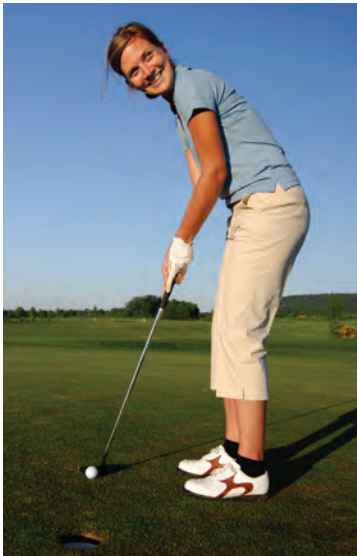


GMT Customer Case Study



Golfsmith®

- ✓ Rapid return-on-investment (approx. 10-11 month payback period)
- ✓ Drastically reduced average time-to-answer and call abandonment rates
- ✓ Higher agent productivity (on call-per-hour basis)
- ✓ Shifted about 20-30 hours/week in workforce management workload from laborious, time-intensive forecasts and scheduling to other higher-value tasks

Challenge

Since 1967, the goal of Golfsmith International, Inc. has been to be “Your Caddy for Life.” With 60+ golf superstores reaching from New York to Los Angeles, Golfsmith has grown to become the only true national golf retailer, powered by the company’s multi-channel retail strategy—combining retail stores with a strong online presence (www.golfsmith.com) and contact center operations for the ultimate golf shopping experience.

But as the company’s retail stores, array of products and services, and sales continued to grow, so did Golfsmith’s operational sophistication and complexity—particularly in their contact center operations. As the company continued to increase the number of catalogs mailed to their customer base (up to 30 different catalog drops a year)—along with offers and promotions through online and email channels—the volume and types of calls flooding into the contact center grew in both raw numbers and sheer unpredictability. Each catalog or promotion generated its own demand curve, and as the number of offers grew and overlapped, it became increasingly challenging for contact center managers to plan their workforce management forecasts and schedules. Compounding the scheduling challenge, their contact center staff consisted of a large percentage of part-time students and senior citizens on staff with limited scheduling availability.

As a result, contact center managers found that at times, they had over-scheduled the number of agents at any given time, resulting in overcapacity and unnecessary labor costs—despite dedicating 30+ man-hours each week creating forecasts and schedules on their Excel-based system. Worse, without the ability to accurately forecast call volume on an inter- and intra-day basis, they often found themselves under-staffed. And at those critical times, average time-to-answer rates spiked, as did call abandon rates; in turn, directly translating into a degraded customer experience, lower customer brand loyalty and ultimately lost revenues.

“We at Golfsmith pride ourselves not only on providing our customers with the most innovative golf products and the greatest value in the golf retail industry, but also on delivering the most reliable and responsive customer service in the industry,” explained Kody Sweet, director of guest experience for Golfsmith. “And as our sales and call volumes continued to grow, it became clear to us that we had outgrown our old workforce management systems and processes in our call center and needed to upgrade to a more sophisticated and cost-effective way of accurately forecasting calls and scheduling agents in such a dynamic operating environment if we were to continue to deliver on that promise to our customers.”

Solution

During the due diligence process of understanding workforce management solutions and evaluating leading vendors, Golfsmith narrowed down their evaluation to three vendors: GMT, IEX and Blue Pumpkin. In the end, the GMT Planet™ workforce management solution provided the best fit for their specific multi-channel retail challenges. In particular, the company highlighted GMT's unique capability to precisely forecast call volume by digesting and analyzing the demand and timing of calls generated by their complete array of catalog drops and other marketing campaigns. As the only solution provider with these “campaign forecasting” capabilities, GMT was uniquely able to help Golfsmith address the Herculean challenge of matching supply of agents on an inter- and intra-day basis, with the ever-changing stream of calls generated by their variable pipeline of catalog drops and other promotional/marketing offers.

With GMT, Golfsmith had the ability to forecast call volume and create detailed staffing schedules with a greater degree of accuracy than ever imagined. GMT's solution achieved this degree of accuracy by capturing Golfsmith's historical data, such as expected conversion rates and other key data points. By walking users step-by-step through a series of questions such as, “How many orders are you expecting this week from X campaign,” and analyzing past catalog drop and resulting call patterns, Golfsmith generated their first GMT-enabled forecast based on discrete 15-minute scheduling intervals. In fact, the schedule was so detailed that managers were skeptical that the forecast was accurate, believing that the staffing would be “too lean” and would result in unacceptably high hold time and abandon rates. After much discussion, they decided to go with their manually created staffing plan—based on years of experience using their previous planning system. At the end of the period, management compared the two forecasts with their actual call logs and were surprised to discover that GMT's projected forecast was in fact, much more accurate than their experience-based forecasts—providing the first piece of support for the GMT-powered workforce management solution.

Soon, GMT Planet was at the core of their contact center forecasting and scheduling—driving the creation of precise staffing schedules (accurate out to 12 weeks) based on factors such as predicted call volume by 15-minute intervals, agent schedule availability and skill sets (while also optimizing agent breaks and lunch shifts). And as Golfsmith continued to use GMT Planet, they also reported that the forecasts and reports generated have also grown more and more accurate, as the system

captured additional data points from which to calculate forecasts and staffing models with even greater precision. Building on the success and high degree of control and accuracy over their forecasting and scheduling processes enabled by GMT Planet, Golfsmith also decided to add teleworkers (virtual home-based agents)—a new category of agents in addition to full and part-time staff—as they expand their operations, as well as deploy the solution in their nationwide network of retail superstores and back office operations.

“As we ramped up the learning curve, we became more and more impressed with GMT Planet's powerful range of capabilities and found ourselves continually asking, ‘What else can this system do for us?’ as well as discovering that the system continued to wildly exceed our initial expectations; I simply can't imagine going back to our old system,” added Sweet. “And we've been impressed not only by GMT's technology and campaign forecasting capabilities, but equally as important, their post-sales service is nothing short of amazing—personalized, responsive and accurate service that's a huge differentiator in my eyes. GMT has truly delivered on their promise of helping us put the right people, in the right place, and the right time.”

Quick Facts



- ✓ **Business Type:** Retail
- ✓ **Operation Type:** Contact center, online and retail branch
- ✓ **Number of Agents:** Approximately 100 full-time and part-time agents
- ✓ **Corporate HQ:** Austin, TX
- ✓ **Website:** www.golfsmith.com