

Technology Customer Support Team

Improving Customer Support with Game Mechanics



The Alvaria™ Motivate Solution

For this \$80M+ global technology company with thousands of client sites around the world, providing fast, responsive, and knowledgeable customer support is central to the company's operations. The company has customer support groups in the US, United Kingdom, Australia and the Philippines. These teams handle over 7,000 customer inquiries per month across inbound/outbound calls, emails, web requests, and automated system alerts. Managing a diverse support network with more than 100 representatives across multiple countries and offices requires constant nurturing to motivate and engage employees, measure quality, provide coaching, oversee ongoing training, and monitor performance and schedule adherence. Altogether, it requires a significant administrative effort and cost.

When the opportunity came to add Alvaria Motivate to their management toolbox, the Support Management group was excited about the pluses it would bring to their group. They were expecting to see impacts on employee engagement and customer service. "Our main goals were focused on improving productivity, quality and schedule adherence across the international support teams. We also wanted to reduce the amount of time needed to administer programs, monitor activities, and measure performance by replacing the manual processes we were using with the game mechanics powerful features and dashboards," said the VP Service & Support.

In order to benchmark results and provide a business case for future gamification expansion, the customer support team's management group provided historical data on critical productivity metrics and KPIs, quality measures, performance, and weekly supervisor activity levels.



Alvaria Motivate helped us cut pause time in half, and grew our productive time by more than 40%. We also gained the added, and somewhat unexpected, benefit of significantly lowering our ASA and abandon rates. For a customer care team, providing timely customer service is critical to customer satisfaction."

– VP, Service & Support, Technology Customer Support Team

INDUSTRY

Technology Support

VALUE

Customer Service

GOALS

Improve Agent Availability

Decrease Wait Times and Speed of Answer

Reduce Abandon Rates

Improve Agent Productivity

Enhance Team Transparency

RESULTS

35% Increase in Agent Availability

50% Reduction in Pause Time

85% Decrease in ASA

20% Improvement in Abandon Rates

Improving Customer Support with Game Mechanics

How well are your customers being served by your customer support contact center? Are your agents delivering the best possible experience when customers engage with your business?

Knowing how well your customer support team is performing is essential for continuous improvement. It is important for managing these frontline workers more efficiently, reducing costs and increasing agent satisfaction – which in turn can impact sales and customer retention.

The potential for increased profits from exceptional customer support requires that you track how quickly your agents are resolving issues and addressing complaints. The first step to gathering baseline and ongoing performance data is to define key performance indicators (KPIs). Once you have this information, the next step is to constantly motivate agents to do better.

Read on to learn how one customer support organization leveraged game mechanics to reduce costs and increase service levels, while engaging employees to help improve productivity.

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The Customer Support Challenge

Customer service is about more than being courteous to your customers. It is a critical part of business operations that directly impacts your bottom line and how your company is viewed in the marketplace. Customer service plays a primary role in keeping the customers that you have worked hard to bring in. As we know, it costs significantly more to attract new customers than it does to take care of the ones you already have.

And when the product is a technical one, that adds to the complexity of the customer care equation. Beyond handling an accounting question or helping correct an order, when your customers run into a use problem with your product, they need to talk to a technical specialist. The point of customer support is to help your current customers use your products better. For technology organizations, the customer support group is often the part of your company that people will have the most engagement with.

Customer support often carries a negative association for many people – long waits, awful hold music, and representatives who don't seem eager to help or have the knowledge to help. If you can avoid these pitfalls, your customers will notice.

A study from The CMO Council^[1] found that providing better technical advice and assistance to customers is the number one way companies can improve the product ownership experience for users. Conversely, each time you fail to solve a tech support question, you're potentially throwing money away, and risk losing customers.

With that said, maintaining a good technical support team is expensive. The costs of recruiting new team members is just the beginning. Customer technical support also requires representatives to complete extensive training with a longer learning curve, not only to become familiar with the contact platform, customer database, or other systems they use during a call, but also to learn the products they are supporting. Once you have those team members trained and in place, companies must balance keeping them motivated and happy with service delivery and making sure that resources are being used efficiently. All of these elements are critical in managing costs.

Source: [1] Report - Product Ownership: Lasting Satisfaction or Painful Distraction? The CMO Council



The Solution

The Alvaria™ Motivate solution has five unique interfaces that show competitions, recognize achievements, and deliver ad-hoc messages. These are displayed on the Alvaria TV Leaderboard across large screens throughout the call centers. Additionally, teams create distinct user interfaces that align features to each level of the Customer Support organizational hierarchy.

At the heart of the Alvaria Motivate solution is the ability to clearly and quantifiably display goals for each agent, team, and supervisor through unique KPI scorecards. These goals were the catalysts to driving foundational decisions to leverage game mechanics and affect a desired behavioral outcome. To assist in boosting outcome efforts, all KPI scorecards leverage machine learning by tapping historical data to forecast an agent, team, or supervisor's likelihood of achieving their goals.

To optimize engagement and participation by the support representatives, the Alvaria Motivate solution allows the support team to stack the center with competition game mechanics that are tied to both monetary and non-monetary rewards. An internal *game master* who thoroughly understands their call center goals and is empowered to leverage game mechanics to ensure those goals are achieved.



Spotlight KPIs



Productive Time

Agent Available time
+ Agent Talk Time



Schedule Adherence

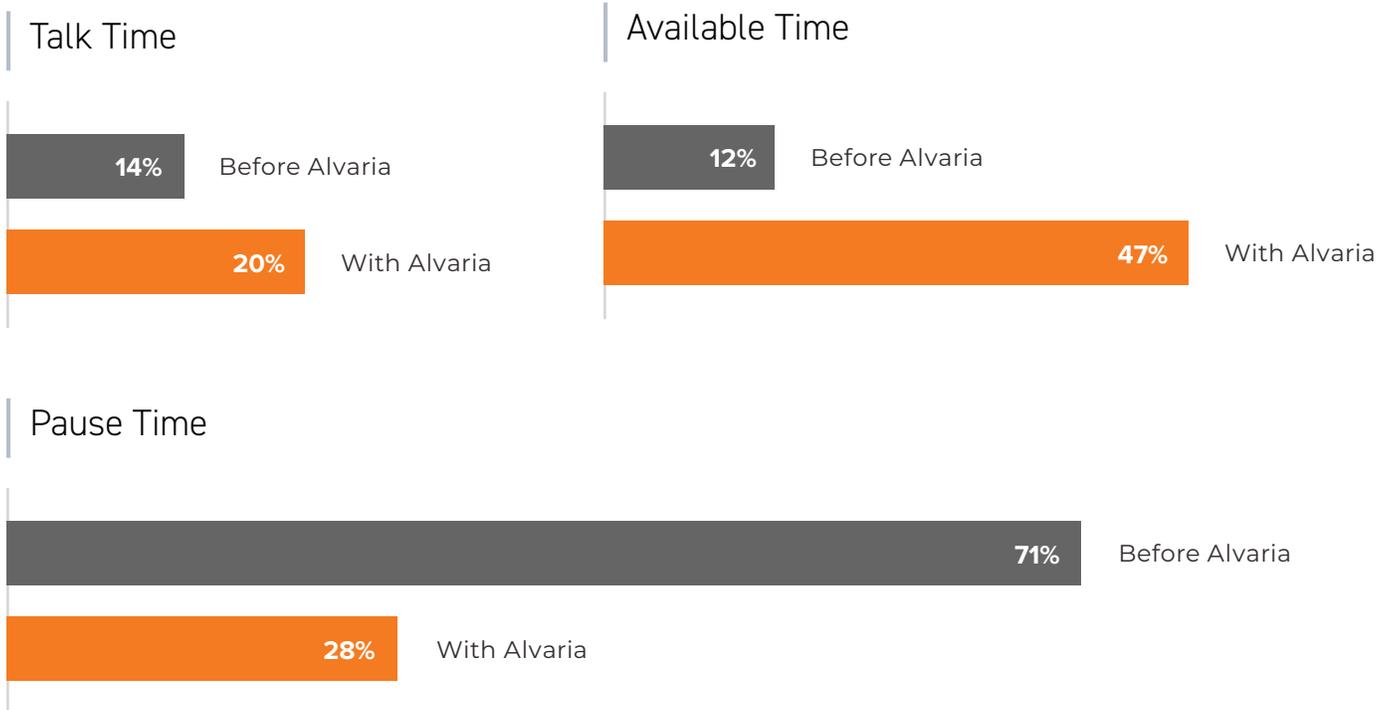


Quality Scorecard



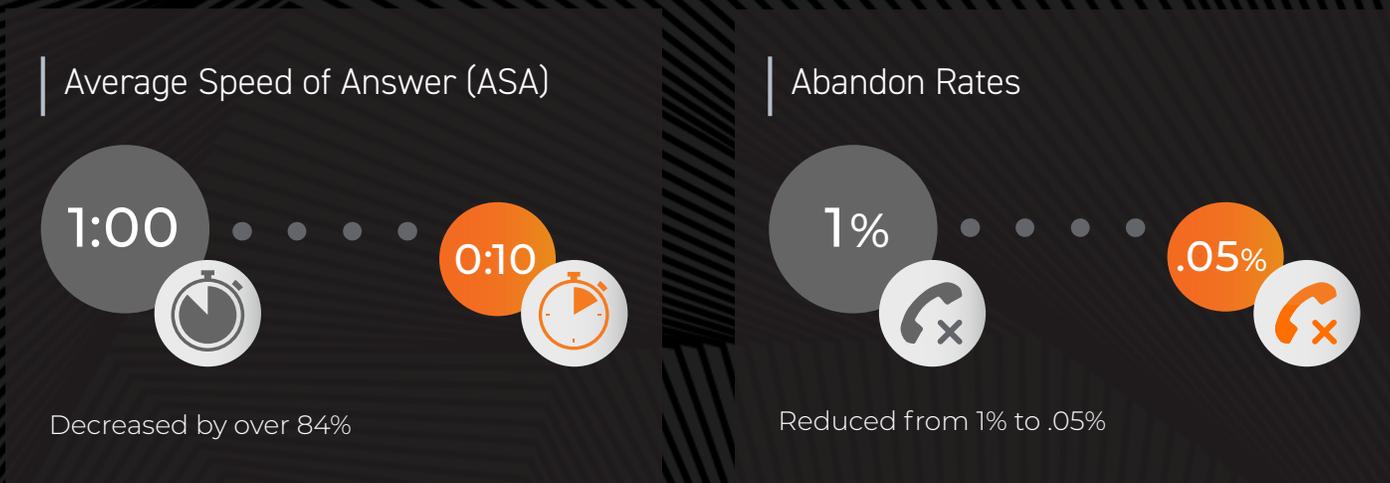
Productivity Benefit

A target KPI was to increase the agent's productive time while reducing the amount of time spent in pause. With Alvaria™ Motivate, the customer support center has seen a significant increase in available time and a corresponding increase in talk time for each agent, accompanied by a reduction in the amount of time that agents are unavailable.



Additional Benefit

The group also saw an unanticipated benefit in the often-critical contact center benchmarks of Average Speed of Answer and Abandon Rates, cutting ASA from one minute to under 10 seconds, and a decrease in abandons.



Manager Time Savings

Alvaria™ Motivate helps save administration time, from running competitions and measuring results to awarding prizes and gathering feedback. “We were using manual competitions and tracking metrics through customized reporting, and gathering feedback through surveys. Overall, it was very hands-on and wasn’t very intuitive for our agent,” stated the VP, Service & Support. “With Alvaria Motivate, we get information at a glance on the dashboards, to immediately see which employees need attention, whether positive or negative. We can quickly give someone a ‘Hi5’ or engage in coaching. We can spend less time micro-managing agents to make sure they are taking calls when they should be, because team members are more engaged and know what they need to do to reach their goals. They want to be on calls, to increase their chances of getting a reward.”

Leaderboards show overall goals and percentage of goals achieved. Managers can easily see which agents are being the most productive, and who has shown the most improvement. They can also quickly see which agents are adhering to their schedules, and how quality scores are measuring up. By improving schedule adherence, the company was able to improve payroll efficiencies and reduce costs by having more agents ready to take calls, so that they could improve service levels with fewer resources.

Getting Agents Involved

Technical Support calls can often be challenging, and keeping agent morale high can be difficult; agents may choose to find other “busy” work that keeps them off of the phones. Alvaria Motivate helps to keep agents more engaged by recognizing the time they spend helping customers. The competitive aspect spurs them on to beat their co-workers and win prizes.

The group’s Director of Technical Support and Alvaria Game Master, says, “We find that our resources are more excited to increase their performance, for various reasons, including recognition, seeing the numbers go up, and winning competitions and challenges. It’s largely ‘me’ stuff. That’s a big deal. People like to see their names come up. In fact, there was a lot of excitement just in the beginning from our players when it came to setting up their profile pictures.”

“We use a lot of raffles and auctions, which makes it easy to manage the rewards. From a management perspective, it’s easy to setup and it’s fun to give out prizes. We mix in monetary and non-monetary prizes, so we are able to have a reasonable budget. We’ve used both large prizes, like tickets to popular sporting events, and smaller items from our company store, such as logo shirts. We try to know what our people are interested in, and load the store with high-demand items.”



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The Results

HOW GAME MECHANICS HELP IMPROVE CUSTOMER SUPPORT

“It all starts with establishing the goals that the organization wants to achieve,” says Brett Brosseau, VP Alvaria. “Then, Alvaria works with you to make sure you have the tools you need to help you get there.”

Alvaria has developed a distinct methodology for the delivery of the Alvaria™ Motivate solution, including steps to determine the business goals, identify the appropriate metrics and KPIs, configuring the user environments to promote the desired targets, and delivering training to allow the user to manage the platform to respond to changing needs and program impacts.

The customer support team established their macro key performance indicators and distilled them down to data points that were critical for agents to achieve. The ultimate result was top line results that were captured in significant customer service performance and productivity improvements. The company was also able to impact critical operational targets, allowing it to improve the efficiency and optimization of resources and make sustainable contributions to their bottom line.



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– CS Team Game Master, Technology Customer Support Team

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About Alvaria

Alvaria™ was founded through the merger of Aspect Software and Noble Systems, technology leaders in Customer Experience (CX) and Workforce Engagement solutions. Our name is derived from Latin for “hives” – nature’s perfect form for millions of years – bringing you solutions that are scalable, resilient and secure, with efficiency, speed and pinpoint accuracy. ALVARIA™. Reshaping Customer Experience™. For more information, visit www.alvaria.com. Follow Alvaria on Twitter at [@Alvaria_Inc](https://twitter.com/Alvaria_Inc). #ReshapingCX

