



CMA Contact Centres Forum Meeting

'Putting the contact centre at the heart of the enterprise'

12th September 2007, British Academy, London

Over forty contact centre managers, engineers and associated professionals, were in attendance at the British Academy for the CMA Forum meeting in association with Business Systems. The event was chaired by CMA Contact Centre forum Leader Steve Pink of Telecommerce, who got proceedings swiftly underway.

The first session of the day was an industry overview from Marion Howard – Healy and Peter Massey of Budd. Which looked at Global trends in outsourcing, a brief look at the UK industry today and then asked the audience to split into pairs and try to determine the 5 most important challenges facing the contact centre today. Which they later identified as, Realising the value of the call centre's value, motivating your staff, measuring and getting action, becoming truly customer focused and delivering a seamless customer service.

The next session fell to Stephen Sawyers, of Business Systems, with his presentation 'turning theory into practice – Where to Start.' Which attempted to investigate how best to get a decent return from your company's investment in call centre technology, by using recent examples, Stephen noted the importance of ensuring you have senior management buy in to new investments by understanding both the new business and cost benefits of the investments. By stating the opinion, the biggest single reason IT projects fail is the lack of senior management buy – in and board level sponsorship.

After a short pause for refreshments, the attendees returned to their seats to listen to Martin Roberts of Nice Systems present 'Creating the high performance business.' Martin started by identifying key factors of interest to the call centre business, profit productivity and customer retention, going on to look at how to increase profit by customer retention. Citing the statistic that 96% of customers will never complain, they will simply uproot to another rival provider, and 68% of customers leave simply because they encountered an attitude of indifference when being served. Martin emphasised the need for quality monitoring and multidimensional analytics (such as emotion detection, phonetic search and text mining) as a way of ensuring customer receives a satisfactory response to their enquiry.

The final session of the day was presented by Stephen Thurston and Toby Sparrow of Business Systems and OPEX Hosting respectively. Who represented opposing sides in 'Hosted Contact Centre Services versus CPE - the great debate.' In which they examined the qualities of both hosted and CPE solutions and gave a comprehensive breakdown of the qualities of both solutions, Stephen went on to conclude that the CPE market won't dissipate as too much is invested in it already, and the market will produce either a coexistent or hybrid hosted/CPE solution as there is no clear winner in this debate.

Overall, the day was seen as a extremely interesting and topical event for people with vested interest in the world of contact centres, and provided excellent networking and knowledge sharing opportunities for industry professionals. Both the CMA and Business Systems were extremely pleased with the quality of the speakers and content which helped create a very successful day.