



The Loyalty Strategy Report

Volume 3, Number 1

Winter 2005/2006

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Customer Spotlight: Taction

Taction puts its reputation on the line -- literally -- thousands of times every day. As a contact center for hire, Taction is the phone, e-mail and fax "voice" of customer support and sales for its clients.

Taction handles calls for some of the country's most trusted brands. Current and past clients include such major retailers, catalog firms and e-commerce sites as Samsonite Company Stores, Cuddledown, American Express, Kodak, State of Maine Office of Tourism, Harbor Sweets Chocolatier, Polaroid, SmartPak Equine, and Frank Schaffer Publications.

It's not surprising then that the company places a top priority on maximizing client satisfaction and establishing the highest standards of agent performance, a key indicator of the end-user experience. Taction turned to the Omega Management Group Corp. to make sure they were reaching their goals in both areas.



Randy Anderson

"We talk about the 'Taction Value' when defining our company philosophy," says Randy Anderson, VP for client services and business-to-business operations. "That philosophy is to deliver a higher average order value along with a higher number of reorders, while creating remarkable customer satisfaction one positive experience after another."

Taction is a small, premium call center located in the coastal town of Waldoboro, Maine. But there's nothing rural about the company's use of the most advanced call center technology and operations, or about its client list.

"We know that lasting, profitable relationships are based on delivering consistently positive customer experiences," Anderson says. "We feel strongly that we are a high touch and very high quality contact center. But all outsourcers say that, don't they? We needed proof in order to ensure that we were actually fulfilling the Taction Value and mission."

Taction began initial conversations with Omega at a trade show in 2003 where Taction was accepting a national award for "Team of the Year." Over the following months the companies worked closely together to create a customer and employee satisfaction program tailored to Taction's specific requirements.

Taction implemented Omega's Customer Satisfaction and Retention



Taction® is a leading provider of contact center services for some of the world's most trusted brands. Founded in 1983, the company offers a comprehensive menu of business-to-business and direct-to-consumer customer contact services 24 hours each day, every day of the year.

Serving as its clients' behind the scenes customer service and sales team, Taction handles fax, phone, e-mail and e-chat inquiries with a sense of urgency. They tailor services to meet the unique needs of each and every client.

Formerly known as the New England 800 Company, the company recently changed its name to Taction, meaning single point of contact. The change reflects its transformation from a call center pioneer into one of the country's premier customer contact centers.

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(CARE) program at the beginning of 2004 in order to assess existing levels of customer satisfaction with its services and staff. Omega conducted transaction and relationship phone surveys with Taction's clients along with semi-annual e-mail surveys of the entire employee population. Omega presented results and recommendations periodically to Taction executives, and the company used Omega's ScoreBoard display system to post documentation associated with the CARE process for all to see.

"This was far more than just a survey and reporting exercise," Anderson says. "We were trusting Omega with our executive client contacts and access to our 'gold bars' -- our employees. But we have been pleased with Omega's overall professionalism and quality of service. Their approach advocates the continuous survey process, which enables us to measure employee performance without interruption.

"We needed validation that we were properly focused in terms of client and employee needs," said Anderson, "and that we were allocating dollars where they were improving the service and support areas of greatest importance. Omega has helped us build that body of evidence."

For example, on the initial benchmark survey, Taction found the level of employees affirming the culture and work environment to be fantastic. The company also learned everyone wanted more communication about the business. As a result, Taction made deliberate attempts to widen the channels of communication by taking such measures as increasing the number of informational meetings and letters from the president's office to the team.

From the client survey, Taction learned that, as expected, clients not only rated their account managers with high marks, but also gave high marks to the reports provided. This discovery led them to shift valuable internal resources to other operational projects that had lower scores.

As a result, Taction now can make course adjustments quickly to address any issues that arise, and can continue to stay the course in areas rated with high scores. Anderson commends Omega's reporting capabilities for making the survey information understandable and actionable.

But Anderson says the real reason Taction selected Omega was the NorthFace ScoreBoard AwardSM, Omega's annual award for customer service excellence given to companies who achieve that distinction based on responses from their own customers. "We wanted to work with a company who is committed to helping their clients attain the highest levels of satisfaction from their customers. We now have solid, unbiased proof: we are the first contact center for hire to achieve NorthFace distinction."

Anderson feels that there's a solid cultural fit between the two companies. "They listen when we talk," he says, "and we listen when they talk, so both parties reach a solid understanding of our shared mission. I truly feel the staff at Omega cares about my business and is willing to go that extra mile for us."

Going forward, Taction plans to continue "walking the talk" with help from Omega. Client and employee surveys will continue and more client trend data will be gathered. "We're always looking for more insight into what our clients want," Anderson says. With Omega, we will always count on more analysis and suggestions on how to deliver our Taction Value better and more consistently...one experience after another."

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Published by Omega Management Group

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