Optimizing Customer Engagement: Short Call Analysis for a Leading Utility Company

Case Study

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Introduction

A leading public utility company headquartered in Chicago and incorporated in Pennsylvania, it is the largest electric parent company in the United States in revenue. It is also the largest regulated electric utility in the nation, serving approximately 10 million customers. Ranked 99th in the Fortune 500, it exemplifies excellence and scale in the utility sector.

What are Short Calls?

Short calls are customer interactions that end within a brief period, typically under 60 seconds. While brief interactions can indicate efficient problem resolution, they often suggest underlying issues that must be addressed. These issues can stem from various factors, including customer behaviour, agent performance, process inefficiencies, and technical glitches.

Importance of Short Call Analysis

Short call analysis is critical for contact centres aiming to improve service quality and operational efficiency. By understanding the root causes of short calls, contact centres can implement targeted interventions to enhance customer experience and optimize resource utilization.

Key Drivers of Short Calls

Customer-Related Factors
- Customer Disconnection
- No Response from Customer

Agent-Related Factors
- Agent Disconnection
- Agent Non-Responsiveness

Process-Related Factors
- Quick Resolutions
- Call Transfers

Technical Issues
- Technical Glitches

Impact of Short Calls on Business

Short calls can adversely affect contact centre operations and the broader business.

1. **Customer Satisfaction**
    - **Negative Experience**: Repeated short calls can lead to customer frustration and dissatisfaction, damaging the overall customer experience.
    - **Loyalty Erosion:** Poor customer service experiences increase the likelihood of customers switching to competitors.
2. **Operational Efficiency**
    - **Increased Call Volume**: Short calls often result in customers calling back to resolve their issues, leading to higher call volumes and increased agent workload.
    - **Resource Utilization**: Inefficient call handling due to short calls can strain resources, impacting agent productivity and contact centre efficiency.
3. **Cost Implications**
    - **Higher Costs**: Handling the same issue multiple times increases operational costs due to repeated call handling and additional agent time.
    - **Training and Development**: Addressing agent-related issues identified through short call analysis necessitates ongoing training and development investments.

4. **Performance Metrics**

    - **Lower FCR Rates**: Frequent short calls can negatively impact First Call Resolution (FCR) rates, a key performance indicator for contact centres.
    - **Quality Scores**: Persistent issues contributing to short calls can result in lower quality scores and affect overall performance metrics.

Analysing Short Calls: Effective Short Call Analysis Involves Several Steps

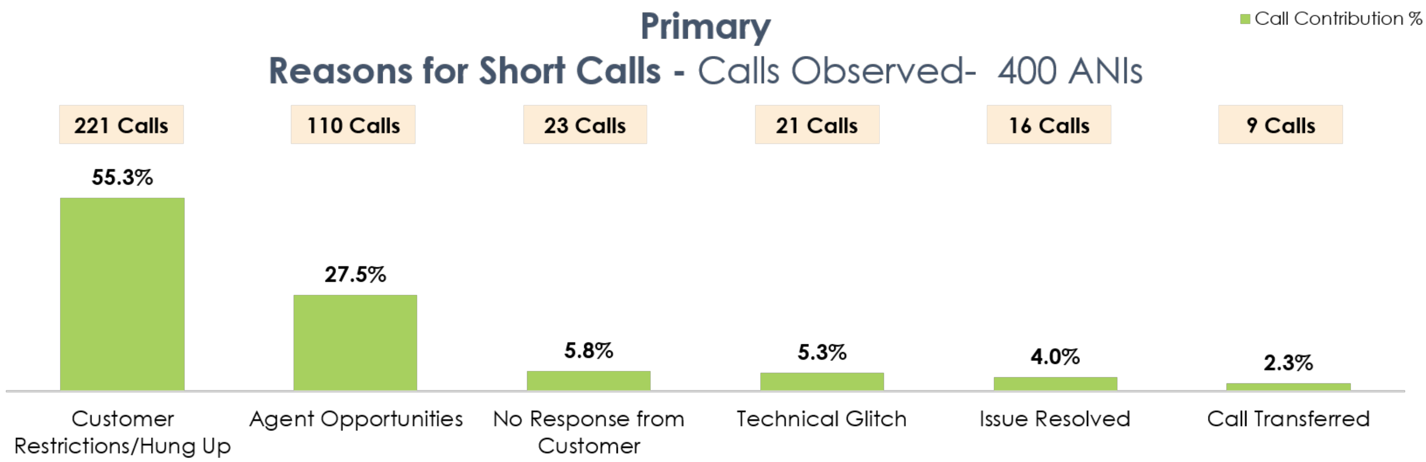
- **Data Collection**: Gather comprehensive data on call durations, reasons for disconnection, and agent-customer interactions.
- **Categorization:** Classify short calls based on root causes, such as customer behaviour, agent actions, process issues, and technical problems.
- **Trend Analysis**: Identify patterns and trends over time to pinpoint recurring issues.
- **Root Cause Analysis**: Use tools like fishbone diagrams and the 5 Whys technique to investigate the causes of short calls more deeply.
- **Actionable Insights:** Develop insights and recommendations for process improvements, training enhancements, and technical upgrades.

Project Summary

A comprehensive analysis was conducted on 400 Automatic Number Identifications (ANIs) to determine the drivers behind short call durations. The findings revealed various factors contributing to these short calls, including customer behaviour, employee actions, process efficiency, and technical issues.

Objective

The primary goal of this analysis was to investigate calls with a duration of 60 seconds or less to understand the reasons behind short calls and their impact on costs, First-Call Resolution (FCR), and customer experience.



Key Findings

Primary reasons for short calls

27.5% calls observed with short duration due to controllable agent opportunities

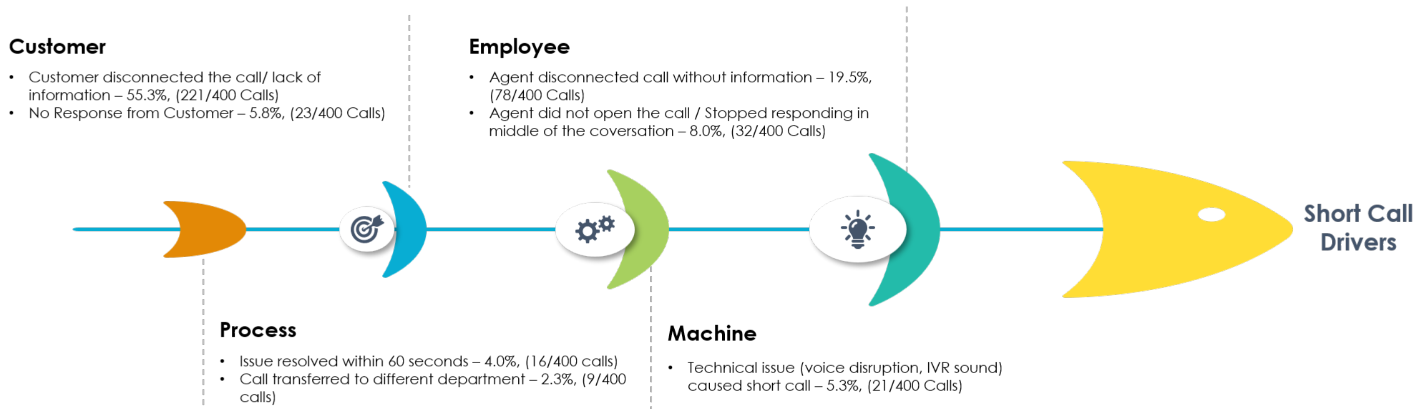
1. **Customer-Related Factors**
   - **Customer Disconnection/Lack of Information (55.3%):** A significant portion of the short calls (221 out of 400) were due to customers disconnecting the call or lacking the necessary information.
   - **No Response from Customer (5.8%):** In 23 instances, customers did not respond during the call.
2. **Employee-Related Factors**
   - **Agent Disconnected Call Without Information (19.5%):** In 78 cases, agents disconnected the call without providing any information.
   - **Agent Did Not Open the Call/Stopped Responding (8.0%):** There were 32 calls where the agent either did not open the call or ceased responding in the middle of the conversation.

3. **Process-Related Factors**

   - **Issue Resolved Within 60 Seconds (4.0%):** 16 calls were resolved within a short time frame, contributing to the short duration.
   - **Call Transferred to Different Department (2.3%):** 9 calls were transferred to another department, resulting in short call durations.

4. **Technical Issues**

   - **Technical Glitch (5.3%):** Twenty-one calls experienced technical issues, such as voice disruptions or IVR sound problems, which led to short calls.



Recommendations

1. **Agent Disconnection Management**

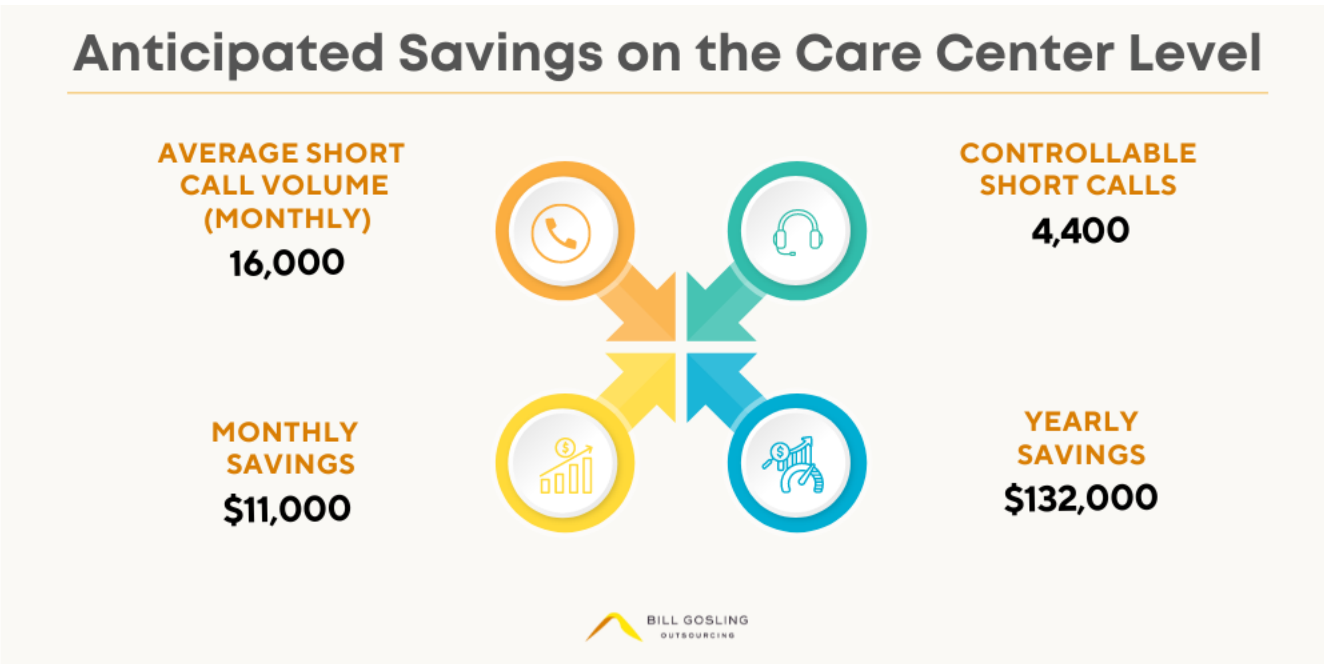
   - Proper call release verbatim should be used when agents disconnect calls.
   - Cases where agents intentionally disconnect calls should be treated as critical errors (call avoidance), and immediate corrective action is recommended.

2. **Technical Issue Mitigation**

   - Regular checks on Avaya and the system can help identify and resolve ongoing technical glitches causing call disconnections or voice issues.

ROI and Cost Efficiency Gains: Controllable Short Calls

In our analysis of short call durations for a leading utility company, we identified significant opportunities for cost savings through better management of controllable short calls. Here's a detailed breakdown of the anticipated savings:



- **Average Short Call Volume (Monthly):** 16,000
- **Controllable Short Calls (16,000 * 27.5%):** 4,400
- **Monthly Savings (@ $2.5 per call):** $11,000
- **Yearly Savings:** $132,000

By effectively managing controllable short calls, we can unlock significant cost savings at the care centre level. This reduction in call volume not only results in substantial monthly and yearly savings but also contributes positively to the overall ROI and cost efficiency, reinforcing the value of this strategy.

By focusing on controllable short calls, the utility company can enhance operational efficiency, reduce unnecessary costs, and importantly, improve customer satisfaction. This reassures the audience about the service quality. This approach demonstrates a clear path to achieving both immediate and long-term financial benefits while maintaining high standards of customer service.

Conclusion

This analysis provides valuable insights into the primary drivers of short call durations. Addressing agent-related disconnections and technical issues and ensuring processes are in place for proper call handling can enhance the overall customer experience, reduce costs, and improve First-Call Resolution rates.

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