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Call centers — improving feedback management

⇒ **ISSUES:**

- Validating calls orientation strategies.
- Observing the impact of smart planning for customer mailings.
- Optimizing operators timetables and profiles.
- Getting relevant data to analyze feedback input.

⇒ **SOLUTIONS:**

- A simulation model accepting a great variety of incoming calls and supported by very refined statistics.
- Several sophisticated algorithms suggested for calls redirection.

⇒ **ADVANTAGES:**

- Validation of a generic call redirection algorithm and of one specific algorithm for ad campaigns.
- Reorganization of operators work schedules and skill groups.
- Anticipation of call peaks and simulation of mailing strategy to level incoming calls during a month.

Banks, insurance companies and medical assistance companies interact a lot with their customers through phone calls. From a simple automatic answering machine to a highly specialized consultant, each interaction plays its part in client satisfaction and in a positive and quick resolution of the request. This is why call centers appreciate the enhancements suggested by a simulation study, especially since this approach fits well their specific issues.

This insurance company chose 1Point2 and ExtendSim to optimize the management of feedback calls in its call center. Commercial prospection actions were taken using both classical advertisement and mailshots (postal and e-mail).

Feedback calls and emails —and even paper reply forms in this exemple— were added to the usual calls for information.
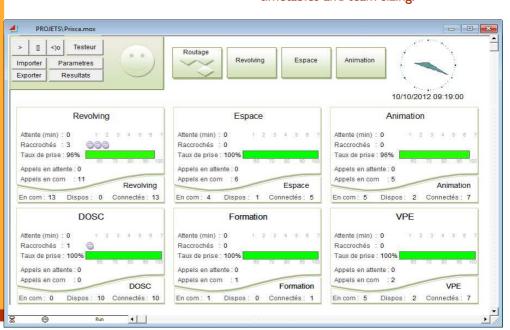
Mailing dates and advertisement dates, combined with unworked days, have a direct impact on the expected flow of incoming calls/e-mails.

For all inputs, simulation provided cross-tables including their type, date, sequence of operations and suggested

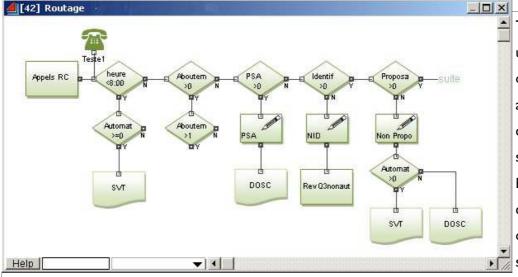service, allowing for an analysis leading to the identification of the most efficient actions.

Another consequence of the simulation was the creation of a training program for phone operators, as some qualifications were required to face the number of calls during the peak hours following the campaigns.

The predictive models we have built enabled users to set different calling profiles and workloads and to compare different working organizations, timetables and team sizing.

Simulation is one of the most powerful tools used to analyze complex systems. The advantages often go beyond the initial objectives. For example:

- **Understanding** the system's dynamics. How long (minimum/maximum time) does is take to complete a file? What is the actual waiting time for each call?

- **Anticipating** the operation of a new system, or **improving** the functioning of existing systems. Simulation allows to avoid making small or big mistakes!

The decision trees used for the call orientation algorithm were the core of the simulation model. Each incoming call is characterized by its origin (a commercial solicitation or a spontaneous request), its time, its type of request and sometimes other information about the caller's profile. Each call is traced individually and even if several persons spoke alternately, we know its route and added waiting times.

Future calls to make are also stored in a list of tasks for another team and they include, when possible, those for getting back people that hung up before call acceptance.

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