Abstract

In a call center environment, numerous challenges exist, requiring many decisions. Determining proper staffing levels is one of many critical decisions for a business operating a call center. While this is just one element of operating a call center it comes with a great deal of complexity and consideration. For instance, technology, employee training and incentive options, customer satisfaction, business growth and seasonality, macro environment and many other influencers. In this work, a streamlined simulation of a call center was built, using ARENA to model a twenty-four-by-seven, three-hundred-sixty-five-day-a-year call center environment for a Financial Services company to exhibit an approach for Operations management to utilize when staffing its workforce.

Background

Overview

A call center environment is common to the Simulation discipline and two out of the three members of this project group work within a call center, sparking interest in exploring this topic beyond what was covered during the course. Noting all the various complexities and decision points [x], assumptions and constants were applied. The assumptions and constants were created out of thin air to protect the organizations by which two of the group members are employed. Furthermore, the workflow was created after calling a set of companies with well-established call center operations: Chase, Capital One, Amazon, and UPS, to piece together a generic and streamlined workflow, focusing on a Financial Services call center environment.

Workflow

Sampling the entities noted previously revealed a common flow – Fig. 1. Calling the customer service centers is always met by a voice response unit (VRU), requesting the customer select how support is needed. Typically, the selection will be met by another layer, of options focusing on the topic selected initially. The options available can bring the customer to self-service VRU or Customer Specialist. At the end of a call, after speaking with a representative, the customer is given the option to complete a survey.

Financial Services are heavily regulated [x], and, while Financial Institutions aim to provide service that meets all regulatory standards, customers will have an opportunity to share details where regulatory standards are not being met.



Assumptions