

Camelot

Powerful evidence to change an operation

As the operator of the UK National Lottery, Camelot UK Lotteries Limited aims to transform people's lives and make dreams come true. Camelot strives to deliver a high level of customer service, but, until recently, its customer service measures didn't reflect the vibrant brand or the needs of the consumers of today. With Bright's help, Camelot has made a number of improvements in this area.



The Challenge

Camelot's customer service had been driven by KPIs which were set by its regulator, the National Lottery Commission (NLC), under the terms of Camelot's licence agreement. These focused on speed as opposed to customer satisfaction. Camelot had to provide evidence of industry performance to the NLC to facilitate a change in what was measured, so that it could undertake a significant transformation programme that would result in a more efficient and cost-effective operation that also delivered a superior customer experience.

The Solution

The cornerstone to this transformation project was to benchmark Camelot's performance against its peers and the wider contact centre industry. Bright Index from Bright was the only service available that would present the level of detail needed, combined with the consultation to interpret the results.

The Result

The Bright Index outcomes gave Camelot the evidence it needed to persuade the NLC to change how it measured its performance. Camelot initiated the operational change programme which has already reduced costs by 40% and enabled a 17% increase in call volumes year-on-year to be absorbed easily. Additionally, customer satisfaction scores have improved by 10%.

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Pam Bowell, Head of Customer Operations, Camelot

Securing its future

In 2007, Camelot was awarded its third licence to run the UK National Lottery. However, the company had to radically change the way its customer services function operated in order to drive through efficiencies and reduce operating costs.

Head of Customer Operations at Camelot, Pam Bowell, takes up the story. “We had never had the opportunity to do a deep dive into our operation. We knew we had to be more effective and efficient, and deliver a quality service to our customers, but we didn't know what we needed to change to deliver the greatest benefit to both our customers and the business. I conducted an audit internally, but the data was contradictory. On the surface, it all looked fine, but I just couldn't get under the skin of it.”

The need for speed

At the time, the Operational Team was measured against a set of metrics provided by the NLC (National Lotteries Commission) that focused entirely on speed; answering calls as quickly as possible.

“I knew from my experience that a team answering 80% of calls in less than 20 seconds was overkill for our type of business, but I had no clear evidence to explain the impact chasing this target was having on performance and, more importantly, our customers,” continued Pam.

“Fundamentally, we had to change the way we provided customer service, and the only way we could do this was to influence how the NLC measured our performance – for the good of the customer and the wider Camelot business.”

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Uncovering the evidence for transformation

“Through my own internal audit I had created a set of hypotheses, but I had a real lack of data,” said Pam. “It was at this point that I went to market to find an organisation that would be able to benchmark Camelot against its peers and against all contact centres in the UK to understand how we were performing, and to substantiate our case.”

The only organisation in the UK able to deliver this service was Bright. Bright was able to use its extensive experience in the contact centre industry to provide more than just a benchmark report; Bright put the report into context through a consultative approach.

“Working with Bright was easy,” explains Pam. “At the start of the engagement, all they wanted from us was to answer a series of questions. They were clear about what they were going to measure and, with little further involvement from us, they completed the contact centre benchmarking programme. They then presented back how we ranked and what it meant to our business. Bright was able to bring to life my hypothesis that we were over-servicing on speed but not delivering the quality of service our customers wanted.”

The Bright Index revealed that the average contact centre industry speed to answer at that time was 124 seconds. Camelot’s peers were typically answering calls in 38 seconds, but Camelot was picking up the phone within 14 seconds – the only organisations answering calls faster were the emergency services!

“We needed to find a healthy place to be on this spectrum,” continued Pam. “The contact centre benchmark project showed us that we were in the top 20 against efficiency measures but that we didn’t need to answer calls quite so fast. Bright challenged us to consider whether this was making our customers happy. What was happening on the call itself? Was the agent quick, efficient and were we achieving First Call Resolution? This wasn’t something we were actively measuring.”

Instigating sustainable change

Ultimately, Bright provided clear evidence for Camelot to take to the NLC to open the debate on what really makes customers happy.

After various discussions, the regulator agreed to the changes. The new approach was implemented in April 2011 and still includes measurement of the speed to answer calls, letters, emails and complaints, but also has clear measures for First Call Resolution, customer satisfaction and compliance.

“The facts Bright presented to us were very powerful. They were able to help us prioritise the changes we could make. They exposed where costs could be saved, where investments needed to be made and how we could ensure customer satisfaction, without significantly impacting on the speed to answer.”

Delivering the brand promise

This wasn’t the only change Camelot made as a result of the insight Bright presented.

“I was finding that there was somewhat of a disconnect between the brand advertising for the UK National Lottery and the customer experience when you phoned the contact centre,” explains Pam. “The advertising promoted dreams, but this culture and brand presence were not reflected by the agents in the call centre. But we couldn’t change this while we were measuring speed.”

With the insight from Bright, Camelot started to address these challenges without having a detrimental impact on the speed of answer – this reduced to 22 seconds, which was still an acceptable level for NLC.

Faster, more informed decision making

Camelot is now measured against a broader range of KPIs; the business is driving deeper change in its customer experience. Conducting the Bright Index contact centre benchmark annually continues to provide Camelot with the evidence needed to continue to improve and contributes to the direction for further change.

“Now that we have a modern approach to contact centre performance measurement, we are much more able to anticipate the impact of change on business performance and the customer. The Bright Index validates our assumptions and gives us the sanity check that we need to ensure nothing untoward is happening in the industry or wider contact centre market, especially with the rapid changes in consumer contact behaviour, technology and the economic situation.”

“Ultimately, Bright has enabled us to make decisions much quicker and with more confidence,” said Pam. “As a result, we have reduced our costs by 40% and easily absorbed an increase of 17% in call volumes year-on-year. We are also now more focused on quality – our customer satisfaction scores have increased by nearly 10%.”

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