Maximizing Student/Parent Communications Through Co-Sourcing
Today’s College Financial Aid and Business offices face a customer service DILEMMA.
Shrinking resources

- Budget
- Physical space
- Technology
- Staffing and training
Growing demand

- Enrollment growth
- Online learning expansion
- Changing expectations for service
- New technologies
Mounting frustration

- Long lines
- Slow response times
- Repeat inquiries
- Perception: “This place doesn’t care.”
Cost of poor service

- Retention issues
- Poor staff utilization/morale
- Brand/image damage
- Cost of re-work - reprocessing new students
- Processing delays
How to solve your service dilemma?
First, what are YOUR objectives?

- Improve service levels?
  - Just one department or many?

- Multi-department improvements or single unit?

- What are your resource constraints?
  - Funding
  - Staff
  - Space

- Are you open to new processes and/or ideas?
Two choices...

• 'Do-it-yourself'
• 'Co-source' or 'Outsource'
What you need to ‘Do it Yourself’

- More space?
- More technology?
- More staff?
- More investment and recurring expense?

Is what it takes to solve the service dilemma even your core strength?
‘Real’ example: in-house vs. outsource

Consider:
- Wage rates
- Supervisory ratio
- Turnover costs
- Ramp up costs
- Space costs
- Data/phone usage costs
- New technology investment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Calls Received</th>
<th>Calls Answered by CSRs</th>
<th># of CSRs Req'd</th>
<th>Total Staffing Cost</th>
<th>Total Minutes, Voice &amp; Data</th>
<th>Facilities &amp; Equipment</th>
<th>Total Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JAN</td>
<td>8,466</td>
<td>6,897</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>$42,865</td>
<td>$2,688</td>
<td>$3,833</td>
<td>$49,386</td>
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<td>4,026</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>$30,211</td>
<td>$2,110</td>
<td>$3,833</td>
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<td>4,848</td>
<td>4,569</td>
<td>6.0</td>
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<td>$36,346</td>
<td>$2,445</td>
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<td>$42,625</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAY</td>
<td>5,796</td>
<td>5,357</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>$34,953</td>
<td>$2,378</td>
<td>$3,833</td>
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<tr>
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<td>5,745</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>$39,850</td>
<td>$2,456</td>
<td>$3,833</td>
<td>$46,139</td>
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<tr>
<td>JUL</td>
<td>7,556</td>
<td>6,213</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>$54,138</td>
<td>$2,550</td>
<td>$3,833</td>
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<tr>
<td>AUG</td>
<td>11,945</td>
<td>10,873</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>$54,138</td>
<td>$3,488</td>
<td>$3,833</td>
<td>$61,459</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEP</td>
<td>7,899</td>
<td>7,470</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>$43,822</td>
<td>$2,803</td>
<td>$3,833</td>
<td>$50,459</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCT</td>
<td>4,725</td>
<td>4,531</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>$31,486</td>
<td>$2,212</td>
<td>$3,833</td>
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<td>NOV</td>
<td>5,020</td>
<td>4,887</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>$34,006</td>
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<td>$3,833</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2,814</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>$42,865</td>
<td>$1,866</td>
<td>$3,833</td>
<td>$48,564</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total: 76,193 calls received, 69,071 calls answered by CSRs, $481,025 total staffing cost, $29,501 voice & data cost, $46,000 facilities & equipment cost, $556,525 total cost.

Cost if using CMD (calls answered by CSRs x $5.80) = $400,612

Savings if using CMD = $155,913
Outsource/Co-Sourcing Model

Find a partner that provides:

- **Multiple Channels**: (phone, email, live chat, text, interactive web videos)
- **Comprehensive, Multi-Department Solution**: student accounts/billing, financial aid, registration, housing and more...
- **Customized Support**: Utilize school’s policies, workflow and SIS
- **World-Class Service Levels
- **Seamless Integration and Support**
Take Advantage of Wide-ranging Service Options

- Inbound Support:
  - Phone Calls
  - Live Chat
  - E-mails
  - Custom IVR Messaging

- Outbound Support:
  - Live Agent Dialer calls
  - Email blasts
  - Pre-recorded Voice blasts
  - Text

- Web Support:
  - Interactive FAQ Videos
  - Live Chat Software
  - Knowledge Base Services
What You Can Achieve with Vendor Support...

- Through Inbound and Web Support
  - Increase answer %s and reduce wait times
    - Depending on your vendor, resolve level 1 to level 3 inquiries
  - Deliver consistent service levels over fluctuating call volumes
  - Maximize 1st contact inquiry resolution
  - Eliminate call backs and complaints
  - Create multi-department/multi-channel communication options for your students
More...

• Through Outbound Programs
• TRUE Default Prevention through Grace Period outreach
• Payment plan monitoring
• FAFSA completion support
• Early receivables follow-up
• And more…
And Consider ...

- Expands your ‘virtual’ hours of operation
  - Live agent support beyond your standard hours of operation
  - Consider 24/7 web video FAQ options

- Creates operational efficiencies
  - Control your staffing levels/eliminate ramp-up/ramp-down
  - Eliminate training costs
  - Reduce your CapEx requirements (it’s now on the vendor)

- Gives you access to ‘best practices’ industry-wide
  - Leverage your vendor’s knowledge
What else should you look for?

• Partnership approach
• Ultimate goal of reducing the number of inquiries and cost
• Knowledge Base that aggregates all your policies, procedures and best practices
• Technology and tools to allow you to monitor support levels and customer communication activity
What to look for: implementation

- Onsite visit
  - Interview staff
  - Document policies and workflow
  - Establish escalation policy and flow
- Develop Training Manual
- Establish and test SIS connection
- Knowledge Base creation
What to look for: staffing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RECRUITING</th>
<th>HIRING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Do they have competitive pay and benefits</td>
<td>• Do they perform aptitude and skills testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Are there opportunities for advancement?</td>
<td>• What do they screen for?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What is their facility and location?</td>
<td>• References</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Background checks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How many interviews?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What to look for: training & management

TRAINING

- # weeks of in-classroom training
- # weeks of on-the-floor mentoring
- Refresher training

MANAGING

- Ratio of CSRs-to-Supervisor
- Frequency of one-on-one coaching
- Frequency of call reviews
- Do they reward great service with incentive comp?
What to look for: **quality assurance**

- How do they handle oversight of quality and service levels?
- What is their method for review of contact activity and compliance?
  - *Client specific compliance?*
  - *Regulatory compliance?*
    - *FERPA, GLB, etc.*
How it might work:

**QA scoring**

Agent-level review

- How many calls reviewed per agent per month?
- Scoring components?
  - Accuracy
  - Customer service
  - Compliance
  - What else?
- How many reviewers?
- Weekly scoring?
- Escalation procedures?
Example: Daily client interaction and workflow

- Weekly Meetings
- E-mail List
- Referral Management
- Reports
What to look for: reporting

- Types of reports at your desktop?
- On-demand reporting?
- Reporting intervals?
  - Can you customize?
- Do they analyze the data?
  - *For example, purpose of calls - do they report it back, along with comments that might be helpful for correcting problems?*
### Sample University - Date by Hour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>CALLS RECEIVED</th>
<th>CALLS ANSWERED</th>
<th>CALLS DROPPED</th>
<th>ANSWER PCT</th>
<th>AVG CALL LENGTH</th>
<th>AVG HOLD BEFORE ANSWER</th>
<th>AVG HOLD BEFORE DROP</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8/31/09</td>
<td>8:00</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>8/31/09</td>
<td>9:00</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>98.25%</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>8/31/09</td>
<td>10:00</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>98.08%</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>8/31/09</td>
<td>11:00</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>98.28%</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>8/31/09</td>
<td>12:00</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>8/31/09</td>
<td>13:00</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>8/31/09</td>
<td>14:00</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>95.65%</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>173</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>8/31/09</td>
<td>15:00</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>95.24%</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>87</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>8/31/09</td>
<td>16:00</td>
<td>38</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Calls Received</th>
<th>Calls Answered</th>
<th>Calls Dropped</th>
<th>Answer Pct.</th>
<th>Avg. Call Length</th>
<th>Before Answer</th>
<th>Before Drop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>433</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>98.19%</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>75</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Real data but the client name has been removed in accordance with confidentiality requirements.*
More: sample reports

## Sample University

### Monthly Call Categories Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category - Initial Calls</th>
<th># of Inquiries</th>
<th>Category - Follow-up Calls</th>
<th># of Inquiries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balance Inquiries</td>
<td>724</td>
<td>Balance Inquiries</td>
<td>735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refunds</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>Refunds</td>
<td>432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal PLUS Loans</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>Federal PLUS Loans</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Stafford Loan</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>Federal Stafford Loan</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Award Letters</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>Award Letters</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing Documents</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>Questioning Charges</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payment Options</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>FAFSA Questions</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Financial Situations</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Missing Documents</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration Holds</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Payment Options</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questioning Charges</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Private Educational Loans</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td>Payment Plan</td>
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<td>Payment Plan</td>
<td>34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Educational Loans</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Special Financial Situations</td>
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<tr>
<td>OSS</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>OSS</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAFSA Questions</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Scholarships</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scholarships</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Study Abroad/Consorium</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Abroad/Consorism</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Registration Holds</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Totals: 2,004**

**Totals: 1,838**

*Real data but client name has been changed in accordance confidentiality requirements*
How can you: verify results

Expect your vendor to offer you, from your desktop...

- Audio and video of recorded calls at any time
- Dashboard of call stats in real-time
- Service reports at any time
- Knowledge base updates at any time
Also consider: security

What are their physical security measures?

- Multiple levels of limited access?
  - Building/Elevator/Suite
  - Restricted areas within offices
  - Key-card or other access controls
- Paperless environment?
Also look for: security

System & Data Security?

- 3rd party security assessments?
- Firewall, security protocols and intrusion testing?
- Detailed Policies and Procedures?
- Compliance with Rules and Regulations?
If you want a comprehensive solution

- Look to your vendor for:
  - Campus-wide
  - Multi-channel
  - Student-friendly
  - Cost-effective

*Seek world-class quality delivered by an experienced partner in Higher Education.*
Questions?

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sorgelconsulting@comcast.net