



# Metrics that Matter

By Erica Strother | Published: August 06, 2014

*Our editorial theme for August is "Metrics that Matter." With that theme in mind we sat down with David Schreck, CEO of Intelemedia Communications. Read on to learn more about the unique metrics approach he recommends and why it works so well for organizations with multiple call centers.*

## **Q: What is the innovative approach Intelemedia takes to metrics that matter?**

A: Since most of our clients use multiple call centers, we apply three key foundational approaches to our metrics. First, we establish a standard data dictionary and definition for all data across all call centers. Secondly, we integrate the data across all the call centers into one uniform platform. Third, we establish and apply "second degree" metrics. These are metrics that allow managers to understand what is driving their executive metrics.

## **Q: What's the main benefit of this approach?**

A: Ultimately, it is financial performance and enhanced customer experience. Achieving these benefits is directly attributed to spending less time deciphering data and more time establishing action items to enhance performance. The data dictionary ensures that all data is based on the same measurements; the integration of the data improves the efficiency in managing the call centers, which provides more time for strategic thinking. Most importantly, the "second degree" metrics pinpoint the specific enablers and inhibitors that are driving the critical performance measurements. With this immediate knowledge, clients can act quickly and confidently with actions to enhance performance.

## **Q: Don't the standard reports provide what you need to manage a program?**

A: Standard reports typically tell you what is working well or not working well, but rarely provide the full picture one needs to pinpoint the root issues and what correct actions to take. There are many factors to consider; therefore, it is important to have the next level of data readily available to quickly rule out what is not a factor and determine what is. Once you see the various factors, you can create the corresponding actions to increase the performance.

## **Q: If this is so important, why isn't everyone doing that?**

A: A couple of reasons. First – often a program manager (a client) isn't aware that there's more data available. Either they don't know it's there – or perhaps they don't have access to it. Secondly – even if they know it's possible, it's not easy. Every call center has a different ACD, and each call center puts out reporting in a different format, perhaps even measuring different things. Furthermore, your second degree metrics need to be industry specific, which means different metrics and reporting for each industry. Most clients don't have the time or the expertise to combine all the reports into one standard report. It's not the skill set of the people managing the channel. In our case, we serve multiple industries with multiple teams experienced in their industry. We have the critical mass and ability to create such tools for the required and specialized analytics.

**Q: Why is this important for environments with multiple call center users?**

A: This approach is most important to the multi call center environments. With these environments, you need to make sure you have consistent data across all your partners, plus a simplistic and efficient way to evaluate performance. Too often today, manager are spending hours consolidating reports versus reviewing data and creating action plans to enhance performance. The idea behind utilizing multiple call centers is that it allows you an opportunity to let multiple call centers compete for your business by turning in the best results. If you can measure them using the same ruler, you can give more business to the ones providing the best ROI. If you are comparing apples and oranges, it's hard to know who's doing the best job.

**Q: Can you tell me more about how you improve performance?**

A: To improve performance, you need to understand the root issue, and only diagnostic reporting can provide you the granular data in a presentation that easily presents the root cause and required improvements. In essence, you need data to tell you what's wrong – what isn't working. The metrics will help you determine which variables need to be changed. For example, if cancellations are running too high, there are many variables that should be examined to see what is driving the increased cancellations. You might consider change in call arrival patterns, change in call volume, length of calls, call abandonment, quality of the reps and source of the calls. Second degree metrics provide the deep dive metrics under the top line metrics that will quickly inform you which of those elements have changed and are creating the increased cancellations.

**David Schreck, CEO of Intelemedia Communications**

David is President and CEO of Intelemedia. Intelemedia offers a new breed of call center services by combining industry-leading technology with a platform uniting top performing agents from multiple call center companies. Since 1993, Intelemedia has developed elegant telephony and database solutions for the call center industry that transform how organizations more effectively manage call handling and caller experience within their customer service and sales acquisition environments. His wealth of experience integrating technology, sound business processes and strategic sourcing is the driving force to the success of Intelemedia's call center applications. David's approach to "client-centric" teams focused on understanding and meeting customer needs has created a track record of developing high demand products. Prior to joining Intelemedia in 2001, David spent 16 years with Moore Corporation where he established Moore's industry-leading national strategic print management outsourcing unit. In addition, he led the company's initial thrust into e-business, successfully introducing electronic forms as a high growth and viable business within the printed form industry.