

## **New Telecel call centre uses intelligent software**

Telecel is establishing a new third generation technology call centre that will have interactive voice response (IVR) and the capacity to deal quickly with customer queries, whether they are made over the phone or by e-mail, messaging or text message.

The new call centre, which is due to start operating very soon, will be able to accommodate up to 90 customer care representatives.

The centre will initially cost more than \$700 000, with the new software accounting for about 60 percent of the total cost.

The software platform that will be used is the Avaya Aura Call Centre (AACC) system, an intelligent call centre system with an IVR that facilitates system-generated customer response management and workforce management. It is well-suited to dealing with both incoming and outgoing calls.

The use of IVR, which automates telephone call responses by enabling the caller to indicate the nature of the enquiry and so be put through to the most appropriate customer care representative or department, will enable the centre to deal with calls quickly and effectively.

It is estimated that more than 30% of customer enquiries will be resolved through the IVR. The IVR will also enable customer to receive help 24 hours a day, since, although it will still only be possible to talk to a customer care representative between the hours of 8am and midnight, IVR support will continue between 00001 hours and 0759 hours.

The new software will facilitate a closer relationship with customers, not only through rapid and efficient query responses but through outgoing calls soliciting feedback.

Customers can look forward to having their calls to the Telecel call centre answered within three rings. An automated voice prompt will guide them to choose the area their enquiry concerns. After selecting the appropriate option, they will be given recorded information that may assist them or be put through to an appropriate customer care representative.

The new system will also facilitate real time reporting on call centre performance and the monitoring of call centre complaints and enquiries trends.

The new platform will be complemented by a working environment that is comfortable and conducive to customer care work. The new centre is sufficiently large to cater for future expansion. It will have a seating capacity of 110, as opposed to the current call centre's 20 seats.

With about 30 percent of calls being handled by the IVR, the volume that customer care representatives have to deal with should be reduced. The effective routing of calls should make it easier to get through to the centre and eliminate the need for customers to make repeated calls, which currently account for a significant proportion of call centre calls.

New customer care standards that match global best practices and the service levels of Telecel's regional counterparts are also being introduced.

Because the system is Internet Protocol (IP) based, rather than being digital or voice-based, information will be transmitted faster.

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The IVR will offer self-service options or the option to speak to a customer care representative.

The increase in the number of customer care representatives, their training on the company's products and the internal and external information they have at their fingertips should make it possible for most queries to be resolved immediately.

If it is impossible to do so, then the customer's details will be recorded and the matter will be referred speedily to the appropriate person to resolve. Once the issue has been resolved the customer will be contacted with the response.

The call centre will also make calls to customers to seek feedback on services and products. The feedback will be compiled in reports for senior management.

The AACC software that the new centre will rely on is one of the world's leading call centre third generation software packages with multimedia capabilities that enable communications via voice, e-mail, instant messaging and other forms of communication to be routed and responded to.

It allows agents to simultaneously handle multiple contacts and quickly access customer information, which may, for instance, include previous communications from the client.

It is an easy-to-use suite with administrative tools that reduce complexity and reduce implementation overheads. It will allow customer care representatives to leverage on real time and historical information to deliver seamless context-sensitive customer care.

It will also enable Telecel to anticipate customer needs. It offers advanced functions that will enable the company to quickly, efficiently and cost effectively satisfy those needs.

The platform also facilitates personalised customer contact experiences that build brands and enhance customer loyalty.

Telecel Customer Operations Director Mrs Zodwa Chinyenze said all Telecel's customer service centres had also been upgraded.

"We are championing world class service delivery with memorable customer experience. All our service centres have been upgraded and we are adding more branches, so that we can be nearer to our customers," she said.

"The new call centre software will ultimately deliver superior customer service tools, providing agents with customer and product information in real time.

"Customers will be assisted in the language they prefer. There will be less holding time. Customers will be able to contact us more easily and have their requests, queries and complaints dealt with faster. By pooling customer information, we will be able to provide customers with the right answers quicker than ever before," she said.

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