

ACD Glossary

This section contains a selection of terminology used when describing call centers and voice services.

Caller Identification

The caller to the system is automatically identified and details presented to the agent. If an integrated CTI solution is being used, the caller data is used to lookup this information in a database and present it to the agent.

ACD

ACD stands for Automatic Call Distribution. The object is to connect callers as quickly as possible with the best suited and available agent. The same principles are also applied to the distribution of fax, email and other types of message.

Administrator

Manages the settings of the agents and the groups in a call center.

Agent

Employees in a call center, responsible for taking incoming calls (inbound) or making outgoing calls (outbound).

Agent ID

The ID of a particular agent.

Agent Status

Description of the current status of an agent, i.e. what work can currently be performed.

Agent Outcall

An outgoing call initiated by an agent.

Agent Wait Time

The waiting period between an incoming call to the ACD system and the answering of the call by an agent.

Answered Call

The description for a call answered by an agent.

Busy Hour

The hour of the day during which the highest call volume is generated.

Call

A telephone call, in other words a contact. In traditional call centers the telephone used to be the only means of communication. Today, call center agents handle a multitude of channels, for example fax, email, video and internet. The contact is often described as a call, even when referring to faxes, emails or internet contacts.

Callback Button

The possibility for a customer to be called back, after having input their telephone number on an internet page.

Call Center, Contact Center

A call center is an instrument for the organisation of customer and market communications using telecommunications technology. Usually customers call a central number, on which the company or a service provider provides a hotline with various services. Call centers are rapidly developing from the simple service centers of the past to the central nervous system of customer communication with the business. They are often referred to as customer interaction centers, contact centers, communications centers or customer care centers.

Call Flow

The path of a call through the system.

Call Routing

A technical procedure, which is performed by an ACD or IVR system, to forward calls according to defined criteria.

Caller ID

The number of the calling party. This is the capability of a telephone network, to provide the number of the calling party to the destination party and thereby facilitate caller identification. See also: Automatic Number Identification (ANI)

CLIP

The display of the caller number on the display of the called party, before the call is taken.

Group

A grouping of agents for particular tasks or with particular qualifications. A group is always the first goal of incoming calls. A group is assigned to a service number dialed by your callers. Call distribution and routing are determined by group rules and routing parameters.

Handling Time

Call time plus post call time

Call Time

The time from answering the call to call hangup by one of the parties.

Hold Time (Waiting Time)

The time during which the telephone call is connected, but no speech connection with an agent is established.

Home Agent

A call center worker, who works from home, but still uses the facilities of the ACD system.

Idle

Description of an inactive telephone extension or call center agent, waiting for a call.

Inbound

Calls, which enter the call center from the outside

IVR

IVR = Interactive Voice Response = Interactive Voice Services It refers to a dialog between the caller and the machine. This can be navigation within a menu system (for example: "Press 2 to be connected to customer service.") or to get or give data to and from callers. IVR dialogs can be used to route calls into the ACD.

Junk Call

A disruptive call to a call center. For example children, who are playing with the telephone, or other disruptive callers who impair the operation of the call center. Such calls can be marked as junk by associating them with a junk call group. These can then be handled in a different way in the routing of the call center, by defining rules to reject the call or to play special prompts to the caller.

Checkpoint

Points in the call flow of the ACD at which the applicability of rules are checked for. Depending on the rule an action at a checkpoint may be initiated.

Longest Waiting Time

Longest Queue Time The longest time period, in which a caller had to wait for the call to be answered, whether he hang up in the queue or his call was answered by an agent.

Post Call

Describes work of a call center agent immediately after a call. This might, for example, include the dispatching or forwarding of an order or complaint or the initiation of the delivery of various documents. Post call is also often referred to as after call work or wrap up.

Post Call Interval

The time period after a call during which post call work is performed and no new calls are distributed to the agent. Multichannel agents can receive calls during the post call interval.

Outbound Call Center

A call center which mainly performs outgoing calls. This type of call center is often used by telephone marketing companies to sell products or services, or perform market research.

Post Call

Describes work of a call center agent immediately after a call.

Queue

The hold queue of a call center hotline. The queue contains calls, which have not yet been answered and are waiting for an agent.

Queueing

Queueing is, alongside routing, one of the core tasks of an ACD system. This function ensures, that incoming calls are registered in the waiting queue, and handled in priority order, until an agent or a group in the call center is able to answer the call personally. This enables, for example, particular customers to be prioritised above others. The queueing mechanism helps ensure that incoming faxes and emails are dealt with within defined service times.

Rule

A criteria, used to route calls. Rules are linked to events such as a full queue and are activated by time constraints and priority.

Routing

The distribution of calls (incoming and outgoing) from callers to agents.

Service Level

A description for the availability of a call center from the point of view of a caller. The service level depends on two factors:

1. The percentage of calls, which reached a call center agent personally.
2. A time interval, during which calls were answered.

A service level of 90/20 would imply, that 90 percent of incoming calls were answered within 20 seconds.

Service Number

The number callers use to contact the call center. Depending on the number dialled, the call is routed to a particular group.

Skills

Skills and knowlegde of your agents, which is relevant to the distribution of calls. You can associate skills with agents, and also distribute calls according to skills.

Skill Based Routing

A function of the ACD system, in which calls are routed to specific agents or workers depending on their individual skill, e.g. knowledge or specialisation for a particular subject.

Supervisor

Manages the agents and groups in the call center during daily business. Supervisors use functions to login and logout agents from groups or the system as the call center load demands. Supervisors can also work actively as agents.

Overflow Function

Calls which exceed the capacity of the call center, cause an overflow to occur. Calls, in the case of overflow, can be sent to other groups or locations or also to external service providers who support the call center in peak times.

Overflow Group

An alternative group of agents, who take calls when a group is overloaded or full.

Queue

The state, when callers are waiting for their calls to be ansered, during which they hear music and announcements. *Queue* can also refer to all waiting calls for a particular ACD group.