This Technical Call Center Achieved Incredible Customer Satisfaction Levels with Call-Backs

The Company

Founded in 1873, Kohler is a global leader in kitchen and bath products; engines and power systems; premier cabinetry, tile, and lighting. Their Kitchen and Bath North America division is supported by a technical call center delivering three tiers of service — Tier 1 handles most consumer interactions; Tier 2 is a trade focused team that serves plumbers and specifiers; and Tier 3 is a team handling high-end technical products, including smart home products.

The contact center handles thousands of interactions daily from pre-sale to post-install interactions. Given the complex nature of these technical interactions, 70% of their customer contact comes through their phone channel.

The Challenge

While they were maintaining good service levels, Kohler found that even 3–5-minute hold times were too long for some customers due to the urgent nature of plumbing needs and the stress caused by wait times. Ever committed to creating exceptional customer experiences, Kohler turned to Fonolo’s Voice Call-Backs in 2017.

Mike Abler oversees customer care for the organization. “With help from Fonolo, we are seeing a positive influence on our recent service levels and customer experience,” he says. “With the Fonolo tool, we are setting our customer up for a positive engagement — an immediate feather in our cap — and it puts us in a good position before the interaction even occurs.”

Like many contact centers, Kohler experienced periodic staffing challenges, making it challenging to achieve desired service levels. With customers facing longer hold times, Mike’s team was feeling the pressure.

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Sr. Manager, Customer Service, CRM & Digital
The Solution

While call-backs were not a silver-bullet solution to their staffing challenges, Fonolo was a lifeline. Kohler was strategic about when they would offer call-backs so they could serve as many customers as possible in a day.

“During peak volume periods without the call-back option, a customer sometimes has to wait 10-15 minutes before they can talk to us,” says Mike. “So, they fight the wait time first before getting into dealing with the situation at hand. That adds fuel to the fire. For us, Fonolo is the water for that fire.”

As staffing challenges improved, Kohler optimized their use of call-backs in 2022 and beyond. Recently, the Kohler team began using scheduled call-backs to help smooth out peak demand on Mondays, offering customers the chance to speak with an associate on a lower volume day of the week. So far, this approach has produced positive results, with improved Monday wait times and average speed of answer.

The Results

Kohler’s dedication to customer satisfaction made Fonolo a perfect fit for their business. With positive customer feedback on their call-back offering, this solution has helped to elevate their level of service. Kohler’s customer care associates also love Fonolo because they know they will be starting the interaction on a positive note.

The company’s initial adoption of call-backs was based on their dedication to superior customer service. As leaders in this space, they were extremely impressed with the service they received from the Fonolo team. It quickly became clear that their shared values made them a great match.

“Fonolo values their customers, and as a partner that’s important,” says Mike. “We want to provide an elevated level of customer care for our customers…it’s great to have that kind of relationship with your vendor partners.”