

5 TRIED-AND-TRUE Tips for Staying on Top of Surge Demands

Lost revenue. Employee burnout. Customer frustration and attrition. These are the business impacts of being unprepared for seasonal surges in customer demand. And like a monsoon, people may know it's coming, but if they're not prepared for it, disaster is inevitable.



Here are some quick tips to help you deliver winning customer experiences when call volumes spike.



1. Identify your blind spots

Conduct an operational assessment to identify people, process, training, and technology gaps to support surges. Retailers, for example, should determine which channels are likely to need more support during the surge, what type of support, and whether the company has the technology and tools for seasonal associates to provide additional support.



2. Create a surge playbook

A step-by-step playbook aligns all necessary resources so that when a swell occurs, the organization can execute faster and reduce costs. The playbook should be customized for each company's needs, but in general, it should include plans for activating contingent contact centers or labor forces as well as ensuring associates have access to the right information and resources to provide consistent and reliable support.



3. Train for empathy

Empathy is a vital skill associates need to anticipate and understand customer needs - especially for those who have been negatively impacted by what triggered the surge in the first place (product recalls, natural disasters, etc.). Taking the time to train associates on empathy in addition to providing a strong knowledgebase sets them up to deliver superior customer support during a surge.



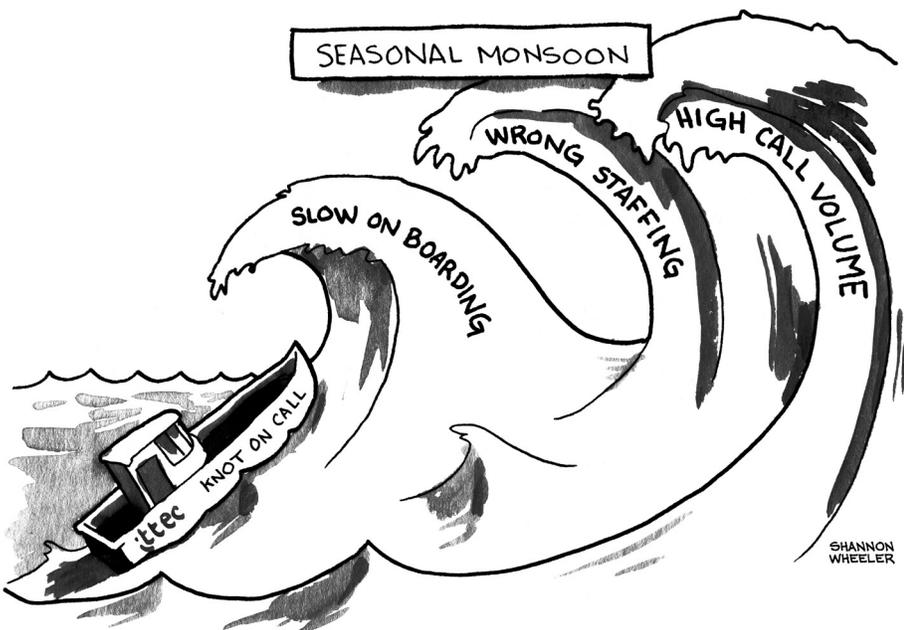
4. Pair AI with humans for optimal results

A mix of human touch and digital technology can create an optimal balance of positive member experience and streamlined operations. Real-time insight from voice analytics, for instance, helps associates focus on what matters to the customer. And AI-powered training scenarios enables associates to quickly practice and hone their skills at their convenience.



5. Think flexible scheduling

The more flexibility an organization has in ramping up or down quickly with a variety of skilled associates increases its ability to meet service levels and deliver an excellent customer experience. For example, tapping into skilled at home associates is one way to augment support during surges.



PREPARATION The Key to Success

With the right preparation, seasonal surges can be an opportunity, rather than a challenge, for driving customer growth and loyalty. To be successful, surge preparation should be a holistic effort versus siloed teams working on their own goals. The companies that value communication, collaboration, and shared insights are the ones who can weather a seasonal surge monsoon with ease.