

**WHITE PAPER**

# What is Your Call Center Telling You About Your Business?

**by W H Inmon, Forest Rim Technology**

People are just now waking up to the fact that in today's world you can use your call center as a means of listening to the voice of your customer. Some advanced companies are using their call center to understand what their customer is trying to tell them.

So what is it that the corporation is actually hearing from their call center? What can corporations learn from their call center conversations and exchanges?

## **Simple Messages**

In its simplest, rawest form, merely looking at the number of call center messages is one way of gauging customer interest and attention. But this simple measurement can greatly be expanded when there is an examination of the actual conversation between the customer representative and the customer/prospect that is occurring.

Once you start to address what is actually being said in the conversation between the call center representative and the customer or prospect, you can find out all sorts of interesting things.

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## More Complex Messages

- Politeness – is the conversation conducted in a polite fashion? In an impolite fashion? Is language that is not fit for proper conversation being used? Who is being impolite – the customer or the customer representative?
- Red flags – Certain words trigger immediate attention. Typical of these words and/or phrases are “This is an emergency!” or “I am going to sue” or “I will see you in court.” In most instances if a situation can be resolved before escalation, all parties are better off. No business happily invites law suits or other untoward circumstances.
- Length of call – some people are chatty and engaging. Some people are very straightforward and businesslike. Depending on the business and the customer base that is being served different styles are appropriate. It is easy enough to measure the length of the calls.
- Effectiveness of call – in some call centers there is a measurable outcome – a sale perhaps or an order placement. It is easy enough to match the percentage of favorable outcomes with the language and approach that is being used by the customer representative. It is also interesting to see which representatives have the most effective approach.

While these aspects of a call center are easy to gauge, once you get into the content of the call the really interesting information about the conversation starts to emerge – what is the nature of the call and what specifically is mentioned in the call.

The nature of the call depends greatly on the business of the corporation. Typically call centers have conversations about:

- Service – good/bad/late/slow/ etc.
- Installation of a product
- Operation of a product
- Costs – of acquisition, of operation, etc
- Delivery – on time, late, wrong order/broken, etc.
- And so forth

Another interesting measure of the call is the completeness of the call. Did the call center representative mention everything that the company wants mentioned? Did something get to be left out?

## Complaints

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But far and away the most interesting aspect of call center exchanges concerns complaints. Complaints are where “the rubber meets the road”. There is a TON of very valuable information that the customer relays back to the organization when registering a complaint –

- What is wrong with a product and/or service
- How to improve a product and/or a service
- What is needed in addition to an existing product and/or service
- The costs associated with the acquisition and operation of a product and/or a service
- How quickly a product ages?
- How does the product break?
- And so forth

The natural reaction an organization has in receiving a complaint is to bristle and deny – to become defensive. But if the corporation rises above this natural and immediate reaction, there is a lot to be learned from customer complaints. If an organization cares at all about their customer experience, then an organization needs to pay attention to what the customer is saying – especially complaints.

Stated differently, the customer directly addresses how the customer experience can be enhanced through registering complaints. In that sense, complaints are the best thing that a customer can do for a corporation, assuming the corporation is mature enough to hear the complaint and astute enough to hear the voice of the customer.

One of the major advantages of listening to your call center is that the data is direct and current. There is no middleman between the customer representative and the customer/prospect. And the information exchange is immediate.

## **In Today’s World**

Once upon a time it was very difficult to capture and understand call center data. But in today’s world it is possible to easily and inexpensively capture call center conversations, analyze them and visualize the conversations. In doing so the direct voice of the customer can be heard loud and clear by the organization.

It is neither technologically difficult to listen to what is being said in the call center and it is inexpensive to do so.

Bill Inmon and Forest Rim Technology provide a service to companies in helping companies hear the voice of their customer. Forest Rim regularly takes call center data and transforms the data into meaningful management visualizations. Contact Forest Rim for more information

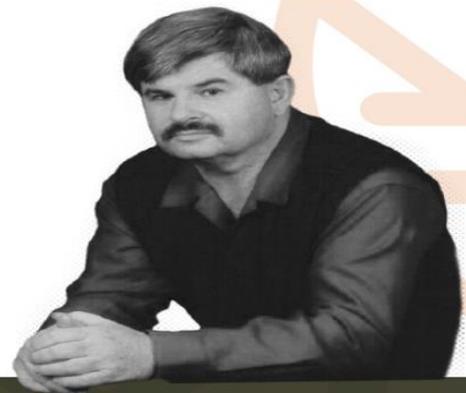
about how you can start to unlock the secrets of your call center by emailing [whinmon@msn.com](mailto:whinmon@msn.com).

Forest Rim Technology was formed by Bill Inmon in order to provide technology to bridge the gap between structured and unstructured data. Forest Rim Technology is located in Castle Rock, Colorado.

## William “Bill” Inmon

### *AUTHOR AND TECHNOLOGY PIONEER*

Best known as the “Father of Data Warehousing”, Bill Inmon has become the most prolific and well-known author worldwide in the big data analysis, data warehousing and business intelligence arena. In addition to authoring more than 50 books and 650 articles, Bill has been a monthly columnist with the Business Intelligence Network, EIM Institute and Data Management Review. In 2007, Bill was named by Computerworld as one of the “Ten IT People Who Mattered in the Last 40 Years” of the computer profession.



Reach Out for a Free Consultation

**Let Us Help You Discover The Hidden Potential In Your Data**

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