

### Improving outbound calling efficiency and capacity at Warranty Direct

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**Duncan McClure Fisher - Managing Director, Warranty Direct Limited**



Established in 1997, Warranty Direct was the first UK direct personal warranty company and remains the only one to this day. Its mission is to offer independent warranties that are actually worth the paper they are written on and also to make the buying process quicker and simpler for the consumer. Today Warranty Direct do not just sell the warranty, they also handle the claim, eliminating the middleman and passing the savings directly on to customers.

Warranty Direct are the only company that offers customers plain and honest cover, which is also approved by the Plain English Campaign - and their policies are underwritten at Lloyd's of London. Their business depends on recommendations, so they always do everything within their power to ensure that customers are delighted at every stage of the relationship, from first contact, throughout the sales process and at all stages of any claim.

#### **Effective communications**

With integrity and customer service at the core of their business, Warranty Direct's ability to communicate with their customers effectively is absolutely vital. As part of the sales and marketing process they advertise heavily to drive traffic to the website, where consumers can receive a quote for any warranty that they might be interested in. Once they have entered their details and received a quote, this is then followed up by the in-house call centre, who are responsible not only for managing all inbound calls, but also for making a high volume of outbound calls to prospective customers as well.

Historically, Warranty Direct's call centre agents were primarily responsible for handling inbound calls only. However, as they now have the ability to identify potential customers who have requested quotes via their website, the need to make more outbound calls was becoming very apparent. Duncan McClure Fisher, Managing Director of Warranty Direct, explains further:

“By late 2004 we decided that we probably needed to consider some form of automated dialler, rather than simply making outbound calls manually as had been the case until then. We looked at a number of options, nearly all of which seemed far too complex for our requirements and also far too expensive. At this stage we were not even sure that a dialler was really necessary and so we wanted to start out with a simple and cost-effective option, until we could see the benefits for ourselves.

We asked three companies to provide us with a demonstration and the one option which did seem to fit the bill was the Adaptive Dialler from New Media Software, which was recommended by our existing telecoms provider - and it turned out to be exactly what we were looking for.”

### **A structured approach**

Warranty Direct selected the Adaptive Dialler and this was installed at the end of January 2005, initially to support 10 agents and to provide a progressive dialling facility. This means that the call is dialled on the agent's handset via an automated process and numbers are simply loaded into the dialler as required and scheduled for each day's calling. This approach minimises the time between calls and ultimately allows Warranty Direct to make far more calls in a day that they would be able to using a manual system.

As the business grows and the call centre expands, Duncan is now in a position to take advantage of the predictive dialling capability of the Adaptive Dialler, which was also included in the original installation. “The predictive dialling facility will increase our call volumes even further”, he explains. “Because the calls are dialled in the background and not on the agents handset, no time is lost making calls which are not answered. We already make between 500 and 600 outbound calls per day and this figure will increase even further, allowing us to efficiently contact more prospective customers than ever before. Setting up and scheduling of calls is very easy for the operator and even someone who is not experienced with the system can quickly understand how to use it. Another advantage is that it integrates extremely well with our phone system and this was a very useful factor in the delivery of the complete solution.”

### **The right decision**

One of the key benefits of the Adaptive Dialler is that all calls are monitored and full real-time reporting is provided, which gives added value for the call centre team when it comes to managing their working day. Calls made in any given time period can be tracked and each agent knows on a minute-by-minute basis whether they are on target and whether they can therefore take a break, or stop for lunch when they hit a particular call volume. Duncan knows how many calls each agent is completing, how long each one took and which agents are meeting their targets consistently. He concludes:

“Even though we were unsure at first, we now know that having an outbound dialler has definitely increased the calling capacity of our team, which now consists of 16 agents. We just couldn't have done this any other way and it has definitely changed the way that the business operates. To be honest, having chosen the cheaper and simpler option we assumed that at some point in the future we would need to upgrade to a more complex and costly solution, once we had proved the efficiency of having a dialler at all. We even looked briefly at another system in late 2005, as we assumed this would in some way be better, but it wasn't. All we did was prove that the choice we made in the first place was the correct one. The Adaptive Dialler does everything that we need it to – and yet was still the most cost effective option!

New Media Software has done a great job and we have confidence that they definitely understand the industry. There are always issues of course, with technology, but they have overcome these very quickly for us when any problems have occurred. We have become very dependent on the dialler so it is vital that we get a fast response from NMS and this has always been the case. They are very professional and they certainly know their stuff.”