

Questions from CCPF Benchmarking Webinar

Answers provided by-



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1. What is the single largest mistake in benchmarking contact center metrics? How can you avoid it?

Alton Martin: Not having apple to apple comparisons.

Christine Wright: The best way to avoid this is to find a credible benchmarking data partner with standard definitions and who is also willing to share a detailed description of how their metric calculations compare to yours. Match up your data on a metric-to-metric basis to see how well they compare. If they are not at least 75%, there is a possibility you can change the way you are computing your metrics, they most likely cannot. However, if you do decide to use their data, you need to understand how they validate that all of the other benchmarks in their database are valid comparisons.

2. How often should one be reviewing the benchmarks?

Alton Martin: For most metrics, 2 times a year is fine.

3. Any thoughts about using data provided by a testing company?

Christine Wright: Not sure if the data is valid (not sure what the data is) I see no reason not to use it. Sounds like different metrics and points of comparison are being used, but the data could be functional in the right environment. We would need more information.

4. What is/are a good 2-3 metrics to measure Web chat channel performance/effectiveness?

Alton Martin: On-time, accuracy, AHT, CSAT, DSAT. The only concern would be we don't track C-SAT or D-Sat at the channel level, unless it's a stand alone program.

5. If I had a limited budget to spend on improving my contact center performance, especially given an uncertain economy, where are the top 3 areas I should focus using benchmarking? Why?

Alton Martin: Accuracy, CSAT and utilization from the standpoint of ensuring an optimal customer experience.

Cheryl Coppens: I would focus on CSAT first due to the point you make about the economy (especially if your business is dependent on continuous customer revenues).

Christine Wright: These metrics are good ones due to the fact that they yield the highest value to the company's bottom line, long-term, if they are operating at an optimal level. I would also add FCR and possibly forecast accuracy from the standpoint of controlling costs

6. What are the industries where you have helped companies improve their contact center performance with a proven ROI? Typically, what has been your ROI for these clients?

Alton Martin: Manufacturing, consumer hardware/software, financial services, telecommunications and business services. Typical ROI for our work is 7 to 10 X investment and often higher.

7. What type of IT systems benchmarks are used, for example for CRM, IVR?

Christine Wright: Telecommunications, Managing Information Systems, Outbound Dialer: uptime and accessibility. Relative to Managing IVR: Self-service rate, Assisted Transfers, Opt-out rate, Abandon rate, and Routing Accuracy. There are also a number of metrics that refer to processing of transactions, 15 different types by functional area, not including processing reports and invoices, On-time, Backlog, Efficiency, and Accuracy, that could be indicators of technology issues.

8. What about Remittance Processing Data?

Alton Martin: I would just use on-time, accuracy, cost per for non-phone transactions.

Christine Wright: Not sure what you mean by remittance, but yes we track End-user Payments for all relevant applications including collections: On-time, Accuracy, Backlog, Efficiency, and Volume. We also have Collecting Debt for both Phone and Non-Phone transactions, under many of the same metrics.

9. Which metrics are most important to cite when developing an RFP for a Contact Center solution?

Christine Wright: The answer will depend on the industry, the application, business strategy and goals for outsourcing. We would need to consult with the client to be more helpful here.

Cheryl Coppens: Ensure you have a balance of metrics (service, quality and efficiency) which will allow you to compare and contrast the responses. You WANT to do business with companies that manage and understand all of these type metrics.

10. The C-sat is directly related to the "crisis" in the network or the overall services no matter how the processes or agents are behaving. How can we guarantee the improvement in C-sat within a call center?

Alton Martin: You cannot, you can only control what is your purview. You should be able to control satisfaction with the agent or the call experience.

Christine Wright: Agreed, but crisis in the business environment can better be managed dynamically in the contact center by looking at dramatic increases in call volumes and real-time agent feedback/voice of the customer data. Loosening service levels, providing dynamic scripting and/or messaging to agents to be able to handle inquiries (service outages, billing errors, etc.), pro-actively sending outbound contacts to clients can mitigate call center barrages and unhappy customer complaints.

11. Do you have Contact Center benchmarks for those that practice full case management with their calls, which involve the completion of complex tasks that may extend over a couple of days?

Alton Martin: This is a new metric in Version 4.3 of the Standard and will be incorporated in SmartMarks™ going forward.

12. How can different switches calculate things like AHT differently?

Alton Martin: Because they do. There is no “industry” metric that hardware vendors agree to use to define the term.

Christine Wright: It is best to ask your switch vendor how they log agent time and calculate AHT. Most users do not know this. There are other metrics that are affected (e.g. logged agent hours, abandonment, ASA, etc.). Different vendors use different ways of time keeping on their systems. They can, in some cases, be programmed to be consistent with your method of calculation, but you need to have IT do this for you.

13. Other than AHT, for what other metrics should process variation be measured?

Alton Martin: Escalation rates, transfer rates, sales metrics, resolution rates, etc.

Christine Wright: Recruiting/Hiring, Training and Forecasting (both scheduling and staffing). I would say a whole heck of a lot of them.

Cheryl Coppens: Consider any metric an agent touches. Remember, call center output is performed by humans. Humans produce variation!

14. What is the best formula to recalculate cost per incident if the amount of transactions is being increasing month by month and the customer complains about the increase in billing

Christine Wright: We use cost per handle minute which is the lowest common denominator as it only includes variable staff and supervisor time relative to the overall number of logged agent’s hours on a program. It is a calculation that takes out every other type of bias or uncontrollable variable in the mix and is a good baseline to use across programs and centers. As the AHT gets longer due to client issues, the cost per handle minute should still be the same.

15. I have a question regarding the balance of financial target setting and process capability. How best can this be approached?

Alton Martin: By locking on the economic value of stable processes.

Christine Wright: If you identify the processes in your contact center that are mission critical to you delivering your business strategy (e.g. make sure every inbound sales opportunity gets answered or every call opportunity get and up-sell, etc.) then the processes that need to become stabilized become self-evident and those are the ones you need to align with target setting.

Cheryl Coppens: I am going to guess, but I believe you are asking if you should set the budget and THEN expect the process capability to “fit”? This is a very good question. Too often, I will see budgets set in a vacuum (often too high) when all the data indicates the process capability could improve and costs could decrease. Consider putting your neck on the line and plan for reductions in variation within your budget, this puts pressure on all to attain the decrease in variation.

16. Would it be possible to get some specific examples on benchmarks for automobile industry?

Christine Wright: COPC Inc.’s contact information for benchmarking data and services is now on the [CCPF Web site](#) in the Group section labeled “Customer Contact Benchmarking Partners”. You can also contact Shelia Curr directly at scurr@copc.com for more information about specific examples.

17. Assuming a Tier 1/ Tier 2/ Tier 3 structured, internal employee HR Contact Center, what is the top 25% performing turn around time phone resolution time in range of minutes?

Christine Wright: Not sure we have a good range of metrics strictly relating to the handling of internal “HR” related contacts. We do track internal help desk contacts, which is our best point of comparison (it is also tiered) and would need to look up the specific programs to see which ones might be HR related, I suspect most of them are IT related. If you want that information, contact Shelia Curr at COPC Inc. at scurr@copc.com.

18. Are there any internal HR only Contact Center benchmarking data for the banking industry?

Christine Wright: We have financial services data for agent (CSR) level metrics, such as recruiting and hiring, training, absenteeism, attrition, and I believe that is all. Financial services include brokerages and insurance companies, as well as credit card companies.

19. Do most contact centers measure email response time? If so, is there an automated method recommended by COPC Inc.?

Alton Martin: I would estimate about half measure this. The methodology is tool dependent.

Christine Wright: We track response time in terms of target time ranges set by the client (minutes, hours, days) as well as how long a transaction is spent in backlog. So the metric is the % e-mail transactions that are processed on-time relative to the response target cycle time and we have a lot of data in that regard for a number of industries.

20. How do we access the COPC Inc. SmartMarks™ data?

Christine Wright: COPC Inc. is now listed on the CCPF Web site in the [“Benchmarking Partner”](#) section of their portal. Shelia Curr is the COPC Inc. contact person who can help you. She can be reached scurr@copc.com.

21. What are the costs for the SmartMarks™ database?

Christine Wright: Pricing information is available on the CCPF Web site in the [Benchmarking Partner](#) section where COPC Inc. is listed. However, it is best to get a custom quote, depending on your specific needs.

Alton Martin: Pricing can vary for “standalone” work. An in-depth review would be \$15K to \$25 depending on scope and scale.

22. Looking at the COPC Inc. metric tracking requirements for recruiting, Table F requires on time to fill class and graduation rate. There must be other benchmarking data we can track for this essential process. Any suggestions?

Alton Martin: You can look at Recruiting quality.

Christine Wright: Yes, actually this comes under training as well, in terms of the number of CSR’s who have successfully passed transaction monitoring 30 days after training and those who have also passed the probationary period (what ever that is for the client).