

Customer Contact Centres — Requirements for service provision

ICS 03.080.30

National foreword

This British Standard is the UK implementation of EN 15838:2009.

Although it is not a customer service standard, this standard is intended to assist with the operational aspects of a customer contact centre and could be used in conjunction with BS 8477:2007, Code of Practice for Customer Service.

The UK participation in its preparation was entrusted to Technical Committee SVS/0/1, Customer contact services.

A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its secretary.

This publication does not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Users are responsible for its correct application.

Compliance with a British Standard cannot confer immunity from legal obligations.

This British Standard was published under the authority of the Standards Policy and Strategy Committee on 30 June 2010

© BSI 2010

ISBN 978 0 580 71319 4

Amendments/corrigenda issued since publication

Date	Comments

EUROPEAN STANDARD

EN 15838

NORME EUROPÉENNE

EUROPÄISCHE NORM

November 2009

ICS 03.080.30

English Version

Customer Contact Centres - Requirements for service provision

Centres de contact clients - Exigences relatives à la
délivrance du serviceKundenkontaktzentren - Anforderungen für die
Leistungserbringung

This European Standard was approved by CEN on 5 October 2009.

CEN members are bound to comply with the CEN/CENELEC Internal Regulations which stipulate the conditions for giving this European Standard the status of a national standard without any alteration. Up-to-date lists and bibliographical references concerning such national standards may be obtained on application to the CEN Management Centre or to any CEN member.

This European Standard exists in three official versions (English, French, German). A version in any other language made by translation under the responsibility of a CEN member into its own language and notified to the CEN Management Centre has the same status as the official versions.

CEN members are the national standards bodies of Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and United Kingdom.



EUROPEAN COMMITTEE FOR STANDARDIZATION
COMITÉ EUROPÉEN DE NORMALISATION
EUROPÄISCHES KOMITEE FÜR NORMUNG

Management Centre: Avenue Marnix 17, B-1000 Brussels

© 2009 CEN All rights of exploitation in any form and by any means reserved
worldwide for CEN national Members.

Ref. No. EN 15838:2009: E

Contents

Page

Foreword.....	4
Introduction	5
1 Scope	7
2 Normative references	7
3 Terms and definitions	7
4 Management Strategy and Policy	8
4.1 General.....	8
4.2 Job descriptions	9
4.3 Operational roles and responsibilities	9
4.3.1 General.....	9
4.3.2 Human resources.....	10
4.3.3 Information and communication technology (ICT)	10
4.3.4 Quality assurance	10
4.3.5 Training.....	10
4.3.6 Operations management function	10
4.3.7 Planning and control function.....	11
4.3.8 Client organization management function.....	11
5 Contact Centre agents	11
5.1 Tasks and functions with regard to agents	11
5.2 Requirements for agents	11
5.2.1 General.....	11
5.2.2 Communication and customer service	12
5.2.3 Technical skills	12
5.2.4 Specific skills and knowledge	12
5.3 Recruitment process	12
5.4 Training of agents.....	13
5.4.1 General.....	13
5.4.2 Ongoing training and coaching.....	13
5.5 Performance	13
5.6 Agents' satisfaction.....	14
5.7 Agents' privacy	14
6 Infrastructure.....	14
6.1 Communication channel	14
6.2 Contact management (hardware and software tools).....	14
6.2.1 Confidentiality and data protection	14
6.3 Working environment.....	14
6.4 Back-up systems	15
7 Processes	15
7.1 Introduction	15
7.2 Agreement with the client organization	15
7.3 Service statistics.....	15
7.4 Handling deviations.....	16
7.5 Monitoring process quality	16
7.6 Workforce management.....	17
7.7 Access channels.....	17
7.8 Complaints processing - CCC service	17
7.9 Privacy	18
7.10 Business continuity plan	18

8	Customer satisfaction	18
8.1	Introduction	18
8.2	Customer satisfaction survey	19
8.2.1	General	19
8.2.2	Results	19
8.3	Complaints analysis	19
8.4	Customer protection	20
9	Social responsibility	20
Annex A	(normative) Mandatory KPIs	21
A.1	KPIs for agents	21
A.2	KPIs for customers	22
A.3	KPIs for processes	23
A.4	KPIs for contact quality	24
A.5	KPIs for infrastructure	24
Annex B	(informative) Recommended KPIs	25
B.1	KPIs for client organization	25
B.2	KPIs for processes	25
B.3	KPIs for efficiency	26
B.4	KPIs for customer and/or client organization complaints	26
Annex C	(informative) Best practice guidelines for client organizations	27
Annex D	(informative) Recommended skills for management and strategy in a Customer Contact Centre	29
D.1	General	29
D.2	Operations management function	29
D.3	Client organization management function	29
	Bibliography	31

Foreword

This document (EN 15838:2009) has been prepared by Technical Committee CEN/TC 375 "Project Committee - Customer Contact Services", the secretariat of which is held by NEN.

This European Standard shall be given the status of a national standard, either by publication of an identical text or by endorsement, at the latest by May 2010, and conflicting national standards shall be withdrawn at the latest by May 2010.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. CEN [and/or CENELEC] shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

According to the CEN/CENELEC Internal Regulations, the national standards organizations of the following countries are bound to implement this European Standard: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

Introduction

Customer contact centres (CCC) have an important role in the interaction between the organization purchasing the CCC service and their customers. CCCs do not always live up to the customers' expectations (e.g. long queuing times, failure to answer queries promptly and efficiently, and impersonal treatment). They vary in their levels of service quality and consumer protection, and work to many different standards and levels of efficiency.

This European standard has been developed in response to European Commission mandate M/378. The Mandate states that the goal of the standard is to provide quality of service requirements for contact centres, common to all centres, and irrespective of the service sector, technical approach to the provision of the service, or the service provider. The standard applies to both in-house customer contact centres as well as outsourced centres. The standard has been devised to benefit both of these types of contact centre and the customers who make use of their services.

Whilst the standard is voluntary, it aims to bring the following advantages to those that adopt it:

- a) improvements in customer contact quality, which can give a competitive edge to the organization and avoids the risk of customer criticism about poor service or service failure;
- b) cost efficiencies through better processes and a better understanding of the customer contact service, whilst maintaining quality outcomes and effectiveness;
- c) improvements in staff retention through understanding and valuing the staff contribution to customer service and outcomes; and
- d) customer satisfaction.

This European Standard aims to encourage the development of services, which are effective, high quality and cost-efficient and which meet customers' expectations. It addresses a number of areas, using a balanced approach.

The European Standard is visualized in the framework in Figure 1. Each Customer Contact Centre is organized in seven categories: four enablers inside the organization and three result areas.

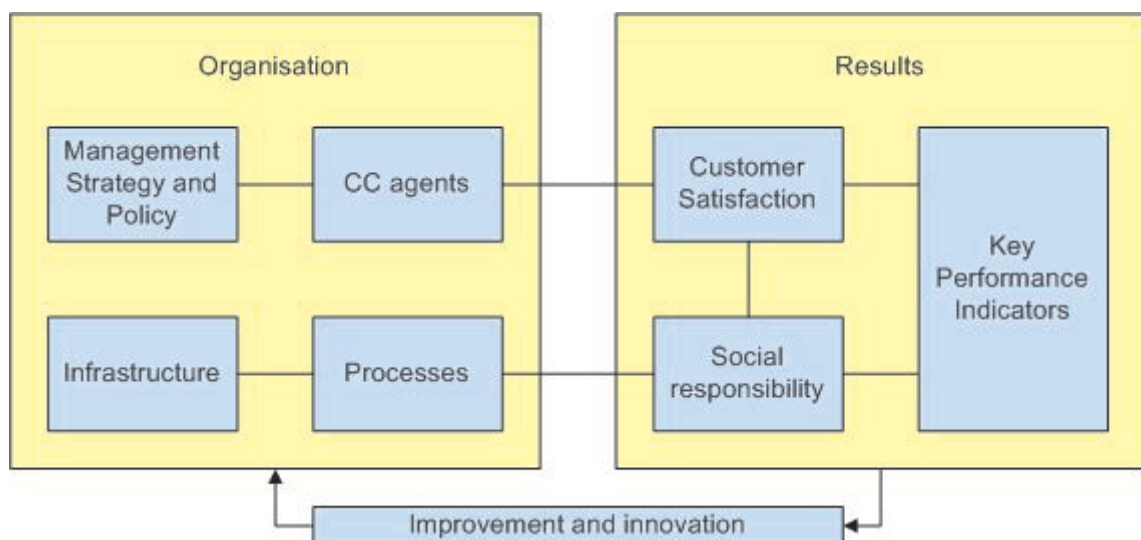


Figure 1 – Customer Contact Centre framework

Implementing the standard should improve both customer service and business success. It is designed to achieve customer, staff and stakeholder satisfaction. It should create a culture of continuous improvement and foster increased understanding of the value of the customer contact centre.

Figure 2 gives an overview of what can be provided through customer contact centres.

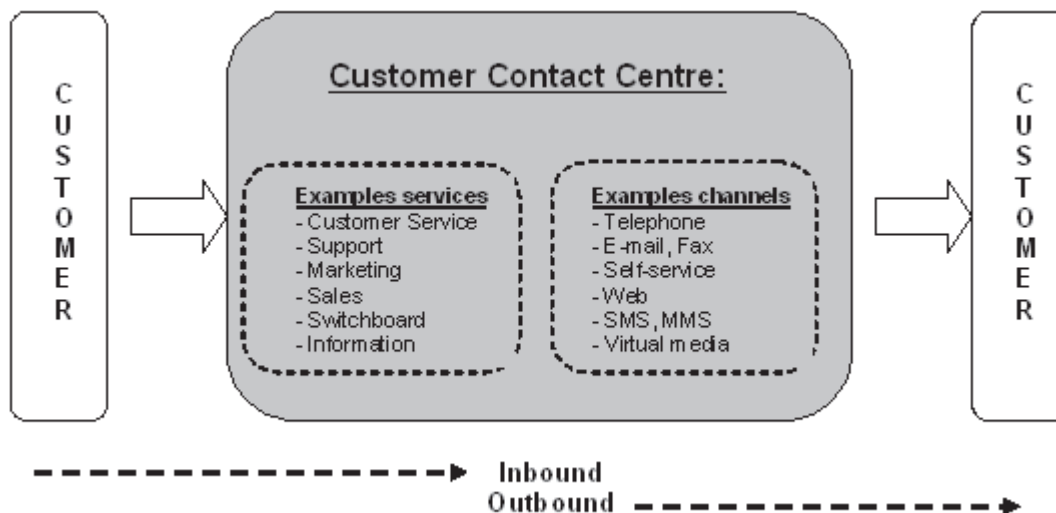


Figure 2 – Overview of what can be provided through customer contact centres

1 Scope

This European Standard specifies the requirements for customer contact centres. It aims to provide customer focused best practice designed to meet customer expectations. This standard applies both to customer contact centres that are in-house and those that have been outsourced.

This European Standard focuses on the performance quality at the point of contact between the customer and the CCC.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

Not applicable.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

3.1

CC agent agent

person working for a customer contact centre (CCC), whose primary role is the handling of customer contacts

NOTE 1 Examples of customer contacts are calls, e-mails, fax, and web inquiries.

NOTE 2 The role of an agent can vary from contact handling to complex problem solving activities.

3.2

client organization

organization for which the CCC works

NOTE A client organization can be part of the internal organization (e.g. CEO or Marketing department), as well as an external organization.

3.3

complaint

expression of dissatisfaction made to an organization, related to its products, or the complaints-handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected

[ISO 10002:2004, 3.2]

3.4

consumer

individual member of the general public purchasing or using goods, property or services for private purposes

[ISO 14025:2006]

3.5

contact

any interaction or communication between a customer and a CCC

NOTE A contact can attract a deferred reply (e.g. postal mail, electronic mail, SMS, fax, etc.) or an immediate and/or interactive reply (e.g. phone call (inbound and outbound), chat, etc.).

3.6

customer

person who receives the operational service from the customer contact centre

NOTE 1 The customer could be a consumer as well as a business-to-business end user.

NOTE 2 A customer could be internal or external to the CCC.

3.7

customer contact centre

CCC

organization which provides customer contact services, on behalf of a client organization, to their customers through various multi-media channels

NOTE A CCC could be an in-house customer contact centre as well as an outsourced centre.

3.8

customer satisfaction

the customer's perception of the degree to which their requirements have been met as a result of contact with the CCC

[ISO 9000:2005]

NOTE 1 Customer complaints are a common indicator of low customer satisfaction but their absence does not necessarily imply high customer satisfaction.

NOTE 2 Even when customer requirements have been agreed with the customer and have been met, this does not necessarily ensure high customer satisfaction.

3.9

Key Performance Indicators

KPI

metrics that quantify objectives which reflect the performance of an organization

3.10

monitoring

all means to validate the performance of the CCC for the purpose of quality assurance

3.11

qualified contact

beginning of the communication between the agent and the customer

NOTE This applies to outbound contacts only.

4 Management Strategy and Policy

4.1 General

This clause describes the requirements for a customer contact centre (CCC) to execute the management strategy and policy of the client organization.

The management strategy shall describe the way to achieve the client organization's vision, with clearly defined goals. There shall be a strategic planning phase to the management strategy. This planning shall outline the intended goals which in turn will form the basis for subsequent business planning. The contributions of all organizational units of the CCC and the client organization shall be defined in order to ensure the fulfilment of the targets.

The contents of the strategy shall be made known and clearly explained to all persons concerned. Knowledge of the corporate strategy should be suitably defined for agents and revised at regular intervals.

The management system shall be verified by a clear system in which structures, processes and procedures are systematically explained. The management system shall be suitably verified e.g. with regard to:

- a) the explanation of structures and responsibilities;
- b) demonstrating interactions within the system;
- c) establishing monitoring systems;
- d) the implementation of the continuous improvement process, to which all structuring of quality assurance activities are subordinated;
- e) the explanation of the interplay between the vision and mission, strategic targets and operative targets.

4.2 Job descriptions

For each job or position in the CCC, a written job description shall be provided. This shall include at least:

- a) the objective of the position;
- b) the definition of tasks;
- c) the qualification and requirements (e.g. education, experience, and personal qualities);
- d) competences (e.g. communicative skills, people skills);
- e) reporting structures;
- f) deputizing arrangements or functional replacements;
- g) decision making authorization.

4.3 Operational roles and responsibilities

4.3.1 General

On an operational level the CCC shall set up, and describe in specific documents, a clearly defined organizational and operational structure in which the various roles and responsibilities, as well as the functions to whom they are assigned, are clearly identifiable.

At least the following competences shall be available to the CCC:

- a) human resources (e.g. recruitment, development, employee satisfaction);
- b) information and communication technology;
- c) quality assurance;

- d) training (e.g. tools, communication skills, service offered, coaching, training on the job, update, refresh);
- e) operations management / CCC management;
- f) planning and control;
- g) client organization management;
- h) knowledge of relevant legislation and regulation, including legislation on customer rights.

NOTE Some functions (e.g. Human Resources, information and communication technology, quality control) will be integrated in the organizational structure of the CCC or will be part of their company's central functions.

4.3.2 Human resources

CCC staff member(s) with HR-responsibility shall have required knowledge of the specific recruitment procedures for CCC staff, e.g. telephone interviews and team assessments.

4.3.3 Information and communication technology (ICT)

The CCC's ICT-responsible persons shall demonstrate knowledge of all specific running systems (e.g. ACD, CTI, IVR, dialler, Web-phoning (VoIP), HR-planning tools, reporting-tools, etc.) and about their usage in that CCC.

4.3.4 Quality assurance

This function shall:

- a) determine action to eliminate the causes of potential poor service in order to prevent their occurrence;
- b) check and report the results of the service supplied against the agreement with the client organization;
- c) analyze possible deviations and suggest solutions to restore the quality level agreed with the client organization;
- d) assure compliance of the CCC processes.

4.3.5 Training

People who are entrusted with training of staff shall be familiar with:

- a) the skills set to instruct others;
- b) complaints and issue management;
- c) service advice and support;
- d) outbound and inbound sales;
- e) feedback rules and coaching fundamentals, as relevant.

4.3.6 Operations management function

The operations management function shall define the actions necessary to achieve the aims of the service.

The operational structure, service quality check and efficiency shall be reviewed periodically and action taken to make improvements as necessary.

The operations management function shall be involved in negotiations on the contractual agreement with the client organization.

4.3.7 Planning and control function

The planning and control function shall plan and control agents' working shifts according to the forecast traffic volume and to the service level agreed with the client organization. The planning and control function shall monitor the actual performance and report results to the management.

NOTE This includes collecting of all the data and the information necessary to analyze performance and to set up internal and external reports.

4.3.8 Client organization management function

The client organization management function shall be responsible for the relations with the client organization concerning the operational aspects of the service (e.g. methods, workflow, results, performance, periodical reports, checks, meetings).

5 Contact Centre agents

5.1 Tasks and functions with regard to agents

The CCC shall ensure that the following tasks and functions with regard to agents are carried out:

- a) specification of selection criteria for agents;
- b) creation of job descriptions for agents;
- c) carry out selection processes for agents;
- d) specification of requirements for and delivery of basic training (interpersonal skills, technical skills, product knowledge);
- e) feedback of information from agents;
- f) employment scheduling;
- g) coaching of agents;
- h) supervision of agents;
- i) training of agents;
- j) executive functions (specification of aims for the agents' tasks, appraisal interviews, planning of operating figures concerning quality);
- k) management of agents on the basis of operating figures.

5.2 Requirements for agents

5.2.1 General

The CCC shall specify a profile of competences for agents depending on specific tasks (e.g. information contacts, ordering contacts, complaint contacts, advice contacts, outbound contacts, etc.). This profile shall include:

- a) the professional requirements concerning the tasks;
- b) the requirements concerning personal skills and abilities.

The requirements shall be clearly defined and verifiable.

The CCC shall ensure that agents acquire the competences in accordance with 5.2.2, 5.2.3 and 5.2.4. These competences shall be checked for validity on an annual basis.

5.2.2 Communication and customer service

Agents shall have at least the following skills and abilities:

- a) communication skills;
- b) adaptability (i.e. flexibility in handling different situations and customers);
- c) problem solving skills;
- d) service and customer orientation (i.e. approach and attitude towards customers);
- e) target orientation and coping with demand.

5.2.3 Technical skills

Agents shall have the following technical skills and abilities:

- a) ability to handle the applied communication systems;
- b) ability to handle the applied IT-solutions.

5.2.4 Specific skills and knowledge

The CCC shall ensure that agents receive basic and ongoing training to acquire the skills required to handle tasks specific for their CCC and its current goals. This shall include 'minimum skills' testing. Agents shall have skills and knowledge dependent on special fields of application and requirements on the part of the CCC. The agent shall have the relevant knowledge of the legal requirements, e.g. on laws on customer rights.

5.3 Recruitment process

The recruitment process shall be conducted on the basis of the established profile of competences (see 5.2). The selection criteria shall be measurable and documented. The degree of attainment of competences shall be explicit. The recruitment process shall be used to determine the principal competences of the candidate in accordance with the requirements mentioned above (see 5.2).

The recruitment process shall contain, and be able to provide evidence of, at least the following elements:

- a) illustration of requirements and tasks of an agent by the CCC;
- b) the conducting of a job interview with the candidate;
- c) methods of assessment and evaluation of the candidate's skills and potentials concerning the requirements (see 5.2.2, 5.2.3 and 5.2.4).

5.4 Training of agents

5.4.1 General

The CCC shall have a defined training programme.

Every agent shall be assessed against the required competences as specified in 5.2. If necessary, appropriate training shall be provided.

Every training programme shall have as a minimum:

- a) the clearly defined objectives of the training programme;
- b) the means by which the programme is delivered;
- c) the methods by which the effectiveness of the programme will be evaluated.

NOTE The training programme can be an opportunity for gathering feedback from trainees, client organizations, and other involved parties.

5.4.2 Ongoing training and coaching

The CCC shall ensure that agents receive training on an ongoing basis. This training shall be documented and focused on each individual agent.

5.4.2.1 Agents' professional qualifications

Ongoing training shall include:

- a) specific training relevant to the agent's job if required;
- b) appropriate annual examination of the relevant professional knowledge.

5.4.2.2 Agents' personal knowledge and skills

Ongoing training shall include:

- a) training when gaps in the agent's knowledge and skills are found;
- b) training in advance when changing processes;
- c) training in advance when changing the range or scope of tasks.

The CCC shall maintain an individual training and development plan for every agent, together with proficiency levels achieved by that agent.

This plan will include an opportunity for individual discussions, with every agent, on areas of personal concern and working environment.

5.5 Performance

The CCC shall establish performance indicators for agents as quality objectives. The performance indicators shall be clear and comprehensible for each individual agent. These shall be evaluated regularly (at least yearly).

The CCC shall carry out an annual performance assessment against the job descriptions.

Assessment (ongoing): the performance of each agent shall be assessed and documented regularly using appropriate techniques. The agent shall be informed about the results.

5.6 Agents' satisfaction

Agents' satisfaction aims to measure the agents' feelings towards their working conditions and to provide an overall view of the workplace environment.

Agents' satisfaction measurements shall be carried out regularly, using at least the following criteria:

- a) statistics on training (e.g. per employee, for professional and personal development);
- b) attrition rate of agents;
- c) statistics from the measurement of agents' satisfaction.

See Annex A.

5.7 Agents' privacy

There shall be clear procedures on protecting agents' privacy regarding monitored data.

6 Infrastructure

6.1 Communication channel

The CCC shall define the available communication channels.

NOTE The CCC can handle the various possible contact channels with the customer, both inbound and outbound, in order to provide the customer with an easy access to the service, including self service access (for example IVR, voice portal, web virtual assistant).

6.2 Contact management (hardware and software tools)

The CCC shall use a contact management system that includes at least the following features:

- a) traceability: to enable the agent to recover a past contact, if necessary, during the handling of the contact;
- b) easy accessibility to data and information: to enable the agent to deliver a quick and accurate answer to the customer;
- c) statistical data: to report the CCC activity and understand any critical features;
- d) data back up: to restore all the collected information.

6.2.1 Confidentiality and data protection

In order to comply with data protection legislation and privacy best practice, the CCC shall have robust security systems in place to protect customer data.

6.3 Working environment

The working environment of the CCC shall promote health, effectiveness and well-being of the employees.

NOTE The application of ergonomics design principles is defined in EN ISO 6385. In case of work with display units the standard series EN ISO 9241 should be applied.

6.4 Back-up systems

Back-up systems shall be provided to replicate and restore data in the event of any malfunction outage or failures leading to data loss and to respond to any requirements agreed with the client organization.

7 Processes

7.1 Introduction

The CCC shall provide consistent timely performance and functionality to the customer, irrespective of individual agents. In so doing, it shall document all of the main processes.

7.2 Agreement with the client organization

Superior performance derives from the CCC's ability to provide client organizations and customers with services that meet their expectations.

For this reason, the operating methods and the aims of the service shall be shared with the client organization in a written document.

The agreement shall be focused on:

- a) aims of the service;
- b) the policies relevant to the CCC identified by the client organization;
- c) aims monitoring (e.g. control methods and frequency, verification meetings, etc.);
- d) processes and operating methods (e.g. operational procedures, communication guidelines);
- e) service scheduling;
- f) escalation processes;
- g) forecasting and planning;
- h) reporting.

See Annex C.

7.3 Service statistics

The CCC shall document the trends and performance levels of the service compared to the service levels agreed with the client organization for each channel of contact.

The CCC shall be able to provide at least the following data for inbound activities:

- a) number of contacts received;
- b) number of contacts handled;
- c) contacts managed within service levels;

- d) number of abandoned contacts (for telephone contacts);
- e) abandon time (for telephone contacts);
- f) speed of answer;
- g) duration of contact.

The CCC shall be able to provide at least the following data for outbound activities:

- number of qualified contacts managed;
- contact result.

Reports for the client organization shall be drawn up according to the agreement.

7.4 Handling deviations

The CCC shall run a check on the activity referring to the parameters (Key Performance Indicators/KPIs) agreed with the client organization and report to the latter any situation deviating from the agreement, including any technical or external situation, linked to the market segment, indicating the need of a change in the operating methods. See Annex A.

Any deviations in the results when compared to the service aims agreed with the client organization shall be analyzed to discover the cause. Relevant corrective actions shall be taken.

The CCC shall have a documented corrective action process or method, which includes the following steps:

- a) problem definitions;
- b) analysis;
- c) implementing action needed;
- d) evaluation.

The efficacy of the action undertaken to solve the problem shall be evaluated at the periodic verification meeting.

7.5 Monitoring process quality

A CCC shall monitor the processing of contacts to ensure that:

- a) there is a minimum of variation in the previously agreed output of the contact or in the processing of the contact;
- b) a minimum of mistakes are made in the processing of the contact or in the previously agreed output of the contact.

Therefore:

- c) Staff responsible for monitoring shall regularly perform calibration sessions;
- d) If the CCC and the client organization both monitor separately, there shall be a joint calibration procedure to ensure a standard valuation;
- e) KPIs which are monitored shall have clear and defined targets (thresholds) and shall be defined prior to the start of the monitoring;

- f) The results from the monitoring process quality shall be analyzed and appropriate action taken, in order to prevent unacceptable service delivery;
- g) There shall be a statistical justification of the sample size, indicating the error margin related to the chosen sample size.

7.6 Workforce management

A CCC shall have a forecast and a deployment scheduling process.

This forecast should be based on quantitative data, such as historic arrival patterns, future trends, upcoming events, marketing information, etc.

The staffing process should be based on the level of demand, average handling time, service level targets, staff availability, and qualified contacts.

Forecasts shall be evaluated against handled contacts.

There shall be a schedule adherence process.

7.7 Access channels

The CCC shall be able to provide advice to the client organization related to customer service issues such as:

- a) subject of the service;
- b) type of channels and customer access details;
- c) working days and hours;
- d) any costs charged for accessing the service provided by the CCC;
- e) service access requirements (e.g. subscription, purchase of a specific product or card).

The CCC shall define its capabilities in terms of accessibility and provide this information to the client organization, its customers, personnel and other interested parties. Recommendations for client organizations in terms of accessibility are described in Annex C Guidelines for client organizations.

7.8 Complaints processing - CCC service

The CCC shall establish an effective and efficient complaints handling process in order to increase customer loyalty and satisfaction and also to improve the quality of the products and services provided.

Information concerning the complaints handling shall be made readily available to customers and other interested parties. Such information shall be provided clearly and precisely.

NOTE ISO 10002 on complaints handling provides a means for the CCC to install an effective and efficient complaints handling process that will satisfy all stakeholders: the CCC, the customer and the client organization.

To this end, the CCC should achieve the following, in accordance with the process defined in ISO 10002:

- a) Be open to complaints and supply customers with precise information on where and how to make complaints and appeals in any case where they are not satisfied with the results of a complaint already made;

NOTE ISO 10003 deals with dispute resolution of unsatisfactory results of a complaints handling process.

- b) Collect and record complaints and devise a method for identifying the contact that generated the complaint and ensure the traceability of the complaint itself, through suitable search keys:
 - 1) date of contact;
 - 2) organization on behalf of which the contact was made;
 - 3) contact code or agent code;
 - 4) objective of contact;
- c) Acknowledge the receipt of the complaint to the customer, if it is not received in person (a phone call or e-mail is sufficient) or if the complaint is not already resolved;
- d) Assess the complaint for validity, possible impact and who is the best person to deal with it;
- e) Refer complaints that are not related to the CCC services to the client organization, where the CCC has not contracted to deal with product related complaints. An escalation flow chart shall be agreed between the CCC and the client organization;
- f) Resolve as soon as practicable, or investigate the complaint further and make a decision about outcomes acceptable to both parties, and act promptly;
- g) Give the customer information about how the complaint will be handled and evaluate the customer's response. Is it likely that the action will satisfy the customer? If yes, then move rapidly to take the action the customer reasonably expects, bearing in mind best practices within the industry;
- h) When all possible has been done to resolve the complaint, tell the customer and record the outcome. If the complaint is still not resolved to the customer's satisfaction, explain the decision and offer any possible alternative actions;
- i) Review complaints regularly – a brief periodical review and a more intensive annual review – to establish if there are any trends or things that could be changed to prevent complaints occurring, to improve customer service, or to increase customer satisfaction.

7.9 Privacy

There shall be clear procedures and responsibility on protecting customers' privacy. These procedures and responsibility shall be known to and adhered to by the agents.

7.10 Business continuity plan

The CCC shall devise a business continuity plan, so as to be able to guarantee the service according to the terms agreed with the client organization in emergency conditions.

How and to what extent continuity of service might be guaranteed shall be defined.

8 Customer satisfaction

8.1 Introduction

Customer satisfaction shall be measured and reported periodically and based on that report the required actions shall be taken.

8.2 Customer satisfaction survey

8.2.1 General

The customer satisfaction survey shall be used on a regular basis to inform possible improvements to the service and to report problems to the organization which the customer is seeking to contact (the client organization). A satisfaction survey can be carried out by:

- a) the client organization;
- b) the CCC, if the client organization allows it;
- c) an external partner on behalf of the client organization.

The CCC shall provide representative samples based on recent contacts with the CCC, in order to illustrate customer ratings and comments.

Several methods of customer satisfaction surveys can be used, including surveys by telephone or by online interviewing (by any channel).

8.2.2 Results

The results of a customer satisfaction survey carried out by the CCC shall be shared and assessed by the client organization and the CCC together, with a view to improving performance. Agreed actions will be documented and taken.

The measurement shall assess at least the following elements:

- a) overall satisfaction level;
- b) satisfaction with agent interaction and fulfilment (e.g. politeness, clarity, competence, availability, responsiveness, accuracy, queuing time, ease of contact, pro-activeness, effectiveness, solution, helpfulness, first contact resolution);
- c) key drivers for customer satisfaction.

The survey and the output of the end user satisfaction as well as its analysis and possible improvements shall be documented.

The results of the satisfaction survey shall be shared with the agents in a special deployment session, in order to raise the level of their performance to meet the customers' expectations and to increase the competencies of the agents.

The sample considered for this measurement shall be statistically representative, indicating the error margin related to the chosen sample size.

8.3 Complaints analysis

The results of the complaints review described in Clause 7 can give an indication of customer needs and satisfaction. Improvements that are required shall be documented and acted upon.

The results of the complaints review shall be shared with the client organization in order to raise the level of performance in meeting customer expectations and to increase the competencies of the CCC.

The results of the complaints review shall be shared with the agents in order to meet the customer's expectations and increase the competencies of the agents.

8.4 Customer protection

To ensure the satisfaction of the customer, the following ethical requirements shall be fulfilled by the CCC.

The identity of the client organization shall be given at the beginning of each communication. In addition to legislation, unacceptable contacts include contacts via telephone or fax which do not meet nationally accepted timeframes, except where the customer has requested a different contact time.

The CCC shall ensure that:

- a) a contact that is not wanted by the customer is terminated. If a contact is not wanted, the address, e-mail address and phone number will not be used again for this campaign or purpose;
- b) adequate procedures are in place to minimize aborted contacts by a dialler;
- c) the customer is informed before the call about the likely cost of a call to any service number;
- d) the customer in a queue is informed of the fact that there is a queue and of charges in addition to normal line charges where they apply;

NOTE Waiting times should be free of charge for the customer.

- e) marketing calls are not disguised as market research;
- f) for outbound: the purpose of the contact is given at the beginning of the contact.

The CCC shall not use pressure selling tactics.

The CCC shall not exploit vulnerable and inexperienced customers.

9 Social responsibility

Given their critical role in promoting good communication across social groups, those managing CCCs should address the wider issues resulting from the impact of their activities on society and the environment in which they operate.

NOTE Guidance on this can be found in ISO/DIS 26000, *Guidance on social responsibility*.

Annex A (normative)

Mandatory KPIs

A.1 KPIs for agents

The CCC shall measure the following KPIs regarding Agents:

KPI	Definition	Recommendation	Measuring Method	Minimum report frequency
Agent attrition	Number of agents leaving as a percentage of total agents employed by the CCC.	This should be broken down into voluntary and involuntary attrition from the perspective of the agent.	{Number of agents departed in last month} divided by {number of agents present on the last day of the month}. Attrition Rate = (Total FTE ¹ Agent Leavers over period / FTE Agent Headcount over period) x 100	Monthly
Absenteeism	Number of unplanned days/hours that are lost through sickness or other unplanned absence each year.	Appropriate action should be taken.	{Number of absent hours in last month} divided by {number hours which were scheduled}. It is expressed as average working days/hours lost per FTE per year.	Monthly
Satisfaction	Measures the satisfaction of agents about their working situation, working conditions, working environment, opinion about management, training coaching, etc.	The outcome of the measurement should be used to take appropriate action on items of dissatisfaction.	The results shall be obtained by using methods which guarantee the anonymity. The results to be presented as a percentage of the maximum score of the measurement using a defined scale system.	Every two years

¹ FTE: Full-time equivalent.

A.2 KPIs for customers

The CCC shall measure the following KPIs regarding customers:

KPI	Definition	Recommendation	Measuring Method	Minimum report frequency
Customer Satisfaction (if client organization allows it)	Measures the customers' overall satisfaction with contact on several specific items such as accuracy, speed of answer, correctness of the answer given, was he treated in a customer-orientated way, etc.	The outcome of the survey shall be used to take appropriate action on items of customer dissatisfaction.	Surveys among a representative sample from the group of customers who represent at least 80 % of the range of contacts. Proportion of customers who rated the service provided by the CCC within a desired range of satisfaction and level of advocacy (i.e. they would recommend the service to others) in relation to the number of customers taking part in the satisfaction surveys.	yearly
First Contact Resolution (FCR)	Measures successful outcome of first contact resolution, evaluated for each channel of contact	Options that can be used to measure FCR are defined below. CCCs should pick the most appropriate method: 1. Call Monitoring – As part of contact handling quality assessment team leaders determination of whether contacts were resolved for a representative sample of contacts; 2. IVR Surveys – Customer completes an IVR survey at the end of the call and is asked if their call was resolved; 3. Repeat contact – FCR definition is based on whether the customer made contact using an alternative channel or called back within three to five business days. This is measured by analysing the number of repeat contacts per unique CLI over three to five business days; 4. Script – Agent asks the customer at the end of the call if their inquiry or problem was resolved; 5. Telephone Survey – Customer is surveyed within one to three days of the call and asked if their enquiry was resolved; 6. Case Mgmt/CRM – Agent uses their desktop software application to capture whether the customer's inquiry or problem was resolved.	FCR can be determined in a range of different ways depending on the CCC environment. CCCs should select the most appropriate ways of measuring FCR from those options defined under recommendations. Where possible this should be done using more than one method, in order to improve the integrity of the indicator.	Monthly

A.3 KPIs for processes

The CCC shall measure the following KPIs regarding processes

KPI	Definition	Recommendation	Measuring Method	Minimum report frequency
Service Level	The percentage of contacts offered to the CCC that are answered within a specified timeframe, evaluated for each communication channel.		{Number of answered contacts (calls/mail/web/post) within target time} divided by {offered contacts (calls/mail/web/post) minus threshold}.	Daily
Forecast accuracy	CCC's ability to accurately meet forecast contact volumes (by major customer segment, type and channel).		Comparing forecasted demand against actual demand arriving in and leaving from the CCC.	Daily
Abandonment rate	In case of inbound calls: percentage of contacts abandoned before being answered by an agent.	The average time needed to answer all contacts should also be measured and added to the Service Level. It is possible to have a threshold for short calls.	{Number of abandoned contacts before being answered by an agent} divided by {total of offered contacts minus number of contacts over threshold}.	Daily
Average handling time	The amount of time necessary to complete the contact, including the time needed to complete administrative tasks related to the contact, evaluated for each communication channel.	Average handling time should be broken down to average contact time and wrap-up/after contact work time.	{total handling time} divided by {total of answered contacts}.	Daily

A.4 KPIs for contact quality

The CCC shall measure the following KPIs regarding contact quality:

KPI	Definition	Recommendation	Measuring Method	Minimum report frequency
Contact quality	Percentage of contacts meeting consistent performance and functionality for the customer.	Recommended measuring method: specified soft and hard skilled parameters presented as a percentage of the maximum score and using a defined scale system {number of monitored contacts} divided by {number of total answered contacts}.		Monthly
Factual accuracy	Factual mistakes in the answer. Mistakes shall be defined prior to service delivery for each service and have clear targets (thresholds).	Recommended measuring method: {Number of mistakes (per service) made by handling contacts} divided by {total number of statistically relevant answered contacts}.		Monthly

A.5 KPIs for infrastructure

The CCC shall measure the following KPIs regarding infrastructure:

KPI	Definition	Recommendation	Measuring Method	Minimum report frequency
Service availability	Availability of infrastructure used by the CCC.		{time system was available} divided by {total time within measurement period} per system.	Monthly

Annex B (informative)

Recommended KPIs

B.1 KPIs for client organization

The CCC should measure the following KPIs regarding the client organization:

KPI	Definition	Recommendation	Measuring Method	Minimum report frequency
Client organization satisfaction	Measures the client organization's overall satisfaction on previously specified items.	It is advisable to conduct a survey of all client organizations at least yearly.	Surveys among a representative sample from the group of client organizations.	Yearly

B.2 KPIs for processes

The CCC should measure the following KPIs regarding processes:

KPI	Definition	Recommendation	Measuring Method	Minimum report frequency
Average cycle late (backlog)	Average cycles late (backlog) of contacts that have not been processed, evaluated for each communication channel.		Total duration of the backlog divided by total number of late contacts.	Daily

B.3 KPIs for efficiency

The CCC should measure the following KPIs regarding efficiency:

KPI	Definition	Recommendation	Measuring Method	Minimum report frequency
Agent utilization	The percentage of time that an agent has spent productively.	{total time spent on handling contacts} divided by {total number of working hours}.		Weekly
Training effectiveness	Effectiveness of training.		{Number of agents successfully passing a test after training} divided by {total number of agents trained}.	Per training
Conversion rate	Percentage of transactions achieved.	Definition of transaction and target result of the contact.	{number of transactions} divided by {number of handled contacts}.	Weekly

B.4 KPIs for customer and/or client organization complaints

The CCC should measure the following KPIs regarding customer and/or client organization complaints:

KPI	Definition	Recommendation	Measuring Method	Minimum report frequency
Complaints handling	Percentage of complaints responded to within the defined response time, made readily available to customers and other interested parties.		{Number of complaints handled within the defined response time} divided by {total number of complaints}.	Monthly
Complaints ratio	Percentage of complaints with regard to the CCC service in relation to the total number of handled contacts.		{Number of complaints received on the CCC service} divided by {total number of handled contacts}.	Monthly

Annex C (informative)

Best practice guidelines for client organizations

All parties, client organization and CCC, remain at all times accountable and cannot pass their regulatory or legal responsibility to the other party. The relationship between the client organization and the CCC should be seen as a partnership with both parties working together to ensure that regulatory compliance and best practice are achieved.

The client organization should be actively committed to effective and efficient customer contact handling. It is particularly important that this is shown by, and promoted from, the client organization's top management. This commitment should be reflected in the definition, adoption and dissemination of policy and procedures for customer contact handling.

The commitment of the client organization management should be shown by the provision of adequate resources.

Top management should establish an explicit customer-focused customer contact handling policy. The policy should be made available to, and known to, all personnel involved in managing the CCC.

The policy should also be made available to customers and other interested parties.

The policy should be supported by procedures and objectives for each function and personnel role included in CCC processes.

When establishing the policy, objectives and requirements for customer contact handling the following factors should be taken into account:

- any relevant statutory and regulatory requirements;

NOTE 1 Accessibility, data protection and fair trading legislation in the EU and at national level should be checked when formulating policy requirements to ensure inclusive and fair treatment of customers.

- financial, operational and organizational requirements;

- the input of customers, personnel and other interested parties.

Policies related to customer experience, cost management, quality and customer handling should be aligned.

Relevant previous experiences should be shared with the CCC and expected performance should be agreed and documented before launch (see 7.2 Agreement with the client organization). In the case of outbound calls, this should include all restrictions on contacting customers and potential customers.

A client organization should take into account the range of potentially interested persons (which can include children, older persons, people with different abilities); thus information and assistance concerning the CCC services should be made available in whatever languages or formats are used in the information pertaining to the products when offered or delivered, so that customers who wish to refer to the services are not disadvantaged.

Information should be written in clear and unambiguous language and should be available in alternative formats suitable for existing and potential customers such as audio, large print, large raised letters, Braille, by email or on an accessible website.

NOTE 2 An alternative format describes a different presentation or representation intended to make information accessible through a different modality or sensory ability. By providing all input and all output, i.e. information and functions, in at least one alternative format, for instance visual and tactile, more people, including some with language/literacy problems, can be helped. Presentation factors that can affect legibility and ease of understanding include layout, print colour and contrast, size and style of font and symbols and the choice and use of multiple languages. See ISO/IEC Guide 37.

The client organization, when offering its services through a CCC, should also take into account the range of customers that will use their services and care for customers that cannot use a specific communication medium (e.g. phone, e-mail). An alternative communication medium should be offered to those customers.

The CCC should be chosen according to:

- a) the ability of the CCC to comply with this European Standard;
- b) adherence to quality and best practice standards;
- c) previous experience;
- d) size;
- e) location;
- f) infrastructure, technologies and methods used.

The operating methods and the aims of the service should be agreed with the CCC in a written document.

If a client organization decides that the optimal solution for its service needs is to use more than one CCC, the client organization should ensure consistency of service to its customers/prospective customers across all sites.

Before committing to a new campaign, a data sample should be tested to ensure that the campaign's objectives can be achieved and benefits both the customers and the CCC.

Annex D (informative)

Recommended skills for management and strategy in a Customer Contact Centre

D.1 General

This informative annex describes the skills that are recommended for management and strategy in a CCC.

D.2 Operations management function

The following skills and knowledge are recommended for the operations management function in a CCC:

- a) customer service provision (customer care, service delivery);
- b) customer acquisition (customer segmentation, campaign management, sales planning and opportunity management, sales tracking and reporting);
- c) forecasting and scheduling;
- d) people management;
- e) quality management;
- f) performance management;
- g) working environment, health and safety;
- h) operations and planning (business process design, brand management, change management, disaster recovery planning);
- i) basics of CCC-technology;
- j) regulatory framework;
- k) sustainability/environmental/climate issues.

D.3 Client organization management function

The following skills are recommended for the client organization management function, as applicable to the contract:

- a) measuring customers and client organizations satisfaction;
- b) complaints and issue management;
- c) product and service advice/support;
- d) transaction processing;

- e) campaign management;
- f) sales planning and opportunity management;
- g) inbound and outbound sales;
- h) sales tracking and reporting;
- i) basics in people management (team building, feedback and coaching, call/contact monitoring, and reporting);
- j) communication guidelines (scripting);
- k) basics about CCC-technology used.

Bibliography

- [1] ISO IEC Guide 37, *Instructions for use of products of consumer interest*
- [2] EN ISO 6385, *Ergonomic principles in the design of work systems (ISO 6385:2004)*
- [3] EN ISO 9241 (all parts), *Ergonomic requirements for office work with visual display terminals (VDTs)*
- [4] ISO 9000:2005, *Quality management systems — Fundamentals and vocabulary*
- [5] ISO 10003, *Quality management — Customer satisfaction — Guidelines for dispute resolution external to organizations*
- [6] ISO 10002, *Quality management — Customer satisfaction — Guidelines for complaints handling in organizations*
- [7] ISO 14025:2006, *Environmental labels and declarations — Type III environmental declarations — Principles and procedures*
- [8] ISO/DIS 26000, *Guidance on social responsibility*

BSI - British Standards Institution

BSI is the independent national body responsible for preparing British Standards. It presents the UK view on standards in Europe and at the international level. It is incorporated by Royal Charter.

Revisions

British Standards are updated by amendment or revision. Users of British Standards should make sure that they possess the latest amendments or editions.

It is the constant aim of BSI to improve the quality of our products and services. We would be grateful if anyone finding an inaccuracy or ambiguity while using this British Standard would inform the Secretary of the technical committee responsible, the identity of which can be found on the inside front cover. Tel: +44 (0)20 8996 9000. Fax: +44 (0)20 8996 7400.

BSI offers members an individual updating service called PLUS which ensures that subscribers automatically receive the latest editions of standards.

Buying standards

Orders for all BSI, international and foreign standards publications should be addressed to Customer Services. Tel: +44 (0)20 8996 9001. Fax: +44 (0)20 8996 7001 Email: orders@bsigroup.com You may also buy directly using a debit/credit card from the BSI Shop on the Website <http://www.bsigroup.com/shop>

In response to orders for international standards, it is BSI policy to supply the BSI implementation of those that have been published as British Standards, unless otherwise requested.

Information on standards

BSI provides a wide range of information on national, European and international standards through its Library and its Technical Help to Exporters Service. Various BSI electronic information services are also available which give details on all its products and services. Contact Information Centre. Tel: +44 (0)20 8996 7111 Fax: +44 (0)20 8996 7048 Email: info@bsigroup.com

Subscribing members of BSI are kept up to date with standards developments and receive substantial discounts on the purchase price of standards. For details of these and other benefits contact Membership Administration. Tel: +44 (0)20 8996 7002 Fax: +44 (0)20 8996 7001 Email: membership@bsigroup.com

Information regarding online access to British Standards via British Standards Online can be found at <http://www.bsigroup.com/BSOL>

Further information about BSI is available on the BSI website at <http://www.bsigroup.com>.

Copyright

Copyright subsists in all BSI publications. BSI also holds the copyright, in the UK, of the publications of the international standardization bodies. Except as permitted under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 no extract may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means – electronic, photocopying, recording or otherwise – without prior written permission from BSI.

This does not preclude the free use, in the course of implementing the standard, of necessary details such as symbols, and size, type or grade designations. If these details are to be used for any other purpose than implementation then the prior written permission of BSI must be obtained.

Details and advice can be obtained from the Copyright and Licensing Manager. Tel: +44 (0)20 8996 7070 Email: copyright@bsigroup.com