



IP Contact Center

Brazilian Electric Power Chamber Reduces Call Center Wait, Hold Times with FrontRange™ IP Contact Center

In 2004, in accordance with the Brazilian law 10.848, the government created the Electric Power Commercialization Chamber (CCEE), a private, nonprofit entity that carries out wholesale transactions and commercialization of electric power for Brazil's national interconnected system (SIN), for both regulated and free environments, and for the spot (cash) market.

Governed by ANEEL, the Brazilian electricity regulatory agency, CCEE is responsible for accounting and financial settlements in regards to Brazilian energy contracts. The call center at CCEE supports the organization's customers, called agents, which fall into three categories: Generation, Distribution and Commercialization, and related organizations and individuals, such as engineering and consulting companies, and attorneys and students.

Per service-level agreements (SLAs), call center agents address issues and questions regarding wholesale transactions and power commercialization. After implementation of the new model for the Brazilian power sector, the organization's customer base increased from 194 in 2004 to 858 by mid-2007. It now handles approximately 2,200 calls and 4,100 e-mails and faxes in an average month.

Since 1999, CCEE has used HEAT® Service & Support™ from FrontRange Solutions for managing issues (previously operating as MAE – Mercado Atacadista de Energia Elétrica and ASMAE – Electric Power Wholesale Market Services Administrador). With an increasing call volume, the call center needed added automation and more detailed data for improved call handling and management analysis.

Better Call Handling with IP-Based Contact Management

CCEE explored integrated voice systems to address its objectives, inviting three vendors to present their solutions based on CCEE's RFP. The key criteria: ease of integration

with HEAT and the company's existing Cisco PBX system. The organization ultimately chose FrontRange™ IP Contact Center, IP-based contact management software.

"IP Contact Center had an open architecture for flexible integration with our existing environment," said Roberto Tadeu Soares Pinto, Specialist at CCEE. "It also provides service-enhancing capabilities such as advanced skills-based routing and extensive reporting."

ACM Group, a Florida-based FrontRange Solutions Partner, assisted in the implementation, scoping CCEE's requirements and processes before proceeding. ACM helped the company integrate IPCC seamlessly with its Cisco PBX system and set up the screen-pop capabilities. However, because a SIP PBX comes standard in IPCC, a separate PBX is not required for use with the software.

Intelligent Call Routing, Answering

When a customer calls, each one enters a unique customer identification number and password. IPCC recognizes the customer and launches a screen pop in HEAT with caller information for the answering agent. That allows agents to greet customers personally and reduce the amount of time previously spent at the start of each call gathering customer information.

Before call center agents answer, customers choose from several options regarding their reason for calling. With skills-based routing, IPCC then passes calls to the appropriate agents based on their expertise.

"Agent" organizations have priority over other callers. When callers enter their ID numbers, IPCC moves them to the head of the queue and to the most appropriate call center agent for their specific needs.

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Real-Time and Historical Views of Call Processing

The contact center supervisor views call handling in real time with IPCC's dashboard, which allows the team to make changes to improve wait and call times. For example, the call center adjusts first-level priorities according to call volumes and puts second-level agents on stand-by when necessary.

"The real-time dashboard drives higher volumes of calls per agent by making it easier to deploy, support and change our environment," Pinto said.

On an ongoing basis, CCEE also creates more extensive reports to understand statistics such as the number of abandoned calls, average time in the queue, call and non-call times for agents, and service levels. That helps managers know when to hire and how to schedule its agents.

"Since implementing IPCC, CCEE has important information about our call center activities, which supports management decisions that improve service to CCEE's agents," said Renata Rezende, Call Center Supervisor.

Accelerating Agent Efficiency as Customer Base Grows

With IPCC and HEAT, the team has seen significant improvements in its service levels. Wait times dropped from 157 seconds to 16 seconds with IPCC and the hiring of two additional agents. With shorter hold times, the abandon rates have gone down by more than 20 percent.

"Results have indicated that CCEE is able to handle more calls with only two additional staff members," Rezende said.

As a result, CCEE reduces costs and keeps service quality high as its center grows. About six months after implementing IPCC, CCEE received results of a marketing research survey indicating customer satisfaction with the call center.

Next, the team plans to implement HEAT Self Service, which will further reduce the burden on agents by allowing customers to log and check on their issues online at any time. Through the implementation of IPCC and as CCEE plans additions in the future, ACM Group will be there to

ensure projects go smoothly and solutions meet the organization's business needs.

"Support from ACM Group during implementation was an important step for helping us utilize the many features of the solution and for knowledge transfer," said Carlos Colletto, IT Analyst. "ACM has been available to support us along the way, which has made a difference in our success."

About ACM Group

ACM Group is a technology consulting and development company providing a unique non-formula approach of high value business management and technological expertise that drives innovation and challenge business decisions. Based on our knowledge and experience of worldwide networks of consultants, working collaboratively within a broad range of industries all over the globe, ACM Group focuses on designing business strategies by integrating people, process and technology to deliver competitive advantage. For more information, call (954) 476-6111 or visit www.acmgrp.com.



About FrontRange Solutions

FrontRange Solutions develops award-winning software and solutions used by more than 130,000 companies and over 1.7 million seats worldwide to manage a wide variety of business relationships and provide exceptional service. FrontRange product families are designed to optimize customer investment by their interoperability, specifically for small-to-medium-enterprise (SME) and distributed enterprise organizations. Solution families are defined by three customer-centric market areas: Customer Relationship Management (CRM) including GoldMine®; IT Service Management including the HEAT®, ITSM and Infrastructure Management product lines; and Communication Interaction Management, including IP Office, GoldMine® IP Voice Suite and IP Contact Center. Customers representing 44 percent of the Fortune 100 and 76 percent of the FTSE 100, include Coca-Cola, Shell Oil, Prudential Securities, Électricité de France, Mack Trucks, Campbell Soup, Avaya, Bechtel Corp, Bank of America, and Turner News Network. For more information, call (800) 776-7889 or visit www.frontrange.com.

AT A GLANCE

Customer

Electric Power
Commercialization Chamber - CCEE

Industry

Energy

Products

HEAT® Service & Support™
FrontRange™ IP Contact Center

Quick Stats

Customers supported: 858
Average service desk monthly volume: 2,200 calls; 4,100 e-mails and faxes
HEAT and IPCC users: 111
Operating environment: Windows Server 2003

Business Benefits Realized:

- Wait times went from 157 seconds to 16 seconds with IPCC and the hiring of two additional agents.
- With shorter hold times, the abandon rates have gone down by more than 20 percent.
- First-call resolution rates improved with more training for call center agents.
- After implementing the proposed solution, CCEE can monitor all aspects of the call center operation and make decisions to improve it.
- CCEE minimizes the number of call center agents needed to handle increasing call volumes.

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