



Customer Profile:

Telecommunications

Website:

bluegrasscellular.com

Location:

Elizabethtown, KY

Business Need:

- Comprehensive customer feedback
- In-depth VoC analysis
- Tailored, multichannel customer polling
- Higher NPS® results

NICE Solutions:

- Voice of the Customer

The Impact:

- 50% customer survey response rate, more than double previous rates
- Annual average NPS® of 87.5
- Improved marketing guidance for agents
- Established a service recovery team

On The NICE Solution

“With NICE VoC, Bluegrass Cellular completely enhanced the quantity and quality of customer feedback we were gaining.”

Erin Hester, Manager of Omnichannel Operations,
Bluegrass Cellular

About Bluegrass Cellular

Headquartered in Elizabethtown, Ky., Bluegrass Cellular (Bluegrass) delivers superior nationwide cellular services to over one million people across 34 counties in Central Kentucky. Started in 1991, Bluegrass Cellular offers the latest devices and ultra-fast data speeds through XLTE technology over an expansive 4G LTE network, in addition to its customized integrated business solutions. And with 19 company-owned retail stores and more than a dozen authorized agent locations, locally owned Bluegrass Cellular offers more Customer Care Centers than any other carrier in Central Kentucky.

The company operates a call center in Elizabethtown to assist its wireless subscribers with their accounts or service, and first call resolution wherever possible. The location's 65 agents handle a contact volume of approximately 460,000 annual calls.

The Challenge

Bluegrass, already employing a Voice of the Customer strategy, sought to advance its understanding of the customer experience through more direct feedback solicitation. To this end, the company decided to utilize the technology it already provides its customers, SMS. However, Bluegrass wanted to leverage it for interactive information gathering, not just sending customers a link in an SMS message routing them to a feedback webpage.

Along with the initiative to change the way that Bluegrass was learning from its customers, it was clear that, to be most useful, the feedback had to be in depth and framed for clear correlation and consistent analytics. This meant that all customers had to receive the same survey, tailored with a multi-channel approach appropriate for all customer-facing interactions - from multiple teams in three different sales channels, call center representatives, and technical support staff. However, customer surveys also had to be sufficiently flexible to allow Bluegrass to respond to new customer experience indicators or technological developments as they came up.

With its new strategy, Bluegrass hoped to get to the core of key customer satisfaction questions: How likely were Bluegrass Cellular customers to refer their friends or family? When? And why?



The Solution

Bluegrass searched for a vendor that would assist the company in gathering accurate voice of the customer data, but also analyze the results and transform them into an easy-to-understand output. The contact center team quickly saw that the NICE customer experience solutions have the innovative sophistication and omnichannel capabilities needed, backed by market-leading experience in both data management and CX analytics.

As a result, Bluegrass Cellular implemented the NICE Voice of the Customer (VoC) platform as part of the corporate initiative to change the way customer feedback was collected and analyzed. Within a short time, actionable insights were drawn from the solution's likelihood to recommend (LTR) scores and customer verbatim responses. As LTR showed a decline, customers began mentioning that Bluegrass Cellular needed to provide unlimited data. This was most likely due to public buzz about the issue, as Bluegrass did in fact have such a plan under a different name.

As a result of the VoC insight, Bluegrass immediately launched the tactically named "Bluegrass Unlimited" plan – and LTR scores rose again, along with customer praise.

VoC Drives More Improvements

Within a few short months, another opportunity arose for Bluegrass to extract value from the NICE VoC solution. Customer verbatim responses with negative comments about Bluegrass pricing began to increase. With the guidance provided during a six-month deployment review by NICE support staff, the company prioritized the Price/Value category in verbatim response analysis, making any responses that mentioned price or value more prevalent for research purposes.

In evaluating the relevant responses over time, drawing on the capabilities of NICE VoC, Bluegrass determined that one of two things was generally happening: a) marketing campaigns were not driving home the value of being a Bluegrass Cellular customer; or b) employees were not explaining the value and prices compared to the competition.

Armed with the data and targeted analysis, a plan was quickly put into motion.

All Bluegrass frontline employees received an easy-to-read one-pager with competitive analysis, explaining various promotions and pricing in the market. The one-pager also provided talking points, targeting specific objections voiced by customers who were apprehensive due to a competitor's pricing.

In addition, Bluegrass has put together a service recovery team. This select group of customer-facing employees reviews each customer response that the NICE solution identifies as including price or value terminology. This triggers a review of the customer's account, followed by a Bluegrass representative reaching out to them to acknowledge their frustration around pricing and to help find a solution. This may include helping them understand their current plan, comparisons to a competitor's pricing, or suggestions to save money.

Incredible Response Rates and Unprecedented Results

With the help of NICE, and just four short survey questions, Bluegrass Cellular completely enhanced the feedback they were receiving from their customers. Survey response rates more than doubled after the transition to the NICE VoC solution and Bluegrass now averages around a 50% response rate from its customers. This compares very favorably with the typical customer feedback survey response rate of between 10% and 30%.

As a result of NICE VoC providing greater detail and related in-depth analytics, Bluegrass is able to rapidly and effectively respond to changing customer experience indicators and circumstances. This is reflected well in Bluegrass Cellular's current annual average NPS*, or Net Promoter Score®, of 87.5, while the average NPS of some of the leading wireless carriers is just 35, according to the 2017 NICE Satmetrix US Consumer NPS Benchmarks. In other words, Bluegrass has achieved an NPS that is far higher than the highest score among current leaders in the telecommunications industry.

Regarding the work of the Bluegrass service recovery team, there is as yet no hard data. It is still a relatively new initiative, although leveraging data from NICE VoC surveys and analytics ensures more targeted action.

The Plan Is in Place

Bluegrass Cellular is certain that having the NICE VoC-driven plans in place going forward will reduce customer churn. With greater understanding of the customer journey among agents and managers alike, Bluegrass is setting the stage for constant optimizing to provide the best customer experience possible.

*Net Promoter, Net Promoter System, Net Promoter Score, NPS and the NPS-related emoticons are registered trademarks of NICE Systems, Inc., Bain & Company, Inc., and Fred Reichheld.

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