



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

FOR MEMBERS

OVERVIEW

Customer Effort, Why Bother?

by Steve Ellis, senior director customer care, EyeMed Vision Care

Learn how you can improve customer experience and cut costs at the same time by focusing on the amount of effort your customers must expend to resolve an issue.

STEVE ELLIS, senior director customer care, provides leadership for the call center that supports 37 million EyeMed members. He redesigned processes and cut customer issue resolution time by 63 percent and led productivity and process improvement initiatives that resulted in \$4.1 million in savings for EyeMed, which is wholly owned by Luxottica, the world's largest global optical company.

“It’s a constant challenge between lower cost and better service.”

The EyeMed Call Center handles about 6 million calls a year, employs about 100 people and outsources another 200-300 customer service agent jobs. At least a fourth of the company's customers say use multiple channels – email, Web, social media or a retail store, perhaps – before contacting the call center. That decreases customer satisfaction and loyalty and increases costs.

Things that drive up the amount of effort a customer must make include not getting a resolution on the first attempt, difficulty in reaching a customer service representative and getting ahold of a representative who does not have the right information or the authority to serve the customer's needs.

Effort quickly **deteriorates** satisfaction



It is critical to understand where your customers are running into problems. By focusing on reducing customer effort you can improve customer service and drive costs down.

EyeMed is currently updating customer touch points. They are looking at what customers are trying to achieve at each of their points of access and making sure they are delivering those items in that format by making it easier for the customer to succeed in obtaining the proper information.

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- They have a third-party vendor make outbound calls to survey customers. They follow up if the customer gave permission during the survey and they search for the root cause of the problems that are being reported to surveyors. They track and trend heavily in order to be able to focus their efforts on customers' biggest problems. They find the outbound calls to be the most effective way of gaining insight, but it is also the most expensive.
- Yet, they don't just focus on failures, which can produce a very negative environment when only a small percentage of customers have bad experiences. They collect verbatim the praise of customers and share it with customer services representatives. They recognize particularly effective agents -- it helps keep the team focused on the positive.
- They spend time aligning their efforts to what they learned from customer feedback. They judge their customer service representatives on how well they meet customer expectations as well as how they do with compliance.

- They do everything they can to replicate the success and behavior of their best agents. Sometimes they ask those agents to mentor others. Ellis suggests that customer service executives map their agents on the two planes of quality of service and cost of service.
- They take action on the insights they have gleaned. If you know what your customers want and where the gaps are, focus on the biggest pain points and enroll your frontline people in solving those problems.

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The executive summary above was written by staff from watching the presentation and many other ideas were presented. Members may watch the full presentation if wished by logging in.