

Digital Conversion Coupon Program

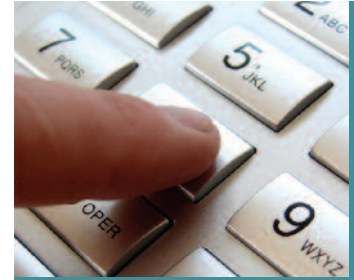


BACKGROUND: TV Converter Box Coupon Program

The U.S. Department of Commerce was tasked with operating the TV Converter Box Coupon Program at the direction of Congress. Congress created the TV Converter Box Coupon Program for households wishing to keep using their analog TV sets after stations transitioned to digital broadcasting. Broadcasters are transitioning to digital to provide important benefits to consumers. Because digital is more efficient, broadcasters require less of the airwaves to provide a better television viewing experience. Once the DTV transition is completed on its final deadline of June 12, 2009, some television channels will be turned over to fire and police departments for emergency communication and others are being auctioned to companies to provide new wireless services. Analog television sets receiving free TV using an antenna will not work after the stations in the local area transition to digital broadcasting. The digital conversion coupon program allows U.S. households to obtain up to two coupons that can be applied toward the cost of eligible converter boxes.

OBJECTIVE: Allow Consumers to Request their TV Converter Box Coupons via Telephone

The contracted agency responsible for the conversion program was looking for a government call center solution that would allow consumers to request their TV converter box coupon(s) by going online, mailing in their application, or by calling a toll-free phone number. Due to the overwhelming scale of the project, the government agency partnered with West Direct Government Services to provide a highly scalable and dynamic blended call center solution to process the inbound calls to the toll-free phone number. Because the media attention could drive unpredictable call volume at any given time, the program needed to be highly flexible to accommodate the fluctuating call volumes driven by the unplanned media announcements regarding the conversion.



Within the first two days, West's IVR platform received over 350,000 calls. In order to meet the extreme, unexpected volume, West Direct ramped to over 600 home-based agents within a week. By the end of Week One (January 6, 2008), the total number of phone calls to the toll-free number reached nearly 575,000.



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SOLUTION: A Multi-Faceted Solution Including an Automated Application and Virtual Call Delivery

West Direct Government Services developed a multi-faceted inbound call handling solution that included an automated application for the TV converter box coupon program's toll-free number, combined with their extensive virtual call delivery solution, Direct Connect. Every phone call is routed to West's Interactive Voice Response (IVR) platform, where the caller is asked a series of questions that can be answered via touch-tone in order to complete their request for coupon(s). If the caller is unable to complete their request in the IVR, they are instantly routed to an available live agent located at one of three call center facilities or to a home-based agent to complete the call. Regardless of the agent's location or whether they are home-based, part of the in-house solution or with multiple outside call centers, West Direct's virtual call delivery solution allows the government agency to view the agents as one unified workforce. This flexibility not only helps increase operational efficiencies, but ultimately delivers a superior caller experience. In addition, with Direct Connect, West Direct is able to support robust information transfer to the agent's desktop to support call completion.

Once the consumer has placed their request for their coupon(s), the information is sent via a live feed to a fulfillment center to ensure their coupon(s) are sent out in a timely manner.

RESULTS: Nearly 50 Million Coupons Requested

Not only was West Direct Government Services able to meet the contracted government agency's initial forecasted volumes, but they have implemented a solution that is able to provide scope and flexibility. Based on the initial staffing forecast, West Direct started Day One, January 1, 2008, with the full-time equivalent (FTE) of 15 English and 5 Spanish speaking agents. On that day, Good Morning America and several other news outlets ran stories on the TV Converter Box Coupon Program and displayed the toll-free phone number. Within the first two days, West Direct's IVR system received over 350,000 calls, of those, over 109,000 were transferred to a live agent. In order to meet this extreme, unexpected volume, West Direct ramped to over 600 home-based agents within a week. By the end of Week One (January 6, 2008), the total number of phone calls to the toll-free number reached nearly 575,000.

West Direct Government Services' solution has allowed millions of consumers across the nation to request their coupon(s) via the toll-free 888 phone number. As of January 17, 2009, a total of 49.3 million coupons had been requested by the public, with approximately 20.5 million coupons redeemed.

In addition, West Direct Government Services' comprehensive reporting gives the contracted government agency detailed information about how the TV Converter Box Coupon Program is running. This consolidated, up-to-the second reporting of all agent activity allows the government agency and West Direct to quickly make real-time changes to meet any unpredictable call volume needs.

West Direct Government Services

West Direct Government Services specializes in providing multi-service contact center solutions to a variety of government agencies and their partners. Services include both premise-based and home-based agents, automated call processing and call routing, outdial notifications and outbound call processing. In addition, West Direct Government Services offers a variety of online reporting tools to assist our clients in managing their programs efficiently and effectively. West Direct LLC, is a subsidiary of West Corporation, a leading provider of outsourced communication solutions.



For more information contact us at:

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