ICMI's Editorial Content Calendar
ICMI has broken out key industry topics to highlight throughout the year. If you have *any* questions or interest in contributing, please contact the editorial team:

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January 2013
Let's kick off the New Year by getting our contact center employees excited about upcoming initiatives and the goals of 2013. A vibrant culture and strong morale will help set your center up for success all year long.

Week of December 31: **A High-Performance Culture**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, December 17, 2012

> Potential topics:
> · What is a high-performance culture and what is the impact on CSAT?
> · How to set expectations of your contact center for your customer AND the agents
> · Knowing when to change course on a performance management program
> Read more

Week of January 7: **The Role of Leadership**
Content Submission Deadline: Wednesday, December 26, 2012

> Potential topics:
> · Building Leaders in the Contact Center
> · Managing Change in the Contact Center
> Read more

Week of January 14: **Incentive Programs**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, December 31, 2013

> Potential topics:
> · How to sell your CFO that you need a morale budget
> · What does an effective incentive program look like?
> · Measuring the before & after effects on your culture
> Read more

Week of January 21: **Partnering for Success**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, January 7, 2013

> Potential topics:
> · How to get the rest of the company involved in the culture of the contact center
> · What metrics and data should WFO share to show culture impact?
> · How to schedule in the culture of the company when it competes with KPIs
> Read more

Week of January 28: **Culture-in-Action**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, January 14, 2013

Potential topics:
· What would you do with $10/agent? $50/agent? $100/agent?
· Video of real-life centers in action
· What's your center's culture?
Read more

February 2013
Social Media Support is a controversial subject in many contact centers. Our intention is to help small and large centers alike figure out the optimal way to support social.

Week of February 4: **The Reality of Social and Customer Service**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, January 21, 2013

Potential topics:
· The reality is it's hard, there isn't a ton of volume, yet it needs to be addressed
· Talk about the latest facts and figures and why most contact centers need to consider it
· Have you tried supporting social? Did it backfire? Why?
Read more

Week of February 11: **Setting your "Social Center" up for Success**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, January 28, 2013

Potential topics:
· How to move the ownership from marketing to customer support
· What to do when the CEO tweets back to customers
· How to schedule social into your already busy contact center
Read more

Week of February 18: **Optimizing Social Media in Your Contact Center**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, February 4, 2013

Potential topics:
· Growth and profit expectations from social media
· The ROI of connecting customers though social to your brand and customer service
· How to identify the customer in the channel they want to be in and solve their problem

Week of February 25: **The Secrets to Supporting Social**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, February 11, 2013

Potential topics:
· What makes a great social agent?
· Who is this new agent? How did you staff and train?
· How can you authorize adoption of social media sites like Facebook and Twitter within your contact center for service, but not for "socializing"? How are you monitoring?
Read more

March 2013
One of the secrets to contact center success is managing to the metrics. The challenge though, is determining what the necessary metrics are that you should track, measure and report. And once you know the "what", you need to determine the how, the when, the who, and the why.

Week of March 4: **Back to the Basics**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, February 18, 2013

Potential topics:
· The importance of a solid call management reporting software
· Reporting on the contact center without all the bells and whistles
· What are the 5 most important metrics a contact center should track and measure?
[Read more](#)

Week of March 11: **Sharing in the Success**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, February 25, 2013

Potential topics:
· Metric of the Day! What metric is vital to your contact center that sets you apart from the norm? Are you tracking something unique for one of your business partners – finance, technology, or marketing?
· Agent Scorecards
· Using dashboards and digital signage
[Read more](#)

Week of March 18: **Beyond the Basics**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, March 4, 2013

Potential topics:
· The challenge of choosing the right combination of metrics
· Metric of the Day! What non-phone metric is key to your contact center's success? What new performance indicators are necessary when supporting email, chat AND phone?
· Here's your chance to show off a little. Tell us, and the community, how your metrics have set the pace for your center. Wow us with your multi-channel volume, your performance, and your customer satisfaction
[Read more](#)

Week of March 25: **What's Next on the Dashboard?**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, March 11, 2013

Potential topics:
· Metric of the Day! What's next to pop up on your dashboards? What metric have you seen or heard about that you'd like to start tracking and reporting?
· Incorporating the new channel metrics of mobile and social into your standard KPIs
· Have you cracked the code on aligning people and metrics? How do you report and show that alignment and keep agents inspired?
[Read more](#)

April 2013
Proper scheduling and forecasting continue to be a challenge for many contact centers. Even when you do get them perfected, they are only part of the WFM equation. We'll show how workforce optimization positively impacts both the contact center and the company.

Week of April 1: **Turning WFM into WFO**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, March 18, 2013

Potential topics:

· The Right People, in the Right Place, at the Right Time
· Costs and Causes of Attrition
· Getting Finance and the C-level to understand the business case for a true WFO program and how it can benefit the entire organization, not just the contact center
[Read more](#)

Week of April 8: **Forecasting for the Future**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, March 25, 2013

Potential topics:
· Cycle planning for more accurate forecasting
· Strategies for handling calls during seasonal peak volume
· Forecasting tools that work for any size center
[Read more](#)

Week of April 15: **An Inside Look at the Annual SWPP Conference**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, April 1, 2013

Potential topics:
· Planning to attend the Society of Workforce Planning Professionals annual conference? The community would love to hear what goes on, and what is on the horizon for WFM
· Discuss the importance of groups like SWPP and the benefits of membership
[Read more](#)

Week of April 22: **Managing Multi-Channels**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, April 8, 2013

Potential topics:
· Chat, social, mobile, email, and phone all have different needs and scheduling challenges. How is your center managing the multi-channel environment?
· Adding non-voice channels into your mix
· Determining which agents are right for which channels and when to offer them
[Read more](#)

Week of April 29: **Different Models that Work**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, April 15, 2013

Potential topics:
· Examples of how the "command center" is set up in your organization – personnel, team size, ratio to agents, backgrounds and education
· How do you communicate your real-time needs back out to the front-line agents? What tools are imperative for this communication?
· Have you experimented with hourly versus salary? Exempt and non-exempt? Full-time versus part-time? Flexible shifts and flex hours? What works and what hasn't in your contact center
[Read more](#)

May 2013
Smartphones are the fastest growing segment of the mobile industry. Today's consumers have access from their mobile devices anytime and anywhere. We want to help our community get prepared to take on mobile support…successfully!

Week of May 6: **Is ANYONE Actually Providing Mobile Support?**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, April 22, 2013

Potential topics
· Statistics show that our customers are using their mobile devices for shopping, research, and self-service, but what are the contact centers doing to support them?
· Is it necessary to offer live support or are self-service options adequate?
· State of the industry and an interpretation of the results from the Voxeo Mobile Customer Service Strategy of 2012
Read more

Week of May 13: **What Does a Mobile Support Strategy Look Like?**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, April 29, 2013

Potential topics:
· Do you even know where to start with a Mobile Customer Service Strategy?
· How should the traditional contact center be retooled?
· How to gain executive buyoff for a Mobile Customer Service Strategy and demonstrate the ROI
Read more

Week of May 20: **A Customer Service Announcement: A Recap of ACCE 2013 – Seattle**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, May 6, 2013 (*ACCE-related content must be submitted during or immediately following the event.)

Potential topics:
· ACCE is the premier contact center event of the year! Tell us about what you loved, what you heard, who you spoke to
· What did you come out of ACCE with that you will be implementing in your centers tomorrow, next quarter or putting on the roadmap for next year
· Provide non-attendees a snapshot of what they missed, and give them insight into proving the ROI for next year!
Read more

Week of May 27: **The Device has Caught up with the Desire – A Focus on Technology**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, May 13, 2013

Potential topics:
· Is it possible to optimize current technologies to support mobile customers or does one need to make significant investments
· What are the new advances in mobile technology? How will that affect you in the contact center?
· Case studies and spotlights on technology vendors and providers that have innovative solutions
Read more

June 2013
For most call centers, agent workforce is the largest budget item. According to much of our community, the cost to hire a new agent can be high. Let's talk about the best ways to attract, retain, and engage our most important assets.

Week of June 3: **Recruiting and Retaining the Best Talent**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, May 20, 2013

Potential topics:
· Conducting pre-hire assessments, personality tests, and other unique hiring techniques
· A snapshot of the different generations of contact center agents
· The difference between a sales and a service agent
Read more

Week of June 10: **Partnering for Success – HR, Training, WFM, Technology**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, May 27, 2013

Potential topics:
· Why Agents aren't in their Seats
· Tools to improve agent satisfaction
· Nuances within the small contact center
Read more

Week of June 17: **Are Virtual Agents the Agents-of-the-Future?**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, June 3, 2013

Potential topics:
· Why Use At-Home Agents?
· How to set-up a virtual at-home agent program from scratch
· Challenges of Remote teams
Read more

Week of June 24: **Tales from the Frontlines**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, June 10, 2013

Potential topics:
· Did you have an agent(s) that was a finalist or winner for Spirit of Service last year? Where are they now? What was it like to win? What made them award-worthy?
· What works and what doesn't from an agent's perspective?
· If you could give your customers candid advice on how to get the best service from your company or contact center, what would you say to them? Here's your chance to give them anonymous, yet valuable insight on being the BEST CUSTOMER
Read more

July 2013
Our customers are in every time zone, our contact centers are bursting at the seams, and we need to support multiple languages across many products. We will explain some strategies to overcome these challenges and give the community the options around build versus buy, outsource versus captive, and offshore versus nearshore. It's all about the goals of the company and the expectations of the customer.

Week of July 1: **When Your Customers Become Global**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, June 17, 2013

Potential topics:
· How do you train your agents on cultures around the world?
· What do you do about the language barrier?
· When does it make more sense for customers to be serviced in-country?
Read more

Week of July 8: **Creating your OWN Captive Out-of-Country Contact Center**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, June 24, 2013

> Potential topics:
> · The challenges and benefits of the build-or-buy strategy
> · Managing across cultures and languages
> · Technology tools to assist with accents and grammar
> [Read more](#)

Week of July 15: **Is Outsourcing to a Business Process Outsourcer (BPO) Right For You?**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, July 1, 2013

> Potential topics:
> · Creating an RFP – samples of RFIs and RFPs and the difference
> · Site and Vendor selection
> · What the heck is an SOW? A QBR? What are they and why do I need them?
> [Read more](#)

Week of July 22: **Geographic Spotlights**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, May July 8, 2013

> Potential topics:
> · We'd love to highlight the ins-and-outs of countries that are currently popular within the contact center industry – the Philippines, India, Ireland, Costa Rica, Czech Republic – what should someone expect when going there for the first time?
> · Have you visited or considered an emerging country for contact center work? Vietnam, El Salvador, Guatemala, South Africa, Romania are popping up on the map as possibilities
> · Is nearshore better than offshore? What are the benefits and challenges of staying near the US for contact center work?
> [Read more](#)

Week of July 29: **Contact Centers Around the Globe**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, July 15, 2013

> Potential topics:
> · Do you have a center that is working great? Let's highlight it!
> · When you were sourcing, are there centers that you would like to talk about, even if you didn't select them?
> · What's it like to be an expat in the Philippines? A frontline agent for US customers in India? A vendor manager for a site in Costa Rica? If you have a personal story, we'd love to hear about it!
> [Read more](#)

August 2013
Organizations that leverage self-service options and manage them effectively, can improve speed to resolution, decrease costs, and create a more consistent customer experience. Self-service is becoming increasingly important as customers expect 24x7 service in any language, for any product, and on any topic. In fact, some customers prefer it.

Week of August 5: **How to Increase Adoption of Self-Service**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, July 22, 2013

Potential topics:
· Automation Strategies for enhancing customer service – IVR and online
· Tips to avoid the perception that customers are going to get stranded in your IVR or online help system
· Who are the customers that prefer self-service and how to get them to endorse it
[Read more](#)

Week of August 12: **Technology Solutions Both Inside and Out**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, July 29, 2013

Potential topics:
· CRM that improves call center results and efficiency
· Integrating your help system, ticketing, and knowledgebase into a customer self-service portal
· The roadmap for a successful self-service roll-out
[Read more](#)

Week of August 19: **Measuring Success**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, August 5, 2013

Potential topics:
· Describe the structure you need and the metrics you should report on to prove success
· A great self-service portal or knowledgebase is often described as a learning tool that deflects a customer's need to interact through other channels. What else can it do?
· Demonstrate how your organization gained a competitive advantage through self-service initiatives that reduced AHT and increased FCR
[Read more](#)

Week of August 26: **Self-Service from the Inside**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, August 12, 2013

Potential topics:
· The importance of knowledge management systems for the agent experience
· Are agents better trained using LMS or other self-service systems?
· How to efficiently create and maintain quality, easy-to-find content in the knowledge base
[Read more](#)

September 2013
While customer satisfaction continues to be a key business driver, companies constantly need to define new, innovative methods for improving and reporting on the customer experience. They also need to know what is truly important to their customers and how to ensure that all company goals and agent initiatives support them.

Week of September 2: **Creating a Voice of the Customer (VOC) Program**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, August 19, 2013

Potential topics:
· What does a true VOC program entail?
· Why does knowing the customer really matter?
· Building a single view of the customer
[Read more](#)

Week of September 9: **What Truly Matters to the Customer?**

Content Submission Deadline: Monday, August 26, 2013

    Potential topics:
    · When is customer service still considered a differentiator?
    · The customer is changing and becoming more educated and knowledgeable in many industries. How has that impacted the VOC program?
    · Identifying the 5 key things that matter to the customer regardless of industry
    Read more

Week of September 16: **Looking Beyond the Survey**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, September 2, 2013

    Potential topics:
    · Does a CSAT survey really matter?
    · How to expose CSAT to the rest of the organization
    · Integrating CSAT and NPS
    Read more

Week of September 23: **Managing the Customer Experience**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, September 9, 2013

    Potential topics:
    · The Role of Quality and Coaching (We will touch more on this in the next month!)
    · Coaching the coaches
    · Using Speech Analytics to improve the customer experience
    Read more

October 2013
Engaged employees clearly focus on the customer experience and help fulfill the company mission and values. Training and a solid Quality Assurance program ensure that everyone is continuously learning and growing into the employees you need today…and in the future.

Week of September 30: **What's New from the Annual QATC Conference in Nashville**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, September 16, 2013

    Potential topics:
    · Will you be attending the Quality Assurance and Training Connection's annual conference in Nashville? We'd love to hear what went on in the fields of QA and Training, from the people that live and breathe these initiatives every day
    · Tell the community why membership into the QATC is valuable and why groups like this felt set the standards for great service
    Read more

Week of October 7: **It's Customer Service Week!**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, September 23, 2013

    Potential topics:
    · Show off your contact center and how you celebrate Customer Service Week
    · Share your low-cost ways of agent engagement and daily activities
    · What inventive morale-boosting initiatives do you have in your center EVERY WEEK of the year?
    Read more

Week of October 14: **A Tutorial on Training**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, September 30, 2013

Potential topics:
· Justifying the need and ROI for classroom training
· The technology and tools of the Learning Management System (LMS)
· Management and leadership training for succession planning
[Read more](#)

Week of October 21: **Quality Assurance and Agent Monitoring**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, October 7, 2013

Potential topics:
· Is the old QA methodology dead?
· How are speech analytic tools and call recordings changing agent behavior?
· Outline a great QA program and demonstrate examples of quality monitoring forms
[Read more](#)

Week of October 28: **A Customer Service Announcement: Call Center Demo 2013**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, October 14, 2013

Potential topics:
· We love to showcase and spotlight our exceptional speakers and presenters from CCDemo. Interview your favorite, or write about something new that you saw or heard during this great conference
[Read more](#)

November 2013
Each year brings new challenges and new exciting priorities for the contact center. Get a jump ahead as we explore new processes and technologies to enhancing the customer experience, improving employee performance, and delivering exceptional results.

Week of November 4: **How to Get the Buy-in You Need for New Ideas**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, October 21, 2013

Potential topics:
· How to get channels like Mobile and Social into your budget
· Definitions and terms you need to know to influence your CFO
· Tips for doing more with less
· The importance of a Customer Access Strategy and annual planning
[Read more](#)

Week of November 11: **Creating our Agent of Tomorrow**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, October 28, 2013

Potential topics:
· Is the agent of tomorrow expected to handle ALL channels?
· Should our agents be a blend of sales AND service? Does that change the hiring and profile and the training need?
· Training an uncomfortable agent to handle a new channel
[Read more](#)

Week of November 18: **The Customer of 2014**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, November 4, 2013

Potential topics:
· Customers are getting more knowledgeable and more perceptive. The contact center needs to use that to their advantage
· With the heavier adoption of mobile and social, will customers actually start utilizing self-service channels more?
· How are the next generations of customers impacting your channel distribution?
Read more

Week of November 25: **What Will our Phones Do?**
Content Submission Deadline: Monday, November 11, 2013

Potential topics:
· What new Technology will you need in the next 5 years to remain completive?
· The role of video in troubleshooting and customer service
· Chat is still the fastest growing channel of adoption in many centers. Explain the impact and the challenges
Read more

December 2013
We will wrap up the year by answering the important questions of 2013 and providing solutions for our community to implement into their own contact centers. Stay tuned throughout the year as we identify the BIG challenges within the industry!