



Three

Creating powerful arguments for change by benchmarking performance

3 is the fastest growing mobile network in the country, which now covers more than 97% of the UK's population. Known as the 'network for the Internet', 3 specialises in making it easy to access apps, websites, and streaming content from the comfort of your smartphone.



The Challenge

Senior management wanted to establish if the Contact Centre was operating at optimum performance but a lack of insight led to decisions being taken based on opinion. In addition, there was no way of telling if what was being measured was having any impact on the customer experience.

The Solution

Bright Index was employed to compare over 60 operational metrics, such as speed of answer and IVR journey time, with other organisations across the country. Crucially, it allowed the management team to have an objective view of what good looks like. This meant they could set the right targets for business processes and has led to a huge increase in efficiency – as well as boosting customer satisfaction.

The Result

- The direct impact of using Bright Index has:
- Taken the emotion out of setting targets
 - Allowed senior management to prioritise initiatives based on customer impact
 - Driven down self-service journey times to being some of the best in the country
 - Sustained improvements to NPS and First Contact Resolution rates as a result of operational changes
 - Led to £millions in savings thanks to a reduction in incoming calls and call transfers

“Before having the Bright data, moving away from the traditional 80/20 Service Level was an emotive subject and not an option. Now we have external benchmarking data, I can have those conversations based on facts rather than just my opinion.”

Millions of pounds in cost savings and increasing customer satisfaction rates may sound like the stuff of call centre fantasy, but that's exactly what happened when mobile network giant 3 used Bright Index to bring the contact centre experience in line with customer expectations. Stuart Saw, contact centre strategy and transformation manager, and Chris Coyle, demand analysis manager, explain more:

What prompted you to look at the way you measure performance?

Chris: Around 2012 we were embarking on a range of transformation processes, and wanted to see what good looked like. There were a lot of opinions as to what we were striving for, but we needed to take the debate out of it – we wanted facts to use as a basis for setting targets.

Stuart: Management were making tactical and strategic decisions based on opinions – we wanted to take the emotion out of the situation and benchmark against other organisations. We wanted to re-educate management

about what good looked like in terms of basic measures such as speed of answer, number of calls per advisor per day, average handling times, etc. We didn't necessarily want to be industry leading, but at least in the mix of where other companies were.

Chris: We were looking to gain insight into how our competitors were performing and also how contact centres were performing across the UK as a whole to give us that view of best practice. We wanted to make sure we were in line with where other organisations were heading and not going after something that was unachievable

What were you looking for in a service provider?

Stuart: We wanted to find someone who could provide us with data across the UK service industry because a customer doesn't compare you just with other telcos, but with every service provider they have contact with.

The data we received needed to be easily digestible, even for those not familiar with Contact Centre metrics. Bright offered us this

and, apart from getting our hands on the initial data to send to them, the whole thing has been very low effort, which was also important.

Bright also offered really good value for money. Securing the budget each year is simple, because it's not an overly significant amount – and what we get in return for the outlay is well worth it. We could spend a lot more money on business insight, but we wouldn't get more value than we get from Bright. Plus, the value we get out of the reports makes it an easy decision to renew with them every year.

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Did you have any issues in getting started with Bright Index?

Chris: The only real challenge was getting our hands on the data Bright required. It had to come from disparate locations, so pulling all the relevant info together was a challenge. Plus, people were initially suspicious of why we needed the information. But once we had taken all the key stakeholders through a presentation explaining why they needed to supply it, the process became a lot easier.

Stuart: It took a few attempts to get it right, but now we have worked out how to send the data painlessly, the whole thing is very low effort, which is important for a busy organisation.

What happened when you started getting the benchmarking reports?

Stuart: Once we received our first report, Bright came in to offer recommendations for change. The presentation was around 120 slides long and summarised where our pain points were – and because they were offering an external independent view, the guys from Bright were able to ask the difficult questions. Whilst uncomfortable, they were really insightful and helped us to drive the agenda internally. We have had other more expensive consultants come in, and they haven't told us anything we don't get from Bright.

It's been a fantastic tool for getting the senior management team to think differently. For example, our speed of answer was very low,

which management saw as a positive. But the report showed that we weren't seeing an uplift in customer experience as a result. Using Bright Index, I was able to demonstrate that it costs money to answer the phone very quickly, but we weren't seeing any value because it was not driving the customer experience.

It's been fantastic for our relationship with the contact centre management team too, because it has taken all the emotion out of setting targets – we can clearly demonstrate what is acceptable for customers.

Chris: The first report backed up our initial thoughts on how to drive customer service forward, but it also gave us a real focus and allowed us to set specific targets against where we wanted to be. By the second and third reports we could really see the value in signing up because we could see the progress of the changes we were making.

We'll continue to use Bright in the future, as it gives us a regular temperature gauge as to how the service sector is performing. A long-term goal is to take the measurements in the Bright Index and push to be number one in those areas.

What changes have you made as a result of using Bright Index?

Stuart: We discovered that our self-service IVR average journey time was double the industry norm, so we have focused on that heavily over the last couple of years. Now, the journey time is one of the best in the country – it's much slicker and quicker. This has led to a big improvement in self-service rates and the number of calls coming in to the centre has hugely dropped.

We also saw that call transfer rates were unacceptably high. This was down to stringent speed of answer targets that were driving the wrong agent behaviour, i.e. answering really quickly even if that meant transferring to another team. The data from Bright has allowed us to move targets in line with customer expectations, restructure siloed teams, and address agent behaviour through training.

These changes have improved the customer experience – all at a reduced cost to the business. I've managed to get all this approved as a result of having this external view of what good looks like.

It's also letting me have bigger conversations. For example, we're looking at changing our service levels. Before having Bright data, moving away from the traditional 80/20 Service level targets was an emotive subject and not an option. Now we have external benchmarking data, I can have those conversations based on

facts rather than just my opinion. That is the power of Bright – it educates people as to what good looks like.

What's more, the data is having an input into a big conversation about offshore. Our partners in India now know from the Bright data what good looks like and that they need to get there. It's not acceptable for them simply to be cheaper, as it may be driving up costs elsewhere.

Chris: There's no doubt Bright Index is a key input into our decision-making. It has allowed us to transform our demand management through looking at agent efficiency and self-service penetration. We can easily see where our service levels are compared to other contact centres and allows us to see if we are spending too much on areas that are not in line with customer expectations.

If you could offer one piece of advice to a contact centre professional looking for a better way to measure performance, what would it be?

Chris: Don't assume anything, make sure you have the facts and that you are measuring the full customer experience rather than what you know you are good at.

Stuart: In most companies, opinions rule when it comes to strategy. And it is the opinion of the most senior manager that gets listened to and actioned. Find a way to take opinion out of decision-making and you'll see the benefits in efficiency and customer satisfaction. Benchmarking is a low effort, low cost way to do this.

“Taking opinion out of decision-making will see benefits in efficiency and customer satisfaction – and benchmarking is a low effort, low cost way to do this.”

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