IPI's guide to WorkforceEngagement Management

Meeting the needs of the modern Contact Centre

Today's widespread use of cloud technology has made it easier than ever for Contact Centres to offer flexible remote and hybrid working to agents, and to deliver the latest innovations in customer experience (CX). But this remote model has its challenges when it comes to efficiently and effectively managing the Contact Centre workforce when they're not physically in the office.

Having a dispersed workforce means it is more difficult for managers and leaders to have visibility of and manage workloads, while also ensuring quality levels are maintained. The increasing customer use of digital channels has also made it harder to accurately forecast inbound Contact Centre traffic and schedule agents, even for smaller Contact Centres, while evolving customer expectations require agents to have an increased and more varied set of skills.
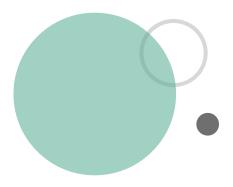
Against this backdrop, Contact Centres must ensure they find and retain top talent by having the right tools and tactics in place to support and engage with employees so that they are motivated to perform and deliver that all-important exceptional CX.

Workforce Engagement Management (WEM) has never been so vital.

CONTENTS

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WEM at a glance

WEM is a combination of Workforce Management (WFM), interaction recording, Quality Management (QM), performance management KPIs and gamification, coaching & training, learning & development, and speech & text analytics. Together, these tools and tactics ensure that your workforce is empowered to provide the best experience to your customers whilst being as engaged, efficient and productive as possible.

WEM Glossary

- **WFM** – Workforce Management (WFM) is a tool or suite of solutions that enables Contact Centre managers and leaders to accurately forecast future customer demand and then design and create the most optimised schedules for agents to meet this demand.

- **WFO** – Workforce Optimisation (WFO) includes a combination of WFM, interaction recording, QM and other performance tools to optimise operational efficiency and quality.

- **Interaction recording** – Interaction recording is an evolution of the traditional 'call recording' and provides insights from customer and agent communications across multiple channels to support compliance, training, and quality assurance.

- **Speech & text analytics** – With speech & text analytics tools, Contact Centres can automatically analyse speech and text-based conversations to discover insights, trends and areas for improvement and use this information to improve both the agent and customer experience.

- **QM** – Quality Management (QM) is the process of ensuring customer interactions meet defined quality and compliance standards within all channels and across all agents.

- **Performance Management KPIs** – Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are used to measure agent performance and are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure performance, engagement and goals are consistently reached and developed.

- **Gamification** – In its simplest form, gamification applies the principals of game play (rewards, point scoring, rules and competition against other participants) to agent activities to increase engagement and drive employee behaviour to align with desired corporate objectives.

- **Learning & development** – Learning and development tools ensure that skills within your Contact Centre remain sharp and can be directed to where performance gaps have been identified from other areas of the WEM suite. It also gives employees a sense of progression towards mastering competencies within their role which is fundamental to job satisfaction.

- **Coaching** – Coaching areas can be identified from employee interaction recordings, as well as QM and speech & text analytics tools and then scheduled at optimal times using WFM to ensure that Contact Centres can balance service levels whilst still developing employees.

The benefits of WEM

Improved Employee Engagement/EX

Employee experience (EX) is just as important as CX in the Contact Centre – after all, happy and productive agents mean satisfied customers. Fortunately, WEM is increasingly focused on enhancing employee engagement so that agents can deliver an exceptional CX:

- **WFM** tools include the ability for employees to self-serve to request time off, swap shifts and view schedules – from wherever they're working. This provides greater control and engagement for employees, and when agents are engaged in their workday planning, they are much more likely to experience a better quality of life, are more focused, positive and motivated.

- **QM** tools can improve EX by identifying training gaps. Managers can then use this insight to ensure agents receive the coaching, training and development support they need to be prepared to deal with multiple scenarios. As a result, they will be more confident, less anxious and more engaged with their work.

- **Gamification** can make mundane workdays more exciting by bringing a competitive edge to workloads and motivating agents to stay engaged and productive. When agents are rewarded for their work, they are not only more enthusiastic but are more likely to over-achieve on targets.

Upskilled agents

Customers expect to be able to interact with their favourite brands across multiple channels, and for every channel to be as effective and efficient as the other. They also expect a personalised, human, empathetic experience. Upskilling agents by exploiting WEM capabilities to meet these expectations is a must for maintaining and attracting customers, as well as ensuring job satisfaction and development opportunities for agents:

- **QM** is a great tool for identifying skills gaps and opportunities for upskilling. With **automated QM** tools, feedback can be shared instantly with agents, with options to book a feedback session within the system, while automated alerts let managers know when an agent's scores are low on a particular question. This saves time for managers who can focus on improving quality, coaching and performance management and enables them to take action sooner to help agents when they need it, making the correction more effective.

- With tools for **coaching** and **learning & development**, agents can build on their skills to deliver exceptional CX across more channels, boosting their own job satisfaction as well as their performance and overall CX. **Interaction analytics**, for instance, can identify training and coaching needs by transcribing and analysing all calls, emails and chats to see where there are gaps.

Improved CX

Good CX is good for business, and customer conversations themselves are filled with valuable information about your brand, products, processes, and services, which WEM tools can help extract:

- Analysing customer interactions with **speech & text analytics** can identify trends and provide insights such as reasons for complaints, escalations or compliments received. It's also used to identify and support customers with vulnerability and ensure compliance. In addition, **sentiment analysis** gauges customer sentiment using positive or negative sentiment markers, scores, and trends. As speech & text analytics can surface key words and topics that have been picked up across all interactions, it's also a valuable source of insight. This can then help inform any improvements that need to be made to CX, product or communications and as a useful development tool to reduce handle time and increase conversion rates.

- **Quality Management** improves not only the CX of employee conversations with customers but also leads to increased process adherence, reducing errors made by agents. This helps achieve higher CSAT/NPS and improved First Contact Resolution (FCR) which in turn help provide uniform service and reduced customer churn.

- By forecasting requirements and scheduling agents across a multitude of channels, including email, social media and messaging applications, **WFM** enables Contact Centres to ensure that customer enquiries are responded to quickly and by the most qualified employees. Contact Centres can further drive satisfaction and meet service levels by scheduling work for bots as well as humans.

Reduced costs

It is no secret that Contact Centres are changeable places with high employee turnover and peaks and troughs in customer demand that can be challenging to predict. Luckily, WEM can help:

- With **WFM**, organisations can plan resources based on forecasts detailing future demands. Rather than relying on guesswork or fixed schedules, plans can be adapted for fluctuations in leads, days of the week, seasonal demand or a variety of other scenarios. At IPI, we've seen clients make **savings in excess of 15%** by eliminating overstaffing and unnecessary overtime with more accurate forecasting and scheduling.

- With **gamification, QM and WFM** organisations can see lower attrition rates and higher employee engagement. Organisations who address engagement issues report a 17% increase in productivity and a 41% reduction in absenteeism [Gallup]. And on average, we've seen a **10% reduction in Contact Centre agent churn,** and increased employee engagement where WEM practices such as flexible working and employee development are in place.

Increased compliance

From GDPR to PCI-DSS (Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard), Contact Centres have plenty of compliance regulations to adhere to – which can all be streamlined with WEM:

- With **speech & text analytics** and **automated QM**, Contact Centres can focus on identifying vulnerable customers, dissatisfaction and complaints, as well as pressure selling for interactions across all digital and voice channels, including bot interactions. They can also ensure agents adhere to reading out compliance statements. Modern QM systems, for example, ensure that all customer interactions are transcribed and monitored for quality evaluation allowing greater scope for quality and compliance checking, while analytics technology enables Contact Centres to efficiently analyse thousands of customer interactions automatically and flag any issues.

- With **WFM**, Contact Centres are able to automatically ensure that they comply with working time directive legislation so that employees don't work too many hours, get enough breaks and rest periods and can take the holiday that they are entitled to.

How IPI can help

Against a backdrop of hybrid working and evolving customer expectations, WEM is a clear differentiator for Contact Centres looking to optimise engagement, productivity and retention. At IPI, our ethos of **Exceptional Customer Contact** is ingrained in everything that we do – including the agent experience.

Our WEM solutions are designed to help you improve the working lives of your agents and the experience of your customers by giving your supervisors and managers the tools they need to motivate, develop and train a workforce that's ready for anything. With a proven return on investment that can be realised in less than six months, it's worth having a talk to our experts about how your Contact Centre can experience great productivity gains with IPI.

Our primary focus is to ensure our clients realise their goals and that their customers get an exceptional experience. We are committed to helping our clients with their customer success strategies and are constantly evolving our methodologies to keep ahead of changing client needs, the latest technologies and customer demands.

IPI Blueprint

Our IPI Blueprint service is another way we can help Contact Centres implement and make the most of WEM.

Our Blueprint consultancy service gives you a holistic view of your Contact Centre, with a focus on key operational areas such as people, process and technology. Our consultancy and technology solutions help you to capitalise on existing investments and provide guidance on digital and CX solutions that improve efficiency and profitability. Our team is ready to help you deploy WEM tools and optimise your associated processes using our best-in-class know-how.

IPI Blueprint process

During the Blueprint process, we:

- Provide education and advice to clients (existing or potential) around what WEM is, what it can do, and how it can work for the client.

- Understand and match requirements, build benefits/ROI case for the adoption of WEM processes and tool selection.

- Implement WEM solutions through Discovery, Implementation, Training, Best Practice and ongoing improvement.

- Provide WEM best practice process reviews and refresher training to increase technology adoption and ROI. This includes improving forecasting accuracy, schedule efficiency, on-the-day agility, automation of processes, better quality and customer experience, greater employee engagement and productivity, deeper understanding of customer contact reasons, opportunities for CX improvement and increased revenue.

Who needs WEM?

WEM can benefit any type of Contact Centre. For instance, a Contact Centre that has grown in size and has reached the limits of what spreadsheets can cost-effectively provide can benefit massively from WEM's automation capabilities. And for organisations that have avoided WEM due to upfront costs, it's now never been easier to pick a solution that fits the bill from the extensive range of cloud and subscription models available. Whatever version of WEM you're looking for, IPI can guide you on that journey.

IPI can also provide expertise to Contact Centres looking to switch WEM partners if their current offerings aren't providing everything they need. We can work with you to determine what is the right fit for you now and in the future. And if

you're an IPI client looking to get more out of our WEM offering, we would love nothing more than to ensure you are maximising your investment.

Get in touch

If you're interested in a conversation with our team about how we can work with you to prepare your Contact Centres for the future, or to find out more about our services, please get in touch and a member of our team will get back to you.

Visit our WEM page for more information.

TAKE THE NEXT STEP

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