



MONITORING QA REMOTELY:

How to Manage Work-From-Home Agents & Monitor Customer Interactions Using Cloud-Based QA Technology

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Cloud-based Speech Analytics
Powerful. Affordable. Easy.

INTRODUCTION

At the time this white paper was written, the COVID-19 virus has changed how U.S. companies do business in just a few weeks. As more businesses transition to a remote workspace to prevent the spread of the virus, B2B and B2C enterprises are facing the challenges of managing employees and call center agents remotely. Operating from a work-from-home business model can also provide some benefits to companies and agents alike, such as lowering operating costs while creating a more diverse workforce. For agents and employees, benefits include a flexible work schedule and zero commute costs. However, implementing a long-term work-from-home strategy will require highly motivated management teams,

discipline, and the right tools and technology to maintain productivity, agent engagement, and customer satisfaction levels while businesses face unprecedented customer communications during uncertain times.

This white paper examines how cloud-based, automated QA technology can be leveraged to not only help manage work-from-home agents, but also to lower operation costs while successfully meeting the challenges of consistently providing excellent customer service in a changing world.

1. Challenges for QA Managers

Costly Agent Turnover & High Attrition Rates

Agent attrition is one of the most expensive challenges for contact centers, and one of the most difficult metrics to improve. While QA Managers understand that expensive agent turnover affects the overall productivity of the call center, they often don't know how much turnover truly costs. Calculating the cost of agent turnover can help determine goals for reducing attrition rates and what needs to be done to reach that goal. Here's one simple formula that can be used to calculate that cost.¹

ATTRITION RATE = NUMBER OF ATTRITIONS/AVERAGE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES X 100

If your contact center lost 37 agents in a year, with an average of 300 employees, your attrition rate is 12.3%. The actual cost of agent turnover will vary by contact center, but according to one Cornell study, it costs roughly 16% of an agent's gross annual earnings to replace that agent.²

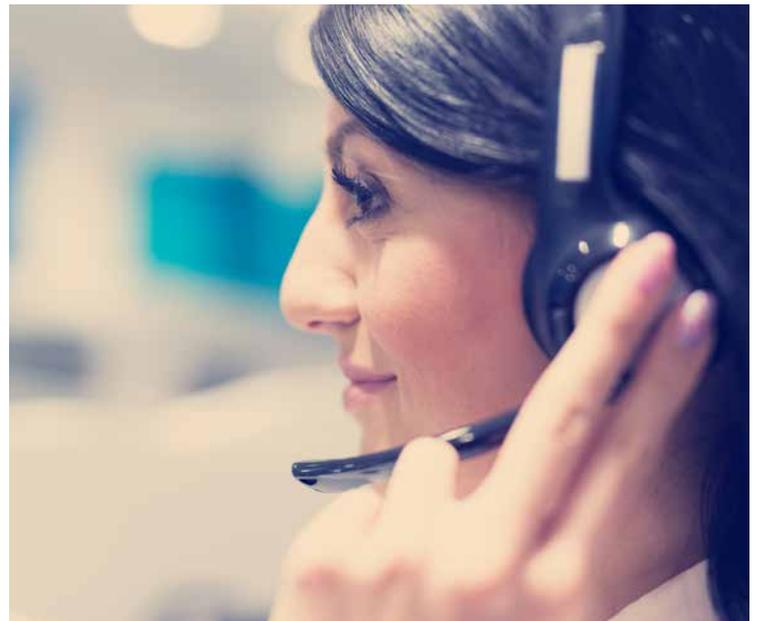
That's problematic for any enterprise, especially when the overall objective is to provide a consistently exceptional customer experience cost effectively. To address this issue, many companies leverage cloud technologies and turn to other resources, such as hiring a Business Process Outsourcer (BPO), for their QA processes. Let's look at the BPO option first.

Business Process Outsourcers offer large numbers of well-trained agents at reasonable prices across a wide range of clients and industries. But they are typically located overseas, and many companies prefer to manage their contact centers domestically. Plus, even BPOs need to find ways to manage agents in a cost-effective way so they can operate large contact centers and maintain their revenue goals.

Whether you use a BPO or manage your call center staff and quality management internally, finding the right agents with the required skills and experience is not your only challenge. Training those agents to meet a certain level of service and professionalism plays a major role in successfully improving customer satisfaction levels. Luckily, as you'll see by the end of this paper, recent innovations in technology are empowering enterprises to employ, train, and manage remote agents in highly cost-effective ways.

Lack of Resources to Manage Agents Effectively

Measuring agent-customer interactions, both in-house and through contracted call centers, can help improve CSAT scores and provide tangible data for training purposes. However, large call volumes and small QA teams make it impossible, and very expensive, to manually listen to every call. A manager in charge of 30 agents who scores 20 calls per agent each month would still need to listen to 500 calls, or about 20 hours of calls each month. As a result, managers who manually monitor calls most often rely on random sampling to catch emerging problems and identify opportunities for coaching and training. To eliminate this strain on resources, they can hire more staff or turn to other solutions.



Balancing Customer Care with Operational Costs

In two recent surveys, 75 percent of businesses and 80 percent of contact centers list customer experience as the largest driver of investment. According to these surveys, agent-customer interactions may determine whether a customer leaves or stays with a company and how that customer rates the company.^{3,4} While most QA managers and business owners know this, the challenge then becomes how to balance the expense of training agents within a customer-centric strategy with everyday operational costs.

II. Benefits of a Remote Workforce

Taking just the three challenges above into consideration, there is one solution that benefits agents, customers, QA managers, and the company's bottom line. Using a remote workforce is affordable, sustainable, and produces the best results for companies looking to create more effective training and procedures that keep customers and agents happy.

1. Cloud-Based Solutions are Affordable

With a cloud-based quality monitoring solution, companies can take advantage of the speed, flexibility, and affordability of software offered as-a-service (SaaS). Not only do cloud-based solutions enable a company to begin with a small engagement and scale as they add new clients or call centers, but they are also essential to managing

remote agents. These solutions also cost dramatically less to implement than custom solutions and do not burden companies with the need to purchase, maintain, and update software or hardware. In terms of ROI, DMG Consulting reports that a cloud-based speech analytics investment can pay for itself in three to nine months.⁵

2. Flexible Schedules Reduce Agent Attrition

For QA managers, hiring agents with flexible schedules eliminates staffing headaches during holidays and prime vacation times. Work-from-home agents can also accommodate spikes in call volume on short notice. Morale and job satisfaction levels tend to be higher in remote agents because they have more control over their schedules. When managers allow for an improved work/life balance, agents are more dedicated to their work and perform better in challenging situations.⁶

3. At-Home Agents Focus More on Customers' Needs

When hiring agents in a work-from-home model, QA managers are not limited to candidates within a geographical region. Expanding the hiring pool increases your chance of hiring the right person with the right experience and education. According to At-Home Agent expert and President of Customer Contact Strategies, Michele Rowan, "Home-based call center agents tend to be more highly educated and experienced, have less stress and are focused on meeting callers' needs."⁷

Now add the affordability of cloud-based technology, the cost savings of reducing agent attrition, and you have a team of dedicated, talented, work-from-home agents who have the resources and time to focus on what matters most – your customers.

III. How to Use Cloud-Based Technology to Get the Benefits of a Remote Workforce & Streamline the Call Center

Combining WFH Benefits and Speech Analytics Technology

By combining the benefits of working from home with technology to transcribe and score every agent conversation, speech analytics makes it possible to train and retain agents from a distance. Speech analytics makes it possible for companies to gain insights by listening to the voice of the customer. As a result, QA managers gain a deeper understanding of both successful and unsuccessful interactions, enabling them to create more effective training and procedures that keep customers and agents happy.

Delivering an Outstanding Customer Experience

Identifying and categorizing specific phrases can also help call centers identify and address sources of customer frustration using root cause analysis. They can then focus on the performance metrics associated with the issue and use them to flag relevant calls, adjust agent scripts, and improve training. This kind of adjustment also provides a valuable service to contact centers and businesses by helping them retain customers and improve procedures.

Enhancing Agent Training with Automated Quality Monitoring Solutions

Automated monitoring and scoring make it possible to evaluate agent performance consistently and objectively while reducing effort and costs. In other words, busy managers can spend less time listening to calls and more time talking with agents and helping them succeed.



The solution can produce automated quality scorecards that show detailed metrics on individual agents as well as performance across teams. This process removes subjectivity and enforces a consistent approach to training. The scorecards empower managers to offer agents precise, meaningful feedback on their work. They can also set up the conditions for positive reinforcement and friendly competition between individuals and teams, as well as pinpoint precisely where agents should focus on improving.

A speech analytics solution can also help identify individual agents who would benefit from additional coaching and pinpoint areas where multiple agents are struggling. And by using the insights derived from automated reports, managers can make sure that training helps to effectively address and resolve these common issues. Conversely, it can also help managers identify and share best practices from high-performing agents who are doing well.

As a result of these efforts, agents may be more willing to stay with call centers rather than quitting in frustration when they don't understand how and where to improve. This, in turn, helps call centers maximize their return on hiring, onboarding, and training those employees. It may also affect the bottom line: one recent survey found that companies who invest in the employee experience have 4.2 times the average profit and 2.1 times the average revenue.⁸

Streamlining the Call Center

Speech analytics is often applied to streamline call center operations. Call centers and their clients in any industry can benefit enormously from speech analytics technology. However, simply purchasing and using this technology in isolation is unlikely to provide these outcomes. Instead, analytics solutions should be thoughtfully implemented as part of a larger strategic initiative – one that has buy-in from leadership and employees and is backed with ongoing training and support from the solutions partner.

Before signing on with a speech analytics partner, there are important business factors for call centers to question and consider. Be sure that any solution you choose has a Managed Client Services offering dedicated analytics experts to help with implementation and provide ongoing support.

IV. Summary

Lasting Effects of COVID-19 & the Future of the Office Space

Given the growing need for highly-trained, talented customer service agents, the COVID-19 pandemic will likely change how companies do business. This new shift to a remote workforce will require solutions that provide call centers with the tools needed to create a collaborative workspace while promoting positive relationships with customers. As companies develop a sophisticated new model that is both affordable and profitable, they will need to incorporate smart technologies to offer employee.

About CallFinder

CallFinder® is a leading provider of cloud-based SaaS speech analytics, automated call scoring, and speech-to-text transcription technology with sentiment analysis. Our easy-to-use solution is designed to help businesses and contact centers automate quality monitoring to improve agent performance and provide a superior customer experience.

For more information, visit us on the web at www.mycallfinder.com

Proof of Concept Demo With CallFinder

Find out what your customers are experiencing when they call your company. Our proof of concept demo is much more than a product demonstration; it's an analysis of the voice of your customers.

Simply provide 100 hours of your call recordings. We will process the audio files through the CallFinder speech analytics engine, and provide you with a report and consultation of our findings. The entire assessment process takes just a few days to deliver results. Start discovering how you can improve your customers' experience today!

Schedule A Demo

CallFinder can help you meet your analytics goals.

800-639-1700
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