Case Study

NCFE

NCFE Revitalises Customer Service for Life-long Learners in the NICE Cloud

Educational charity NCFE promotes and advances learning through vocational and technical education, issuing hundreds of thousands of certificates annually and assessing the employability of over 1.3 million individuals. Its contact center primarily serves administrative staff at schools, colleges, and private training providers who, in turn provide training to individuals. The service operation previously ran on a loosely connected array of feature-focused systems, with limited cohesion as well as limited insights for leadership. Moving to NICE CXone Mpower gave NCFE a future-focused platform to make tangible improvements in contact center metrics as well as agent satisfaction today, and the potential to continue growing into the future.

NICE

£17,000
Net annual savings on technology and maintenance with CXone Mpower

80-90 HOURS
Reclaimed agent time by avoiding system errors and outages

17 PERCENTAGE POINTS
SLA improvement in web chat

18 PERCENTAGE POINTS
SLA improvement on email contacts

33 SECONDS
Average speed of answer (ASA) improvement in voice channel

CUSTOMER PROFILE

ABOUT
As one of the largest technical and vocational awarding organisations in the UK, NCFE issues certificates to hundreds of thousands of learners each year. NCFE was founded in 1848 from the belief that no learner should be left behind.

INDUSTRY
Education

WEBSITE
www.ncfe.org.uk

LOCATION
Newcastle upon Tyne, UK

AGENTS
92

GOALS
- Unify disparate solutions
- Improve working conditions for agents
- Improve several performance metrics
- Expand contact service channels
- Simplify common transactions

PRODUCTS
NICE CXone Mpower platform
- Omnichannel Routing
- Expert Knowledge Management
- Interaction Analytics

FEATURES
- Extensive, uniform performance data analysis and metrics
- Automated callback queue
- Omnichannel agent queue
- Accurate demand forecasting
- Tailored dashboards by role
- Comprehensive knowledge management
- PCI compliance
- Customer sentiment analysis

Case Study

01 THE BEFORE
Little news but challenges

Like many storied institutions, NCFE's contact center operation developed over time with a variety of on-premise software. As the organization sought new capabilities, different providers were brought in to supply point solutions for things like email, live chat, and comprehensive call recording. Shared folders and spreadsheets served a variety of as-needed roles. "We did not deliver best-in-class solutions, and that hindered the customer and colleague experience," said Brian Queen, NCFE's head of customer service.

02 DESIRE TO CHANGE
A voice for change

When he took his position, Brian brought decades of contact center experience to NCFE and quickly recognized issues in the current operating structure. New capabilities were added in piecemeal and were frequently either incomplete or poorly supported. The disparate systems meant that data was very difficult to reconcile, clouding the ability to truly understand performance. "We had separate providers, things were old, and management information was held on large spreadsheets," he said. "It became apparent quickly that the systems we were using weren't an efficient or stable platform for us."

Furthermore, NCFE's support teams consistently reported low colleague satisfaction levels. In time, leadership connected the scores with the difficulty of working with the current technology solutions. Recognizing both the opportunity and the need to change, Brian mapped out several ambitious targets for a contact center overhaul:

- Enhanced planning and forecasting
- Instilling a high-performance culture
- Delivering value-for-money to the organization.
- Improved recording with focused quality assurance
- Improved employee experience
- Improvements across several operational and performance benchmarks.

03 THE SOLUTION
New frontiers in the cloud

As part of a broader effort to modernize operations in the cloud, NCFE selected CXone Mpower to transform its customer service operations. "We embarked on a mission, and leveraged CXone Mpower technology to help us deliver a more efficient and consistent customer and colleague experience," Brian said.

The solution addressed a number of basic shortcomings in the previous estate, including a smooth and secure transaction process plus comprehensive center performance data. Adding Interaction Analytics surfaces caller sentiment and frustration alongside other performance metrics, which helped to identify and resolve customer pain points and inefficiencies. Armed now with searchable call records, NCFE uses keyword queries and product/service-specific complaints to try to settle issues at the front lines. The goal is to find ways to improve outcomes and sentiment, not just optimize call handle times.

To replace an overburdened application being used to house knowledge articles, NCFE also adopted Expert Knowledge Management. Agents are introduced to Expert as part of their onboarding, and consistent development of the knowledge base has already reduced the burden on second-tier support. Quality assurance professionals use search patterns to identify articles to add or improve, and metrics on view time and scroll rates help validate that the content is genuinely aiding

agents. "We've been through a cultural transformation in customer support and NICE CXone Mpower has definitely contributed," Brian said.

04 THE RESULTS
Dramatic improvements in performance and satisfaction

The implementation improved operational metrics across the board. "Our CXone Mpower implementation has been transformative," Brian said, and the numbers bear out that conclusion:

- Voice service levels are up 10 percentage points, with ASA down 33 seconds.
- Chat service levels are up 17 percentage points, with average first response down five seconds.
- Email service levels are up 18 percentage points, with ASA down nearly 80%.
- Customer NPS is now +67. "Our customer feedback metrics are extremely strong, and are getting stronger," Brian said.
- Reductions in system outages save at least 80 hours of wasted effort per year.

Employee NPS is also substantially higher since implementation, now that agents can more easily handle a wider range of inquiries with confidence and systems
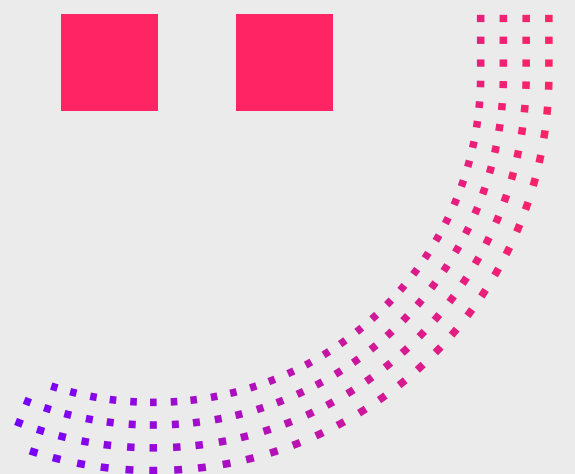
NICE

support. With PCI compliance in the NICE cloud, common tasks like certificate reorder are now simple and easy for learners and agents to complete.

The new solution represents a significant investment for NCFE, and one that pays for itself. Efficiencies have produced an 8% FTS saving due to the stabilized and efficiencies of the CXone Mpower platform. "And CXone Mpower is a far superior platform," he noted. "Every pound we spend is important, and any profits we make can be reinvested back into improving the education system."

05 THE FUTURE

Opportunities abound for a 175+ year old institution

Freed from constraints and operational interruptions, NCFE's contact center is now a source of opportunity and growth for the storied organization. "And we're really excited about implementing a platform that allows us to be future focused," Brian added. "We'll soon be dipping our toe into the water with AI from a customer service point of view, because things like Interaction Analytics help us build confidence in AI."

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BRIAN QUEEN
HEAD OF CUSTOMER SERVICE
NCFE

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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