

# CALL CENTER MANAGEMENT **Review**<sup>®</sup>

*Strategies & Solutions for Call Center Professionals Worldwide*

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## **Agent Rewards and Recognition Report**



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## Overview/Executive Summary

Call centers have long battled to keep agent enthusiasm up, and absenteeism and attrition down. After all, agents need to be not only happy but also present if they are to make a positive and measurable impact on customer loyalty and the company's bottom line.

In battling agent disengagement and turnover, one of the most critical weapons in the call center's quiver is an effective and dynamic rewards and recognition program that consistently and positively reinforces agents' desired behaviors and accomplishments.

As management consultant Susan Heathfield says, "Prioritize recognition for people, and you can ensure a positive, productive and innovative organizational climate. People who feel appreciated are more positive about themselves and their ability to contribute, and are potentially your best employees."

Such a potentially powerful weapon against common call center ailments deserves some special attention. That's why ICMI recently conducted a survey focusing on what today's call centers are doing—and plan to do—with regard to rewarding and formally recognizing frontline staff for their noble efforts and successes.

In all, 257 call center professionals from a wide array of industries participated in the survey. The results helped to pinpoint several key practices/strategies, common pitfalls/shortcomings, and insights into what's in store for the future regarding rewards and recognition.

### KEY FINDINGS:

- The vast majority (86.4%) of respondents indicated that their call centers formally reward and recognize agents when they achieve set objectives and/or demonstrate exemplary service. Among the centers without a formal rewards/recognition program in place, 42.9% cited "insufficient budget/support from senior management" as the primary reason, with another 37.1% mentioning "insufficient time to implement/support programs."

- The most common productivity metrics upon which agent rewards/recognition are based are:

1. Adherence to schedule (cited by 51.8% of respondents)
2. Absenteeism (46.5%)
3. Average handle time (45.2%)

- The most common quality metrics upon which agent rewards/recognition are based are:

1. Quality monitoring scores (cited by 83.3% of respondents)
2. Customer feedback (60.5%)

3. Coworker feedback (33.8%)

- Of some concern is the finding that only one in five centers (19.7%) base incentives on their first-contact resolution rate—a metric that has been shown to be a critical driver of quality, customer satisfaction and revenue.

- While more than half (59.8%) of the centers surveyed reward agents with cash, non-monetary rewards/recognition is much more prevalent (94.3%). The most common non-cash incentives used are gift certificates (85.4%), food (78.4%), and plaques/trophies/certificates (69.5%).

- Few centers offer advanced development opportunities as an incentive for agents. Only 8.9% of respondents reported that they reward well-performing staff with special training/coursework; and just 2.3% let deserving agents go to conferences or seminars of their choice.

- The biggest benefits of centers' rewards/recognition efforts include:

1. Higher agent morale/job satisfaction (43% of respondents have experienced this "in moderation"; 21% "in abundance")
2. Improved quality (44% in moderation; 18% in abundance)
3. Improved productivity/sales (39% in moderation; 21% in abundance).

- The top three challenges cited by respondents in implementing/maintaining a rewards/recognition program are:

1. Making sure that the actual rewards/recognition provided are meaningful to the entire agent population (cited by 45% of respondents as "moderately challenging"; and by 31% as "very challenging")
2. Measuring the effectiveness of rewards/recognition efforts (37% "moderately challenging"; 36% "very challenging")
3. Finding time to create/implement rewards/recognition initiatives (36% "moderately challenging"; 26% "very challenging")

- Among the most common changes/improvements that respondents have planned for their rewards/recognition programs over the next 12 months are:

1. Re-evaluate the metrics/results on which rewards/recognition are based (60.4%)
2. Create more alluring, fresher types of rewards/recognition (56.8%)
3. Get agents more involved in the creation and support of programs (53.1%)

# Study Results

## RESPONDENTS' BACKGROUND

ICMI received responses from 257 call center professionals in the study, with a diverse mix of call center sizes rather evenly represented (see Figure 1).

Respondents also represented a very broad range of industries, with the top five being Financial Services (19.1%), Medical Healthcare (7.8%), Property/ Casualty Insurance (7.4%), Utilities (5.8%) and Manufacturing (5.1%).

The vast majority (89.1%) of respondents work in North American call centers, with the largest percentage of participants (23.7%) working in the Midwestern United States (see Figure 2).

## REWARDS AND RECOGNITION PRACTICES

Nearly nine out of every 10 call centers surveyed (86.4%) have some type of a formal rewards and recognition program in place to help foster agent enthusiasm and drive improved

performance. In most of these centers the program is officially managed by the call center manager (53.1%) or a supervisor (28.3%). Only a handful of respondents (7.5%) reported having a dedicated rewards/recognition specialist in place. (Additional responses are listed in Appendix A, on page 10.)

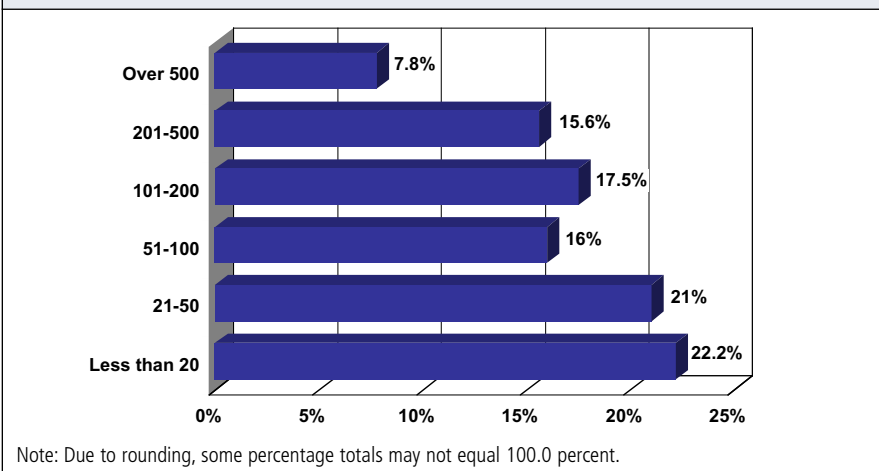
Among the top five industries, Financial Services call centers are the biggest proponents of agent rewards/recognition programs, with 95.9% of respondents from these cen-

ters indicating having such programs in place. Manufacturing call centers—at 84.6%—reported the fewest programs among the big five industries, though they are still within close range of the overall call center industry average.

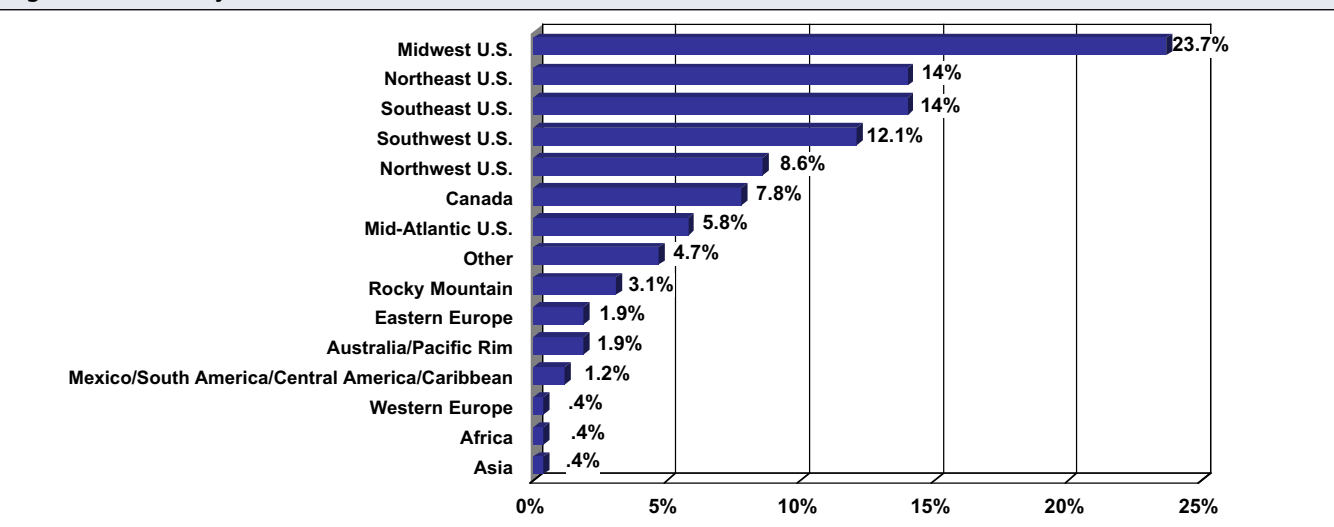
## PRODUCTIVITY VS. QUALITY

Just over two-thirds (69.5%) of the centers surveyed create an equal mixture of productivity-based and quality-based rewards/recognition programs (see Figure 3, on page 3). Experts agree that too much emphasis on pro-

**Figure 1: How many full-time agents are employed in your call center?**



**Figure 2: Where is your call center located?**



ductivity metrics may cause agents to rush callers, make errors when inputting customer data, or fail to recognize viable cross-selling opportunities during contacts. And too heavy an emphasis on quality metrics may have a negative effect on agents' efficiency in handling customers.

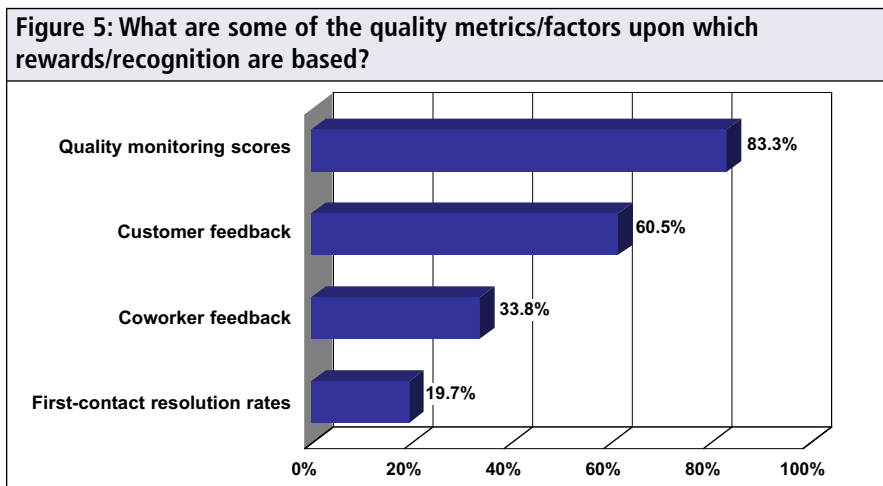
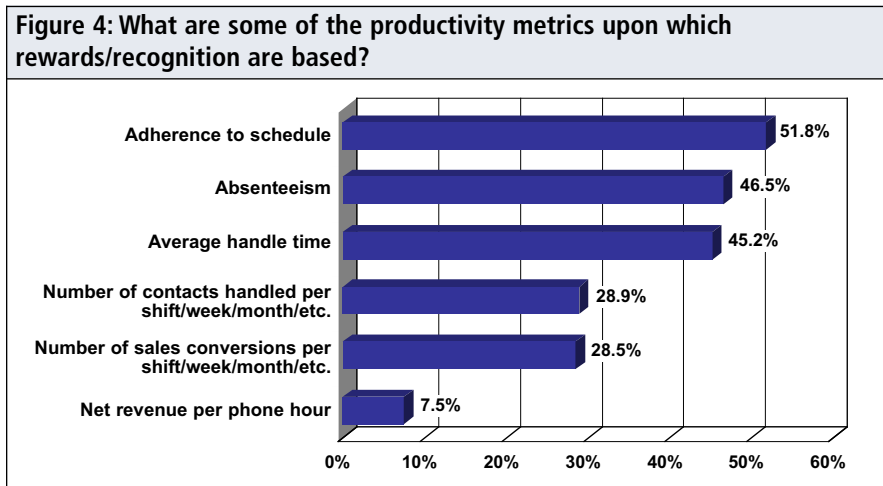
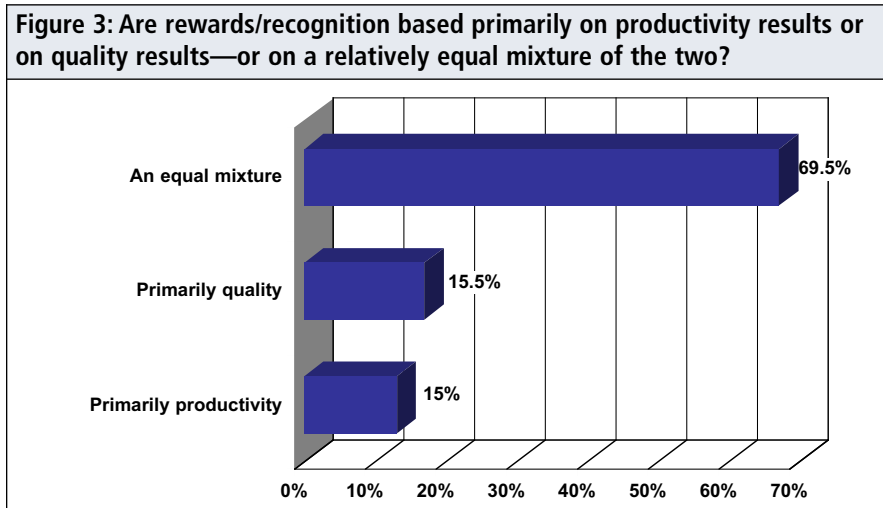
Analysis of the top five industries reveals that Property/Casualty Insurance centers use the most balanced set of metrics; 94.4% of respondents from these centers reported basing rewards and recognition on an equal mixture of productivity and quality results. In contrast, Medical Healthcare call centers have the least balanced set of metrics, with only 44.4% indicating using an equal mixture of productivity and quality results when rewarding and recognizing agents. These centers favor productivity; 27.8% reported using primarily productivity metrics for incentive purposes, while only 5.6% reported focusing more on quality metrics.

According to respondents, the most common productivity metrics upon which agent rewards and recognition are based are:

1. Adherence to schedule (cited by 51.8% of respondents)
2. Absenteeism (46.5%)
3. Average handle time (45.2%)

Other common productivity metrics used in agent incentives and recognition include number of contacts handled (28.9%) and number of sales conversions (28.5%). (See Figure 4.) Additional metrics mentioned by respondents include meeting service level goals, sales referrals and after-call wrap-up time (see Appendix A, on page 10).

While it appears that call centers are still placing a bit too much emphasis on metrics that are out of the realm of agents' direct control (number of contacts handled and, to an extent, AHT), the fact that the primary focus seems to be on things like adherence



to schedule and absenteeism—metrics that agents can, indeed, control—is a very good sign.

With regard to quality, the most common metrics tied to agent rewards and recognition are (see Figure 5, on page 3):

1. Quality monitoring scores (cited by 83.3% of respondents)
2. Customer feedback (60.5%)
3. Coworker feedback (33.8%)

That so many call centers value customer feedback—and use that feedback in agent recognition efforts—is promising; and experts believe that doing so can have a huge impact on agent commitment and performance improvement. “Connecting real-time caller feedback directly to the agent providing the service has far-reaching benefits,” says Dr. Jodie Monger, president of research and consulting firm Customer Relationship Metrics. Mike Desmarais of research and consulting firm Service Quality Measurement Group (SQM) agrees. “Agents find customer feedback more meaningful than [that provided] by peers, supervisors or quality assurance teams. Each [agent is able] to understand which issues are most important to customers and how they are improving.”

Not all of this study’s findings are quite so positive. Of some concern is the fact that only one in five centers surveyed base agent incentives and recognition on the critical metric of first-contact resolution (FCR). Recent research suggests that no other call center key performance indicator (KPI) has a bigger impact on customer satisfaction than does FCR. According to studies by SQM, cus-

tomers satisfaction drops an average of 15% with each callback a customer must make.

That alone should be enough to encourage every call center to place a stronger emphasis on FCR and to ensure that agents are rewarded for achieving high FCR rates. But there’s more: Other benefits associated with high FCR rates, according to SQM, include lower operating costs, increased sales opportunities and higher agent satisfaction.

**INDIVIDUAL-BASED VS. TEAM-BASED REWARDS/RECOGNITION**

Just as most call centers strive for an equal mixture of productivity and quality metrics, many centers surveyed aim for parity in regard to individual-based vs. team-based rewards/recognition. More than one-third (38.3%) of respondents reported basing rewards/recognition on an equal blend of individual and team/centerwide performance. Most centers (56.8%), however, indicated that incentives are “primarily individual-based”; only 4.8% reported them being “primarily team-based” (see Figure 6).

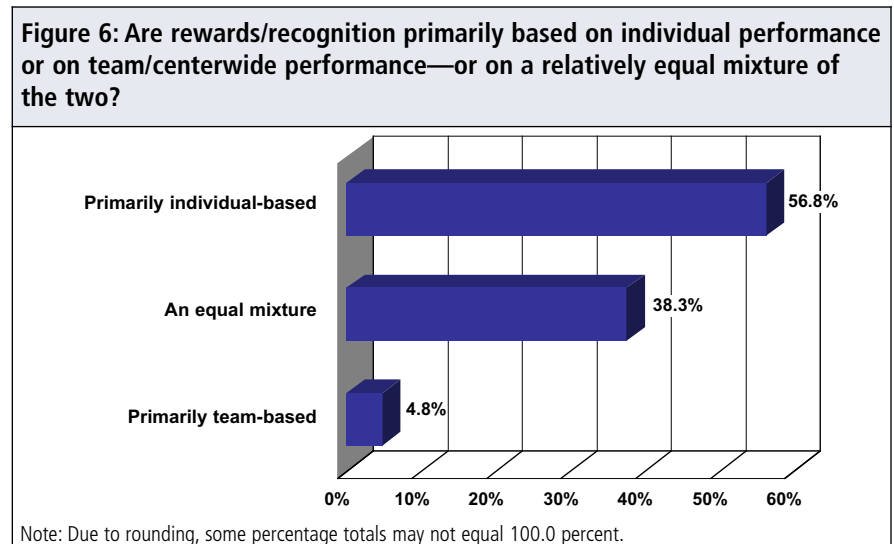
**CASH VS. NON-MONETARY REWARDS/RECOGNITION**

Cash rewards for agents are not uncommon among call center participants (59.8%). Utilities call centers (76.9%) and Financial Services centers (73.3%) are much more likely to reward agents with cash than are centers in the other three big industries—Property/Casualty (38.9%), Manufacturing (33.3%) and Medical Healthcare (27.8%).

Overall, non-monetary items make up the bulk of most centers’ rewards and recognition programs (94.3%). Among the most common non-monetary rewards/recognition given to high-performing agents/teams are:

1. Gift certificates for merchandise, restaurants, spas, etc. (85.4%)
2. Food (78.4%)
3. Plaques, trophies, certificates (69.5%)

Other common agent rewards/recognition include tickets for movies or other events (64.8%); agent “Stars” bulletin board or “Wall of Fame” (posting agents’ names, photos and accomplishments) (53.1%); “Thank



You” letters (52.1%) and awards luncheons/dinners (47.9%). (See Figure 7.) Also mentioned by respondents were 15-minute incentives added to lunches and breaks, auctions, casual dress days, and lunch with the manager (see Appendix A, on page 10).

Though most centers appear to be doing a good job of recognizing agents in a variety of ways and keeping programs fresh, few centers offer advanced development opportunities as an incentive for agents. Only 8.9% of respondents reported that they reward well-performing staff with special training/coursework; and just 2.3% let deserving agents go to conferences or seminars of their choice. That’s unfortunate, considering the fact that ample industry research has indicated that those are exactly the kinds of things that agents want—the things that keep them engaged and interested in pursuing meaningful call center careers. Staffing services giant Manpower conducted a study to iden-

tify the key motivators for call center staff, and topping the list were “the chance to learn new skills” and “to be offered continuous new challenges and support for personal growth.” Ongoing research by HR consulting firm Kenexa supports these findings, and has prompted the firm to list “Growth and Development” as one of the drivers that most influence agent motivation and commitment.

**ONLINE INCENTIVE PROGRAMS**

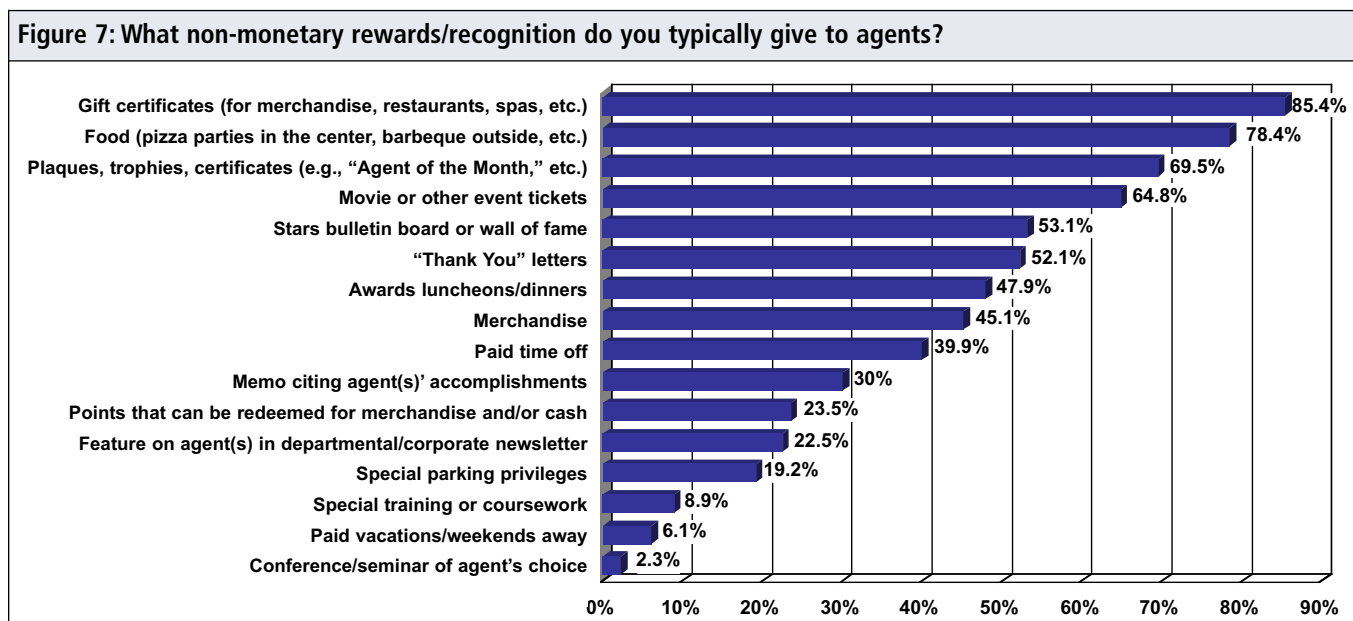
A number of call centers (13.5%) have explored the emerging realm of online incentive programs—those that enable agents to access online accounts to see how many points they have accumulated based on their performance, and to redeem their points for rewards of their choice. Property/Casualty call centers (25%) and Financial Services centers (20.5%) are, by far, leading the way in regard to online incentives. On the other hand, not a single respondent from Manufacturing reported having an online program in place.

The reason why online incentives are becoming increasingly popular with agents and call center managers/supervisors alike is that they are easy to administer and track, and typically provide agents with a wide array of choices in the types of rewards they receive for a job well-done. That being said, online incentive programs are not intended to completely replace more traditional rewards/recognition methods; they are instead intended to serve as an alluring addition to a well-rounded and eclectic incentive strategy.

**AGENT INVOLVEMENT**

To help ensure that the various types of rewards and recognition provided by the call center hit the mark and foster agent buy-in, most respondents (83.6%) actively seek staff input on and assistance with the center’s incentive practices. Common methods of doing this include:

1. Having agents provide input (informally and/or via surveys) on how they would like to be



rewarded/recognized (77.1%)

2. Giving agents the opportunity to nominate coworkers for awards such as “Agent of the Week/Month” (52.1%)

3. Involving agents in discussions on the metrics/factors upon which rewards and recognition are based (40.4%)

Some centers (12.8%) have even created task forces comprised of empowered agents who help to implement and manage the centers’ incentive programs. (See Figure 8.)

**BENEFITS OF REWARDS/ RECOGNITION PROGRAMS**

So what are the key benefits experienced by call centers that have invested time and effort in rewards and recognition for agents? According to respondents, the “big three” are:

1. Higher agent morale/job satisfaction (43% of respondents have experienced this “in moderation”; 21% have experienced it “in abundance”)
2. Improved quality (44% in moderation; 18% in abundance)
3. Improved productivity/sales (39% in moderation; 21% in abundance)

Other benefits realized by respondents include higher customer satisfaction, and lower agent attrition and absenteeism. (See Figure 9.)

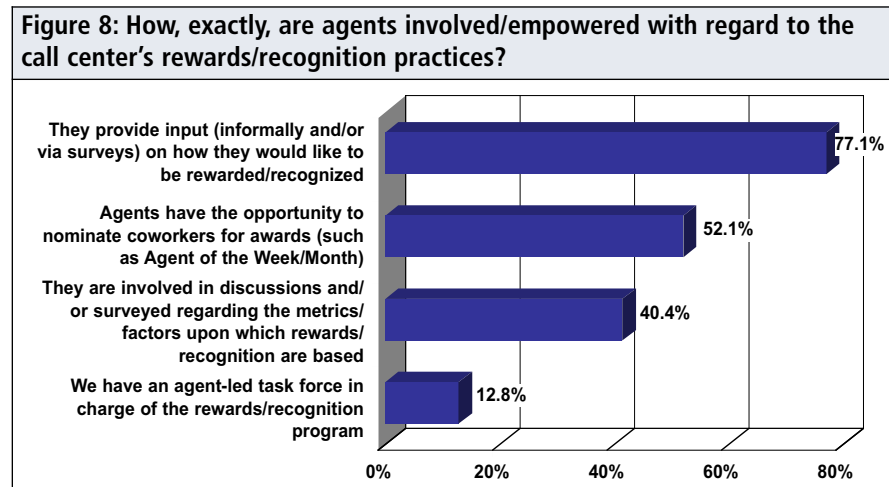
Additional comments by respondents include improved teamwork, and agents’ increased focus on departmental and company goals (see Appendix A, on page 10).

These alluring and very real benefits will hopefully grab the attention of all the call centers (13.6%)—and their senior managers—that indicated that they had no formal rewards/recognition initiative in place.

The most common reason cited by such centers is that senior management in their organizations does not

provide them with sufficient budget and/or support to implement a viable incentive program (42.9%). It is unclear how much of a fight these respondents are putting up to help persuade management to embrace agent rewards and recognition, but one thing is almost certain—if they have, in fact, given up on the cause, many of their agents likely have given up on the call center, and, consequently, many of their customers may have given up on the company.

It’s not just ICMI’s research that shows how companies clearly benefit from solid employee recognition programs. A study by The Forum for People Performance Management and



**Figure 9: What benefits has your center experienced as a result of your rewards/recognition efforts?**

	Have not experienced this benefit	Have experienced some	Have experienced in moderation	Have experienced in abundance
Higher agent morale/job satisfaction	6%	30%	43%	21%
Improved quality	7%	30%	44%	18%
Improved productivity/sales	14%	27%	39%	21%
Higher customer satisfaction	12%	29%	41%	18%
Lower agent attrition	28%	27%	33%	12%
Lower agent absenteeism	31%	32%	30%	6%

Note: Due to rounding, some percentage totals may not equal 100.0 percent.



Measurement at Northwestern University found a direct link between “internal marketing” activities (i.e., employee incentives, recognition) and employee satisfaction, customer satisfaction and an organization’s bottom-line success.

Another common explanation respondents offered for not having a

formal rewards/recognition program is “insufficient time to implement/support the program” (cited by 37.1% of centers without such programs in place). Granted, creating and maintaining an incentive program does take time and effort, but so does re-recruiting, rehiring and retraining new agents who must be brought in to

replace those who leave due to a lack of incentives.

**CHALLENGES INVOLVED; CHANGES/IMPROVEMENTS PLANNED**

Fortunately, insufficient budget/support and insufficient time isn’t enough to stop most call centers from striving to maintain viable rewards and recognition initiatives for their

**Figure 10: What are the biggest challenges in implementing/maintaining your rewards/recognition program?**

	Not a challenge	Slightly challenging	Moderately challenging	Very challenging	N/A
Making sure that the actual rewards/recognition provided are meaningful to the entire agent population	8%	15%	45%	31%	1%
Measuring the effectiveness of rewards/recognition efforts	9%	17%	37%	36%	1%
Finding time to create/implement rewards/recognition initiatives	13%	25%	36%	26%	0%
Obtaining the budget to support rewards/recognition practices	28%	23%	29%	19%	1%
Gathering meaningful input/feedback from agents regarding the center’s rewards/recognition practices	19%	31%	34%	14%	3%
Keeping track of agents’ performance results/points and ensuring that they are appropriately tied to rewards/recognition	24%	27%	34%	12%	3%
Creating a good balance of individual-based and team/center-based rewards/recognition programs	17%	30%	35%	11%	6%
Creating a good balance of monetary and non-monetary rewards	23%	29%	28%	14%	7%
Delivering rewards/recognition in a timely manner	27%	31%	29%	12%	1%
Selecting which metrics/results on which to base rewards/recognition	20%	38%	30%	11%	1%
Creating a good balance of productivity-based and quality-based rewards/recognition	19%	41%	24%	15%	2%
Union challenges	35%	2%	3%	3%	56%

Note: Due to rounding, some percentage totals may not equal 100.0 percent.

valued agents. Both these bugbears were listed among the top five challenges by respondents whose centers have incentive programs in place, as were “making sure that the actual rewards/recognition provided are meaningful to the entire agent population” (the No. 1 challenge cited by respondents); “measuring the effectiveness of rewards/recognition efforts”; and “gathering meaningful input/feedback from agents regarding the center’s rewards/recognition prac-

tices.” (See Figure 10, on page 7.)

Most centers surveyed are focused on continuing to address these key challenges and others—and on overcoming them—to take their rewards and recognition programs to the next level. When asked what changes/improvements they had planned for their program over the next 12 months, respondents pinpointed several key objectives, including:

1. Re-evaluate the metrics/results on which rewards and recognition are

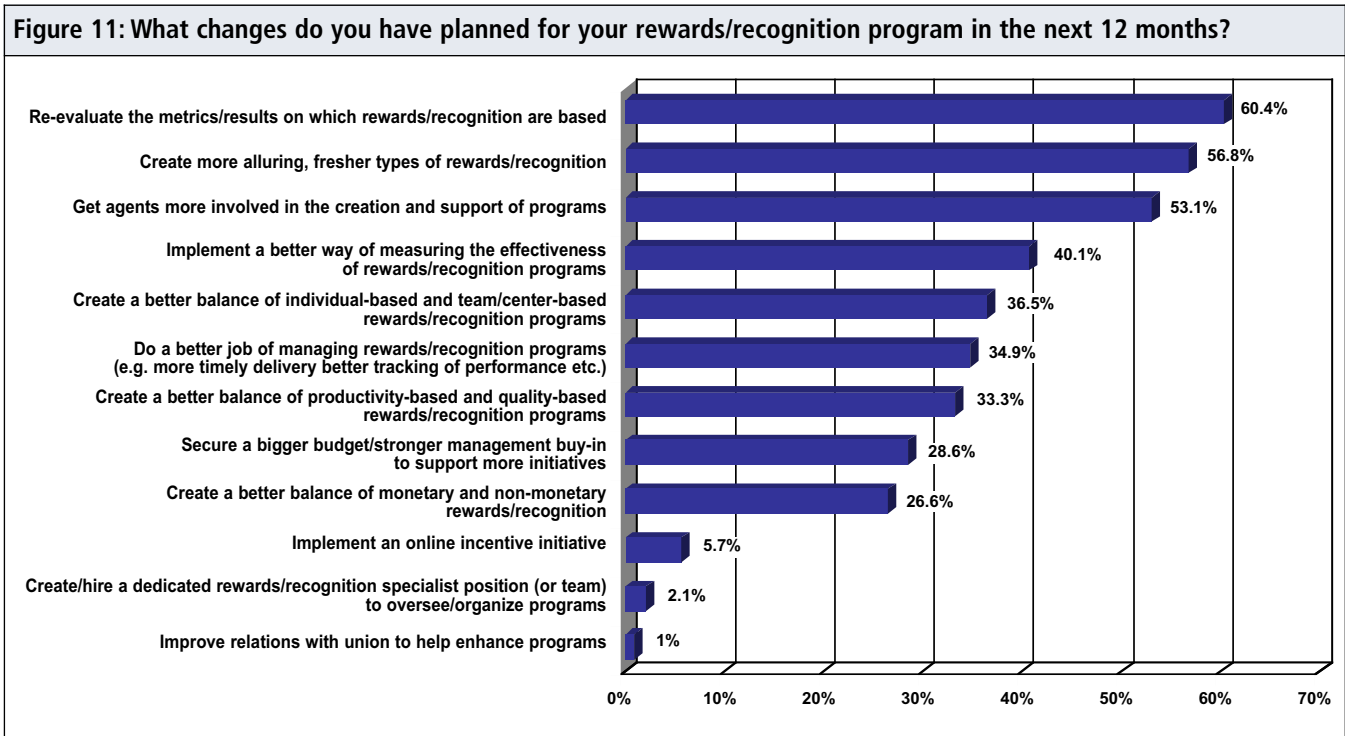
based (60.4%).

2. Create more alluring, fresher types of rewards/recognition (56.8%).

3. Get agents more involved in the creation and support of programs (53.1%).

4. Implement a better way of measuring the effectiveness of rewards/recognition programs (40.1%).

5. Create a better balance of individual-based and team/center-based rewards/recognition programs (36.5%). (See Figure 11.)



## Conclusion

Clearly, rewards and recognition programs have become a key priority at most call centers, with roughly nine in 10 centers reporting that they have a formal program in place. The benefits realized by these centers—improved agent satisfaction, higher quality/productivity—reveals that they are doing many things right with regard to rewarding and recognizing staff for a job well done.

Particularly promising is the fact that so many call centers have gotten—or soon plan to get—their agents directly involved in creating and maintaining incentive programs, whether via regularly soliciting their feedback, enabling them to nominate colleagues for awards, or empowering them to head up rewards/recognition task forces and/or planning committees. Encouraging such active involvement is an incentive in itself—one that helps to foster engagement and enthusiasm among frontline staff, and, consequently, better service and higher satisfaction for customers.

Another positive sign is the fact that call centers are basing rewards/recognition decisions less on such troublesome productivity metrics as number of calls handled, and more on metrics that are within the realm of agents' control, such as adherence to schedule and absenteeism. As many experts are quick to point out, if these two metrics are the key focus in a call center, the other productivity metrics such as calls per hour and handle time will naturally fall into line.

On the quality side, there is some cause for cheer, and some cause for concern. The positive is that so many centers are taking a more holistic approach to quality—factoring in not only monitoring scores but also customer and coworker feedback on agent performance—when determining which individuals/teams are deserving of rewards

and praise. Such diverse, 360-degree feedback is welcomed by agents, and helps to cut down on the number of complaints about unfair/narrow quality criteria and/or supervisor favoritism.

The negative on the quality side is that so few call centers are factoring the critical metric of first-contact resolution (FCR) into their rewards/recognition decisions. The fact that this metric has been shown via research to have a significant impact on customer satisfaction, agent morale and operational costs makes it almost a crime to not consider it a prime focal point of any rewards/recognition program.

With regard to the actual agent rewards/recognition provided, most centers have created an eclectic mix that will likely appeal to a broad range of individuals. However, it would be a big step in the right direction if more centers would start promoting advanced development opportunities and education as valued incentives for staff. Agents—according to ample research—already want to learn, evolve and advance. Turning such opportunities into regular rewards—which few centers are currently doing—will help further increase the perceived value of agent development and strengthen your staff's interest in acquiring new skills/knowledge and advancing.

Overall, today's call centers are doing a fine job of promoting healthy agent competition and fostering enthusiasm and job satisfaction on the front lines. While each center faces its share of challenges (to be sure, maintaining and continuously improving a dynamic rewards/recognition initiative isn't easy), most centers are well aware of the sticking points and shortcomings in their programs, and, more importantly, they have plans to take positive action and make key reparations.

## Appendix A: Additional Written Responses

Note: Several of the survey questions provided text-boxes for respondents to provide answers that were not included among the choices listed. Except for minor editing of punctuation, spelling and grammar, respondents' comments are presented here verbatim.

### Why do you NOT formally reward and recognize agents?

1. We informally reward agents.
2. Vendor currently runs the center.
3. Company believes in Deming philosophy whereby recognition by incentives or rewards demotivates others. All persons within company are hired and coached rather than relying on incentives to motivate.
4. We are a public utility.
5. We are a winning team. Everyone does their best to achieve company goals. If someone doesn't carry their weight, then they are terminated.

### What are some of the productivity metrics upon which rewards/recognition are based?

1. Service level goal met; cross-sells/goals reached
2. Time service: time needed to close out a transaction
3. Cross-sell referrals
4. Service Level; number of competitor placements
5. Appraisal services scheduled
6. Ring time; aux time.
7. Percentage of administered contacts
8. After-call work
9. Total monthly revenue
10. Upselling
11. Reducing freight costs
12. Average "not ready" time
13. Meeting revenue numbers—as a team
14. Service level—entire team is recognized
15. Hold time
16. After-call wrap-up; abandoned rate
17. Idle time; abandoned rate
18. Adherence to call processes
19. Sales referrals vs. goal
20. Team average speed of answer; team call abandon percentage
21. Percentage of workload handled
22. Net revenue per call
23. After-call work; unscheduled break time

### What are some of the quality metrics/factors upon which rewards/recognition are based?

1. Control reports—number of mistakes
2. Contact administration quality
3. Errors
4. Fatal/non-fatal error rates
5. Accuracy
6. Underwriting quality (risk assessment, adherence to processes)

### What non-monetary rewards/recognition do you typically give to agents?

1. On-the-spot green apron recognition cards
2. Gym memberships
3. Balloons
4. 15-minute incentives to add to lunches and breaks

5. Better working hours
6. Certificates
7. Opportunities to job shadow other departments
8. Jeans days
9. Account manager takes them to lunch
10. Auctions and catalogs
11. Casual dress

### Who officially manages your rewards/recognition program?

1. Supervisors, managers, facilities personnel, recognition team
2. Director of call centre operations
3. Recognition committee and management
4. The business unit's trainer
5. All leadership is involved
6. A combination of call center management, sr. director's assistant and human resources
7. A centralized group within our organization
8. The department admin tracks the points, and the managers/supervisors decide what is going to be rewarded
9. Call center manager and FISH peer team
10. Department director
11. Automated
12. Call center director
13. Human resources
14. HR and department manager

### What other benefits, if any, would you say you've experienced moderately or in abundance as a result of your rewards/recognition efforts?

1. Better fit of products/services for our members
2. Increased the number of volunteers working additional hours due to a program that offered incentives beyond OT
3. Staff being prepared to go "the extra mile"
4. Agents have a clearer picture of the issues they are expected to focus on
5. Improved teamwork
6. More of a teamwork type of atmosphere
7. Too early to tell what benefits we will receive; we are just rolling out the program
8. More productive agents result in having to staff fewer of them
9. Keeping up with other call centers
10. Some peer pressure among some to do as well as others in the group
11. Higher level of focus and awareness of departmental and company objectives
12. Has made the call center more interactive with other departments in the building
13. Team cohesion and employee empowerment
14. Reinforcement of coaching and feedback on the importance of sales referral activity on inbound service calls
15. Teamwork and a desire to make processes more productive
16. Better relationships with the team; the team has more synergy and is more open to new ideas/change

## Appendix B: Agent Rewards and Recognition Survey Instrument

Please answer the following questions:

### 1. How many full-time agents are employed in your call center?

- Less than 20
- 21-50
- 51-100
- 101-200
- 201-500
- Over 500

### 2. What industry are you in?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accounting                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance—Life     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Internet Services  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associations                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bookseller                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cable/TV/Radio                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Catalog Sales                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computers/Software              | <input type="checkbox"/> Publishing         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consulting                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Distribution                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Restaurants        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education/Training              | <input type="checkbox"/> Retail             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Services              | <input type="checkbox"/> Service Bureau     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Shipping           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Government                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Telecommunications |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Healthcare—Dental               | <input type="checkbox"/> Telemarketing      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Healthcare—Medical              | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Healthcare—Pharmaceutical       | <input type="checkbox"/> Travel—Airlines    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hotels                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Travel—Agencies    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information Services            | <input type="checkbox"/> Travel—Tourism     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance—Medical               | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance—Property and casualty | <input type="checkbox"/> Wholesale Trade    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) _____    |   |

### 3. Where is your call center located?

- Northeast U.S.
- Mid Atlantic U.S.
- Southeast U.S.
- Midwest U.S.
- Rocky Mountain
- Northwest U.S.
- Southwest U.S.
- Canada
- Mexico/South America/Central America/Caribbean
- Africa
- Western Europe
- Eastern Europe
- The Middle East
- Asia
- Australia/Pacific Rim
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. Does your call center regularly reward and recognize agents when they achieve set objectives and/or demonstrate exemplary service?

- Yes  No

### 5. (If No) Why do you currently not reward and recognize

### agents on a regular basis? (Check all that apply)

- Insufficient budget/support from senior management
- Insufficient time to implement/support programs
- Lack of agent buy-in
- Union policies forbid incentives/rewards
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### 6. (If Yes) Are rewards/recognition based primarily on productivity results or on quality results—or on a relatively equal mixture of the two?

- Primarily productivity
- Primarily quality
- An equal mixture
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### 7. What are some of the productivity metrics upon which rewards/recognition are based? (Check all that apply)

- Number of contacts handled per shift/week/month/etc.
- Average handle time
- Number of sales conversions per shift/week/month/etc.
- Adherence to schedule
- Absenteeism
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### 8. What are some of the quality metrics/factors upon which rewards/recognition are based? (Check all that apply)

- Quality monitoring scores
- First-contact resolution rates
- Customer feedback
- Coworker feedback
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### 9. Are rewards/recognition primarily based on individual performance or on team/centerwide performance—or on a relatively equal mixture of the two?

- Primarily individual-based
- Primarily team-based
- An equal mixture
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### 10. Do you reward agents with cash?

- Yes  No

### 11. Do you reward agents with non-monetary items?

- Yes  No

### 12. (If Yes) What non-monetary rewards/recognition do you typically give to agents? (Please check all that apply)

- Gift certificates (for merchandise, restaurants, spas, etc.)
- Movie or other event tickets
- Plaques, trophies, certificates (e.g., "Agent of the Month," etc.)
- Merchandise
- Points that can be redeemed for merchandise and/or cash
- Food (pizza parties in the center, barbeque outside, etc.)

*Continued on next page*

(Continued from page 11)

- Awards luncheons/dinners
- Paid time off
- Paid vacations/weekends away
- Special parking privileges
- Special training or coursework
- Conference/seminar of agent's choice
- Memo citing agent(s)' accomplishments
- Feature on agent(s) in departmental/corporate newsletter
- "Stars" bulletin board or "wall of fame" (featuring agent name, photo and accomplishment(s))
- Thank You letters
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**13. Who officially manages your rewards/recognition program?**

- Call center manager(s)
- Call center supervisor(s)
- Dedicated rewards/recognition specialist (s)
- A third-party vendor
- An agent-led task force
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**14. Do you seek agent input/feedback regarding the call center's rewards/recognition practices?**

- Yes  No

**15. If Yes, how exactly are agents involved in the process? (Please check all that apply)**

- They are involved in discussions and/or surveyed regarding the metrics/factors upon which rewards/recognition are based
- They provide input (informally and/or via surveys) on how they would like to be rewarded/recognized
- Agents have the opportunity to nominate coworkers for awards (such as "Agent of the Week/Month")
- We have an agent-led task force in charge of the rewards/recognition program
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**16. Does your call center use any online incentive programs? (Those that enable agents to access online accounts to see how many points they have accumulated based on their performance, and to redeem points for rewards of their choice.)**

- Yes  No

**17. What benefits has your center experienced as a result of your rewards/recognition efforts? Please rate each of the following as either "have not experienced this benefit," "have experienced some," "have experienced in moderation," or "have experienced in abundance":**

- Higher agent morale/job satisfaction
- Lower agent absenteeism
- Lower agent attrition
- Improved productivity/sales
- Improved quality
- Higher customer satisfaction

**18. What other benefits, if any, would you say you've experienced moderately or in abundance as a result of your rewards/recognition efforts?**

**19. Please rate the following rewards/recognition challenges as either "not a challenge," "slightly challenging," "moderately challenging," "very challenging," or "N/A":**

- Obtaining the budget to support rewards/recognition practices
- Making sure that the actual rewards/recognition provided are meaningful to the entire agent population
- Finding time to create/implement rewards/recognition initiatives
- Selecting which metrics/results on which to base rewards/recognition
- Keeping track of agents' performance results/points and ensuring that they are appropriately tied to rewards/recognition
- Measuring the effectiveness of rewards/recognition efforts
- Creating a good balance of monetary and non-monetary rewards
- Creating a good balance of individual-based and team/center-based rewards/recognition programs
- Creating a good balance of productivity-based and quality-based rewards/recognition
- Delivering rewards/recognition in a timely manner
- Gathering meaningful input/feedback from agents regarding the center's rewards/recognition practices
- Union challenges

**20. What other rewards/recognition issues, if any, would you consider "moderately" or "very" challenging in your center?**

**21. What changes do you have planned for your rewards/recognition program in the next 12 months? (Check all that apply)**

- Secure a bigger budget/stronger management buy-in to support more initiatives
- Get agents more involved in the creation and support of programs
- Re-evaluate the metrics/results on which rewards/recognition are based
- Create a better balance of productivity-based and quality-based rewards/recognition programs
- Create a better balance of monetary and non-monetary rewards/recognition
- Create a better balance of individual-based and team/center-based rewards/recognition programs
- Implement a better way of measuring the effectiveness of rewards/recognition programs
- Do a better job of managing rewards/recognition programs (e.g., more timely delivery, better tracking of performance, etc.)
- Create more alluring, fresher types of rewards/recognition
- Improve relations with union to help enhance programs
- Implement an online incentive initiative
- Create/hire a dedicated rewards/recognition specialist position (or team) to oversee/organize programs
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

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CALL CENTER TRAINING

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MAY 2-3, 2006 NEW YORK, NY  
MAY 16-17, 2006 SAN FRANCISCO, CA  
JUNE 6-7, 2006 BOSTON, MA  
JUNE 27-28, 2006 DENVER, CO  
JULY 25-26, 2006 WASHINGTON, DC  
AUGUST 1-2, 2006 SEATTLE, WA  
AUGUST 15-16, 2006 MONTREAL, PQ  
AUGUST 15-16, 2006 ST. LOUIS, MO  
SEPTEMBER 26-27, 2006 LAS VEGAS, NV  
OCTOBER 10-11, 2006 BOSTON, MA

### ■ OPERATIONS

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MAY 9-10, 2006 TORONTO, ON  
JULY 11-12, 2006 LAS VEGAS, NV  
OCTOBER 17-18, 2006 WASHINGTON, DC

#### Implementing Six Sigma in Call Centers—Level 1

JUNE 12-15, 2006 BOSTON, MA

#### Implementing Six Sigma in Call Centers—Level 2

NOVEMBER 6-8, 2006 PONTE VEDRA, FL

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#### Monitoring and Coaching for Improved Call Center Performance

JUNE 20-21, 2006 BOSTON, MA  
OCTOBER 3-4, 2006 SAN FRANCISCO, CA

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#### Maximizing Sales Results in Your Call Center

JUNE 20-21, 2006 WASHINGTON, DC  
OCTOBER 24-25, 2006 ORLANDO, FL

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#### Contact Center Technology:

#### What Works, What's New, What Drives Results

JUNE 6-7, 2006 DALLAS, TX  
OCTOBER 24-25, 2006 BOSTON, MA

### ■ STRATEGY

#### Smart Strategy=Strong Leadership:

#### An Executive Workshop on Call Center Strategic Planning

JUNE 13-14, 2006 CHICAGO, IL  
SEPTEMBER 26-27, 2006 TORONTO, ON

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### Disaster Recovery Planning

MAY 4, 2006 2:00 PM-4:00 PM ET

### An Introduction to Call Center Operations

MAY 9, 2006 2:00 PM-4:00 PM ET

### ■ CALL CENTER COACHING: 3-PART SERIES

#### Part 1: Improving Performance

MAY 5, 2006 11:00 AM-1:00 PM ET

#### Part 2: Addressing Challenges

MAY 12, 2006 11:00 AM-1:00 PM ET

#### Part 3: Inspiring Employees

MAY 19, 2006 11:00 AM-1:00 PM ET

### ■ CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEYING: 2-PART SERIES

#### Part 1: Designing Surveys

MAY 11, 2006 1:00 PM-3:00 PM ET

#### Part 2: Leveraging Survey Results

MAY 18, 2006 1:00 PM-3:00 PM ET

### ■ CALL CENTER HIRING: 2-PART SERIES

#### Part 1: Interview Methods and Guidelines

JUNE 2, 2006 11:00 AM-1:00 PM ET

#### Part 2: Everything But the Interview

JUNE 9, 2006 11:00 AM-1:00 PM ET

### ■ FOR FRONTLINE AGENTS:

#### Connecting Through Email

MAY 2, 2006 2:00 PM-3:30 PM ET

#### Handling Difficult Callers

MAY 23, 2006 2:00 PM-3:30 PM ET

#### The ABCs of Grammar

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