



Customer Profile:

HSN

Industry:

Direct Marketing

Website:

<http://www.hsn.com>

Location:

St. Petersburg (FL); Roanoke (VA); Ohio; Tennessee

Business Need:

- Engage with and motivate a mostly offsite workforce in a fun, fresh way
- Accelerate the onboarding process for new employees
- Replace legacy performance management system with modern solution
- Inject new life into agent reward and recognition plans
- Enable integration into workforce management system
- Automate KPI tracking by role and team

NICE Solutions:

- NICE Performance Management with Gamification

The Impact:

- New badge-based award system engages and consistently rewards the right agents
- Real-time scores and bragging rights spread HSN's fun-based model to remote workers
- Reduced administrative overhead to assign and track agent KPIs
- Created goal-based coaching culture activities

On The NICE Solution

"As a company, we are very committed to employee engagement, and gamification through NICE Performance Management fits perfectly into the ideas we want to reinforce with our agents."

- Julia Schmitz, Manager of Customer Care Operations, HSN

About HSN

Founded in 1981, HSN is an interactive multi-channel retailer in the United States. It reaches 94 million households with television home shopping programming broadcast on the HSN television networks and other direct-response television marketing. It also operates business-to-consumer digital commerce and wholesale distribution operations. The company markets and sells a range of third party and private label merchandise directly to consumers.

The Challenge

Long before e-commerce, there was HSN. HSN changed the way people shopped and bought from home by beaming exciting, intriguing, exclusive offers to American TV sets, changing the face of direct marketing forever. Being there to feed an impulsive, indulgent purchase is what HSN is all about, right down to the company slogan "It's fun here."

HSN wants that spirit to permeate every aspect of its operations. "When you have a motto like that, it's not just your customers who expect fun, your agents do as well," says Julia Schmitz, HSN manager of customer care operations. "So everything that we do really tries to drive employee engagement. Engaged employees are doing what they can to better the business, and they come to work for more than just to collect a paycheck."

The challenge is that most of HSN's 1,700 agents work from home. Conventional tactics that build healthy competitive spirit and camaraderie in face-to-face settings don't translate as well to a widely-dispersed workforce. Like many organizations, HSN was also concerned that recognition programs created a virtual treadmill, which becomes dull over time, and that the one-off programs didn't necessarily recognize the best overall agents.

On the performance side of the house, HSN had long used traditional performance management tools to understand agent performance and engagement from a statistical standpoint, but the system was showing its age. Among other limitations, the legacy performance management system did not automatically assign the most relevant KPIs to agents and teams based on their roles and responsibilities. Administrative staff had to spend long hours manually linking agents and teams with the right metrics.

These limitations also prevented HSN from deploying a reliable balanced scorecard for all agents. Too many performance-related discussions had to wait for annual supervisory reviews. HSN had developed a complicated tangle of rewards and recognition programs for agents, but the standards were inconsistently applied across groups.

Rather than simply replacing its performance management system with a newer and more capable edition, HSN wanted to try something new—an approach that would not only provide better data and scorecards, but also help the company build stronger relationships with agents near and far.



The Solution

Working with NICE, HSN decided to implement both a technological and cultural overhaul by adopting NICE Performance Management, making the implementation of the gamification module a top priority. By engaging in a modern fashion, with transparent goals, real-time performance insights, and constant feedback, gamification gives HSN a more lively connection with agents. “Gamification has made it easier for us to communicate our company values and deliver engagement to all of our agents, even those who are work-at-home,” she says. “It allows us to bring a lot of excitement to them, even if they’re sitting at their own desk in their pajamas.”

HSN was issuing achievement badges to employees three months after starting the gamification deployment. HSN and NICE worked together to design more detailed reporting, so HSN knows more about how many badges are being earned and by which agents, without requiring leaders to pull manual reports. At first, HSN worked with NICE consultants to design and deploy new badges, but that process is now managed internally. “We’ve learned so much by working with the system that now the creation of new badges is pretty much automated,” Schmitz says.

Today, gamification is part of HSN’s agent culture from the first day on the job and throughout the agent’s tenure. In order to streamline the onboarding process for new employees, HSN has created a virtual passport, which introduces the gamification concept with easily-attained goals such as a first upsell, before introducing more challenging targets. Detailed tracking and reporting of all agents also makes it easier for HSN to recognize agents with a consistent track record of excellence, and ensure that the positive feedback every quarter doesn’t become stale and routine. HSN used this insight to provide special accolades to six agents who performed at the highest level over the course of a full year, and to create the “Premier League” for agents in the top five percent every quarter.

The enhanced insights provided by NICE Performance Management enabled HSN to roll out a balanced score rating for each agent, with consistent, team- and role-based goals. This gives agents an at-a-glance understanding of how they are performing on a regular basis, and what tangible changes are needed to move them up into an “exceeds expectations” ranking. NICE Performance Management gives HSN the tools it needs to reinforce a coaching culture dedicated to helping agents improve rapidly, and adapt quickly to changing requirements.

NICE Performance Management is also driving greater operational efficiency in HSN’s contact center by integrating with HSN’s workforce management system. Using the automated organizational chart in NICE Performance Management, HSN can quickly generate the entire hierarchy of agents by role and team, and assign KPIs as appropriate to each employee without long hours of administrative labor. “Just having the auto-org chart linked in to our workforce management system is a huge win for this implementation,” Schmitz says.

With gamification in place, HSN is delivering a consistent set of standards to agents, and saving time that was once spent manually tracking down performance metrics for 1,700 agents. Just as importantly, the gamification approach ensures that agents are immersed in HSN’s culture of fun. “We even have other areas of the business that want to sponsor a badge,” Schmitz says. “Gamification has legs, and I know this program will be going strong in five years.”

About NICE

NICE (NASDAQ: NICE) is the worldwide leading provider of enterprise software solutions that empower organizations to make smarter decisions based on advanced analytics of structured and unstructured data. NICE solutions help the world’s largest organizations deliver better customer service, ensure compliance, combat fraud and safeguard citizens. Over 25,000 organizations in more than 150 countries, including over 80 of the Fortune 100 companies, are using NICE solutions. www.nice.com