WHO IS THE VEREX GROUP?

The Verex Group brings major innovation to the UK motor insurance and vehicle manufacturer accident aftercare sectors. Its specialist insurance services business works in the interests of car buyers who want their vehicle repaired to vehicle manufacturer approved standards, vehicle manufacturers, their franchise dealers and approved body-shop networks and provides comprehensive vehicle manufacturer-branded motor insurance and accident aftercare services.

THE CHALLENGE

With 70+ contact center agents located across two sites in Rickmansworth and Bristol in the UK, along with several remote home-based workers, Verex handles on average more than 300 telephone-based payment transactions every day. A mid-call Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system was previously deployed that allowed agents to re-route callers to an IVR system to complete the final payment stage for their insurance policy, renewal, or adjustment. There was however several issues arising from this method that needed to be addressed, as Jack Davis, Salesforce & Omnichannel Development Manager for Verex Group explains:

"We were finding that every day, a high percentage of callers would drop-out of the payment process; anywhere between 20% and 30% of payments by phone would fail at the first attempt. A key issue was that if a customer had a query or inputted their card details incorrectly, there was no way of them communicating with us at the time, so they would drop-off the call and, hopefully, try again.

"Not only did this mean we were seeing high failure rates, but it also meant that if the customer called back, there was no guarantee that they would speak with the same agent. As our agents are rewarded for successful customer outcomes upon completion of each transaction they personally handle, this was a major frustration for our team.

"We needed to identify an assisted mid-call solution that would overcome this problem, while also ensuring we remain PCI DSS Compliant in the way our customers' payment details are handled."

To add to this, NewVoiceMedia, a Vonage Company, which handles the contact center telephony solutions for Verex, had advised the team that the existing mid-call IVR solution was being discontinued and an alternative would need to be arranged. Following discussions with NewVoiceMedia it was agreed that Verex would migrate away from a mid-call IVR to a more user friendly, assisted option.

THE SOLUTION

Following NewVoiceMedia's recommendation, Verex selected PCI Pal's Agent Assist solution, which is a true cloud secure payments solution that is fully integrated with NewVoiceMedia.

Originally the team assessed three solutions; an alternative mid-call solution, PCI Pal's Agent Assist and a 'pause and resume' option. Confirms Jack, "The assisted option really struck us as the best as it would enable us to provide a more personalized approach on every customer interaction.

With Pause and Resume, it requires agents to be switched on to this; there's a huge reliance on staff to get this right as if they forget to pause, we're in breach. Also, if they forget to un-pause and we haven't recorded the terms and conditions being read for example, and there's a claim, we don't want to be hit with a £1M claim as this wasn't recorded! We operate in a highly regulated industry and so it's vital that we're on top of our game here; we felt PCI Pal's solution removes this issue for us completely."

Instead, Agent Assist appealed to Verex as it would allow them to take card payments securely while the agent and customer remained in conversation. With no call transfers required, the customer is able to input their card details using their telephone keypad. If any assistance is needed, the agent remains on the line and is there to assist, meaning fewer dropped calls, faster transaction times and greater service continuity for the customer.

It also means that no card details are verbally provided, so the threat of potential insider frauds is not present and removes the burden of handling any sensitive card details from its staff.

Once the customer has provided their details, the agent simply presses the 'process card' payment button on the CRM screen and it instructs the PCI Pal solution to send the transaction to the payment provider for processing. No card details are seen or heard by the agent, and no data enters Verex's infrastructure, reducing the scope of PCI DSS compliance.

SUCCESSFUL INTEGRATION

Tom Bowen, a Senior Database Architect (Insurance) for Verex worked closely with NewVoiceMedia and PCI Pal to integrate the solution into Verex's existing CRM's iFrame dashboard, as he confirms:

"The whole process of integrating PCI Pal's Agent Assist was as smooth and as slick as any recent project implementation I have been involved in with Verex; from the initial conversations to completion it took no longer than two and half months.

We were initially supplied with a comprehensive integration specification proof of concept, and had an assigned account manager, Matt Davis, who was completely on the ball and with whom we held weekly project calls. Matt coordinated everything between NewVoiceMedia, our payment gateway providers and our internal developers, and made sure everything was in place in terms of the development, testing and implementation of the PCI Pal solution."

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"There were a few technical hurdles to overcome on the way, such as imbedding the PCI Pal iframe interface into our broker software, but we had a lot of knowledgeable people involved in the project, including our senior insurance CRM developers. This meant we all knew who was doing what, and it resulted in a seamless transition to the new PCI Pal solution, which was delivered on schedule."

Tom Bowen
Senior Database Architect, Verex

THE RESULTS

With data security high on the agenda for Verex, payment card security is assured thanks to Agent Assist. When reflecting on the results since Agent Assist went live, both Jack and Tom are quick to praise the way the solution has supported Verex:

Confirms Jack, "PCI Pal's Agent Assist is a far better solution; since launching we have seen call drop-out rates fall from up to 30% to just one or two per cent. Now, agents can interact directly with customers and so the points of failure are far less. They are there to handhold customers through the experience, whereas before if a customer mistyped their details or were unsure about something they had to start again, which was frustrating for them and our agents. It's far more customer-friendly now."

Tom adds, "There's certainly less margin for error and since Agent Assist went live we have seen that our call rates have improved. We're faster at processing payments and so on average we've seen our calls reduce, on average, by at least 30 seconds, which adds up when you're working with the volumes that we do."

On Average, calls to discuss and book an insurance policy were originally 15 minutes. Since using Agent Assist, average call durations are now around 13.5, which over the course of a month, across 55 agents, calculates to quite a time saving.

Explains Jack, "All agents have said they prefer the new system; it's improved their efficiency, they haven't had to dramatically change the way they work, plus with dropped-calls all but disappearing, they are achieving successful customer outcomes on every transaction call they handle, which for them is a major advantage."

From a technical and management perspective, PCI Pal's solution provides metrics and developer tools that the team can use to track performance and debug any issues with payment processing on individual transactional cases. Adds Tom, "This level of functionality and transparency was not as refined under the older, mid-call IVR solution, so PCI Pal's Agent Assist provides us with another clear advantage."

"The process of buying a policy is now easier; the process is much more refined and so customers are less likely to drop out. For our agents, our call times have improved which is a big measurement for us. Ultimately, our agents prefer it, our customers prefer it and we are seeing a big jump in efficiencies all round."

Tom Bowen
Senior Database Architect, Verex

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