

LIVEPERSON SUCCESS STORY

EarthLink Increases Customer Satisfaction and Agent Productivity with LivePerson Online Engagement Solution

Company Overview

As the nation's next generation Internet service provider, Atlanta-based EarthLink has earned an award-winning reputation for outstanding customer service. Serving over five million subscribers, EarthLink offers high-quality connectivity, minimal online intrusions and customizable features in its suite of online products and services.

"Customer service has always been a strategic differentiator for EarthLink," said Mike Murphy, Senior Manager, Call Center Innovation at Earthlink. "We've found that our customers appreciate multiple contact options and expect fast resolution to their issues through their preferred channel of communication."

The Challenge

A pioneer in the adoption of live chat, EarthLink implemented click-to-chat in 1998 to improve customer service, increase agent productivity and drive bottom-line savings. The technology facilitated faster customer issue resolution by allowing agents to assist three customers simultaneously, compared to one-on-one email or phone interactions. In 2006, after declaring chat the online "channel of choice" for its impact on customer satisfaction, EarthLink sought to develop a proactive service application to reach customers who were likely to abandon online self-service, or skip it altogether.

"We viewed proactive service as a natural extension of both our existing 'click-to-chat' implementation and our commitment to improving customer service," said Murphy. "If successful, this would allow us to reach out to our online customers proactively, before they reached the point of frustration, serving their needs better and providing us with additional opportunities to build customer loyalty."

The Solution

Creating the industry's first proactive service solution, LivePerson configured its platform to monitor visitors browsing EarthLink's online support center, identify those most likely

to call or email, and offer chat as a method for instant issue resolution.

With goals of increasing customer satisfaction and deflecting incoming customer support calls to the more cost-efficient chat channel, EarthLink employs LivePerson's rules-based platform to:

Identify hot leads in real time. EarthLink identified the specific Web pages that drove call volume and monitored visitors to determine the actions that led them to phone or email for support. Using this knowledge, the company developed business rules to pinpoint visitors experiencing difficulty in the self-service channel.

Business rules trigger a proactive chat invitation when a visitor:

- Exhibits defined behaviors on certain pages, including FAQ sections associated with connectivity issues.
- Indicates that their issue was not resolved in an FAQ query.
- Encounters an error on the "My Account" login page.
- Remains on the My Account "Password Retrieval" for an extended period of time.

Deliver prompt customer service. EarthLink uses LivePerson's predictive dialer to ensure that visitors only receive chat invitations when agents are available, and skills-based routing capabilities match visitors with appropriate agents.

Continuously optimize results with comprehensive reporting. Operational and transcript reports allow EarthLink to conduct detailed analysis of operational metrics and review chat transcripts for ongoing program optimization. EarthLink leverages customer exit surveys to constantly monitor customer feedback and oversee agent performance.

"LivePerson has extensive, practical experience in the development of business rules aligned to targeted behaviors," said Murphy. "They know how to leverage this background, share best practices for agent training and build programs for ongoing process improvement."



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Tangible Results

After conducting an eight-week pilot, EarthLink assessed the value of LivePerson's proactive service solution based on customer satisfaction, cost reduction and agent productivity metrics.

10 point increase in top customer satisfaction score.

EarthLink witnessed a ten-point increase in their top CSAT score (customers rating the experience "very satisfied") for proactive service over their existing click-to-chat deployment. The company saw a seven percent increase in first contact resolution, and 88 percent of visitors using proactive chat indicated they were either "satisfied" or "very satisfied."

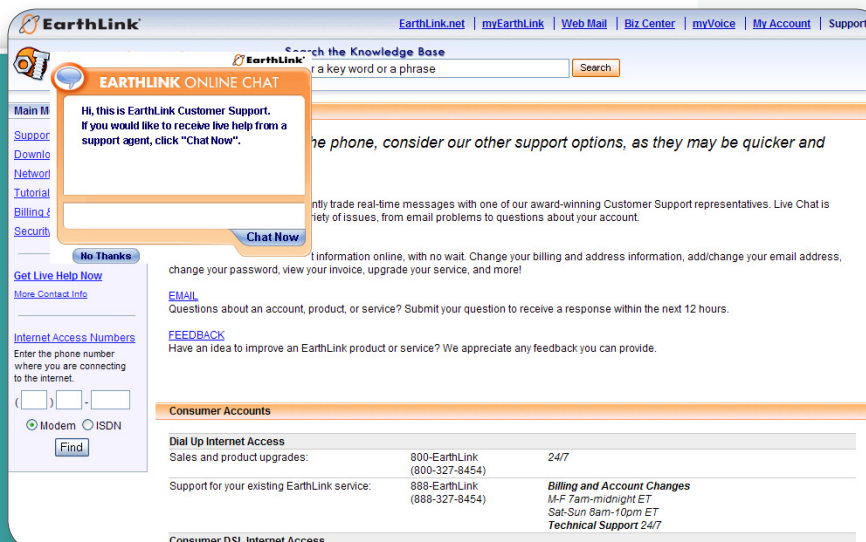
15 percent increase in agent efficiency. The proactive nature of LivePerson's platform and predictive dialer ensure agents work at maximum capacity throughout their shifts. "There is a certain ebb and flow to chat volume when contacts are based on customer choice with click-to-chat," said Murphy. "LivePerson's predictive dialer allowed us to 'fill the trough' in agent capacity by reaching out and engaging customers not only when they need help, but when we're best able to provide them with prompt service."

200 percent return on investment. EarthLink drove significant cost reductions by moving volume from voice and email to chat; their overall chat volume increased by 15 percent while phone volume dropped 5 percent. With the value of each deflected call estimated at \$2.70, the proactive service pilot delivered annualized savings of over \$600,000 with no increase in staff. Because program analytics showed there was additional demand ("hot leads") beyond the number of invitations sent to customers, EarthLink is increasing chat staff to deflect more call volume; the projected annual direct cost savings is approaching \$1 million.

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Using LivePerson Enterprise, EarthLink identifies and engages visitors most likely to abandon self-help or call for assistance and proactively offers an immediate, text-based live chat with a customer support expert.

LivePerson's predictive dialer ensures that visitors only receive chat invitations when agents are available, and skills-based routing features match visitors with appropriate agents.