



Major Financial Services Company Achieves Outstanding Collections Results

Case Study, Mellon Financial Corporation

Converged Voice and
Data Networks
Customer Relationship
Management
Unified Communication
Supported by:
Avaya Labs and Services

PROFILE

In 1985, Mellon Bank installed their first Avaya™ Predictive Dialing System (formerly known as Mosaix PDS) in its collections department. Now, more than 15 years later and in a new millennium, Mellon remains a valued Avaya customer. This spotlight tells how the Avaya Predictive Dialing System (PDS) is helping Mellon Bank achieve outstanding collection results and maintain exceptional levels of customer service.

Mellon Financial Corporation— a financial leader

Mellon Financial Corporation, headquartered in Pittsburgh, PA, is a major financial services company, with more than \$300 billion of assets under management and \$1.5 trillion of assets under administration. Mellon principally engages in two core businesses: fee services and banking.

Fee services include consumer and corporate investment products, asset management, discount brokerage, mortgage products, securities lending, cash and investment management, and employee benefits. Mellon's banking services include retail financial services, credit card and small business banking, corporate banking, capital markets and venture capital, middle market banking, insurance premium

financing, asset-based lending and leasing, and real estate finance for corporations and institutions.

In 1985, 30 years after installing their first computer, Mellon moved from a manual outbound dialing environment to an Avaya PDS. This immediately improved their collection department's ability to service customers and collect debt. More than 15 years later, Mellon remains a valued Avaya customer.

Retail collections

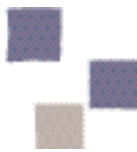
Avaya spoke with James Trozzo, Vice President and Division Manager, and Alex Demczak, Vice President and Technologies Manager for Mellon's Retail Collections Division, about Mellon's successful collections operation and use of the Avaya PDS.



"The Avaya PDS provides the power to point to your own destiny. We don't conform to technology; the technology must conform to us. It has to meet our needs, and Avaya PDS meets those challenges."

— Alex Demczak, Vice President and Technologies Manager, Mellon Financial Corporation Retail Collections Division





Demczak has written a book on successful contact center operations and is a frequent speaker at industry trade shows and conferences.

“Our collections call center in Pittsburgh employs approximately 100 people, including managers and adjusters. We have created a solid team with supportive management and maintain a results-oriented attitude,” states Trozzo. This attitude toward team management and results can be traced back to 1985 when Mellon Bank installed its first Avaya™ PDS. “We realized that our employees, our adjusters, were too valuable to be manually dialing the phones. They needed to spend their time doing what they do best: talking with our customers. We haven’t looked back since.”

“The Avaya PDS is a data warehouse, not just a dialer.”

*James Trozzo,
Vice President and
Divisions Manager,
Mellon Financial Corporation
Retail Collections Division*

Collections as customer service

It was noted that Trozzo used the term “customers” when referring to collection accounts. He quickly replied, “They are our customers—valued and valuable Mellon Bank customers. Though what we do is a debt collection function, it must be performed with a strong customer service approach and attitude.”

Demczak provided this example of collections with a customer service attitude: “We take time for individual customer counseling. By asking questions and spending a little time to understand a specific situation, we might turn a problem account around. Someone who is habitually delinquent in paying his or her credit card bill is a good example. We could call them each and every month and make no substantial improvement. Instead, taking a few minutes once might resolve the situation and free up an adjuster’s time for other calls. Perhaps the payment is due on the 12th, but that customer doesn’t get paid until the 25th. A few easy questions can quickly isolate and identify that. One change of the payment due date eliminates repeated calls and helps the customer recognize our service-oriented approach.”

Avaya Predictive Dialing System contributes to success

“Our Avaya 5000 PDS has helped us to create and maintain exceptional customer service and collection levels. Through call blending, Screenbuilder®, PC Analysis, and general ease of use, we are continually meeting expectations and creating new avenues for productivity and results,” states Demczak. “The Avaya PDS provides the power to point to your own destiny. We don’t conform to technology; the technology must conform to us. It has to meet our needs, and Avaya PDS meets those challenges.”

Intelligent Call Blending®

Mellon Financial Corporation makes considerable use of Intelligent Call Blending, one of three call blending options for the Avaya PDS. States Demczak, “At Mellon, our inbound call handling is of paramount importance. We need to be there for our customers and also be efficient, and not staff for calls that are not there. That was an ongoing challenge and hurdle when working through our ACD. Now, with Intelligent Call Blending, we have eliminated the ACD, related equipment, and maintenance expenses, along with the associated training and reporting functions that were required.”

“The Avaya 5000 PDS enables us to place our eggs into one manageable basket. It’s more cost-effective than the ACD,” adds Trozzo. “If our adjusters are not on an inbound call, Intelligent Call Blending enables us to keep them productive in the outbound calling environment. In turn, this reduces monotony and keeps the job interesting for our staff. In fact, many of our adjusters specifically request blend assignments.”

Best of all, it’s working. Demczak says, “Our call mix is approximately 75% outbound and 25% inbound, from four different 800 lines. We successfully handle 98% of those incoming calls.

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This helps us maintain our customer commitment and provide a reliable, dependable level of service. Our benchmark for handling inbound calls is to keep customers in a hold queue for no more than 20 seconds. Many customers may be willing to wait longer than that, but we view it as a customer service opportunity. Quality of customer interaction is as paramount as the quantity of interaction. We see our 98% call-handling rate as a measurement of our ability to maintain a high quantity of work, while our “20 seconds or less” hold-queue benchmark is a measurement of our quality of interaction. This paints a truer picture of total customer service.”

“The Avaya PDS is so robust that we can place all customers within a given portfolio [i.e., product line] into the system. This gives us a tremendous amount of information right at our fingertips.”

Alex Demczak,
Vice President and
Technologies Manager,
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Corporation Retail
Collections Division

PC Analysis reporting

PC Analysis enables users to extract and use data from the Avaya™ PDS to prepare reports, charts, spreadsheets, or form letters using PC software. Users can extract data from one of five files: job history, agent history, information statistics, transaction statistics, and calling lists.

“We often use PC Analysis reporting not only for our specific collections calling lists but also to segment an entire portfolio,” states Demczak. “The Avaya PDS is so robust that we can place all customers within a given portfolio [i.e., product line] into the system. This gives us a tremendous amount of information right at our fingertips.”

Demczak continues, “It is valuable to get the big picture of a portfolio—the entire pie, not just the collections slice. With the entire portfolio placed in the Avaya PDS, we can track delinquency rates [against the portfolio] and compute past due to current ratios. In turn, these statistics help measure success and progress, not only of the collection job within the portfolio, but against the portfolio at large. Are delinquencies as a percentage of the entire portfolio increasing or decreasing? PC Analysis reporting provides us with the answers to these business questions and helps us stay on course.”

Mellon is also leveraging that data for other uses on the Avaya PDS. “Our calling missions are based on customer relationships,” says Demczak. “With entire portfolios downloaded, including all bank relationships, we can conduct retention surveys, make activation calls (e.g., unused line of credit), up-selling and cross-selling calls, and other business opportunities.”

Adds Trozzo, “All of this is easily possible when you have complete portfolio information available. It is an enterprise relationship. PC Analysis is a robust tool that has really enabled us to leverage the Avaya PDS. It’s a data warehouse, not just a dialer.”

Screenbuilder communications tool

When Mellon's adjusters log in, they receive a Screenbuilder customer-announcement screen that they must acknowledge before moving to the next screen. Here they view all of the jobs running, their assignments, etc. This provides instant, accurate, and timely information at the start of shifts and after breaks and lunches. Mellon also uses Screenbuilder for many creative functions.

"Screenbuilder is a great educational tool for providing on-screen information," states Demczak. "We start with a blank screen—an empty palette—and via Screenbuilder use that palette to create messaging communications to our adjusters. We've used it for announcements, commonly used phone numbers, employee directories, employee of the month news, and even to present sections from the Fair Debt Collections Act.

"We use every inch of the screen. Relevant information is just a keystroke away. Our adjusters do not have to flip through manuals. And, our adjusters designed the screens. They know best the information they need and how they want to view it. Managers can easily change messages as needed. Screenbuilder is a very flexible communications tool for us."

Results

Mellon has used Avaya™ PDS for more than 15 years. To test the efficiency and effectiveness of the systems, they performed a corporate wide assessment of contact center systems and suppliers. "That study confirmed that we definitely have a good partner in Avaya," states Trozzo.

"Avaya PDS is a total package, offering ease of use, configurability, and open architecture. You don't need a 'white lab coat'—it's easy to use, both from administrative and management perspectives," adds Demczak. "The first part of success is having a solid understanding of what you want and what you need to achieve. Avaya provides us with the tools to take it from there—to get us to that success. Once our call center managers know what they want to achieve on any given calling mission, the Avaya PDS helps makes those results happen."

Mellon Financial Corporation and Avaya Inc.— an enduring, innovative, and successful partnership!

For further information about the award-winning Avaya PDS and how it can benefit your business in the Customer Economy, contact your Avaya Client Executive, or visit avaya.com/solutions.