

Unearthing and fixing agent flaws

Quality management and eLearning systems improve training programs by providing courses tailored to an agent's weakness. They are starting to deploy speech analytics and mining tools to uncover even the most hidden conversation nuances. Here's what is happening. **BY RALF ROESEL**

In contact centres where communications serve as the sole business driver, it is critical to deliver quality and cost-effective service to differentiate your company. Recording and quality monitoring help you do this by filling the knowledge gap of "what is really going on." Monitoring crucial business processes and the changing kaleidoscope of agent communications can transform customer interactions from a phantom apparition to a valuable data resource.

These quality management tools in contact centres should ensure superior customer interactions for all communication channels. But their primary goal, to gain insight about the quality and processes of contact centre operations, must transform the gathered knowledge

process of detection of weaknesses. Speech analytics examines recorded audio by content. It reduces the workload of contact centre trainers by enabling fast and automated selection of important calls as identifiers of agent weaknesses.

Keyword spotting locates predefined words or phrases to find calls related to critical processes, e.g., termination of an account. These "problem" calls are the most likely to detect agent weaknesses because in these situations the highest skills are required.

Transcription enables even more applications. Besides the ability to "google" any word or phrase within a recorded call (compared to keyword spotting), transcription may be used with sophisticated mining tools.

Text mining of written calls enhances the ability to discover

ability to chat or even whisper into the conversation.

The eLearning training method provides corrective measures after weaknesses are detected. The eLearning courses in modern quality management systems serve as an interactive guide for certain topics such as the sales process or script adherence. In some cases, these courses can be enriched with best- or worst practice examples for superior instruction or, in the case of best-practice scenarios, to show agents how to improve their skills.

These courses usually conclude with a final exam to see if the agent has learned the material. The test and the scoring should then be used to define the agents' skills for workforce management to match the actual skill level of the agent with the appropriate shift.

Seminars or classroom courses are also widely used because they provide direct contact with trainers who can give tips and respond to specific agent questions. However, this form of instruction takes a lot of time.

Seminars must be scheduled; a trainer must attend as well as a couple of agents, who will inevitably miss some shifts. With eLearning and coaching sessions, training time can be planned spontaneously. These quality management tools can be used more flexibly when only a few calls are incoming or during idle times at an agent's desktop.

In addition to saving time, modern quality management systems can assign training based on scoring during an internal evaluation process. By defining threshold scores for a particular skill, quality management systems can then automatically send instruction to agents who fall below that level. Speech analytics and data mining go a step further by spotting lack of product knowledge or friendliness and then, based on a manually defined rule, can forward the corresponding training course.

Agent integration into quality assurance process

Today's training processes can also be enhanced by more proactive integration of agents into the quality management process through feedback modules. Agents can then evaluate their own sessions or score training lessons. Asking for input makes agents part of the team and gives supervisors or trainers new insight.

Conclusion

The speed of technological change is phenomenal, and call centre processes must adapt to survive. In the past, training and coaching occurred through manual advice by trainers or formal classroom instruction. But this process was extremely time consuming for trainer and agent alike and therefore very costly for the contact centre provider.

Modern quality management systems improve individual training programs by providing courses tailored to an agent's weakness, detected by using modern speech analytics and speech mining tools to discover even the most hidden nuance of any conversation.



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through holistic training, adapted to the special customized needs of each agent.

"Best in class tools" go a step further. In addition to manual control of quality through assignment of training sessions by supervisors, they automatically gather information about agent quality and suggest training focus via eLearning, even assigning predefined content automatically. Then, as the agent fortifies his current lack of knowledge, new opportunities present themselves, and the eLearning module addresses the next weakest link in the chain.

Automatic detection of training needs

With the most recent tools speech analytics achieves this automatic

useful information relating to product, process and operational issues by using artificial intelligence algorithms in an automated manner. These algorithms help detect unknown issues without a supervisor even listening to the call.

Evaluating training methods

Today's tools for quality management and agent training offer numerous ways to create learning material or process agent coaching but differ primarily in the time factor.

The use of eCoaching provides a reactive tool to help the trainer respond to issues in real time, either through personal coaching where the trainer sits besides the agent and gives hints, or a more sophisticated solution with live monitoring of the call and agent's screen with the