



Global Footwear Client Achieves 30% Savings by Migrating Customer Service Operations to Auxis Nearshore Model

Client Profile

Shoes for Crews (SFC) is the global leader in slip-resistant footwear, protecting over 100,000 workplaces worldwide from slips and falls. Since 1984, the company has been designing and manufacturing shoes worn by the staff at fine restaurants, fast-food kitchens, medical facilities and industrial operations.

Overview

Looking for a lower cost solution that also provides operational redundancy and scalability, Shoes for Crews collaborates with Auxis to establish Nearshore Customer Service Center, delivering "high touch," multi-language services for its customers, 24x7x365.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Approximately 20% of shoe orders come in via in-bound calls to SFC's internal Customer Service Center located in Florida - over 45,000 per month. With varying call volumes due to seasonal peaks, brand promotions and marketing campaigns, the company had contracted with an outsourced call center to handle overflow call volume during peak call times.

However, SFC was struggling with the overflow provider's service delivery quality, experiencing long wait times, high call abandonment rates (up to 50%), and longer than normal call handling times. The company prides itself on its knowledgeable and experienced customer service agents, but the lack of dedicated agents from the overflow provider resulted in many customer satisfaction issues -- with customers often required to call back multiple times to place orders and resolve problems.

Internally, the company was experiencing high attrition in its Florida call center, resulting in inconsistent performance and service quality-- especially challenging when dealing with the call volume spikes from promotional activities. In addition, SFC's call center is located in a hurricane zone, so there were significant business continuity concerns that could result in lost revenue and unfulfilled orders from the impact of a natural disaster.

These factors prompted SFC to consider outsourcing part of its internal call center, in order to provide operational redundancy and



“We actually saw our service levels improve by 35% in our ecommerce channels because of the great service that Auxis provides to our customers... Auxis is a trusted business partner that places a high priority on world class service and providing value to our customers.”

- James Urban, Customer Service Director, Shoes for Crews

improved customer service performance. The company issued an RFP to various service providers, seeking a solution that provided:

- Dedicated agents, providing “high touch” customer service experience
- Scheduling flexibility and scalability
- 24x7x365 operations
- Coverage for nights and weekends, as well as overflow during “prime time” (Monday-Friday, 7:00 am – 7:00 pm)
- Multi-language support (e.g., English, Spanish, French and Mandarin)
- Ability to handle e-commerce work, such as fax and email orders, online chat, etc.
- Variable pricing and lower operating cost
- Formal service level commitments

SOLUTION

With a projected staffing level of 50 customer service agents, SFC found that the larger call center vendors were unable to provide a cost effective solution to address this range of requirements. Auxis, proposed a multi-phased solution out of its nearshore service center, located in Costa Rica, with the entire transition expected to occur over six months.

Using our well established, rapid deployment methodology, the Auxis team documented processes and procedures for all in-bound customer order processing, returns and warranty exchanges, as well as the e-commerce activities.

The first stage of the project called for having an initial Auxis group of five agents ready to take ownership of the call overflow within a month. The success of this initial stage – along with the exceptional customer service provided – caught the attention of SFC executives and they elected to accelerate the transition process incorporating some “prime time” coverage” into Auxis’ scope of services.

Ultimately, SFC decided to split the call center between its Florida internal operation and Auxis’ nearshore center. SFC was able to identify and retain its highest performing customer service agents, and offer them first choice on schedules during prime time hours while Auxis assumed full responsibility for nights and weekends and provided coverage for some of the prime time shifts.



“What Auxis brought to the table was a high level of flexibility and an interest in adapting their model to support our business.”

- Jim Dugan, EVP, Shoes for Crews

RESULTS

In less than 3 months, Auxis' Costa Rica service center office was fully operational, with 50 multi-lingual agents providing customer service to SFC customers and meeting agreed upon Service Levels. By leveraging the best of its internal staff, along with the new Auxis team, SFC was able to greatly improve its customer satisfaction levels, and increase its revenue per call metrics significantly.

Some of the highlights of the implementation include:

- Achieved service level performance in less than 3 months (Calls per Hour, Average Handle Time, and Utilization)
- Provided a collaborative model which adjusts to changing requirements, schedules, call volumes and demands
- Increased operational visibility and communication with SFC management
- Attained high utilization rates by having overnight and weekend teams handle e-commerce order processing when not on the phones

Some key benefits have included:



▪ Operational Improvements

- 98%+ accuracy rate on order processing
- Call volume has been reduced by more than 10% due to higher first call resolution and other improvements
- Call abandonment rate was reduced from 12% to less than 4%
- High customer satisfaction ratings



▪ Financial Improvements

- Variable pricing model that includes hourly cost for “prime time” coverage” and per transaction fees during off-peak hours
- Significantly lower variable costs for utilities (power, a/c, etc.) during off-peak hours and weekends
- Elimination of the cost of the former overflow call service provider
- Reduction in training and attrition costs
- An overall projected savings of more than 30%



▪ Business Continuity

- The nearshore service center in Costa Rica serves as the back-up to SFC's call center in Florida, providing full coverage in the event of an outage, natural disaster or other unplanned event

About Auxis

Auxis is a very different consulting and outsourcing firm comprised of former industry professionals who don't act like traditional consultants. Offering a customized, “real world,” results-oriented approach, we become ingrained in our clients' culture and vision and truly dedicated to their success. Our depth of experience allows us to operate under a very different leverage model and maintain a focus on customization, flexibility and bottom-line results at a very competitive cost structure. Whether in Finance & Accounting, IT, Supply Chain or any back office operation, Auxis creates and implements strategies to streamline any area and improve efficiency, reduce costs and increase profitability.

