

Dynamic Staff Management Process Overview(Co-Sourcing Partnerships)

USA800 operates three contact center locations in the Midwestern United States. USA800 managed over 48 million talk minutes last year with 1,200 customer advocates servicing those talk minutes. These minutes did not include e-mail and web chat volumes which represented about 10% of overall revenue for USA800.

Approximately 75% of USA800 partners have peak seasons and or direct response driven volumes which challenge USA800 to provide the stringent service levels expected by our partners while delivering the internal occupancy rates necessary to remain profitable on a variable cost basis. Through innovative hybrid staffing models, a flexible and diverse workforce, and a rigorous WFM approach, USA800 has been able to achieve excellent growth by delivering bottom line results for its partners. The case study below demonstrates how USA800 is able to effectively and efficiently handle peak seasons.

Hickory Farms Case Study

As a seasonal cataloguer, Hickory Farm was challenged with significant ramp in the fourth quarter. Furthermore, due to a legacy system, their agents had to spend a minimum of 40 hours on system training. USA 800 was able to leverage an innovative hybrid staffing model, as well as a complex CRM integration resulting in substantial cost savings in training time and average handling time which resulted in lower overall costs. Secondly, USA 800 successfully transitioned what used to be 100% in-house operation to USA800 providing 100% of the customer communications (both voice and e-mail).

Business Model

After 50 years of maintaining a strong stance against outsourcing, due to limited success with outsourcing overflow, a leading gift cataloguer awarded their contact center operations work to USA800. As a result of the contract, USA800 assumed 100% of the responsibility for their multi-channel 24x7 in-house operations. As a result of the people, processes and most importantly the technology deployed by USA800, the gift cataloguer was able to realize substantial savings and improve the customer experience.

Technology Deployed

Immediate savings were realized in training. USA800 developed and deployed a custom web based order entry system that reduced training time from 35 hours down to 4, reducing costs and improving the customer experience by providing a solution that was easier to use for the agents.

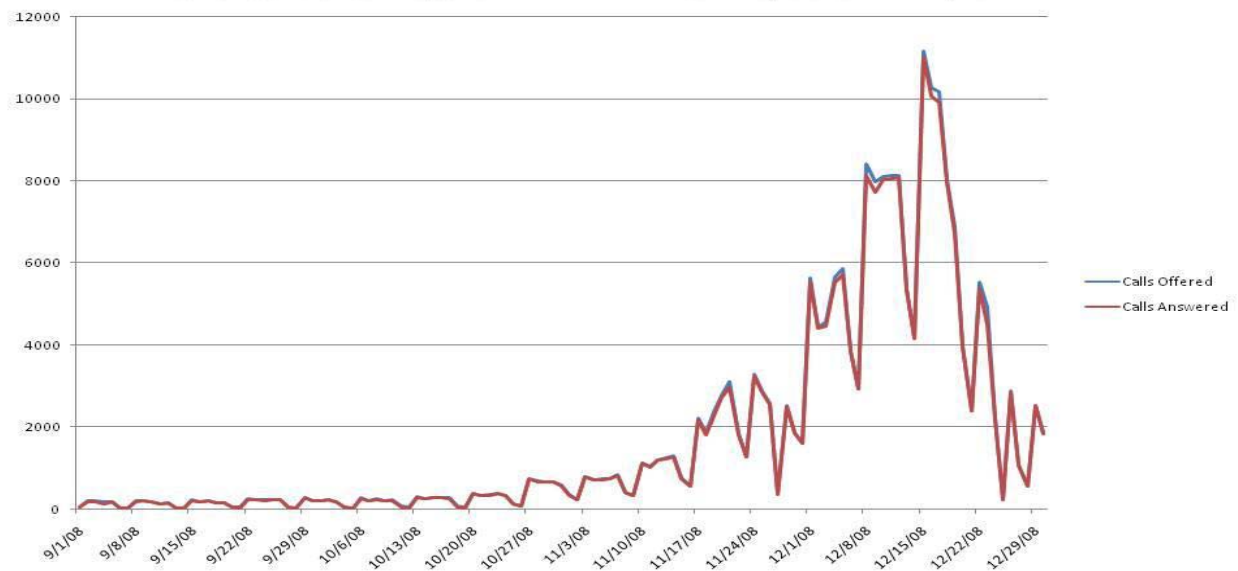
In addition, USA800 utilized the Contact Central solution to provide the CRM user interface and scripting engine. The benefit of the scripting engine provides consistency on all calls, which improves the customer experience and helps to maintain their premium brand image. In addition, utilizing the Contact Central technology, USA800 was able to reduce average handle time by 12%.

Results

Most importantly, during the critical holiday season, which the client had struggled with in the past to answer all the calls and still provide quality service, USA800 was able to scale to over 400 agents, handling over 10,000 calls per day, something the cataloguer has struggled with in the past. The cataloguer was able to leverage the experience and technology offered by USA800 to realize substantial financial savings, and at the same time, improve the customer experience.

Hickory Farms Peak Season Results | USA 800, Inc.

Calls Offered:	213,756	Abandon %:	1.8%
Calls Answered:	209,911	Service Level:	85.54%
Calls Abandoned:	3,845	Peak Day Calls:	11,154



To effectively manage multiple partners programs with drastic peak programs, USA800 has a Workforce Management structure and process which places substantial emphasis on analysis and rigor in execution.

USA800 has a dedicated workforce management team of sixteen (16) individuals who provide multiple tasks to ensure forecasts are accurate, yet flexible. The primary functions of the forecasting team are comprised of three (3) functions:

Long-Term Forecasting and Staffing

The group’s purpose is to review historical performance on each account in terms of call volume, handle times, service levels, and demand pattern by day of week and hour of day. This information is used to provide projections for each week over the next three to four months to insure proper hiring, staffing and coordination with human resources. The group works with clients to understand seasonality, review program requirements, understand demand drivers and variability to meet the long term needs of a program.

Near-Term Scheduling

The primary purpose of this group is to take the patterns identified by the long-term group and to utilize IEX TotalView and other internal forecasting tools (and analytical reviews) to properly produce agent schedules (generally 2 weeks). Daily variation, attendance, time off requests, coaching & team huddle requests, and immediate training needs are factored into the agent schedules to ensure a proper balance between customer demand and offline time is maintained. This group has the flexibility to approve individual schedule change requests for increased hours or time off via our online agent scheduling tool (Zen Time Request). Short notice changes for upcoming days (for last minute client campaigns) are coordinated through this function to adjust schedules, training hours, and coordinate time off and other time requests.

USA800 Command Center



Several proprietary internal tools are monitored which give us real-time status on every account, agent status, by interval and for the day. This group also serves as an immediate point of escalation for customer issues, client system/website outages, and a 24x7 monitoring for all issues impacting our clients. Last minute adjustments for demand and staffing can be made immediately through this group.

Intra-Day Management

The dedicated personnel within USA800's Command Center are staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week monitoring same day demand variations and fluctuations which might require shifting

schedules, calling more agents into work early, or offering same day requested time off. This intraday team monitors various reporting on eight (8) 52" monitors in our state-of-the-art command center to deal with the immediate customer demand variations and communication with both the long-term and near-term groups as required on an account by account basis to ensure proper coordination and schedule adjustments.