Superior Plus Propane

Superior Plus steadies services with NiCE CXone Mpower

Superior Plus delivers propane to a wide variety of commercial and residential customers across Canada and the United States. The company trades under more than 40 brands across the continent. Regional operating needs and growth through acquisition meant the company operated over 140 + distinct IVR solutions. Standardizing operations on the NiCE CXone Mpower platform helps Superior Plus with its customer experience transformation by providing a strong and consistent foundation for customer service. With new analytics, call routing, and self-service capabilities through CXone Mpower, the company is better positioned to retain customers and deliver a consistent experience.

140+
standalone IVRS reduced to 8 on CXone MPower

Rising
customer satisfaction

Decreased
repeat calls

Decreased
abandoned calls

Expansion
of channels: From voice-only to voice, social, chat, email, IVR and self service

Customer profile

About
Superior is a leading North American distributor of propane, compressed natural gas, renewable energy and related products and services, servicing approximately 770,000 customer locations in the U.S. and Canada. Through its primary businesses, propane distribution and CNG, RNG and hydrogen distribution, Superior safely delivers low carbon fuels to residential, commercial, utility, agricultural and industrial customers not connected to a pipeline. By displacing more carbon intensive fuels, Superior is a leader in the energy transition and helping customers lower operating costs and improve environmental performance.

Industry
Energy / Utilities

Website
www.superiorplus.com

Location
Toronto , Ontario, Canada

Agents
Remote agents

Products
• NiCE CXone Mpower platform
• Omnichannel Routing
• Autopilot
• Expert Knowledge Management
• Quality Management
• Interaction Analytics

Goals
• Modernize customer experience without sacrificing local connections
• Retire 100+ stand-alone IVRs
• Standardize IVR experiences
• Expand to digital channels

Features
• Virtual contact centers with regional rules
• Sophisticated IVR navigation
• Customizable IVR messaging based on supplier branding
• Call sentiment analysis
• Callback queue

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01 Before

A widely distributed, disjointed model

Superior Plus has relied heavily on growth through acquisition to expand its footprint across much of Canada and the United States. Each acquisition brought a new customer service phone number and IVR, along with a unique method for sharing knowledge internally. In addition to local IVRs, the company operated contact centers on three different technologies, spanning both cloud and on-premises systems.

US operations were particularly limited, in some cases barely better than an answering machine. "What they used was just one step up from having desk phones. It was a significant challenge," said Alex Wozniak, Superior Plus's Director of Customer Advocacy and Retention. "Overall it was incredibly inefficient, and there was no concept of studying who actually takes calls and how many people we need taking calls."

02 Desire to change

Taking charge of customer experience

When Wozniak took ownership of Superior's customer service operations, he recognized that the highly distributed technologies and processes created an inconsistent customer experience. Leadership had no way to understand customer sentiment because each office had such different reporting metrics. This made it difficult to identify and avert customer churn.

Superior decided to reorganize both Canadian and US customer service around a cohesive, integrated contact center. This meant aligning 40+brands under the same umbrella without losing the regional brand loyalty associated with them. In the past, each brand operated its own IVRs to ensure that messaging would be consistent for customers, but this was also highly inefficient.

The company engaged an analyst firm and several vendors in an RFP process. The company wanted to simplify it's technology stack and improve customer experience while also improving and simplifying the agent experience.

03 NiCE solution

Revitalizing experiences on an industry-leading platform

After considering several options, Superior Plus selected NiCE CXone Mpower to unify contact center operations across North America. Implementation began in early 2024 with the bulk of the work carried out during the summer when call volumes are lighter in the propane industry. "We're going through a change in our organization where we reinvent the way we operate," Wozniak said. "We picked NiCE because it's the top in the industry and provided everything we needed immediately, and for where we want to go."

Instead of over 140 stand-alone IVRs, the company now operates eight virtual contact centers. The virtualization includes selective ability to add extra evening and weekend hours during peak periods, targeted at regions which need them most based on actual call data. A callback queue has proven popular with callers and the option to leave voicemail disabled in some markets due to strong uptake of the callback option.

Callers hear a greeting appropriate to the Superior brand in their area. The company is now able to engage across social, chat, email, self-service, and IVR channels as well as live voice. Many of the local phone systems used previously could only offer an emergency escalation of remain on the line. Today, Superior provides greater prompts allowing the customer to reach the best suited agent based on their selection.

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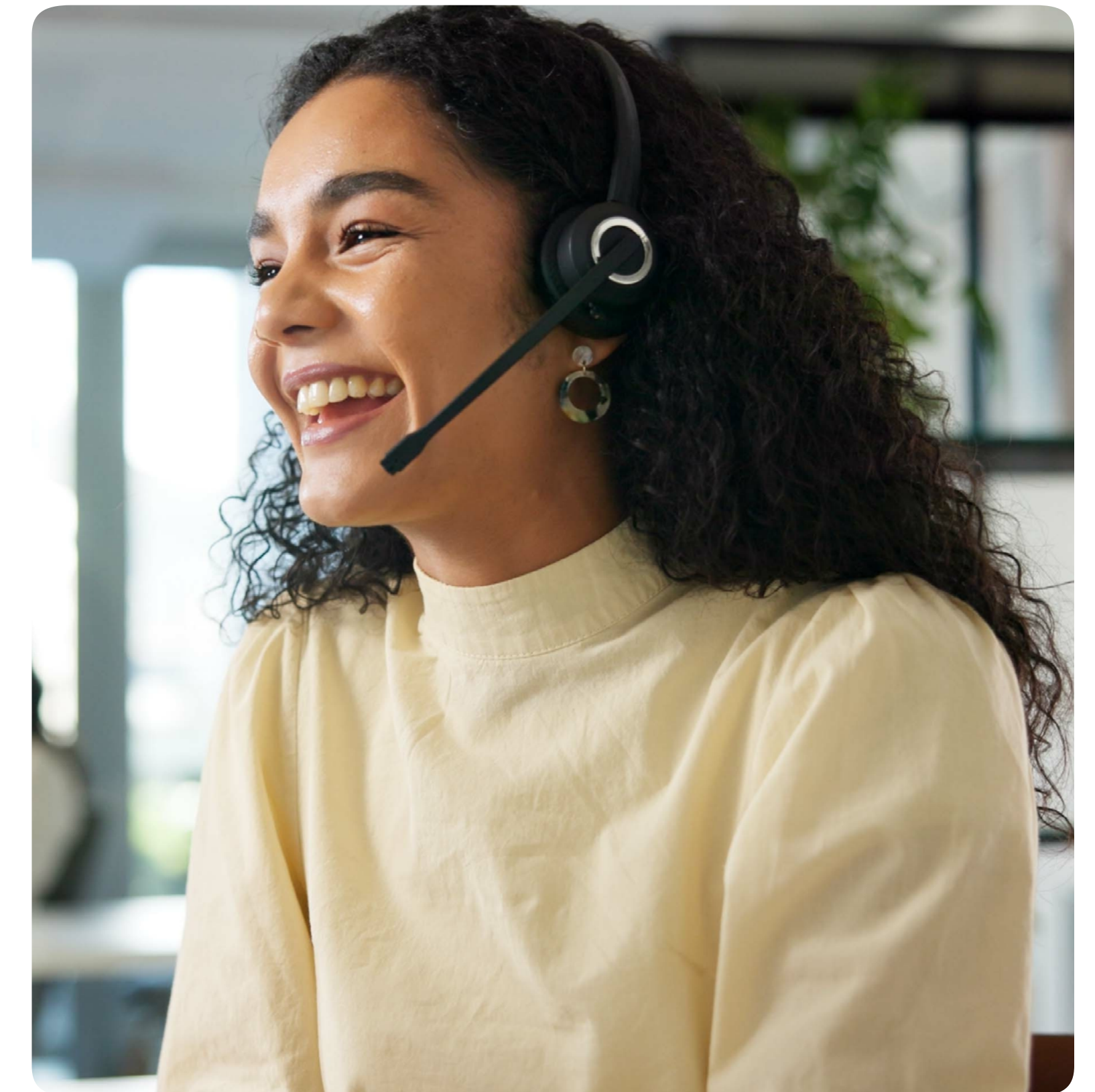
CXone Mpower Interaction Analytics provides detailed call volume insights and is setting the stage for Voice of Customer and Voice of Agent reporting. These, in turn, will expand visibility into performance, enabling them to identify churn risk and take proactive measures to prevent it – such as analyzing the impact of delivery delays, multiple calls, and other customer experience inconveniences.

Superior Plus is also using CXone Mpower Expert in Canada. This will simplify the process of helping agents through complex and high-stakes interactions with a single source for institutional knowledge. "It's a great example of how NiCE helps us minimize the footprint of the agent's workspace," Wozniak said.

04 Results

Sophisticated service, local touch

Early results have been roundly positive, as Superior's customer satisfaction has risen alongside a drop in both abandoned calls and repeat calls for the same issue. The company is navigating a modernization strategy without losing its local appeal. "While the agents are in a virtual contact center, they're still local. A customer might still get the rep they've spoken to for 20 years if they're not already engaged with another customer" Wozniak said.

Leadership now has significantly improved insights into agent productivity and efficiency with a single workflow to monitor. This helps address both talk time and after-call work metrics. Although the company expects average voice handle time to increase as more low-level issues are handled through self-service and asynchronous channels aided by Autopilot, efficiency is still a concern. "NiCE live monitoring and

supervisory tools are much better than what we had, " Wozniak said. "And now agents are going to face more challenging discussions, and we'll make sure they have the right amount of time to have that conversation with the customer."

In addition to creating more self-service workflows for orders and payments, Superior now has improved customer sentiment analysis. The company analyzed customer sentiment with its previous solution, but it was too cumber some to use on a regular basis. Interaction Analytics also monitors repeat calls, escalations, and frustration to model outcomes. " We're using Analytics to help get in front of customers before they potentially leave , " Wozniak said. "And that's going to be a key part of managing potential customer loss."

05 Future

Continued competitive advantages

In a commodity business, Superior Plus needs every competitive advantage. The company has already seen analytics help the performance of related disciplines including collections and hopes to further expand the advantages of CXone Mpower to other departments. The company is on the cusp of rolling out Facebook interactions and of implementing CXone Mpower Autopilot - powered AI agents. Initially, Autopilot will automate several high-priority intents relating to propane delivery and payments, driving self-service containment and alleviating seasonal staffing challenges. The wider use of AI powered customer experience is also under consideration. "AI can make it easier for the agent when they're talking to the customer. That's definitely something we're starting to think about here ," Wozniak said"

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Alex Wozniak
Director of Customer Advocacy and Retention
Superior Plus

About NiCE

NiCE is transforming the world with AI that puts people first. Our purpose-built AI-powered platforms automate engagements into proactive, safe, intelligent actions, empowering individuals and organizations to innovate and act, from interaction to resolution. Trusted by organizations throughout 150+ countries worldwide, NiCE's platforms are widely adopted across industries connecting people, systems, and workflows to work smarter at scale, elevating performance across the organization, delivering proven measurable outcomes.

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