



Endorsed by:



Workforce Management Practices in Contact Centers

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We would also like to thank the Society of Workforce Planning Professionals for endorsing this research project.

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**May, 2008**

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# Workforce Management Practices in Contact Centers

## May, 2008

### Executive Summary

Our objective with this research was to gain insights into how contact centers in North America staffed and administered their workforce management function. Appendix 1 contains a brief description of the research team's definition of workforce management. In both 2006 and 2008 invitations to participate were sent out to 1000 contact centers in North America. The final data in this report are based on 85 completed responses in 2006 and 168 completed responses in 2008.

Key Findings from the study include:

- Dissatisfaction with both the workforce management process (38% to 47% not satisfied) and with workforce management software (41% to 46% not satisfied) occurred from 2006 to 2008.
- Overall experience (in years) has declined between 2006 and 2008 for all job roles. A greater percentage of workforce managers, forecasting specialists, scheduling and intraday specialists reported 0-5 years of experience, an increase from 55% to 62%.
- An overall decline in training was experienced between 2006 and 2008 with 18.5% of job roles reporting less than 10 total hours of training, up from 13.3% in 2006.
- 66% of all respondents reported performing skill set scheduling in 2006. This figure increased dramatically in 2008 to 79%.
- In 2008 the greatest % of customers reported that having a suite-based performance optimization solution is only somewhat important.

The satisfaction, training and tenure facts are particularly troublesome when viewed holistically. Focus on cost savings with less of an investment in training and a general frustration with the WFM process and applications has yielded a declining level of satisfaction. A decrease in satisfaction certainly may have an impact of tenure within these roles. Collectively, the industry must consider this trend to be one that should be reversed.

### Leveraging This Study

The findings from this study can be a powerful tool for initiating and sustaining continuous improvement. This report, when combined with good judgment, is a foundation for effective decision-making. The results provide contact center leaders with factual information to make important decisions regarding their workforce management practices.

The study results can:

1. Expedite accurate problem identification and the development of viable solutions by focusing leadership's attention on underlying issues and problems and provide a vehicle for developing timely and effective solutions.
2. Be a powerful tool for change by generating credible, comprehensive, comparative information that authoritatively identifies weaknesses within in your WFM practice.
3. Highlight changes in the WFM practice between 2006 and 2008 that are germane to your center.
4. Be a catalyst to move your organization from an ongoing debate about what is wrong to a discussion of how to improve.