

**The authority
on managing
the customer
contact center**

Customer Service

NEWSLETTER

Service Metrics

What's your most important customer service standard?

When asked, "What is the most important or unique customer service standard that your organization has established?," some of the participants in *Customer Service Newsletter's* 2006-2007 Salary and Benchmarking Survey responded in more philosophical terms than in terms of performance metrics. Even so, most of our respondents express the goal of keeping the customer first, whether that's expressed as a higher-level service mission or as observable behavior on the frontline.

What's your most important or unique service standard? Here's how some of the companies participating in our survey responded:

- "We have an average speed of answer goal of 45 seconds with a stretch goal of 43 seconds. Currently, our average speed of answer is 37 seconds."
- "We track 'Not Ready' time — the time a rep stays busy between calls."
- "Resolving complaints and personal treatment of customer concerns is our most important goal."
- "We strive to have all calls answered by an actual customer service rep without going through a phone queue or into a voice-mail system."
- "Our CSRs are cross-trained to service inbound and outbound

calls, and documents. They do not sit all day taking calls. We overstaff for the phones to allow CSRs to be crossed utilized. This has greatly reduced turnover and burn out."

- "Our customer service goal is: 'One call does it all.'"
- "Our service goal is one-stop shopping — reps are required to handle customer calls from start to finish."
- "We remind our service people that there is only one person who has the power to fire anyone from the CEO down to the janitor, and that is the Customer — who has the power to do this simply by taking his business elsewhere."
- "After each call, we offer the caller the opportunity to speak with a supervisor to discuss their satisfaction with the call. We find that overall about 10 percent of callers would like to speak with someone."
- "We treat others in the manner that we would want to be treated."
- "We focus more on agent etiquette than performance standards. We require our agents to provide "Vitamin C" to all of our customers. This means that agents are Coachable, Capable, Courteous and Caring."
- "Our target service goal is to have 80 percent of all calls answered within 30 seconds."
- "Our mission statement is

to deliver a remarkable customer experience."

- "We aim to be known as industry knowledgeable solution providers."
- "Our chief standard is to respond to all customer requests within 24 hours of receipt."
- "These are the company values that we live, breathe, and practice: 1) Customer Orientation, 2) Commitment to Teamwork, 3) Commitment to Excellent Performance, 4) Passion for What We Do, 5) Focus on Innovation, 6) Respect for the Individual, 7) Integrity."
- "We aim for accuracy in order entry. Orders are checked by a planning group and reps are graded on the accuracy of their orders."
- "Answering the phone on the first ring — and we answer the phones live, they do not go into the phone system unless everyone is on the phone."
- "We've abandoned automated answering systems to answer phones with real people, using trained internal staff who can transact business by phone, and not an outsourced phone bank."
- "We have a Single Sales Point of Contact (SSPOC) — this customer contact position provides high level service to our Sales Offices."
- "Our customers have recognized us for our prompt response times and for our effort in resolving calls or

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email on the first pass.”

- “Our goal is to answer all calls with a live person.”
- “We look for a turnaround time of three hours or less from time of fax/email receipt to the time an adjuster is assigned.”
- “All contacts need to be noted and time-stamped.”
- “We have a code of conduct that includes everything from professional appearance to work performance standards.”
- “We have a training program targeted at computer skills and customer service skills - completion is required by year end, and compensation is affected by participation rate.”
- “The most important performance standard is for a customer to reach a person to discuss the issues they have. We have generalists, and based on customer needs the rep will transfer, with introduction of call, to a specialist to handle specific questions.”
- “We strive to have all calls answered within 60 seconds.”
- “Our mission is Excellent Customer

Service! It’s the only thing that sets us apart.”

- “Our most important standard is call quality. We monitor calls, and an agent is expected to average 85 percent of a possible 100 points on each monitor. Each rep has one monitoring session per week.”
- “Reps have to be available on the phone for 85 percent of their shift time.”
- “We have a Customer Care Excellence Challenge. Targets are set out for the month and the team must achieve them. Lunch is rewarded for this accomplishment.”
- “Senior management comes to the Call Center monthly and listens to customer calls.”
- “Our motto is, ‘Win one for the customer — Get it right the first time around.’”
- “The most important thing is a good attitude. Reps must be friendly, helpful, and responsive, and this must come through over the phone.”
- “We try to ensure that the customer (internal and external) does not feel rushed. We give them the time

they need to interact with us. Certainly we need to re-direct those who are lonely and just need to chat, but most of our customers contact us with an end in mind.”

- “Our performance matrix includes everything from attendance to call quality, call quantity, email quality, and email quantity.”
- “We roll over calls to an outside call center to ensure that a customer always reaches a live person.”
- “The most important standard is to hold up our promise in customer service to stay with the customer through their experience even when having to tie in another associate for answers.”
- “We try to answer on the first ring — and most of the time a call can be handled on the first contact.”
- “We want to answer 75 percent of customer calls in 30 seconds, and 85 percent in 60 seconds.”
- “We track customer saves as a measure of customer retention.”
- “Our most important service standard is availability time to answer customer calls.”

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