for less" but of course that's not what really happened. It saved very little and we called it "mess for stress". If anything we have observed that rushing these off shoring processes has produced more contacts through poor handling practices and poorly designed operations. We know that has been the issue as one of our most common projects has been organisations asking us to "go fix" these poorly managed off shore operations.

PETER MASSEY: UK VIEW

It depends what you refer to as 'contact' and the customer perspective is not the same as that of the business. Customers think of pressing IVR buttons, fathoming out how to find and do stuff on web sites and mobile apps as contact. Talking to someone, via whatever media, is a last resort. Except when they need reassurance for something vital. Then they want a well-informed, confident person on the end of the phone or behind the counter. So I wouldn't generalise too much about contact increasing or decreasing. One needs to be specific about which companies and for which customer needs.
We also find that measuring contact can be difficult. We ran a contact rate benchmark across the UK mobile phone companies for several years. It was an enormous job to get simple data on how much contact was occurring even at the macro level. Today some companies have the integrated infrastructure to give them M.I. (management information) across all channels so it's a little easier. But internal definitions of contact vary so much that comparison is messy. What we could see over the years was which companies paid attention to contact rate. As smart phones came in O2 (Telefonica) led the way in reducing contact rate, meeting their customers' desire to self-serve as well as improving the economics. That's why they got the iPhone contract in the UK - Apple certainly understood the importance of effective demand management and went with a like-minded business. All the telcos and ISPs focused hard on person to person contact rate once smart phones were mass market and kept the contact rates flat. But they still varied considerably between companies in absolute terms.

Q2: What has been the impact of new channels like digital, social media and the like?

DAVID JAFFE: AUSTRALIAN VIEW

There is no question that here in Australia there has been a "free way effect" so these channels have often added to the volume of contacts. Build a new channel like digital and people use it more. People check their banks account details far more as an example. That is also one of the reasons why contact rates to contact centres have remained obstinately high in banking. The "substitution" effect between channels has been off-set by new and different contact types caused by the new channels. For example, access to information has given customers greater visibility of things they couldn't see before. They query transactions more and probe their statements with knowledge. In utilities like telco's and energy, they query their bills as they have more information.

The second big contact driver that has reduced substitution is the added support for these new channels particularly if they aren't well designed. Customers call or chat to ask questions about how things work or to locate things on digital platforms or get passwords reset.

One of the keys to success of Omni-channel, we find, is that you have to embed support and education about new channels into the way manned channels work. That means accepting that as digital grows, the contact centre will have to invest in customer education and showing customers how to do things. We observe many organisations in Australia who have failed to get the digital take up they wanted, because the contact centre didn't help promote and support digital. Often this was re-inforced by organisation structures that separated digital and contact centre channels so that they weren't collaborating. Where the channels operate in silos we often see increased contact as new channels emerge.

PETER MASSEY: UK VIEW

Chat has had a big impact. Customers don't want to swap to email or pick up the phone mid browsing. Whether it absorbs contacts is down to old skills like resource planning to have enough people available to handle the chat sessions. Chat needs to be timely and well managed or it doesn't work. Then there are other challenges like well-designed knowledge management to support agents so they know what to say when they are online.

For companies, social has had a great impact. Speed, transparency, authenticity are needed and won't wait for policy makers to muck about. Social media cuts through silos and the old, old question of "who owns the customer?" has been quickly resolved. It's had a big impact on giving front line staff the time to research answers, to speak openly and to relax. It's having an impact on front line knowledge sharing - everyone needs to know stuff. It's breaking down barriers in the more enlightened businesses, but a key part is that execs and managers need to be online folk themselves to really understand it or make it work.

Going back to customers, social is a great way around the traditional slow email or long phone queue and boy do we know it. In most companies, it is well resourced now but will it be as well resourced when social-media contact grows further and there are 200 staff handling it rather than 20? It's a further challenge because staff are using the written word more and having to do it in a branded but authentic way - a challenge to many contact centre skill sets.

So, is the answer that voice and email are being replaced by new channels? In the better companies, it's being replaced by great mobile and self-service, not by channel shift to social and chat. In the companies that haven't got a handle on the customer needs, it just proliferates contact by more and more means.

Examples like Argos and Shop Direct, show the way. At a recent conference, Shop Direct stood up and said they only wanted adequate not world class contact centres - the contact centre audience was aghast but wrong in my opinion. Shop Direct's strategy is to put the money into world class, personalised, mobile and online experiences - and so adequate contact centres aligns with this strategy.

BILL PRICE, US VIEW

Digital, social, and related channels such as chat and SMS are increasing in the States, partly because customers are asking for them and partly since they are more engaging for younger customers who have been so accustomed to mobile communications. A related development is "visual IVR" whereby the mobile customer can see the IVR script on her phone and click through to get to the right path, or obtain the information that they need.

While some of the companies implementing these new channels have done it with the same vendors and tools, using single code sets (the same process and methods of tracking contacts for all channels), in many glaring cases they have essentially "bolted on" new channels that become islands, or silos. The same-vendor or single code set companies end up enjoying a single view of their customers' contact history and can draw implications quickly, and address issues in-channel and Omni-channel. The silo type companies end up falling behind their customers and lose out to competitors that embraced the same-vendor or single code path. They suffer from information proliferation and can't tell what is really driving demand. As a result, they suffer longer handle times, repeat contacts, and higher costs – partly from an increase in contact rates … assuming that their disparate systems even allow them to figure out the total number of contacts that they are getting!

Q 3: Are there many organisations who have really reduced the demand for contact as you predicted i.e. who are the shining cases?

PETER MASSEY: UK VIEW
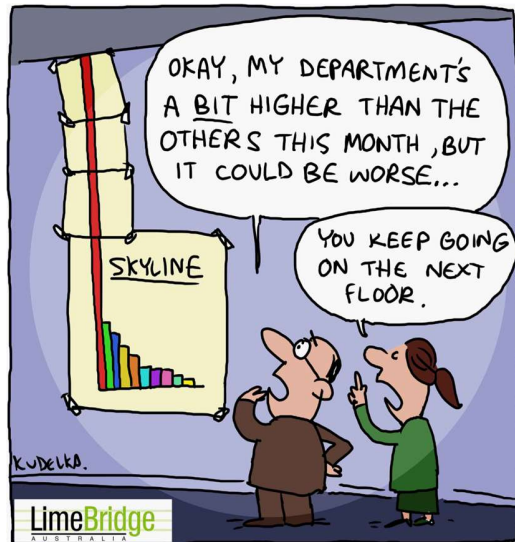
Two cases I really like on the demand side are AO.com and HMRC (Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs). RAC was another. One read and used the book, the other two we helped with what to do and to train their people. What made them good was that they joined up the dots and made their whole system centre around Best Service.

In AO.com's case they not only addressed demand, they built great understanding of customer issues so they could be proactive. For example, if selling a double door fridge to someone who lives in Apartment 32, there's a very good chance you will have delivery issues. So rather than waiting for them to happen and then put it right, they call the customer about their order and check through in advance about access and what is required so that the delivery is right first time.

In HMRC's case, the director general (the CEO equivalent) recognised that the senior business team had to co-own the contact targets if any progress was to be made with the classic issues of complex processes and forms with difficult explanations.

In both these cases significant savings in customer effort and contact costs were made - but the progress felt by staff and customers was the real breakthrough. The culture changes and it shows.

Specifically, the RAC case showed this. They ran the full The Best Service Is No Service processes after piloting and building robust processes. It became the heart of how they optimised process, engaged their people and shared MI with corporate clients. It wasn't that the sums of money were so large, it was that they changed the culture. People felt valued, the brand values felt real.

BILL PRICE: US VIEW

T-Mobile, a large mobile carrier has slashed 30% from their annual support budget, closing under-performing centres along the way, even as their subscriber count has increased more than 20%. They followed the Best Services ideas and got real value. The regulated electric utility Southern California Edison has seen a plateau in its contact rate even as it has added more channels such as email and chat. The business software provider CheckFree has been able to grow their customer count and transaction volumes by 70%, respectively, with the same headcount in its contact centers so contacts per customer are way down.

In all three cases, and others that we have helped or encouraged along the way, there are some consistent themes that have produced these successes: (1) a "champion" in the customer support team who has been willing to change direction from "coping with demand" to "challenging demand", and has rallied his/her troops; (2) new metrics like CPO and CPC, widely shared, with celebrations once the rates decline; and (3) buy-in from the C-level execs, especially the CFO and the CIO/CTO, since the latter is needed to push through needed improvements in the web or IVR self-service.

DAVID JAFFE: AUSTRALIAN VIEW

The Australian Tax Office has done a great job in reducing contact through a mix of digitization and use of proactive rather than reactive contact (as we talked about in Best Service Chapter 4). Use of electronic tax returns has changed the contacts they handle significantly and reduced calls for forms, form help and so forth. Their proactive contact is done in a smart way. Recently they used analytics to identify over a million customers who have always lodged tax returns late. They analysed these further and sent reminder texts to 200,000 of these at a cost of less than $25,000. They collected $800m in tax payments from these customers three months earlier than they had in prior years and avoided both outbound and inbound contacts. That's a great example of use of proactive contact to prevent collection activity and inbound contacts. The cash flow benefits alone were measured in millions.

We've seen good examples in utilities such as AGL and Origin Energy who have driven down contacts significantly by putting in place a better model of contact handling with re-thought processes. We helped them get complex contacts to a second tier of agents who had increased delegations and access to what were previously back office functions. This drove down repeat contacts and prevented escalated complaints. In addition, the new processes embedded self-service education and got customers information faster (where previously it might have meant a back-office request). The net outcome has been contact reduced by over twenty per cent in both cases and workload down even more because contacts were handled better). The same model reduced email contact 40% in one case.

Q4: What have you learnt from the success and failure you have seen?

BILL PRICE: US VIEW

Vision, persistence, and a new form of currency. Let me explain. The "winners" in the Omni-channel world, those that have managed to reduce contact demand as in The Best Service is No Service, have demonstrated these three factors: (1) Vision, or the ability to rise above the day-to-day challenges running contact centers (and I know from personal experience at MCI and at Amazon, it's very tough job!) and juggling limiting budgets. The winners go against the grain, for example accepting that as they automate contacts or eliminate others, as a result the average handle time (AHT) will rise, and that that's a good thing; (2) Persistence, or the drive to corral other executives to agree that "the customer is in charge", and that in order to create lasting customer loyalty it is essential to make it easier for customers and therefore remove demand for support; and (3) A new form of "currency", or hard data that will secure attention

from C-level executives such as CPO (contacts per order shipped) and a way to quantify the annual costs to handle contacts that ought to be automated or eliminated.

We worked with a client whose CFO was shocked to learn that they were spending more than $10 million per year responding to customer questions about when they'd be getting back their product from the repair center. Once she learned this, she quickly approved a request for an automated outbound alert capability at a fraction of this savings, seeing the solid ROI. We also worked with a

Six Sigma-trained customer care executive who was unable to get attention to spend money on root cause analysis, but when he identified that customers were contacting his company to get their password it was because the password recovery process was so cumbersome that customers created new accounts. This also inflated the customer count, and wound up impressing Wall Street when the company reported higher sales per customer.

On the other hand, the failures have stemmed from the opposite situations: (1) Lack of focus; (2) acquiescence and acceptance of the old way of behaving; and (3) Slavish embrace of tired metrics like "lower AHT is better" or NPS (Net Promoter Score).

PETER MASSEY: UK VIEW

Wow, big question almost worthy of another book! Let me summarise a few points and refer to more detail. We've implemented The Best Service Is No Service in many different companies & industries, to differing depths and levels of sustainability. We have constantly studied what works and what doesn't. We published a paper five years ago based on interviews with our UK clients and their hindsight. We did this to help others embarking on the journey. I can share the 12 key findings but I feel the overriding issue comes down to leadership.

It's not the contact points that create the contact, it's the rest of the organisation upstream and it's complicated stuff usually. Policies, behaviours, band aided process fixes layered on other problems with unintended results – that kind of thing.

However it is the leadership team level that is often the ultimate root cause - do they act as a team first and functional leaders second? This sets the tenor for the rest of the organisation. It is possible for middle management and even front line staff to collaborate to remove cross functional causes of problems. But it seldom happens for long unless that behaviour is fostered, sponsored and expected at the leadership level.

A classic example is the 'gating' procedure for launching new products or services (see cartoon at the start of this document). To customers it is obvious whether the launch has been well prepared or not. In mature businesses, the launch won't go ahead unless all the functions are ready: stocking, logistics, online help, pricing, returns, field force trained, front line trained in store and in contact centres. There are so many businesses who haven't reached that stage yet and launch regardless. It is leadership's role to put these processes in place and make decisions day to day to make them work, thus avoiding pain for customers downstream.

DAVID JAFFE: AUSTRALIAN VIEW

The lesson we have learnt time and again is that this isn't a contact centre problem, it's a whole of business problem. We had one disappointing result where the contact centre tried to drive responsibility for contacts into the rest of the business without sponsorship at the right levels. The rest of the business still ignored the issues as they didn't have measures aligned to this problem.
In contrast we've seen much better results where there is an executive sponsor who can hold all the right people accountable.
The second lesson is that this isn't a one-off problem but a continuous one. For example, new channels like digital and social create new issues and new contacts. The most successful companies have recognised this and kept a focus on demand continuously. When new issues or contact categories emerge they mobilise teams quickly to investigate and find solutions. Unfortunately, in Australia as many organisations are still flying blind (with limited or no reporting of demand) they just see contacts increasing and don't know why. That's been good for our business as we have great ways to help them understand it, but we'd still rather provide them with the tools to stay on top of demand all the time.

Q5. If there are still opportunities that you documented in The Best Service Is No Service why do organisations need Your Customer Rules!?

PETER MASSEY: UK VIEW

THE REAL GENIUS OF THE COMPLAINTS APP WAS THAT IT DIDN'T WORK.

The Best Service Is No Service as a discipline is still growing but no one method or book can ever encompass everything involved in customer experience. There's no right and wrong, no silver bullet.

We've seen in the UK, Europe and indeed worldwide, that constantly focusing on delivering 'brilliant basics' is the first part of what makes companies legendary. Using The Best Service Is No Service is a never ending quest and some smart businesses know this. Though it's not the end game.

What a customer feels about your brand and organisation is critical and complex. Brand aspiration and marketing has moved to explore experience and word of mouth. But what does this mean? Perhaps it is summed up by the Geek Squad quote "Marketing is the tax you pay for being unremarkable". To address this, you can change your economics first by removing the dumb stuff that happens and secondly by helping customers love you.

For me, there are two dimensions to simplify how we think about The Best Service Is No Service and Me2B (Your Customer Rules!). Firstly, The Best Service Is No Service, addresses the physical needs that customers have, whereas Me2B (Your Customer Rules) looks at the emotional factors. Secondly, The Best Service Is No Service addresses the hygiene factors of sales and service, the stuff that can be fixed. Whereas Me2B mainly addresses the wow factors, things that make customers love you.

Of course, it's not as clear cut in practice. Working with clients, I often refer to the structures in the two books as 'mental models'. I think it's why the books have sold so well - they give people ways to work with colleagues in shared mental models which address inherently complex situations. They allow organisations to work on the problems the same way rather than many random ways and that avoids what we call "it's raining projects".

BILL PRICE: US VIEW

In The Best Service is No Service, we concluded by saying that companies needed to "Deliver great service experiences", and we proposed several ways to do that. In the intervening years, it became apparent to us that great service experiences, while necessary, are not sufficient – instead, companies need to figure out how to deliver great customer experiences on an end-to-end basis starting with the browse and search stage, across all channels (hence, Omni-channel), and with one's business partners as well. We interviewed leading customer experience legends in order to expand the range of The Best Service is No Service, and to reinforce our Principles with more fundamental "Customer Needs" and "Foundations". Many of the companies we featured in The Best Service, is No Service, also appear in Me2B, for example Amazon, Danaher. Nordstrom, and T-Mobile, but others in Me2B come from very different situations and geographies, such as Flight Centre in Australia, Hyatt based in Chicago, Vente-Privee based in Paris, and Yamato Transport based in Japan. The broader sweep in Me2B has, on the one hand, validated our earlier findings

in The Best Service is No Service, but also paint a much richer picture. In this way, if you follow Me2B you will also be on the path to Best Service.

DAVID JAFFE: Australian VIEW

Whilst we felt the customer contact "demand" opportunity hadn't gone away, we also saw that the engagement model between customer and organisation was changing. We wanted to document how organisations needed to respond to a situation in which customers had more knowledge and influence. We also hadn't spent much time in The Best Service is No Service describing the way in which customers wanted contacts to be handled, for those contacts that remained. Thus, the two books are complementary in that Best Service says "lets get rid of what shouldn't be there" whilst Your Customer Rules gives a lot more detail on how to handle the contacts that remain. We also had to reflect on all the new emerging channels and their implications.

Q6: If organisations did just one thing from either book, what would you recommend?

DAVID JAFFE: AUSTRALIAN VIEW

THE DARTBOARD METHOD OF CALL-TYPE TRACKING WAS THE MOST ACCURATE COMPANY X HAD FOUND.....
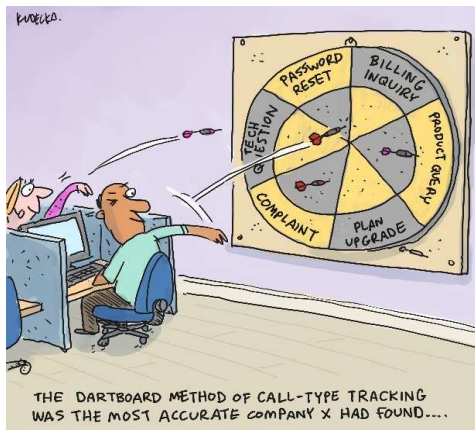
In our geography that would have to be, get a really clear handle on contact "demand" and how it's changing. We say you need to understand not only what customers are calling/emailing/chatting or messaging you about but why. A customer may be asking 'what's my balance? but they are asking because the balance on the digital platform doesn't match some other balance they have been told. Getting the right level of understanding about demand isn't easy and even working out which tracking mechanisms work best takes some effort. Then there are issues like getting the right level of detail and working out who is responsible. It sounds like a basic thing but it's so much the bedrock of demand management that we keep coming back to it.

BILL PRICE: US VIEW

I would nominate as the single recommendation from The Best Service is no Service! That companies acknowledge that the customer support team exists to fix other groups' mistakes or confusion, and that in order to solve customers' frustrations the entire enterprise needs to rally around customer support.

From Me2B my suggestion is that companies ensure that they get each of the Seven Customer Needs in order, starting first and foremost with "You know me, you remember me". This means, at long last, not asking customers what you already (should) know, drawing clear lines across all contact channels (or, as David likes to call it, being "joined up"), and recognizing customer loyalty at all times.

PETER MASSEY: UK VIEW

Think "create a system" rather than projects and targets. Many leaders believe their job is to fix the broken things and have the brightest ideas. Wrong – that's what managers do. What leaders do in the best companies, is to redesign the way that things work.They work out the underlying processes that are required and resource them adequately.

Think about this example. Why are nearly all IVRs a poor experience? Is it for lack of best practice on how many options, or what language to use, or how many menus to have? Or is it that in most businesses that there is no process or people with time to look at the MI, listen to the customer and optimise the way it works?

Or this example. Why are so many websites a poor experience when clearly some are brilliant? What makes one business better at it than another? It is what leaders pay attention to incessantly. They design great optimisation processes and resource them thoroughly. The really smart leaders do it with no extra cost as we've shown in The Best Service Is No Service. Using front line staff in contact with customers to tell the on and offline optimisers what needs doing, how to do it, whether it will work and how it did work.

Directors design, implement and maintain the processes and resources to run the underlying systems (and I don't mean tech systems) required to optimise a business. From The Best Service Is No Service, it's about reducing the pain that customers experience when buying and using your products. From Your Customer Rules! Me2B it's tuning into your customers and optimising what they expect from your brand.

Getting More Help:

www.activeo.com

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