Using Gamification and Digital Motivation to Increase Call Center Productivity

Integrating gamification elements within the existing business processes of call and service centers can not only drastically improve the productivity of employees but also increase call deflection and keep customers engaged with the brand.

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DRIVERS IMPACTING CALL CENTER PRODUCTIVITY

High Churn and Lack of Engagement

Call center employee churn rates are consistently high, both among millennial-age staff members and older employees. Many call centers have 50% or more millennial-age employees. And studies show they tend to work for 1 to 2 years before moving on. The best way to combat this is to foster a more engaging workplace where employees of all ages want to be — not just somewhere they show up to for a paycheck. Gen Zers reportedly have less desktop keyboard and mouse skills and use their smartphones and tablets as computers. They also seek continuous feedback to improve their performance and productivity. So there needs to be a way to engage the new generation of workers. Based on numerous studies, providing immediate feedback, recognition, and showing clear career paths are ways to engage and retain today’s employees.

Increase in Remote Agents

Hiring remote workers is becoming more common for call center operators. Those that hire remote staff gain access to a wide variety of perspectives and experiences, but the lack of community and engagement amongst the team members poses challenges.

Unfortunately, management cannot provide encouragement in person. So instead of a high five after a good call, managers can give digital praise. Reward structures and inter-employee contests are proven ways to increase job satisfaction and build relationships.

Staffing Shortages, Including Management

Talent pool and employment rates in some markets can put a squeeze on companies that need local call center talent. Training of new staff requires time and money resources, which can be a problem if a company is growing and needs onboarding to occur quickly. Gamified tools can boost the new staff training procedures by injecting tasks and rewards into the process, effectively turning it into a fun — or at least tolerable — exercise instead of a chore.

Some solutions have shown a jump in boosted training attendance and performance metrics, allowing new staff members to be better prepared to handle demanding customers.

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(2) Bianca Wright, Making the Transition To At-Home Contact Center Agents , http://www.nearshoreamericas.com/making-transition-athome-contact-center-agents/ (Sept. 22, 2015)
Focus on Call Deflection

In the call center industry, “deflection,” shouldn’t mean turning away customers just to save a few bucks. It’s providing the customers with alternative — and often preferred — methods of answering questions. An online Q&A, for example, is a sensible way to deflect some calls and aid customers who might rather read some content than have to talk to someone on the phone. Each call costs time and money, so the financial benefits of increased deflection and online learning can be substantial.

Changing Customer Expectations

Customers need to be engaged more. Studies have show that increasing customer engagement, including through social channels such as Facebook and Twitter, increases customer satisfaction, loyalty and revenue.

Predominance of Mobile

Employees engage on multiple devices, including mobile. Studies have also shown that by providing mobile ways to work increases productivity.

A DIFFERENT APPROACH IS NEEDED

The digital workplace today needs both gamification and digital motivation. Many organizations may start with gamification to reward a particular behavior and increase participation at a point in time. But organizations need digital motivation to reward multiple behaviors exhibited across multiple systems to increase engagement over a period of time. Most importantly, through digital motivation and reputation, Badgeville taps into intrinsic motivation, which lasts longer and is more effective. By extending the focus on behaviors alone to reputation, companies can now tap into people’s internal drives to improve and be part of something bigger for lasting gain.

1 Provide structure and achievement around the onboarding progress - help people understand not just where they are, but where they’re going, and help them see what happens when they win.

These days, gamification is found in many walks of life, so many younger staff members come to expect a certain level of feedback and interactive play in their workplace platforms. So, contact centers should strive to alter gamification strategies to fit pools of staff members based on their job functions or demographics, including age and location. Combined with a gamified online community or knowledgebase, these efforts will result in long-term boosts in customer and employee satisfaction.

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CALL CENTER PRODUCTIVITY

2 Recognize agents as they succeed in real time, and provide a reputational record for them to see how they’ve won in the past.

Gamification allows companies to easily extend this concept to employees who aren’t even in the office physically.

With today’s programs, staff members can earn various rewards or statuses by completing certain actions, such as completing training, or resolving a certain number of customer inquiries. Advanced gamification platforms even include analytics about staff actions and interactions, allowing managers to tweak the gamification as needed. This information can be tied to data on average hold times, call resolution metrics, and other stats.

3 Build any competitive element into a team-based structure; don’t pit employees head-to-head.

Other companies use gamification to encourage staff members to take management-training classes above and beyond their current position.

Even with the lure of a promotion and more pay, many clients often struggle to encourage participation in this type of training⑤. But by introducing gamification into the agent experience, firms can increase the numbers of staff who begin — and complete — the training process.

4 Consider additional investment into career development as a reward - give your top performers additional training job opportunities, etc.

Gamification can extend into the company’s online Q&A by providing visitors with badges that mark how much content they have consumed⑥. This structure allows the company to build levels of “experts” through badge tiers.

5 Look for alternative ways to drive productivity, rather than focusing only on the transactions. Investment in reusable content/resources or driving collaboration between agents can drive great results.

This matching of content with the customer’s desires is a way companies can improve customer satisfaction, reduce churn, and improve the overall brand reputation. The number of support tickets generated by customer can also be reduced, and the company’s online knowledge base will increase in size and scope.

ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL APPROACH

Accelerate Learning and Measure Training Effectiveness

Motivate employees to consume material to keep them compliant and current in order to meet the company’s obligations. Incentivize people to complete learning activities, validate their accomplishments and build their reputation. Incentivize participation and completion in Skillsoft eLearning programs. Correlate product sales to training on those products. Tie increased sales confidence to training taken. Show where training has impact on pipeline generation and sales. Identify areas of improvement.

**Build Expertise**

Badgeville’s *Expertise Tracks* are a critical path for learning and development. Expertise Tracks allow individual employees to earn recognition for key skill sets, unique knowledge and related achievements. This enables the organization to leverage the “best athlete,” utilize flash teams, and collaborate more effectively. This also enables organizations to quickly build skills in growing fields.

**Build Career Paths**

Badgeville provides multiple pathways for learning and development for any employee through missions. Missions also allow organizations to reward and recognize wins along the way and guide the employee journey. While system level badges work well for task completion, missions reinforce key behaviors, support long-term success and align interests among all employees.

**Provide Immediate Feedback**

Badgeville provides immediate feedback for valued activities and achievements. It reinforces value of the activity and feeling of success through real time pop-up notifications. Social streaming creates a positive force in cultural transformation. Through Badgeville’s social streams, employees can see in real-time what others have done. As a result, collaboration grows by recognizing individuals in how they can help one another. This leads to the sharing of new ideas and innovation.

**Recognize People for their Achievements**

To achieve long-term employee engagement, Badgeville uses intrinsic motivators that validate the employee’s story of personal growth and purpose. Tools such as validation and reputation can be more effective than purely external motivators such as monetary rewards. Through a Universal Reputation model, Badgeville intrinsically motivates through reward accumulation, connecting members to the best users available to help. It also rewards those who help the most by recognizing them for it, across the applications they use in the enterprise. Badgeville comes with configurable visualizations that address the particular needs of each audience.

Long-term engagement is generally the right design monitored and upgraded over time. As a result, companies create rewards that are personalized and fresh, resulting in a much sticker user experience. Profile-level fields enable you to personalize games for users based on any number of characteristics (e.g. role, location, level of expertise).
LEADING TELECOM UTILIZES BADGEVILLE TO REDUCE SUPPORT COSTS, DRIVE PRODUCT INNOVATION AND INCREASE CUSTOMER ADVOCACY.

THE SITUATION

Since launching, this telecom service company has received numerous accolades, including Canada’s most recommended national mobile service according to J.D. Power & Associates. As such, they were achieving significant growth in their subscriber base, but they also faced a challenge. More customers meant more issues for their support teams to tackle. They saw this as an opportunity to innovate and to create a customer experience, which would engage their users, reduce supports costs and also drive advocacy.

Gamification Elements Included:

- Points
- Achievements
- Missions
- Levels
- Leaderboards

THE SOLUTION

A Community was launched as the go-to place for customers to ask questions, get answers and share ideas on all things mobile. To ensure a thriving community, they integrated Badgeville into their community. Utilizing Badgeville enabled a more personalized, rewarding customer experience, which would motivate community engagement. As customers interact with the brand as well as with one another, they earn Points and Achievements for performing valuable behaviors such as answering questions, sharing ideas and logging in daily.

The community also leveraged Levels, a powerful digital reputation technique, to recognize customers who demonstrated expertise within the community. Every quarter, team acknowledged a select few to reach the top level, and earn a title reserved for their most dedicated community members. Customers who earn this recognition are rewarded with personalized swag, sneak peeks, and exclusive access to programs such as testing the latest products.

THE RESULTS

The community has since been hailed as the most active and self-sustaining online community of any Canadian telecommunications company. Here are some of the compelling results they’ve seen with Badgeville:

- **44%** Improvement in Call Deflections
- **97%** Questions Answered by Customers
- **85%** Likely to Recommend
- **15hr** Average Time Per Week Engaged
- **4min** Average Time to Answer
CONCLUSION

For call centers and service teams, the places where we have the most impact on productivity isn’t on the transaction itself. The challenge is changing the management mindset from transactional or metrics orientated into something that is more human. Our best results are on time to productivity, onboarding, team engagement, reducing call load through knowledge sharing. These focus on achievement, tribal affiliation, and expertise as ways to “win at work,” rather than trying to squeeze another .5% productivity out of the process.

By adding Digital Motivation elements to your already existing work processes, employees become more engaged in their environment and thus likely to perform better. It goes beyond the stick and carrot approach – to dangle an incentive in hopes of achieving goals – by instead tapping into the pleasure center of the brain, the human’s need for play and growth, giving them the tools and the framework to achieve milestones and showcase their skills.

Gamification can be used also to extend into the company’s existing environment, providing the user with elements to measure their performance with, or Portable Reputation to showcase content consumed and levels reached, on both the employee and consumer end of the business.
Every engagement program is different, so you need a platform that can be malleable to your company’s needs. To learn more about how you can create a more sticky, engaging experience for your users, contact info@badgeville.com.

If Badgeville Enterprise Plus sounds like the right move to engage your employees and customers, let’s chat at sales@badgeville.com!