



10 Smart Tips to Transform Your **Contact Center** into a **Sales Center of Excellence (CoE)**

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Service and Sales are two very diverse organizational functions. Traditionally, each function needs a different set of core competencies.

The new-age **contact center** breaks this convention. It has the unique ability to equip and empower a **contact center** agent with selling skills and techniques that enables him to cross-sell and up-sell products in addition to handling a service call efficiently.

This article underlines some key tips and techniques that can convert the **contact center** into a Sales Center of Excellence.

There is a rising need across businesses to convert the regular order-taking **contact center** to revenue-generating profit centers within the next few years. The customer contact center is thus, evolving from being a plain vanilla customer service center to the more advanced, more valuable revenue generating center. The service call, which is the lifeline of the customer **contact center**, provides immense potential to initiate a sales cycle. Companies are, therefore, making efforts to leverage this channel to provide a next level lift in revenue generation.

In a customer **contact center**, every customer call is an opportunity which can be effectively leveraged to initiate a sale. The call center agent has the full attention of the customer when he calls in for resolving a problem or a query. It is, therefore, obvious that leveraging inbound calls is a far effective and efficient medium to initiate a sale rather than an outbound sales call.

Consider this: The largest generation today, Generation 'Y' with a population of 100 million represents an annual buying power of \$1 trillion.

Buyers within this segment of buyers are tech-savvy, indulge in online research before buying and expect expert help when they are ready to buy.


One can thus imagine the potential buying traffic that for various reasons could get diverted to the **contact center** and generate sales opportunities. However, converting these opportunities into sources of real revenue is where the real challenge lies.

Transforming the regular **contact center** into a revenue generating Sales Center of Excellence (CoE) requires a methodical and a well-planned approach. The WNS approach to building a Sales Center of Excellence involves:


- Understanding the customer lifecycle
- Helping the client identify the sales maturity model of the **contact center**
- Suggesting ways and means and charting out a well-defined roadmap to convert the **contact center** into a Sales Center of Excellence and reduce the Total Cost of Ownership considerably.





Here are **10 tips** that can transform the regular **contact center** into a Sales Center of Excellence:


 **1. Revamping Your Hiring Engine** – Your employee recruitment process should be focused on identifying, selecting and hiring candidates who share a good number of behavioral traits with current strong performers within your **contact center**. Some of the traits could be:


- Interpersonal skills: It is important that a sales person feels natural interacting with people with an ability to adapt to a variety of situations and different personalities
- Resilience: The power to pursue objectives with self motivation and patience
- Capacity to inspire trust
- Ability to quickly identify the critical issues during a conversation
- Ability to negotiate confidently
- Passion and enthusiasm
- Integrity and honesty
- An interest in learning new things


 **2. Training Contact Center Agents to Sell Effectively** – Sales people are not born, they are trained. Training must become a priority to reinforce the sales culture in your **contact center**. Your **contact center** agents must be sensitized about being able to effectively use up-selling and cross-selling techniques, for example, offering a new product / service while providing support for an earlier version, or cross-selling an additional product or service. A great service call can become a good sales call, if the contact center agent can put forth a sales-closing question. Introduction of industry / domain interface in training is also an important facet to build a confident pool of resources who could sell better. Training should not be restricted to **contact center** agents only and must be extended to team managers too.

 **3. Power Scheduling and Prioritizing** – The best agents in your **contact center** should be earmarked and deployed to attend calls during sales peak times to effectively handle customer queries and at the same time make a sale. Introduction of advanced workforce management solutions is a must to be able to forecast sales peak times and schedule call-handling by the best agents in the call center. In addition, contact centers must also deploy an intelligent call-routing technology with the ability to 'power prioritize' calls basis agent and customer profile. Planning and scheduling not only enhances the chances of cross-selling and up-selling, but also bolsters the ability of the contact center's ability to take care of customer enquiries in a timely manner.


 **4. Intelligent Incentivization** – Sales incentive compensation management is increasingly becoming the key decisive and motivating factor in influencing the **contact center** sales force to sell and make an impact on business performance. WNS recommends an outcome-based incentive structure with incentives for sales on high margin products, cross-selling of bundled products and revenue generated per transaction.


 **5. Valuing Feedback** – You **contact center** agent is your strongest link with your customer; and it pays to inculcate a practiced and sustained behavior of collecting, respecting and valuing the agent's ideas and feedback.

 **6. Monetizing Customer Wait Times** – Customer wait times on IVR can be effectively utilized by running special promotion announcements when putting the customer on hold. This can be supplemented by fast-tracking customers for 'deals of the day' on Websites.

 **7. Integrating Customer Contact Center with Your Website** – Integrating the customer **contact center** with your website with proactive Web chat options is a great way to improve online customer acquisition and retention. With an advanced Web chat option, one can expect approximately 50 percent reduction in shopping cart abandonment rates.

 **8. Integrating Social Media with Contact Center** – Monitoring your brand on social media and integrating your **contact center** to support customers over social channels and helping key buying decisions of your customers is emerging as a great strategy to ensure better ROI on your social media investments.

 **9. Ensuring Better Insights with Analytics** – There is a growing need to drill out actionable insights from data collected from contact centers. Analytics has the power to fuel sales by providing actionable insights for better customer recovery, loyalty management, product improvement, campaign management and so forth. Speech Analytics platforms are increasingly being seen as a 'game changer' for the contact center-sales center segment of business. New approaches in analyzing CSAT and NPS could also be deployed to improve quality of the feedback mechanism.

 **10. Continuous Benchmarking & Improvement** – While, continuous benchmarking should be a contact process to acquire / develop technology that complements and supplements sales within the contact center; use of Six Sigma methodology should be used effectively to improve quality of query handling and enhancing sales.



Partner with the Expert

WNS, a leading Business Process Outsourcing company, offers strategic solutions to current and futuristic **contact center** needs of as many as nine industry verticals, including Banking and Financial Services, Healthcare, Insurance, Manufacturing, Retail and Consumer Products, Shipping and Logistics, Telecommunications, Travel and Leisure, Utilities and Energy. A successful sales program requires cultural and process changes.

The WNS Sales COE is a one of a kind “Sales + Service” bundled offering that is helping clients globally to transform their order-taking contact centers into revenue generating sales Centers of Excellence. To take advantage of opportunities in the current uncertain economic climate, in which there is a significant focus on sustainable growth, WNS has partnered with its clients to create Sales Centers of Excellence while upholding quality of service.

Snapshot of **contact center** solutions and benefits:

Clients	UK-based Travel Agency	Leading North American Airline	Global Leader in Travel Communication / Network Solutions	Leading North American Travel Agency	Leading Multiline Insurer
Processes Serviced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internet-based Travel and Leisure Bookings Inbound Sales Outbound Project – Cross-sell / Up-sell White Label Partners (Premium Customers) Information on Top Selling Destinations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Bookings (Sales) Changes to Existing Bookings Special Services Medical Cases Schedule Changes Travel Agency Queries Web Support Fares, Ticketing Group Bookings Pets Travel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selling Network Products Remote Account Management Engage with the Regional Sales Team Campaigns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internet-based Travel and Leisure Bookings Inbound Sales Outbound Project - Cross-sell / Up-sell Information on Top Selling Destinations Click-to-Call (CTC) Functionality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motor Sales and Services Motor Customer Advice and Sales Travel Sales and Services NCD Proof Validation Motor Customer Admin E-mail and Data Processing
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Car Rentals: 60%+ Airline Bookings: 20%+ Hotel Bookings: 30%+ Vacation Packages: 10%+ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in Sales Revenue Generated by ~17% From 2007 to 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total Sales and New Business Increased 5 times over the Last 5 Years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased Conversions From 14% to 20% in 2011 Successful Management of CTC Yielding \$1.5mn Revenue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ~£25mn of New Business Revenue Generated in 2010 Handling 2.7mn Calls

To learn more, please write to us at marketing@wns.com