



eOn Communications Keeps Taction at the Forefront of Technology Advancements

Company Overview

Taction, by definition, means "the act of touching, contact" — and the name accurately reflects the company's transformation from a call center pioneer into one of the country's premier customer contact centers for hire.

Based in a state-of-the-art facility in Waldoboro, Maine, Taction is a highly successful customer contact center employing almost 150 year-round and seasonal personnel to serve its clients' customer service needs. Founded in 1983, Taction's success is built upon offering the latest interactive services through a combination of sophisticated technology and a commitment to state-of-the-art agent hiring and training practices.

By consistently meeting client demands through an experienced and responsive contact center team, Taction has gained a national reputation for exceptional quality and service.

"Because eOn's solution is so powerful and Taction knows it so well, we are able to consistently meet our clients' demand for superior capabilities. By integrating the eOn solution with our own powerful applications, we have built lasting and meaningful customer relationships — one positive experience at a time," said Steve White, Taction's Chairman and Chief Executive Officer.

Taction provides a comprehensive menu of customer contact services for voice, e-Mail, e-Chat and e-Fax interactions, 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Since 1983, Taction has tailored its services to meet the unique needs of each and every client. A sampling of the company's services include: order processing; problem resolution and consumer advocacy; customer inquiry; event registration; and, serving as a complete customer service center for major retailers, e-commerce sites and catalog firms. In addition, the company offers contact center operations and technology consulting services.

Taction provides superior customer service for some of the world's most trusted brands, including Chanel, Samsonite, McGraw-Hill Children's Publishing and Harbor Sweets — as well as the internationally recognized Atkins Nutritionals.

Customer Story



Taction's success formula is "best of breed" technology, state-of-the-art training, a customer-centric culture and great agents.

eOn Customer Success Story:

Taction

Knowledgeable Contact Center Staff Needs the Best Technology

Taction's contact center expertise has advanced the company to the forefront of the contact center industry. With contact center personnel managing anywhere from 6,000 to 8,000 customer interactions each day, and exceeding 16,000 interactions during peak times, Taction needed the most advanced customer interaction management solution to handle all forms of customer contacts. To meet this demand, Taction turned to eOn Communications for its sophisticated eQueue Multi-Media Contact Center Solution.

eOn's eQueue provides a unified queue that manages the routing and reporting of all customer interactions, helping Taction achieve its overall operational goals of lowering costs, enhancing quality and increasing productivity.

One of the many challenges contact centers face is predicting customer demand. To help anticipate staffing needs, Taction utilizes its proprietary forecasting and productivity monitoring applications, which are seamlessly integrated with the eQueue, providing Taction personnel with real-time visibility to peak demand and the tools to dynamically schedule personnel. These tools enable Taction supervisors to anticipate and predict activity based on discreet customer modeling and real-time event monitoring. Taction's proprietary solution for order processing and tracking, ResponseTrak®, is also integrated with the eQueue, which provides sophisticated reporting of customer transactions. With these combined technologies — eQueue's unified queue for routing and reporting all customer contacts, and Taction's advanced forecasting and order tracking software applications — Taction remains at the forefront of technological advances in the industry, while staying true to its customer service commitment.

"We combine years of contact center expertise with the best tools in the industry — the result is a superior customer experience, and an invaluable partnership with our clients that decreases their operational costs and increases their revenue," said White.

As an independent contact center for hire, Taction's goal is to seamlessly combine its contact center services with its clients' operations. Ultimately, the greatest compliment Taction can receive is to have end-user customers mistake Taction's agents for employees of the companies they serve. With Taction's business model, enabling technology and partnership with eOn, this happens with virtually every customer contact.

Exceeding Expectations While Reducing Costs with eOn's eQueue Multi-Media Contact Center Solution

One of Taction's key business strategies is to solve client needs through the use of sophisticated technology. Taction relies on eOn for a solution that helps to achieve its major goals of providing targeted client services, improved customer service levels and reduced costs.

Taction can customize its services to help clients who require shared applications, overflow management and after hours contact center support, with all the benefits of a seamlessly integrated contact center. Understanding that successful overflow management is a challenge for many contact centers, Taction uses the unique approach of merging its contact center operations with its client's operation to help reduce costs. Because the eQueue has the ability to integrate with Taction's workforce management, order tracking and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) solutions, Taction can more accurately route contacts, forecast agent demand and report on activities across all centers. Additionally, its clients have access to more customer data, including access to a sophisticated Taction knowledgebase. And by keeping its agents cross-trained, Taction is able to provide its clients with immediate access to additional agents in a sudden overflow situation, or during peak times.

eQueue's Benefits: Openness, Flexibility and Functionality

Because Taction is a contact center for hire, time-to-market and feature flexibility is crucial. In order to foster client loyalty, Taction must solve client needs quickly and accurately. Therefore, Taction's technology solution must be robust and comprehensive, proven and scalable, as well as open and flexible — so that Taction can add capabilities easily and quickly, and is not forced to rely on costly and time-consuming custom development.

"Many systems have a multitude of limitations, but there is virtually no limit to what eOn's solution can do," said White. "The eQueue is incredibly flexible and powerful, and we can easily modify the system to do whatever is needed for our clients. The system has extensive features that many others don't have, and eOn delivers the goods."

Taction uses eQueue's reporting capabilities to view real-time data and capture historical information across all center contact activities. Because the eQueue provides easy access to consolidated data across multiple centers, Taction is able to feed its forecasting and workforce management software, as well as store the information in its knowledge database. Additionally, Taction's clients have remote access via the Internet to the same real-time and historical reports that Taction uses — providing useful data that helps its clients improve their own services.

Taction can retrieve critical customer interaction data and demographic information from the eQueue and ResponseTrak solutions. These integrated applications enable Taction to determine how best to help its clients increase their sales and customer satisfaction levels. Advanced features also enable contact center managers to view customer experiences identifying which agents need more training, or what selling techniques are working the best. System reports can show how long a customer waited on hold, how long a customer spoke with an agent, if an order was placed, and whether or not the customer interaction was escalated to a supervisor. Data is then associated with the specific customer, including his or her demographics and spending patterns.

The eQueue solution has enabled Taction to offer new services to its clients. For example, the eQueue's networking flexibility and openness has led Taction to introduce a new approach to overflow management — coined "FirstCall" — to deliver a higher service level. Using the FirstCall process, the eQueue routes contacts between networked centers based on a set of business rules, such as speed-to-answer within 30 seconds. Every call is presented first to Taction's center, where the eQueue instantaneously predicts if Taction's agents can handle the call within the specified time limit. For calls that cannot be answered within the business rule, 30 seconds in this example, the eQueue immediately routes the call to the client's center. This process is transparent to the caller, and every call is answered in a timely manner, which helps maintain exceptional customer satisfaction levels.

Also as a result of the FirstCall process, Taction is able to keep its agents busy for a higher percentage of each business hour, improving agent productivity. Taction's agents are busy for 45 minutes out of every hour — as opposed to a rate as low as 30 minutes out of every hour for many customer service centers operating in a shared environment. Ultimately, this results in a lower average cost-per-minute, and Taction's clients save money. Taction also relies on eQueue's advanced skills-based routing capabilities to ensure that contacts are routed to the best available agent. For example, Taction's agents may focus on selling and serving customers by taking orders, literature requests and answering product questions, while a client may choose to have its in-house agents handle all product return requests or other specialized customer service activities.

With an emphasis on high quality customer service and satisfaction, Taction also found the eQueue's recording capabilities extremely useful. Inherent to the system, eQueue Recording enables Taction's supervisor coaches to monitor agents' interactions with customers, either live or via scheduled recordings. Advanced capabilities enable remote monitoring by Taction's supervisors or the client, providing valuable feedback on agent performance and potential agent improvements.

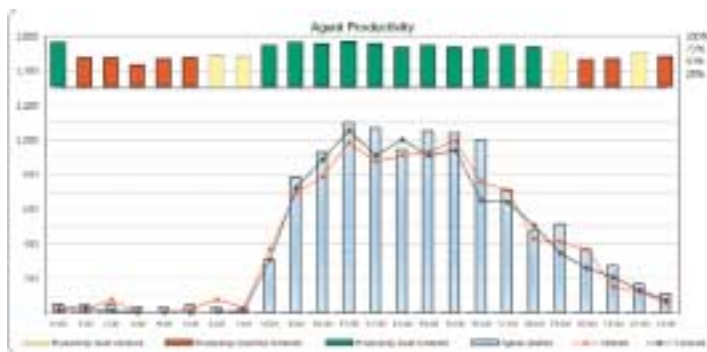
The eQueue has additional features that provide Taction's clients the flexibility to do business their way. The eQueue can assign a project account code to every outbound telephone call to ensure that each of Taction's clients is accurately billed. Taction also offers e-mail response and Web chat management services to its clients, ensuring that customers can do business any time and through any media that is convenient for them. For those customers preferring to interact via e-mail, Taction uses the eQueue's universal knowledge base to manage and consistently respond to customer e-mail inquiries, providing additional cost savings to clients.

Taction's future plans include expanding the use of the eQueue to include remote agent capabilities. By instituting a virtual agent program, contact center agents can work off-site, saving both Taction and its clients' overhead costs, while providing additional high quality personnel to choose from.

Case-in-Point: Taction and Atkins Nutritionals

Atkins Nutritionals offers its customers information and products to support the Atkins Nutritional Approach™. Atkins recently engaged Taction for immediate assistance with its in-house call center. While very successful at direct consumer operations, Atkins found that during high call volume periods, its in-house agents were not always able to meet the company's high customer service standards. After analysis, Taction recognized it could help Atkins improve its speed-to-answer standard, as well as reduce call abandonment rates and improve operating efficiencies.

Atkins selected Taction as its contact center and consulting partner. In less than a month, technology was implemented, training was completed and Taction's contact center agents were handling Atkins' call center overflow needs in a 24-by-7 environment, including nights and weekends. Today contact center supervisors in both centers use common tools — which includes a combination of eQueue Reporting and Taction's forecasting and productivity monitoring application — to coordinate daily management of the centers.



eQueue data feeds Taction's state-of-the-art management tool set.

Taction's forecasting, the management team at Atkins has added flexibility at their corporate call center. Atkins can now anticipate when its personnel will be needed, and has the flexibility to create accommodating schedules, as well as rotate employees to different departments on an as-needed basis.

By working with Taction as its contact center partner and consultant, Atkins has not only exceeded its service delivery standards, the company has also streamlined operations, reduced costs and improved average order value. Using eOn's technology, Taction can capture more data about Atkins' customers to ensure even higher levels of customer satisfaction and company revenues.

The Bottom Line

"I have yet to get a question from a client about system capabilities that eOn's eQueue couldn't handle," said White. "eOn's technology has given us the flexibility to design seamlessly integrated solutions for our clients that improve their customer service, increase sales and reduce costs. And from our perspective, the eQueue provides all the features we need in one solution, giving us a lower total cost of ownership."

Taction is always looking for better ways to serve its valuable partners — its clients. Confident in its technology and people, Taction offers service agreements based on revenue generated. This is a radical departure from traditional outsourced contact center offerings, where clients are typically billed based on the number or duration of contacts handled. Taction works closely with its clients to create innovative business models, including technology and training, which ensure revenue success for both parties.

With Taction's technology solution, contact center managers can easily view data that shows how much time and resources an agent needs to reach a certain sales level, enabling Taction's supervisors to make productivity adjustments where necessary. This data is then used to feed the revenue business model created for its client. Working with Atkins, the team has already shown a 4.5 percent increase in average order value.

"Our promise to our clients is that every transaction will be complete, on time and error free — or we'll buy it back," concluded Steve White. "With help from eOn, we are confident we have both the technology and personnel in place to deliver the superior level of customer service our clients demand."

The Taction Contact Center Solution

eOn eQueue Multi-Media Contact Center Solution

- **Unified Solution for Customer Interaction Management:** Single queue for routing and reporting on all media types – voice, e-mail and Web communications – improves customer service and loyalty, increases agent productivity and lowers total cost of ownership.
- **Comprehensive Applications including E-mail and Web Chat:** Applications include e-mail and Web chat with comprehensive universal knowledge database, integrated voice response, voice mail with unified messaging, fax messaging, quality assurance recording, complete telephony capability and a complete range of desktop devices and applications – offering more choices with consistent and personalized service delivery, as well as consolidated tracking and reporting of all customer contacts.
- **Scalable and Modular:** For contact centers with as few as ten agents to those with thousands, the flexibility to add, combine and customize important features and functions to meet the individual needs of the contact center today and well into the future.
- **Open Solution:** Completely open architecture based on the Linux platform, support for standards-based interfaces and protocols, as well as browser-based desktop tools that can be accessed from multiple locations – provide contact centers the extensibility and integration tools necessary to integrate the eQueue solution with other enterprise applications to meet the specific contact center environment.



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