



QWEST SOLUTIONS FEATURING:

Qwest® Q Routing® and Qwest EZ Route

Case Study: Cleveland State University



CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY

CUSTOMER:

Cleveland State University
www.csuohio.edu

BUSINESS CHALLENGE:

School administrators needed to significantly increase the efficiency of their incoming call management and routing system. Calls came into multiple locations while human resources were tapped to deliver repetitive instructions.

SOLUTION:

Qwest® Q Routing® allows Cleveland State University (CSU) to flexibly and more efficiently manage its 86-person call center staff. The Qwest EZ Route solution enabled the automation of repetitive tasks such as explaining how to get transcripts.

BENEFITS AND RESULTS:

- EZ Route reduced agent-answered calls by 31 percent in first year of service (from 45,000 to 31,000)
- Increased calls-serviced performance by 520 percent in first year (from 14 to 87 percent)
- Liberated many labor hours the financial aid processing staff previously spent answering calls—reduced processing cycle
- All incoming calls terminate at single, more efficient 1 800 "location"
- Virtually eliminated customer complaints about phone system incoming call process
- Substantially increased employee satisfaction—more efficient system reduced worker stress
- Call center agents can now log onto system and serve customers from any desktop location

CSU was established in 1964. Since then, the campus has grown to include 40+ buildings over 85 acres. Its many colleges serve a student body numbering 16,000 and more than 90,000 alumni.

In recent years, the school has upgraded its technological infrastructure to better serve its constituents. By the fall of 2005, CSU's aging incoming call management process earned a careful review. It received failing marks for flexibility, cost and efficiency.

FACING THE CHALLENGES

Traditionally, incoming calls would be terminated at various campus locations. So, for example, the admissions, registrar and bursar offices each had their own separate phone centers. Consequently, callers would sometimes contact the wrong location and be transferred.



This was manageable for low volumes of calls, but by August of 2005, CSU received over 45,000 calls that month alone. The current inefficiency of the system was obvious.

"We calculated that only 14 percent of those calls had been serviced," said Edward Mills, chief enrollment services officer for CSU in Cleveland, Ohio. "We had to find a more efficient way to handle incoming calls to better serve students and alumni."

As Mills analyzed the current infrastructure and processes, he discovered that much of the call volume could be attributed to repetitive information being disseminated by phone center agents.

"One of the highest volume calls we get is people asking how to get copies of their transcripts," explained Mills. "Well, that answer is the same every time so we felt that some sort of automation technology could free-up costly live agents while meeting callers' needs."

“The Qwest Q Routing and EZ Route solutions have been the best changes in service that we’ve done at the University in the past two years. Our incoming call management efficiency is up considerably and both callers and my staff are much happier with the results.”

—Edward Mills, Chief Enrollment Services Officer, Cleveland State University

PROVIDING A SUCCESSFUL SOLUTION

To meet these challenges, Mills’ IT team chose a combination of the Qwest® Q Routing® and Qwest EZ Route solutions.

These solutions allowed him to centralize incoming calls onto a single, 1 800 number. For example, rather than relying on caller’s judgment to contact the correct department, Q Routing now directs caller requests to the correct agent team or automated system. Moreover, it is flexible enough to route calls anywhere Mills’ agents work.

“Previously, people were typically having to call two or three different places and getting shuffled around,” stated Mills. “Q Routing put an end to that.”

The EZ Route solution allowed CSU to automate routine business transactions using a menu-driven, self-help application. “That has been very helpful for us because we have a series of questions that are very common,” explained Mills.

DELIVERING RESULTS

The Qwest implementation team met a tight four-week timeline. With the very busy August pre-enrollment season coming up fast, Mills wanted the new system in place by the end of July to work out any kinks. “Qwest was able to meet every milestone, every deadline in those four weeks,” recalled Mills.

HIGHLY EFFICIENT AND COST EFFECTIVE

The year following the installation “The Qwest services had reduced our live-agent call volume from 45,000 to 31,000 calls (31 percent) and increased the number

of calls serviced from 14 to 87 percent (520 percent increase),” said Mills. “In the August that’s coming up, I plan on reducing call volume through automation down to 28,000 and to increase calls serviced to 95 percent.”

As a result, Mills’ agents’ productivity is higher as they now spend time on difficult customer issues—while letting the EZ Route solution handle the low-skilled repetitive information dissemination.

ENHANCED CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Within two months of centralizing his calls onto a single 800 number through Qwest, dissatisfaction with the retired legacy system disappeared.

“Since implementing the Qwest solutions, our service level, and the satisfaction of both the people calling in and my own staff have gone way up,” recalled Mills. “The President of the University commented that they had received no complaints from students who could not get through on the telephone.”

In addition to servicing incoming calls, CSU operates a processing organization. In the past, many calls that the Qwest solutions are now handling interrupted the work of financial aid processors.

“Addressing calls without them going back to a processing staff member means that we’ve speeded up our processing cycle,” said Mills. “Which in turn reduces the number of calls we get. They’ve made us a much more effective and efficient organization.”

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