

**INDUSTRY**

Travel and Hospitality

**SOLUTION**

Care Services

**PRODUCTS**

Customer Care and Technical Support

**CLIENT STORY**

Reduced Average Handle Time (AHT), Increased Satisfaction:

## Airline Reduces AHT with Quality, Not Speed

If an exceptional customer experience is the goal, does a contact center's average handle time (AHT) matter anymore?

For decades, the prevailing attitude towards contact center effectiveness was "volume is value"-- and rewards were doled out to employees who reduced AHT by hanging up the fastest. The irony was that just as companies were working hard to attract customers, they were missing opportunities to build long-term loyalty. This large airline didn't want to make the same mistakes; it wanted to show customers that their time was respected and valued. We helped increase customer satisfaction scores (CSAT) for an overseas reservation program -- and reduced AHT in the process -- by improving the quality of each customer contact.

Why did some calls take so much longer than others? In order to answer that question, the airline first needed to understand what a properly handled contact looked like. We created a detailed process map of the airline's reservation calls, which we used as a starting point for a deep-dive analysis of actual customer interactions. It became clear from the research that associates for the program needed more support. Conversations with customers were often disjointed; the pre-scripted responses were difficult to work into a live interaction, and as a result they were not being used consistently. Associates who were struggling with product knowledge were not improving their skills -- and spending too much time looking for answers while customers sat on hold.

We worked with team leads within the contact center to develop improved scripts, and ensured that associates had access to them for use on every customer contact. Individuals who needed more training

on product information were identified through a new center-wide knowledge assessment, and a supplementary training program was designed to drive the center to a higher level of proficiency.

The improvements to the associates' work experience translated directly into a better experience for customers. Now that calls were being handled by a more confident and knowledgeable team of associates, average handle time within the center was reduced by a full minute. The airline saw a significant cost savings as a result; but more importantly, the higher customer satisfaction scores meant that travelers would be more likely to return when booking their next big trip.

### RESULTS

**60 second reduction** in average handle time (AHT)

**Increased** customer satisfaction scores (CSAT)

**Higher** employee satisfaction