



Making Contact is Critical to Eckerd Health Services

AT A GLANCE:

- **Background:** Eckerd Health Services of is a leader in the prescription benefit management.
- **Challenge:** Provide efficient phone contact with their client's employees and doctors.
- **Solution:** Automated phone dialing & management through Concerto's Conversations.
- **Results:** The contact center's efficiency and productivity increased. Agents spend 75% of their time talking to patients, compared to 25%.

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Mike Maximenko, Manager of Health Care, Eckerd Health Services

BACKGROUND

Eckerd Health Services of Pittsburgh, PA is a leader in prescription benefit management. The company's clientele includes major corporations, with Eckerd administering prescription benefits for millions of people. In the course of a week, Eckerd's mail service pharmacy (Express Pharmacy Services) fills approximately 200,000 prescriptions.

It is Eckerd's responsibility to manage the total drug benefits for companies like American Airlines. Eckerd Health Services provides the valuable service of reducing prescription costs in a market place of spiraling medical bills.

CHALLENGE

Ongoing and effective communication is vital to Eckerd's business. First, when appropriate, Eckerd attempts to switch their beneficiaries to a less expensive, but comparable drug. This requires contacting the client's employees and their doctors for approval. Second, Eckerd contacts employees that have not reordered their medication, in order to verify they are taking the medication correctly and maintaining their therapy. Finally, the company contacts employees when there is a conflict with their account. Eckerd initiates the call on behalf of their clients.

Prior to working with Concerto, Eckerd agents were manually looking up phone numbers and dialing to connect with employees and their doctors. A significant portion of the agent's time was wasted trying to get a person on the phone. In most cases, the employees were not home, not answering, or phone number was wrong.

In the highly competitive healthcare market, efficiency is a vital factor. It was apparent that the system needed to be automated and improved in order to reduce costs and improve service. According to Sue Filo, Clinical Program Supervisor, "We needed to find a way to contact more of our patients."

SOLUTION

Concerto enabled Eckerd with a complete Customer Interaction Management solution. It includes Concerto Conversations, the hardware platform and software application and Magellan, Conversations agent desktop interface. The system seamlessly

interfaces with their existing telephone system and its back-end data warehouse. This allows EHS to take a selection of records and feed it into Concerto's Conversations. It reads and records, dials the phone number and automatically dials for the agent. Once connected, Concerto's Conversations can detect the difference between a busy signal and an answering machine, and responds accordingly based upon pre-defined rules. Concerto's Conversations' answering machine detection feature can also determine whether to schedule a redial, automatically play a prerecorded message or pass the call to an available agent.

Eckerd selected Concerto's Conversations for several reasons:

- The application required the least amount of IT resources through installation and implementation.
- It provided the best return on investment by maximizing agent contact rate and productivity.
- The ease of integrating the Magellan desktop with Eckerd's back-end data system.
- The Concerto's Conversations dialing algorithm leads to a very low over-dial rate. Eckerd is able to maximize customer contact and minimize customer frustration.
- Concerto had the best understanding of Eckerd's business and its issues.
- Conversations provides detailed real-time reports on an agent-to-agent basis.

RESULTS

"We are contacting four times as many customers as we did previously and it's a direct result of using Conversations," says Mike Maximenko, Manager of Health Care. "Conversations paid for itself after one month and we couldn't be happier. We are moving ahead with plans for a second host integration, so that should tell you how satisfied we are with Conversations."

"We experienced a greater increase than anticipated in overall productivity and we are thrilled by Conversations and the very real, tangible difference it has made."
*Sue Filo, Clinical Program Supervisor,
Eckerd Health Services*

Eckerd was told to expect a 200 percent increase in productivity. Being skeptical, the company budgeted for half that amount. To their surprise, the results surpassed the initial projected ROI. "We experienced a greater increase in overall productivity and we are thrilled by the performance of Conversations and the very real, tangible difference it has made," says Filo. "Our agents are now spending 75 percent of their time talking to patients, compared to 25 percent prior to Conversations."

The installation was well planned and coordinated. Filo says there were no problems tying into Eckerd's back-end systems. The process required minimal customization.

Agents are handling considerably more calls per week which contributes directly to EHS' success. Efficiency and productivity have soared. Discussions are currently underway to install Concerto's Conversations in additional departments affirming the successful implementation of Concerto's Conversations at Eckerd Health Services' contact center.

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