

One of the World's Largest Multi-channel Retailers



OBJECTIVE:

Reduce Operating Costs and Improve Service Levels

In 2003 HSN, one of the world's largest multi-channel retailers, was searching for an outsourced customer contact provider that could provide a cost-effective and flexible contact solution to help them process sales and inquiry calls for products featured during their network programs. HSN's executives determined that an outsourced contact provider was critical to maintaining optimum service levels during periods of high-volume from seasonal activity or special programming.

Not only did the solution have to give HSN the flexibility to scale up or down quickly, but the solution had to deliver a high level of quality and they needed the program to be operational within 6 weeks in order to handle an expected increase in call volume. After analyzing various options, HSN chose West Corporation as their partner, based upon West's responsiveness and experience in managing cost-effective, high-volume and volatile inbound call campaigns.

THE WEST AT HOME SOLUTION:

A Highly Flexible Solution Utilizing Home-based Agents

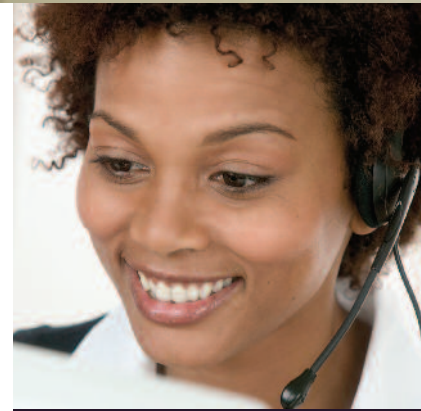
West's experienced staff worked closely with HSN executives to initially develop a blended solution of home agents and call center agents. The program has since evolved into a 100% home-based agent program to better capitalize on the flexibility that the West at Home solution provides. West currently utilizes over 1,300 active home agents, with an average of over 175 steady-state agents handling incoming sales calls and customer care calls such as order status.

West's Instructional Design and Development (IDD) team worked closely with HSN to develop a comprehensive and customized training program. The home-based agent training is conducted 100% virtually via the internet with instructor led webinars at the conclusion of the three week program. The West IDD team worked closely with HSN to develop the optimum training curriculum that would help our home agents provide their customers with an exceptional level of customer service. Through this customized training program, the West at Home agents were able to quickly learn and retain more information on HSN's product offerings, processes and systems than with traditional training methods.

During peak calling periods, HSN's overflow call volume is directed to West's state-of-the-art platform which enables West to quickly and intelligently route callers to the best available agent, regardless of location. By integrating with HSN's Siebel CRM database, West's home agents have access to the most current and up-to-date customer information on HSN's callers.



West at Home



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West also implemented their workforce management system, Spectrum[®], allowing West at Home to quickly schedule the appropriate levels of agent coverage based on half-hour segments. This ability to generate highly flexible schedules was crucial to HSN's ability to handle the extreme volatility in call volume from day-to-day and week-to-week. Spectrum also allowed the agents to choose schedules that fit their lifestyles, driving better schedule adherence and improved agent satisfaction.

To ensure the highest quality of service to HSN's customers, West employs web-based monitoring and communication tools that enable 100% of calls to be recorded. HSN management is able to replay these calls within minutes of call completion to verify accuracy and adherence to quality standards. In addition, West utilizes Performance Assessment Liaisons to ensure that HSN's call processing standards are met.

THE RESULTS: Exceptional Customer Service Paired with Unmatched Scheduling Flexibility

According to a recent HSN press release, HSN's CEO Mindy Grossman stated, "We have made world class customer service our top priority over the past several years." Their efforts and the efforts of the West at Home team have been recently rewarded as HSN was ranked #7 in The Fifth Annual NRF Foundation/American Express Customer's Choice Survey. The survey of more than 8,000 consumers gave HSN its highest ever ranking for retail customer service.

West at Home's agents consistently exceed HSN's goals for customer satisfaction averaging 92% in customer satisfaction ratings. West's ability to easily handle the demands of seasonal or situational call volume also allows HSN to deliver better service levels. In fact, on numerous occasions the West at Home solution has ramped up from a state of "zero need" to up to 500 agents and back down again in a matter of hours. This flexibility helps HSN maximize every revenue opportunity while minimizing idle agent costs and improving the overall customer experience.

West at Home's highly skilled home-based agents were delivering average upsell conversion rates of 18% which were meeting HSN's expectations. But the West team felt that they could improve on these numbers and proactively implemented a KPI management process and soft skill training to improve results. West is now averaging 24% upsell conversion rates and has outperformed HSN's internal call centers in upsell revenue for five months running.

With HSN's greatest need for agents occurring during non-traditional hours, along with their extreme swings in sales and service volume, West at Home's flexibility and higher quality agents have been instrumental in helping HSN provide world class customer service while driving improved sales performance.

WEST AT HOME: A Premier Provider of Home-based Agent Contact Solutions

West at Home is one of the nation's leading providers of home-based customer contact solutions. West at Home helps Fortune 1000 companies deliver unparalleled results through a combination of higher quality, better educated agents and a highly scalable, state-of-the-art infrastructure. West at Home employs the industry's most comprehensive agent training, management and monitoring processes and features multi-layered security protection. This helps companies protect their customer data, achieve a higher level of quality service, improve staffing flexibility and realize a greater return on their investment.

West at Home is a subsidiary of West Corporation, a leading provider of technology driven, voice oriented solutions.



West at Home

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