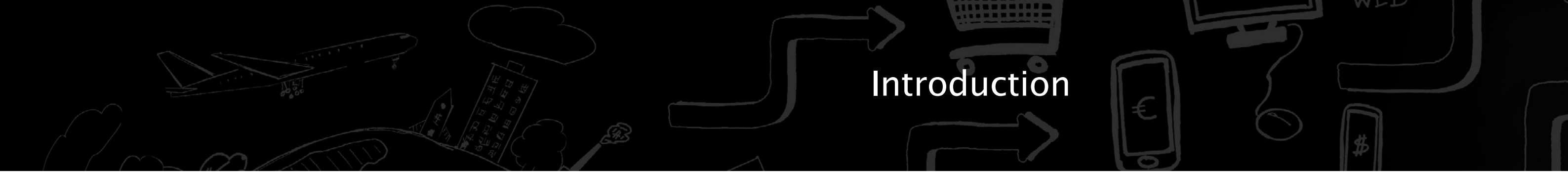




How to Build an Omnichannel Team

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Introduction

The way that people shop has changed drastically over the last few years. Buying a television, for example, used to be simple. Now, if we get past our laptops to actually set foot in a store, we stand there comparing prices on our phones, reading reviews, looking on Twitter for advice. By and large, linear buying processes are a thing of the past. Consumers work across multiple channels to get what they want at a competitive price. They have gone 'omnichannel'.

Businesses have yet to keep pace with the consumer's omnichannel reality, particularly if you consider the general approach to customer service. The traditional call center is now a thing of the past, evolving into contact centers that have to handle all methods of communication. While it is generally true that businesses have done a good job of developing their contact center offering as new channels enter the fray, it is also true that they are operating in a fragmented multi-channel way rather than adopting a seamless omnichannel approach.

Businesses that have a developed contact center will, more often than not, work in silos and keep channels completely separate due to historical infrastructure. With social teams sitting apart from call teams, for example, the ability of companies to deliver seamless customer service to support a cross-channel journey is compromised. Achieving First Contact Resolution with a low handling time can often seem an impossible goal for agents in a divided, multi-channel, environment.

Often, agents also operate without prior knowledge of the journey that each caller has taken before coming into contact with them. This is because their tools are as fragmented as the contact center teams. This lack of knowledge frustrates consumers and has a knock-on effect on agent efficacy.

Building a specialized omnichannel team that serves customers regardless of channel, and with a full view of the customer journey, will increase customer satisfaction and deliver more sales.

Understanding the business need to meet the consumer's omnichannel expectations is the first step towards building an effective omnichannel customer service team. In this document, we guide you through the next five.

About Now Interact

Now Interact is a leading omnichannel insight vendor. Founded in 2010, Now Interact delivers platform and channel-agnostic Predictive Intelligence insights and applications that use online & offline data to enable the next generation of personalization.

1 Recruit properly

The most successful omnichannel team will be equipped with your most well-rounded talent. Whether seeded from existing agents on your floor or sourced externally, it's crucial that you find the right mix of people for your team.

The team should be a diverse mix of talent whose specialisms reach across customer experience, sales and customer service. Team members should be skilled at rapport building. They should approach your customers with empathy, possess excellent product knowledge and have high customer satisfaction scores. It shouldn't necessarily be made up of your biggest sellers; even though sales will always be a priority, it shouldn't be the driving force behind the establishment of an omnichannel team.

One of the main reasons why you are building an omnichannel team is to deliver an incredible customer experience. A team consisting of well-rounded individuals achieves this. A group of hardcore salespeople may not.

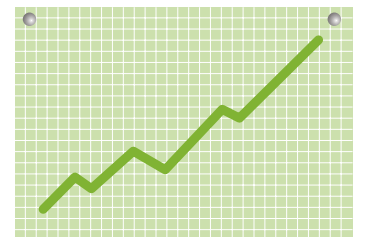


2 Ringfence a team

Before deploying across the wider estate, it's good practice to pilot a new solution as a proof of concept exercise to work through any early teething problems or training requirements. Start with a small team first, working on a segment of your visitors, before making decisions about how, and where, to expand.

Before the team is even formed, make sure that you have budget and space allocated for its development. A successful team feeds off each other, sharing successes and learning from mistakes in a collaborative environment.

Ensuring a team is given the tools and space they need to be successful from the start will increase the chance of your pilot becoming a firm fixture in the contact center.



3 Spend time on it

Do not expect to have the perfect team immediately. Although it may be tempting to gather up your best agents and get the ball rolling straight away, you are better served by investing time in the project.

When recruiting internally, take time to examine agent data. Extract the data from a long enough period of time to get a good idea of each agent's typical results and, from there, identify the highest performers. Cut the data to determine which agents are the most well-rounded. See how the agents work together in a team and, if necessary, make adjustments.

The strategy that your new team takes, and the goals that they are given, should be carefully thought through before any work starts. Take time to establish exactly why you're setting up the team.

If you think that you might be doing it just for the sake of it, take a step back to consider the role of omnichannel within your wider strategy. Are you looking to make online processes more efficient? What additional knowledge would you like to know about your customers? How are you planning on sharing insights from the omnichannel team with the wider business? How are you defining success?

Investing time in truly understanding the importance of developing an omnichannel contact channel team in the project's infancy, as well as determining exactly what you hope the team will achieve, will help to assuage any nervousness from other key stakeholders.



4 Don't be afraid to make changes

You are not going to get everything right the first time. There will be growing pains and inefficient processes. There will also be developments in customer experience as technology advances. Change means growth. Embrace it.

Your omnichannel team should be actively looking for how they can adapt to best accommodate consumer needs, increase efficiency and drive profits. It's crucial that your team plans for, and is receptive to, change. Be a leader that fosters an agile team spirit - build a team that is passionate about being a step ahead of industry developments, making adjustments wherever needed to surpass customer expectations and achieve optimum results.



5 Devise a relative reward structure

Building the best omnichannel team may be worthless if its members are being measured and rewarded on a historical reward scheme. For example, Average Handling Time may not be the best KPI for a sales-focused agent; customers want to feel valued, and that all their needs are met when making a purchase, not like they're being rushed.

The best managers of the most successful omni-channel teams devise relative reward structures. Reward distribution should be based on fulfilment of the goals established when first building the team. Customer Satisfaction Skills (CSAT), the Net Promoter Score (NPS) and other relevant measurements should be embedded in the team's core values and should be used to help drive each agent towards success.

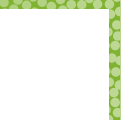
Not having a reward structure in place that appropriately rewards achievements runs the very real risk of demotivating agents. A team with low employee engagement will, in turn, have low customer satisfaction rates. Agents are the frontline of your business, they should be rewarded for delivering a fantastic experience.



How to create an omnichannel team: Checklist ✓

To help your business on its journey towards establishing a world-class omnichannel team, we've created this handy checklist. Print it out and stick it somewhere prominent to help you to stay focused on your goal.

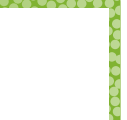
#1 Recruit properly



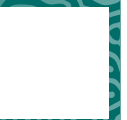
#2 Ringfence a team



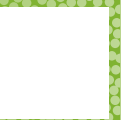
#3 Spend time on it



#4 Don't be afraid to make changes



#5 Devise a relative reward structure



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Summary

As a consumer, you already live in an omnichannel world. You understand the expectations consumers have for a high quality customer experience. You know that these expectations have changed as technology has become more intuitive, more necessary.

As a business person, you most likely operate in a company that isn't aligned with its consumers. You may not offer optimized web experiences. You will have an understanding about how online visitors affect the bottom line, but you may not be able to use online consumer data to build a greater picture of consumer patterns or to educate wider business decisions. You will no doubt be an expert at helping your customer at each point of their customer journey, but will be unable to leverage data to ensure a smooth transition between these different touchpoints.

There are gaps in the consumer lifecycle currently left vulnerable to abandonment and customer dissatisfaction. Building an omnichannel team that ensures the delivery of a seamless customer experience and takes advantage of every opportunity to secure sales will seal these gaps.

The need to adapt for omnichannel is pressing, but you need to make sure that your response to the need isn't rushed and careless. Recruit properly, ringfence a team, spend time developing skillsets and strategies, be open to change and develop a relative reward structure. Following these five steps will help you to build a strong team able to deliver on the promises of omnichannel success; increased revenue and an improved customer experience.

Now Interact's Predictive Intelligence technology

Your team should be equipped with the best technology in order to enable their success. Now Interact's Predictive Intelligence platform was developed with omnichannel insight at its heart.

Now Interact's Predictive Intelligence technology maps behavioral data against machine-learning algorithms to understand each individual online visitor's unique need state. It knows why each visitor is online, and uses this knowledge to power the personalization of contact channels offered in order to reduce levels of cart abandonment, increase revenues and help customers to get the help that they're actually looking for.

Our platform- and channel-agnostic intelligence identifies the best channel a customer should be served on, facilitating a powerful cross-channel experience for agents.

Our technology is unique in that it has an understanding of the customer's journey in both the online and offline worlds. Through our SiteVision platform, agents have access to comprehensive, and easily digestible, information about the caller's previous, and continuing, online journey while connected on a call. If needed, they can also send documents or other files to the caller's screen.

Omnichannel agents need tools that give them as complete as possible an understanding of the consumer lifecycle. Now Interact's Predictive Intelligence is the only tool that bridges the gap between online and the call center. Ours is the only tool that incorporates offline touchpoints in the call center within the scope of omnichannel's definition. We are the insight tool that gives companies the best possible hopes of realizing their omnichannel potential.

Consumers are already living in an omnichannel world. Your business should be too.



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