

Synergy’s Six Sigma approach leads to service improvement and cost savings for a key healthcare partner.

THE BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Synergy’s client, one of the largest health and wellness companies in the US with a member network of over one-hundred million nationwide, challenged Synergy to help them cut costs by 8% over a three month ramp period by reducing the average handle time for their multi-channel (voice/IVR/web), nationwide provider locator service.

THE SOLUTION

In keeping with our Six Sigma approach, Synergy initiated a “DMAIC” project. The project team was able to methodically identify the “inputs” of handle time, which were comprised of process drivers, system response time and agent-controlled behaviors. Using statistical process measurement tools, Synergy identified the most impactful inputs and set in place improvement plans.

Synergy was successful in improving call handle time through a variety of technological and process improvements, but Synergy did not stop there! Through rigorous inspection of the data, Synergy discovered that there was a “tipping point” relationship between AHT and quality. As handle time dropped below a certain threshold, overall quality and first call resolution seemed to degrade. Synergy’s theory was that the Customer Service Representatives who were taking slightly longer on calls were oftentimes delivering a higher quality service experience.

Using process modeling, Synergy discovered a “sweet spot,” at which Synergy could achieve the optimal AHT levels to satisfy client goals, while providing a customer experience that drove customer delight and increased first call resolution. Simultaneously, Synergy deployed a customized provider indexing program that improved system response time and therefore lowered AHT even further by reducing provider search times.

THE OUTCOMES

Through our collaborative and consultative approach to performance management, Synergy was able to show the interconnectivity of various data points and help our client focus on the most impactful changes.

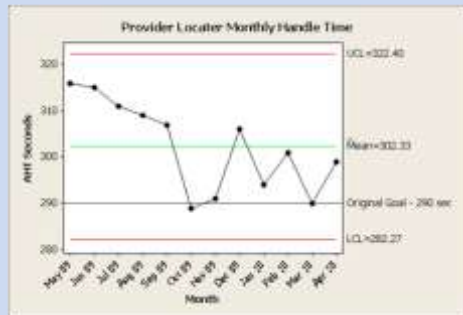
Synergy’s technology team was able to customize the client’s database to optimize search time and reduce handle time systemically across the enterprise.

Synergy nearly doubled the client’s challenge of decreasing costs by 8% while steadily improving quality and FCR.

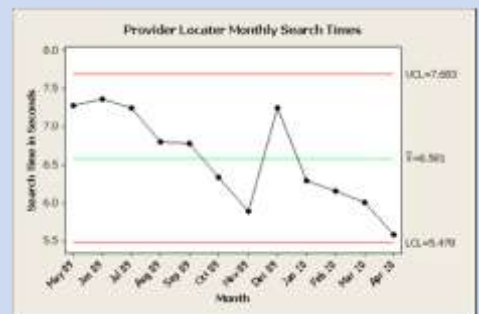
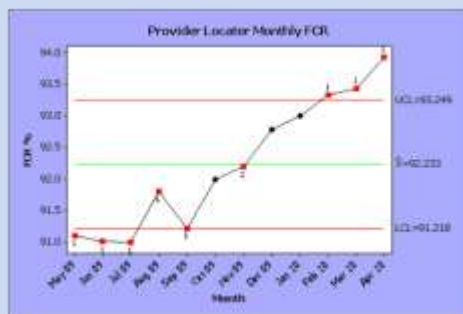
Synergy’s holistic approach to process improvement enabled significantly increased revenues for our client and helped them bolster their brand through our consistent delivery of customer delight.

Not only did our client benefit from improved handle times, but the quality and First Call Resolution improvements resulted in increased customer loyalty and improved contact rates. This, along with the improved search times achieved by our technology team has resulted in decreased contact rates and significant savings for our healthcare client.

THE DATA TELLS THE WHOLE STORY:



Synergy began a multi-faceted AHT reduction project in June 2009. Initially, Synergy was able to consistently improve QA scores while decreasing AHT; however, when AHT dropped below 295 seconds, quality also began to deteriorate. Over the next several months, Synergy worked to define the correlation between AHT and quality and develop a perfect balance between the two metrics.



Creating an environment in which the Customer Service Representatives had the time to provide High Quality Service, in addition to building loyalty through customer delight, had a huge payoff in terms of First Call Resolution. This improvement translated to an overall reduction of about 4.5% in Contact Rate. Finally, in order to exceed the client’s goal of 8% improvement, Synergy also deployed a technological solution to improve system response time and reduce search times.

This holistic solution created and delivered by Synergy resulted in an overall improvement of 17.1% - nearly double the client’s goal!

Synergy's client also obtained valuable business intelligence regarding customer preferences and quality.

SIX SIGMA

Six Sigma is a disciplined, data-driven problem solving approach that measures the quality and stability of a company's products and services. It is comprised of a set of management tools, methodologies, and strategies designed to maximize customer satisfaction, productivity, and shareholder value.

Synergy's success in program management relies upon Six Sigma's DMAIC approach as the foundation for all continuous improvement activity.

DMAIC

- Define project goals
- Measure the process performance
- Analyze the root cause of defects
- Improve the process by eliminating defects
- Control future process performance

Six Sigma certified practitioners achieve levels of mastery denoted by White Belt, Yellow Belt, Green Belt, Black Belt and Master Black Belt.

This strategy is customized for Synergy's customer management business, which requires rapid implementation of improvement processes to quickly achieve measurable, sustainable results.

ABOUT SYNERGY

Synergy Solutions is a premier provider of outsourced service solutions for a variety of industries including healthcare, insurance and financial services. Headquartered in Phoenix, Arizona, Synergy specializes in "high-end, high-touch" programs where the customer experience is essential to the success of every call.

Synergy is committed to providing our clients with service solutions that increase sales, decrease attrition and enhance customer loyalty. By implementing innovative strategies to foster intelligent, productive and supportive customer interaction, Synergy Solutions is able to delight customers and offer true multi-dimensional customer contact solutions.

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