



CASE STUDY:

Virgin Media

THE CHALLENGE

- Improve online conversions and increase incremental revenue
- Support and improve customer satisfaction
- Incorporate brand and culture into customer interactions

Virgin Media, the UK's leading entertainment and telecommunications company, needed a live-engagement partner who could integrate into all aspects of the online business, including sales and customer care. The primary objectives were to improve overall website sales and to support the Virgin Media brand with outstanding customer care.

THE SOLUTION

Virgin Media launched a fully managed TouchCommerce engagement program in limited deployment in 2009. By 2010, Virgin expanded TouchCommerce's role throughout its organization, where it supported the entire purchasing lifecycle for broadband, TV, telephone, and bundled services.

Virgin Media worked collaboratively with TouchCommerce to define and develop an incremental-sales model, create revenue-driving strategies, and modify processes to drive cross-selling and up-selling opportunities.

THE RESULTS

- Live-agent interactions generated a 17% site lift in conversions
- TouchCommerce orders increased by 39% in 2010 over TouchCommerce 2009 orders
- Live-agent interactions posted a 90% incremental sales rate - that is, 90% of customers who interacted with an agent and purchased products or services would not have bought without the conversation
- 80% of customers said they were either "very satisfied" or "extremely satisfied" with their live-agent experiences.

THE BENEFITS

Live Agents Increase Revenue with Cross-Selling and Up-Selling

TouchCommerce collaborated extensively with Virgin Media to enable improvements in RGUs (revenue-generating units) and ARPU (average revenue per user), by refining and optimizing business rules that would drive and support cross-selling and up-selling opportunities. As a result of these conversion optimization strategies, revenue-generating units handled by live agents outperform self-service online sales by selling higher base-level products in the broadband and telephone arenas..



COMPANY SNAPSHOT

Name: Virgin Media

Industry: Telecommunications

HQ: Corporate: New York City, NY

Operational: Hook, England, UK

Employees: 22,500 (2005)

Website: www.virginmedia.com

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CASE STUDY, CON'T:

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Qualifying Leads for Better Offline Conversion

With roughly 50,000 visitor interactions per month, TouchCommerce live-assistance agents had an enormous opportunity to provide value-added customer service and help qualify leads who may go on to buy through other channels.

“We’ve seen an improvement in the quality of the calls from people who have come to the site,” says Walton. “They have a good, informative chat with an online agent; then if they choose to call in to complete their order, they’re more qualified and informed so there’s a higher chance of conversion. And the same goes for in-store purchases.”

Getting the Details Right for Seamless Service

Because Virgin Media is based in the UK, most customers use British English, which differs from U.S. English in both terminology and spelling. For instance, a customer to Virgin Media’s web storefront may be looking for a “tariff” (plan) for a “mobile” (cell phone), or to sign up for “fibre optic” broadband. TouchCommerce teamed up with Virgin Media to educate its agents in the finer points of the British vernacular to ensure a smooth experience for customers.

In addition, Brits tend to be less verbose, notes Walton. “UK consumers tend to chat in a different way to US consumers,” says Walton. “In the US there would be longer interactions, and people would engage more. In the UK people might have just one question, and if they get the answer they want, then that’s it and they close the window.”

Knowing that interactions were likely to be short and sweet helped set expectations for the agents to make interactions more direct and streamlined for customers.

In addition, by virtue of its front-line engagement with customers, TouchCommerce is uniquely positioned to offer instantaneous feedback on site operations, escalate client complaints, or pass along praise that might otherwise not be captured. “The benefit of having the direct insight from the chat agents is invaluable,” says Walton.

Reinforcing Brand through Customer Interactions

Virgin Media has a casual, cheeky, and irreverent brand voice, and the company is renowned for its ability to keep that voice consistent across all its communication channels.

To ensure that consistency in live-agent interactions, TouchCommerce worked closely with Virgin Media to provide training to its agents on “the Virgin tone.” Agents inject elements of fun and humor when interacting with customers and keep the tone of interactions colloquial and conversational.





CASE STUDY, CON'T:

Creating a Flexible, Collaborative Partnership

During its engagement with Virgin Media, TouchCommerce became much more than a vendor – it became a partner. The company has become part of Virgin Media's training and incentive teams, helping brainstorm ways to improve performance, encourage and reward chat agents, and monitor and improve live-interaction performance and site sales.

TouchCommerce also calibrates closely with Virgin Media's business goals and continually adjusts its tactics and business rules to match.

“The integration piece -- having the agents, the consulting, the optimization all under the same roof – has been fantastic,” says Walton. “TouchCommerce is very proactive when suggesting adjustments to the business rules, and we are relying on them to look at new opportunities. That's a big plus, and something I'd say is essential for a successful chat programme.”

About TouchCommerce

Founded in 1999, TouchCommerce delivers results for market-leading brands with innovative online engagement solutions that enhance customer experience, increase revenue and reduce support costs while using real time customer data analytics. For more information please visit www.touchcommerce.com.

