Case Study

alteram

Expert Guidance Helps South African BPO Firm Mature & Improve Operations

When Alteram decided on the NICE Workforce Management (WFM) solution, they faced a drastic shift in how they operated. Their old model relied heavily upon Excel, making it difficult to forecast, schedule and track performance metrics. With Value Realization Services (VRS) experts from NICE, Alteram implemented best practices and introduced an effective long-term plan to grow its BPO business.
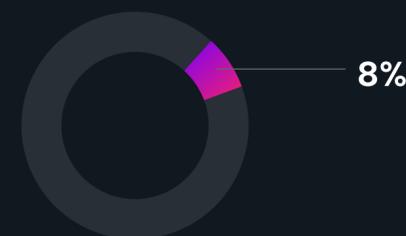
NICE

84% DECREASE IN ABANDONMENT RATES

84%

82% IMPROVEMENT IN OCCUPANCY

82%

74% INCREASE IN FORECAST ACCURACY

74%

8% INCREASE IN CALL VOLUME FORECAST ACCURACY

8%

CUSTOMER PROFILE

ABOUT
Alteram Solutions is a dynamic black-owned and managed ICT (Information and Communication Technology) services and solutions provider. They provide customers with custom-designed and integrated technology services and also operate as a BPO. Alteram offers businesses the ability to improve customer service and align business processes through back-end system integration, contact centre management, and other customer service initiatives.

INDUSTRY
Technology & BPO

WEBSITE
www.alteram.co.za

LOCATION
Johannesburg, South Africa

AGENTS
350

GOALS
- Real-time monitoring with accurate and reliable views of adherence
- Automated WFM activities for forecasting and scheduling
- Effective leave management
- Better forecast accuracy
- Improve service levels to meet and exceed contractual obligations

PRODUCTS
- NICE WFM
- NICE Value Realization Services

FEATURES
- Forecast accuracy
- Schedule management
- Expert guidance

01 THE BEFORE

Functional, but not future proof

Alteram's contact centre operates on traditional Mon-Fri bank hours, with agent lunches and breaks relatively fixed. Their environment did not involve significant complexity, so they used Microsoft Excel to manage their workforce. "Excel was functional," says Musa Motautona, Head of Workforce Management, "but forecasting and scheduling were time-consuming, imprecise, and manual processes—certainly not scalable. We had no way to track adherence and were experiencing high abandonment and low occupancy." Alteram had a running list of nice-to-haves as they considered a new solution, including real-time visibility to adherence, effective leave management, and automated WFM activities.

02 DESIRE TO CHANGE

Getting on the right track with NICE WFM

After winning an important contract with the South African government, Alteram had to expand its workforce management capabilities, gain flexibility and improve service levels to meet contractual obligations. Their wish-list items quickly became must-haves.

Alteram selected NICE WFM in the cloud to tick the must-have boxes. NICE WFM delivered real-time adherence visibility, integrated forecasting, and scheduling experience, with data automatically entered instead of hours and hours of manual data compilation. Realizing the jump from Excel (with a few formulas) to NICE WFM (the world's most sophisticated WFM solution) was a massive change, Alteram engaged NICE VRS' expert guidance to ensure the WFM solution was configured to support their planned growth. VRS also provided a maturity model that prioritized getting the basics right—including the appropriate organizational and governance structures to support bringing on additional lines of business for South Africa's Department of Labour and more customers.

03 THE SOLUTION

Alteram's Transformation

To ensure Alteram's smooth transition into the NICE WFM world, VRS and NICE Professional Services mobilized early to provide technical and operational guidance. VRS conducted an Operational Assessment immediately after kick-off to baseline Alteram's performance and understand their goals and business practices. At the same time, NICE's Professional Services team collaborated with Alteram's ACD vendor to ensure the integration between the ACD and NICE WFM functioned properly.

VRS identified isolated groups among Alteram's agents who were single-skilled. After verifying that single-skilling was not contractually obligated, VRS advised Alteram to shift to a multi-skilling model. VRS projected a positive impact on Alteram's service levels and offered guidance to improve business operations.

VRS then guided configuration of the NICE WFM solution to support multi-skilling, as well as future multimedia queuing and multiple enterprise entities. Alteram is now equipped to easily add additional lines of business for the South African government or other customers. VRS also provided continued support and guidance post-launch for change management, user adoption and general Q&A as the team was advancing with WFM. Through these expert access sessions, Alteram's team increased knowledge and comfort levels with NICE WFM.

04 THE RESULTS

The hard work pays off

At the first post-launch VRS checkpoint, Alteram had already achieved substantial results with NICE WFM. Forecast accuracy improved by 74%. Volume forecasting also improved—after under-forecasting call volume by 8%, Alteram is now spot-on. They also virtually eliminated the manual work and hours required to manage employee leave.

Since implementing NICE WFM, Alteram has significantly improved service levels. "Now that we can track real-time adherence, we can manage compliance and in turn, improve the customer experience," Motautona says. "With better adherence, both abandonment and occupancy rates have improved over 80% and we've seen improvements in other metrics like AHT and ASA."

NICE

Case Study

Maturing the BPO business

Alteram plans to use NICE WFM to further enhance business operations, employee productivity and satisfaction, and the customer experience. One next step is to incorporate multimedia queues into WFM so that outbound calls, emails, chats and other digital platforms are all part of WFM scheduling and forecasting. This strategic recommendation from VRS will help Alteram fully leverage NICE WFM and move up the maturity continuum.

Another project in Alteram's maturity plan aims to address the load-shedding (periodic power outages scheduled to avoid larger outages) in South Africa. "Because we still have agents working from home, load-shedding impacts our business operations," Motautona explains. "If we can map agent locations to the electrical grid to know which agents will be without electricity and when, and then enter that information into NICE WFM, our scheduling will be more efficient and we'll have fewer schedule exceptions."

Alteram is also considering adding Employee Engagement Manager (EEM) and Desktop Analytics to support its agent mobility, flexibility, and productivity goals. VRS' insight into how these solutions integrate with NICE WFM will support Alteram as it continues to grow and streamline its BPO practice.

"When we started this project, I believed we didn't have time for change management— 'soft and fluffy,' I called it. But VRS' continuous reinforcement and focus on user enablement eliminated the resistance to change we've experienced before and sped adoption. **It was a secret ingredient to our deployment success** and became a point of pride and celebration for us."

MUSA MOTAUTONA
HEAD OF WORKFORCE MANAGEMENT
ALTERAM

About NICE

With NICE (Nasdaq: NICE), it's never been easier for organizations of all sizes around the globe to create extraordinary customer experiences while meeting key business metrics. Featuring the world's #1 cloud native customer experience platform, CXone, NICE is a worldwide leader in AI-powered self-service and agent-assisted CX software for the contact center— and beyond. Over 25,000 organizations in more than 150 countries, including over 85 of the Fortune 100 companies, partner with NICE to transform—and elevate—every customer interaction.

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