

Contact Center Manager's KPI Survival Guide

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary2
Role of Performance Management and KPIs.....2
What is Contact Center Performance Management?.....2
Performance Management Definitions.....3
Performance Management Solves the Contact Center Data Challenge4
Steps for Building a Successful Performance Management Program.....4
Balanced Scorecards.....6
Designing Balanced Scorecards6
 Figure One: KPIs for Balanced Scorecards.....6
Benefits of Performance Management.....8
 Figure Two: Benefits of Performance Management8
Performance Management Process.....10
 Figure Three: Performance Management Roadmap10
Will Performance Management Benefit Your Enterprise?.....11
Final Thoughts12
Appendix A13
Appendix B14
About the Author17
About the Sponsor18

Executive Summary

Contact center managers are confronted with volumes of data and dozens of reports generated by automated and manual systems and processes. They may have a surfeit of metrics, but lack the fundamental information needed to manage their operating environment. Too often, contact centers have no way of systematically measuring and communicating how well internal and corporate objectives are being met and identifying where change is required. Contact center performance management addresses this challenge. It gives contact center managers an analytical framework for determining if and where process improvement is required and the management tools for making changes, when necessary.

This white paper presents a methodology and process for building an effective performance management program. It shows how to identify and use the right key performance indicators (KPIs) to monitor and enhance the performance of your contact center. This white paper:

- Defines contact center performance management
- Discusses the benefit of performance management for customers, agents, supervisors, managers, the contact center, sales, marketing and the entire corporation
- Presents KPIs and metrics for agent, supervisor/manager, contact center, sales/marketing, enterprise and customer balanced scorecards
- Provides the steps and a roadmap for building and implementing a performance management program

Role of Performance Management and KPIs

Performance management is an analytical approach to managing and improving the effectiveness, quality and overall experience provided by the contact center. It is a process that uses goals, KPIs and metrics to measure the performance of the contact center. This quantitative management approach removes subjectivity and ambiguity from rating how well a contact center is executing.

What is Contact Center Performance Management?

At a strategic level, contact center performance management provides a framework for aligning the goals of the contact center with those of the corporation. At a tactical level, the performance management process uses goals, KPIs, metrics, data sources and balanced scorecards for capturing and reporting how well the contact center delivers to its objectives in order to identify the actions necessary to address areas of weakness or strength. At a practical level, it streamlines and simplifies contact center reporting, enabling managers to use a carefully selected

set of KPIs, metrics and reports to manage their operation, instead of the numerous reports and hundreds of measures previously required.

As the contact center handles customer interactions on behalf of the enterprise, it's essential to create scorecards specific to all of their constituencies, including operations, sales, marketing, credit, R&D and the overall enterprise. It is of equal importance to produce contact center scorecards that measure the performance of agents, teams, sites and the total contact center. It's also essential to use staff-related scorecards for managers, supervisors, quality assurance specialists, trainers and agents to measure how they deliver to internal departmental and external customer satisfaction goals.

Performance Management Definitions

The primary terms in a contact center performance management program are:

Goals – The long-term purpose or end result that the enterprise, contact center or other department strives to achieve. There are many types of goals. Enterprise goals support the corporation's overall mission and profitability requirements. Contact center goals are directed at productivity, quality and the customer experience. Sales/marketing goals are intended to sell more products while building the brand and increasing customer retention. Most other operating areas will share goals such as reducing expenses, improving quality and increasing profitability.

Metrics – A set of parameters providing a quantitative assessment of the lowest level contact center component, activity or function that can be measured.

Key Performance Indicators – Critical measurements of behavior or performance that directly correlate with specific goals. Multiple metrics may be required to create one KPI. Various metrics may be weighted and counted differently.

Scorecard – A scorecard addresses one aspect of an agent's or department's performance. It may include a variety of KPIs that address one goal. For example, a scorecard may address contact center productivity or training.

Balanced Scorecards – A balanced scorecard presents complementary KPIs that evaluate all aspects of an agent's or department's performance. A balanced agent scorecard includes KPIs for productivity, overall effectiveness, quality, customer satisfaction, training and, if relevant, sales.

Data Sources – Data or information on contact center performance that is produced by automated or manual systems and processes. Performance management solutions facilitate the

collection, integration, management and sharing of information from multiple data sources and/or multiple sites.

Performance Management Solves the Contact Center Data Challenge

Contact centers are among the most technologically sophisticated departments in a corporation. They use anywhere from two systems – an automatic call distributor (ACD) for routing and queuing customer transactions and a servicing application to manage customer requests – to more than forty systems and applications to manage customer interactions. Every contact center system and application produces management and system reports intended to help measure their effectiveness and benefits. The problem is that there is too much data, much of it redundant and even worse, conflicting, resulting in inconsistent numbers for the same metric, such as the number of calls received. (See Appendix A for a list of contact center systems.)

Managers in contact centers of all sizes – small, medium and large – need information to manage their operation properly and efficiently. Performance management ensures that they receive the “right” information at the “right” time so that they can rapidly identify when and what changes are needed to improve effectiveness. It automates a process that might otherwise be handled by support staff, freeing these resources to assist agents and customers.

Steps for Building a Successful Performance Management Program

Building a successful performance management program requires changes in systems, process, management approach and culture. While these changes are significant, they are all positive, as they move the contact center away from subjective performance measures and rewards and toward performance measures based on objective facts. While few people like change, once the performance management program is communicated to the staff and they are trained on its benefits, it usually is readily adopted. Below are the recommended steps for setting up a performance management program.

1. Identify or establish enterprise-wide goals – review the goals of the corporation and all departments supported by the contact center. Identify contact center KPIs that measure these goals.
2. Identify contact center goals for productivity (service and sales), effectiveness, quality, training and customer satisfaction. Identify contact center KPIs that measure these goals.
3. Determine which metrics are required to measure each of the KPIs.

4. Determine the best data source for each of the metrics. The best source is generally the originating system or application. Keep in mind that many of the metrics are available from multiple sources and different calculations may be used to determine the same KPI.
5. Validate all calculations and don't use a secondary source unless it is the only option. This process is referred to as creating "one version of the truth."
6. Test each of the data sources to ensure that its numbers are valid and can integrate with the performance management system.
7. Assign weights to metrics – There can be multiple metrics associated with each KPI. Weight each metric to reflect its relative importance in determining the KPI.
8. Create balanced scorecards for the contact center, external departments and the corporation. Each scorecard will address productivity, efficiency, quality, training and customer satisfaction for each of the goals. This will include specifying which KPIs are included and their weights.
9. Review balanced scorecards with all relevant constituencies inside and outside the contact center. Make any necessary changes to goals, KPIs and metrics until buy-in is obtained.
10. Communicate the new performance management program goals and objectives to all contact center staff.
11. Train the staff – agents, supervisors, trainers, quality assurance, technicians and managers – on the new goals and objectives for which they are now responsible.
12. Conduct a pilot to ensure that the KPIs measure the activities necessary to monitor adherence to internal and external goals, as reflected in the balanced scorecards.
13. Collect and analyze historical data to establish a baseline set of consistent, prior period contact center performance metrics for contact center and external goals and KPIs.
14. Compare results of baseline and pilot to identify areas requiring improvement. Document these areas and develop action plans to address all areas of weakness as well as to reward outstanding performance and achievements.
15. Correlate KPIs to enterprise and departmental goals to make sure that the metrics are appropriate and effective.

16. Institutionalize the performance management program to ensure ongoing benefits. This includes defining the frequency of reports and responsibilities of all impacted areas, inside and outside the contact center. Set up a closed-loop process for addressing all areas of weakness uncovered by the analysis to ensure that improvements are addressed on a timely basis.
17. Communicate success of performance management program to contact center staff, external constituencies and senior management.

Balanced Scorecards

Balanced scorecards should be produced for all primary areas impacted by the contact center, including agents, supervisors/managers, the entire contact center, sales/marketing, the enterprise and customers. Instead of concentrating on one KPI, these scorecards should reflect all areas of performance that are relevant for these constituents, including productivity, effectiveness, quality, customer satisfaction, revenue and training.

The goal of a balanced scorecard is to provide a holistic view of an entity's performance, taking into consideration all appropriate KPIs. For example, a contact center may have an agent whose average handle time is consistently 30 to 45 seconds higher than the other team members. It also may turn out that this agent closes 25% more sales than anyone else on the team. If this agent were evaluated solely on productivity, he/she would be fired for not meeting goals. However, when sales results are also considered, it becomes clear that this agent is making an outstanding contribution to the enterprise and, instead of being fired, should be rewarded.

A balanced scorecard may reflect all of the KPIs that contact center management traditionally measures, as is reflected in Appendix B. Alternatively, it may include only the KPIs that are essential for each of the balanced scorecards, as reflected in Figure One.

Designing Balanced Scorecards

In addition to defining internal balanced scorecards, it's essential for the contact center manager to collaborate with peers in all of the functional departments the contact center supports to establish goals, define KPIs, assign weights for each section and then build balanced scorecards. A balanced scorecard provides a snapshot of how well the contact center is meeting its goals, allowing the manager to reward outstanding performance or take immediate action to fix problems. The weights allow the manager to prioritize departmental and enterprise-level initiatives.

Figure One: KPIs for Balanced Scorecards

Agent	Supervisor/Manager	Contact Center	Sales/Marketing	Enterprise	Customer
Productivity					
Number of calls/emails/chat offered and handled Average talk time Average work/wrap time Average handle time	Number of calls/emails/chat offered and handled Team average talk time Team average work/wrap time Team average handle time	Number of calls/emails/chat offered and handled Average talk time Average work/wrap time Average handle time	Number of sales calls/emails/chat offered and handled Average handle time of sales calls	Number of calls/email/chat offered and handled	Average wait time Average hold time
General					
Occupancy rate Schedule adherence	Team occupancy rate Team schedule adherence	Occupancy rate Cost per call/email/chat Percent of time spent on non-call activities	Cost per sale call/email/chat	Cost per call/email/chat	N/A
Effectiveness					
Call/email/chat first contact resolution rate (FCR) Number of calls escalated to supervisor Backlog (email) Average time to resolve email	Call/email/chat FCR Percent of calls answered in x seconds (service level) Average speed of answer Number of calls escalated to supervisor Backlog (email) Average time to resolve email	Percent of calls answered in x seconds (service level) Average speed of answer Number of calls escalated to supervisor Backlog (email) Average time to resolve email Percent of calls fully resolved by IVR Percent of inquires fully resolved on website Number of calls transferred from IVR to agents Agent attrition rates Agent absence and vacation percentages Employee satisfaction survey rating	Number of calls where sale was attempted Sales conversion rate	Number of operational issues identified Employee satisfaction survey rating Percent of complaint calls Average time to resolve email	Average speed of answer Abandonment rate Number of repeat calls Number of calls escalated to supervisor First contact resolution rate Percent of complaint calls
Quality					
Call/email/chat QM score Accuracy of information/transactions/quotes Appropriate use of wrap-up	Call/email/chat QM score Team accuracy of information/transactions/quotes Appropriate use of wrap-up	Call/email/chat QM score Accuracy of information/transactions/Quotes Appropriate use of wrap-up	Accuracy of information/transactions/quotes	Call/email/chat QM score Number of quality issues identified	Call QM score Accuracy of information/transactions/quotes
Customer Satisfaction					
Customer survey satisfaction rating Percent of complaint calls	Team customer survey satisfaction rating Percent of complaint calls	Customer survey satisfaction rating Percent of complaint calls	Customer attrition rate	Customer survey satisfaction rating Customer attrition rate	Customer survey satisfaction rating Customer stress level analysis
Revenue					
Number of sales Number of saved accounts Number of up-sell/cross-sell attempts Number of up-sell/cross-sell successes Revenue per sale	Team number of sales Team number of saved accounts Team number of up-sell/cross-sell attempts Team number of up-sell/cross-sell successes Revenue per sale	Number of sales Number of saved accounts Number of up-sell/cross-sell attempts Number of up-sell/cross-sell successes Total revenue Revenue per sale	Number of new accounts Number of sales Number of up-sell/cross-sell Number of saved accounts Number of leads generated Account profitability Revenue per sale	Number of new accounts Number of saved accounts Account profitability Total revenue generated Cost per sale	Average spend/balance Number of repeat orders
Training					
Skill proficiency (QM scores) Compliance rate Test scores	Number of training issues identified for team Number of training or up-training hours for team	Number of new hires trained Percent of new hires that completed training course Average ramp-up time Training cost per agent	Number of people trained/up-trained on new promotions/offers/products/services	Training cost	N/A

Benefits of Performance Management

The benefits of performance management extend far beyond the scorecards and dashboards used to measure agent performance, as seen in Figure Two. Performance management should be used to motivate the contact center to meet or exceed enterprise, sales/marketing and departmental goals and objectives.

Contact center performance management streamlines the reporting process, providing a balanced view of the department's achievements. Instead of looking at dozens of reports from numerous systems, many of which contain conflicting results for the same KPIs, the performance management application provides balanced scorecards for the different departments supported by the contact center.

Performance management systems enable contact center management to rapidly identify agents, supervisors, sites or operational areas that require assistance. It's a cost effective method for identifying and focusing on areas of strength and weakness. The better performance management applications allow managers to drill down from the high-level KPIs included in reports and dashboards to the actual transactions involved. This results in quantifiable improvements in productivity, quality, revenue generation, training, the overall customer experience and the enterprise bottom line.

Figure Two: Benefits of Performance Management

Contact Center Manager's KPI Survival Guide

Agent	Supervisor/ Manager	Contact Center	Sales/ Marketing	Enterprise	Customer
Productivity					
Improves agent performance and adherence to department goals. Motivates self- management of performance.	Real-time, holistic view of agent and contact center performance. Facilitates faster resolution of operational problems.	Improves staff productivity and utilization. Reduces cost per transaction. Eliminates unproductive and redundant activities.	Increases sales.	Aligns contact center and corporate goals.	Reduces unproductive interactions with the enterprise.
Effectiveness					
Improves agent morale, satisfaction and retention. Provides objective method to self-evaluate performance vs. goals. Increases awareness of performance opportunities and goals.	Provides real-time, objective data for agent evaluations and recognition/rewards. Rapidly identifies and responds to customer, agent performance, quality or operational problems.	Increases agent occupancy, utilization and adherence. Increases first call resolution rates. Reduces call backs, transferred calls, error rates and fraud losses.	Rapidly identifies competitive challenges, customer insights, new product opportunities and "at-risk" customers. Enhances/builds the brand.	Allows contact center to deliver to enterprise priorities. Synchronizes activities, enables sharing of vital information and builds cooperation between customer facing departments.	Improves the customer experience. Improves customer satisfaction, consumer confidence and loyalty.
Quality					
Provides continuous feedback to motivate quality improvements. Identifies operational improvement opportunities.	Rapidly identifies and documents root cause of quality issues by individual, team or contact center site.	Improves service quality. Streamlines QA process.	Increases effectiveness of marketing campaigns.	Objectively identifies and reports on quality issues throughout the enterprise.	Allows the enterprise to rapidly identify and resolve customer quality concerns. Builds customer loyalty.
Customer Satisfaction					
Measures impact of agents on customers. Provides immediate feedback.	Identifies unhappy customers and processes that cause dissatisfaction. Facilitates rapid resolution of problems that result in customer attrition.	Acts as early warning system, identifying potentially negative trends and issues quickly. Reduces customer attrition.	Captures customers' reaction to sales and marketing initiatives.	Captures customer concerns or satisfaction with the company, product and all aspects of service delivery throughout the customer life cycle.	Identifies problems that cause customer dissatisfaction, enabling the organization to proactively respond to and resolve issues.
Revenue					
Measures and reports sales effectiveness. Identifies leading/lagging sales performers.	Identifies outstanding and poorly performing agents. Identifies new sales best practices.	Increases revenue generation. Quantifies and reports contact center contribution to the bottom line.	Increases sales, up-sell/cross sell and lead generation opportunities. Identifies successful or unsuccessful offers. Retains customers.	Identifies ways to generate incremental revenue. Captures ideas for new/enhanced products and services.	Increases awareness/ utilization of value-added products, services and opportunities.
Training					
Rapidly identifies targeted training needs to drive improvements in agent performance.	Identifies agents who require training. Identifies activities that are not being done properly. Measures effectiveness of training classes.	Increases effectiveness of training. Facilitates targeted training. Reduces agent staffing and training costs. Provides feedback to training staff.	Identifies areas of confusion regarding products and services.	Identifies training issues, from customer viewpoint, for the contact center and other operating areas.	Identifies areas where improved customer communication would be highly beneficial.

Performance Management Process

For performance management programs to be successful, automation must be accompanied by changes in the business process and culture of the contact center. Figure Three is a roadmap of the contact center performance management workflow. Performance management applications provide automation to facilitate this workflow and provide a framework for ensuring the accuracy of the information. Performance management is an iterative process that is intended to improve the operating environment on an ongoing basis.

Figure Three: Performance Management Roadmap



Source: DMG Consulting LLC

Will Performance Management Benefit Your Enterprise?

Most contact centers, from those with 25 agents in one office to those with thousands of agents housed in multiple sites, can benefit from the use of a contact center performance management application. Use this checklist to identify the areas where performance management will make significant and quantifiable benefits to your organization.

Yes No

1. Do you have multiple systems/sources that report the same KPIs and metrics?
2. Do you receive multiple reports with different results for the same KPIs/metrics?
3. Does your management team spend more than half an hour per day reviewing and/or manipulating reports to make the information meaningful and actionable?
4. Do you have one or more staff members dedicated to consolidating report data from different sources to provide management with a comprehensive view of your contact center's performance?
5. Do you want or need a reporting capability that will give you a real-time view of agent and contact center performance?
6. Do you want to provide contact center agents and supervisors with an objective and quantifiable means to measure and self-manage their performance?
7. Would it benefit your supervisors and managers to know which agent metrics and KPIs correlate closely with enterprise and departmental goals?
8. Would it benefit your organization to have a system that automates the creation of scorecards for agents, the contact center and other departments, such as sales and marketing?
9. Would you like to be able to rapidly identify productivity, quality, customer satisfaction, training and operational issues in near-real time and create actionable and focused recommendations for improvements?
10. Would you like to be able to capture and share vital customer information with all customer facing departments within your enterprise on a timely basis?
11. Would you like to align the goals of your contact center with the enterprise?

12. Would it be beneficial for you to quantify and report on the contact center's contribution to sales, marketing and the enterprise bottom line?
13. Is your company willing to make investments (spend money) on a new application that has a proven ROI?

If you answered "yes" to nine or more of these questions, your organization should strongly consider using a performance management application to improve your contact center's performance, increase agent and supervisor satisfaction and improve the customer experience. If you answered "no" to more than six of these questions, then a performance management application is not currently a priority for your company. Since these applications streamline reporting, simplify the management challenge, improve agent and supervisor job satisfaction, improve the customer experience and provide essential information to sales, marketing and the executive suite, you still may want to look into their benefits for your contact center.

Final Thoughts

Contact center performance management is essential for aligning the goals of the contact center with the executive suite, sales, marketing, operations and other operating areas. Performance management is becoming mission critical as the contact center is increasingly being asked to identify customer insights and share important customer information with all relevant constituents on a timely basis.

Performance management is both a business process and system. Performance management enhances, streamlines and simplifies contact center reporting by providing management with a single and reconciled set of goals, KPIs and metrics to manage the operating environment. Contact centers can implement a performance management program without installing a new system; however the benefits increase for the enterprise, contact center and customers when processes are automated to ensure consistency. Formalized performance management becomes even more important as contact centers grow both in size and complexity. This application also saves contact center analysts, supervisors and managers a great deal of time by having automation eliminate the need to manually collect, reconcile and "crunch" numbers.

Appendix A Contact Center Systems

Core Contact Center Systems

- Automatic Call Distributor
- Computer Telephony Integration
- Universal Queue
- Interactive Voice Response
- Speech Recognition
- Network Management
- Dialer

Management Systems

- Recording/Logging
- Quality Management
- Workforce Management
- Surveying
- eLearning
- Coaching
- Real-Time Analytics
- Speech Analytics
- Business Intelligence
- Performance Management

Supporting Systems

- Knowledge Management
- eService Suites
- Email Response Management
- Web Self-Service
- Chat
- IM
- Collaboration
- Scripting
- Letter Writing
- Voice Verification

Servicing Applications

- Customer Relationship Management Suite
- Customer Service Tracking Application
- Sales Force Automation
- Telesales
- Field Service and Dispatch
- Collections
- Fraud Management
- Internal Help Desk
- Supply Chain
- Enterprise Resource Planning

Enabling/Common Applications

- Databases
- Data Marts
- Configuration Engine

Marketing Encyclopedia

Appendix B

Performance Management
Balanced Scorecard for: Contact Center
For Week of _____

<i>Balanced Contact Center Scorecard</i>				
Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Weight	Goal	Weekly Score	Variance (+/-)
<i>Productivity (Inbound)</i>				
Number of calls/emails/chat offered				
Number of calls/emails/chat handled				
Average call/email/chat "talk" time				
Average wrap/work time				
Average handle time				
Average hold time				
<i>Productivity (Outbound)</i>				
Number of calls/emails/chat attempted				
Number of outbound calls/emails/chat completed				
Average "talk" time				
Average wrap/work time				
Average handle time				
<i>General</i>				
Cost per call/email/chat				
Occupancy rate				
Percent of time spent on non-call activities				
Schedule adherence				
<i>Effectiveness</i>				
Service level: Percent of calls answered in x seconds				
Average speed of answer (ASA)				
Abandonment rate				
Call/email/chat first call resolution rate (FCR)				
Percent of complaint calls				
Percent/number of calls fully resolved by IVR				
Percent of calls transferred from IVR to agents				
Number of inquires fully resolved on website				
Number of operational issues identified				
Number of repeat calls				
Number of call transfers				
Number of calls escalated to supervisor				
Backlog (email)				
Average number of hours/days to respond to an email				
Agent absence and vacation percentages				

Contact Center Manager's KPI Survival Guide

Balanced Contact Center Scorecard				
Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Weight	Goal	Weekly Score	Variance (+/-)
Agent attrition rates				
Employee satisfaction survey				
Quality				
Call/email/chat QM scores				
-Product knowledge				
-Technical knowledge				
-Communication skills				
-Problem resolution skills				
-Adherence to policies /procedures				
Accuracy of transactions/quotes				
Number of repeat calls				
Appropriate use of wrap-up				
Number of quality issues identified				
Customer Satisfaction				
Customer survey satisfaction rating				
Customer attrition rate				
Number of customer complaints/issues				
Operational issues identified				
Customer stress level analysis				
Revenue				
Number of calls where a sale was attempted				
Number of sales closed				
Revenue per sale				
Total revenue				
Number of cross-sell/up-sell attempts				
Number of cross-sell/up-sell successes				
Number of leads generated				
Number of new accounts				
Number of saves attempted				
Number of saved accounts				
Training				
Percent of new hires that complete course				
Number of new hires trained				
Average test scores for new hire training				
Number of days spent in new hire training				
Skill proficiency (QM scores)				
Number of training needs identified				
Number of staff trained (up-training)				
Hours of up-training/agent				
Average ramp-up time (time to become fully productive)				

Contact Center Manager's KPI Survival Guide

<i>Balanced Contact Center Scorecard</i>				
Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Weight	Goal	Weekly Score	Variance (+/-)
Training cost per agent				

About the Author

Donna Fluss is the founder and Principal of DMG Consulting LLC, a firm specializing in customer-focused business strategy, operations and technology services for Global 2000 and emerging companies. Ms. Fluss is a recognized thought leader and innovator in CRM, contact center and real-time analytics. For over 23 years, she has helped end users build world-class differentiated contact centers and vendors develop high-value solutions for the market. She is the author of the recently published book, *The Real-Time Contact Center*, and many leading industry reports, including the *2006 Speech Analytics Market Report* and the annual *Quality Management/Liability Recording Product and Market Report*.

More information is available at www.dmgconsult.com.

About the Sponsor

Mercom Systems, Inc. is a leading provider of easy-to-use, award-winning multimedia recording and evaluation tools for contact centers. Our products identify agent behaviors that correlate to enterprise goals, enabling our clients to retain customers and employees, reduce interaction handling time, enhance employee skill sets, increase revenue and minimize training costs. Built on the latest industry-standard technologies and off-the-shelf components, Mercom's products protect your investment and allow straightforward hardware and software upgrades.

With well over 6000 Audiolog and Mercom Interaction products installed in leading organizations around the world, Mercom has achieved a reputation for excellence. The company is privately held and headquartered outside of New York City.

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