



Customer Profile:

As part of providing financial services to higher education institutions, ECSI has become the largest provider nationally of loan servicing and tax document services.

Website:

<http://heartland.ecsi.net>

NICE inContact Solutions:

- CXone Omnichannel Routing
- Advanced Chat and Cobrowse for CXone
- CXone Personal Connection
- CXone Reporting

Results Achieved:

- 58 percent reduction in average handling time for chat interactions
- 86 percent reduction in chat abandon rate
- Over 500 percent improvement in phone service levels (average speed of answer)
- 13 percent increase in customer satisfaction

On NICE inContact

“With Advanced Chat and Cobrowse for CXone, the customer experience has dramatically improved with much shorter wait times, and our productivity has soared.”

Mike Bowman,
Senior Contact Center Manager, ECSI

ECSI Realizes Exceptional Gains with NICE inContact Advanced Chat and Cobrowse for CXone

About ECSI

With over 45 years of experience and a 99.9 percent client retention rate, ECSI provides financial services to colleges and universities across the country. It has become the nation's largest provider of loan servicing and tax document services. ECSI employs between 100-120 agents who assist student borrowers who are repaying their loans, answering questions ranging from account management issues to loan payment queries. In 2018, ECSI agents handled over 850,000 phone calls and 350,000 chats.

The Challenge

In late 2017, ECSI noted a growing demand from student borrowers for a reliable online chat feature over phone. ECSI had previously tried chat platforms from two different vendors, but neither was user friendly and both slowed down conversations.

“Our wait times reflected our lack of speed and efficiency, because we didn't have the right tools,” says Mike Bowman, Senior Contact Center Manager. “Our previous platform constantly crashed. There was no supervisor visibility into agents' activities and no automation.”

“Students already don't want to talk with us,” he continues. “Make them wait, and it's going to be a difficult interaction. This is important to our business: If we provide less than stellar service to students, clients hear about it, and it puts our relationships in jeopardy. We needed a digital solution (chat) that was fast and easy to use for both students and our own staff.”

“The most problematic issue, though, was that we had no reporting tool to easily calculate our performance,” Mike says. “For example, we had to compute each chat agent's productivity manually, which was time consuming and error prone.”

The Solution

As a current NICE inContact customer, ECSI decided to implement Advanced Chat and Cobrowse for CXone with the help of NICE inContact engineers and training staff. “The implementation of Advanced Chat and Cobrowse for CXone was very easy,” says Mike. “The training was exactly what we needed, and the engineers were available to make any final tweaks before we went live. Overall, it was a straightforward transition. Our supervisors and agents love Advanced Chat for CXone.”

“We are extremely proud of the fact that we received zero complaints about service from our clients after implementing live chat,” Mike says. “We also enjoyed higher ECHO survey scores.”

Automation Drives Efficiency and Productivity Gains

One of the biggest improvements with Advanced Chat and Cobrowse for CXone was automating the distribution of incoming chats. Previously, agents manually selected chats from a queue, which added time to each interaction.

“Advanced Chat for CXone automatically distributes chats to agents based on the skills we’ve set up,” explains Mike. “It’s a huge time saver, and it positively impacts our average time to answer, as well.” Additionally, chats are now automatically pre-populated with greetings, closings and demographic information, such as the student’s name.

“Advanced Chat for CXone greets the student and introduces the agent who will help them,” says Mike. “If agents are finishing up a chat with another customer, they don’t need to look away from their current chat to get the next one started. This saves the agent a couple of minutes on each interaction.”

“The result is that our agents are handling more chats. They used to service two chats at a time; our better agents are now handling five people concurrently due to the automation. Our average speed to answer [chats] is now only 27 seconds!” In addition, agents can choose from a toolbox of prewritten responses to answer common queries, which also saves valuable time and effort.

“About 80 percent of the questions we answer are similar, so we created some standard responses, which the agents can pull from the Advanced Chat for CXone toolbox,” says Mike. “This reduces manual typing and makes it easier for agents to service more customers concurrently.”

ECSI was initially worried that agents might feel overwhelmed answering a higher volume of chats, but that proved not to be the case at all. “I was concerned our agents might burn out,” says Mike. “But we’ve had no turnover on our chat team since implementing Advanced Chat for CXone.”

Our agents are now managing four or five customers at a time, but it’s so much easier with the prewritten responses to common questions and the other tools. It’s a win-win all around.”

“We’ve had no turnover on our chat team since implementing Advanced Chat and Cobrowse for CXone. Our team’s productivity is much higher, and their stress levels are lower. It’s a win-win all around.”

Mike Bowman, Senior Contact Center Manager, ECSI

Increased Efficiency Allows Chat Agents to Take On an Additional 18,000+ Phone Calls

Interestingly, Advanced Chat for CXone had an enormously positive impact on phone interactions, too, including contributing to a 500 percent improvement in phone service levels (average speed of answer). Mike explains that Advanced Chat has positively impacted both chat and call traffic by actually giving the team the bandwidth to handle both. For the company, this has meant being able to keep service levels high without needing to use additional labor.

“Our chat team is so much more efficient that they also took 18,000 phone calls last year. The CXone Automatic Contact Distributor recognizes when chat agents are idle and sends them a call. With our previous contact center solutions, that was technically impossible. In fact, the chat team serviced over 18,000 phone calls last year with no negative impact on their chat metrics!”

“Today we have a great reputation with our clients...”

Mike is enthusiastic about CXone and its positive impact. “Everything we’ve achieved was done without hiring additional personnel,” he emphasizes. “Our customer satisfaction scores also increased 13 percent since implementing Advanced Chat for CXone.”

“With CXone Reporting, we also now know exactly where we stand on key performance metrics. For example, our service levels have skyrocketed. It took us 32 minutes in 2017 to answer phone calls; now it takes only two minutes. Our chat abandon rates fell 86 percent—the gains are astounding.”

“Our business exploded last year, and before introducing Advanced Chat and Cobrowse for CXone, we simply couldn’t keep up with the workload, because we were trying to do everything manually. NICE inContact Professional Services opened our eyes to what we could do with automation, and it’s changed everything. Today we have a great reputation with our clients, and we’re very happy about that.”

About NICE inContact

NICE inContact is the cloud contact center software leader, empowering organizations to provide exceptional customer experiences with the world’s #1 cloud customer experience platform, NICE inContact CXone™. CXone combines best-in-class Omnichannel Routing, Workforce Optimization, Analytics, Automation and Artificial Intelligence on an Open Cloud Foundation to help companies act smarter and respond faster to consumer expectations. NICE inContact, a NICE company, is recognized as a market leader by the leading industry analyst firms, and serves customers in more than 150 countries, including over 85 of the Fortune 100 companies.

For more information, visit: www.NICEinContact.com