

Case Study: Carphone Warehouse

The Carphone Warehouse Gets Service Right with KANA

Carphone Warehouse

THE COMPANY

Largest independent mobile phone retailer in the world with 2,200 stores operating across 10 markets

THE CHALLENGE

Deliver fast, accurate and consistent responses to an ever-growing volume of customer inquiries

THE SOLUTION

KANA IQ
KANA Response

THE RESULTS

First-time resolution rate of 89%

Correspondence productivity up by 39%

Consistent answers and 'tone of voice'

Significant Improvements in First-Time Resolution and Staff Productivity

The Carphone Warehouse is the world's leading independent retailer of mobile phones and services, with 2,200 stores in eleven countries. Over the past five years, Carphone Warehouse has built up a significant telecommunications business through its Talk Talk brand, the consumer telephone business of The Carphone Warehouse Group, which contributes half of the group's revenue.

The company operates three UK contact centers for its Retail and Distribution business along with several more international centers that support its Talk Talk telecoms operation. Carphone Warehouse chose KANA solutions for knowledge management and email management to replace its previous proprietary solutions, which had proven unable to cope with the company's growing scale and sophistication. To improve the customer experience, the new KANA solutions were implemented across its three UK call centers, 800+ retail stores, as well as operations in India and South Africa.

"We now have a first-time fix rate of 89%, which is amazing. KANA is a key part of the toolkit that helps us to achieve that result."

Anne Wood, Head of Knowledge Management and Self-Help



Overcoming the Challenges Faced by Carphone Warehouse

For Anne Wood, Carphone Warehouse's Head of Knowledge Management and Self-Help, and the customer service team, gaining access to consistent, accessible information across the business was a high priority. Carphone Warehouse suffered business pains caused by having multiple businesses, each independent, but all part of the Carphone Warehouse family. The group had extensive expertise and knowledge, but little of this was written down or recorded in a consistent manner — and with no central source of content or ownership, the result was dissatisfied customers, a high cost to serve, and a lack of easily accessible, reliable information across the business.

Wood explained, “We have a genuine focus on customer experience and needed a way of providing fast, accurate, and consistent responses to an ever-growing volume of customer inquiries. This demanded a robust, functional, and multi-channel platform that we can rely on.”

Carphone Warehouse decided to completely review its existing customer support content. The implementation team, composed of KANA experts, the Carphone Warehouse Knowledge Management Team, and IT project managers, mapped out the company’s requirements by undertaking a thorough review of business needs.

KANA and Carphone Warehouse

Following an in-depth review of several leading vendors and system integrators, the company chose KANA as the group’s strategic supplier. “We knew what we wanted, and it was simply a case of choosing the vendor that was best able to meet our demands. Among the reasons we chose KANA was the completeness of their solution together with their implementation expertise. This gave us the confidence that KANA was the right partner to deliver the best solution,” said Wood.

KANA scored highly against competitors in Carphone Warehouse’s criteria for choosing technology, which included criteria ranging from the strategic fit with the business, to the configurability of the system, compliance requirements, service delivery and the vendor’s ability to work closely with the company.

Carphone Warehouse decided to start the project from scratch, and the implementation team mapped out the company’s requirements by understanding the needs of the business. All of the customer service content was replaced with copy-written content in a knowledgebase structured around the customer.

Wood said, “What we like about KANA is that it lets us put all of our content in one central knowledgebase, and we can name that content differently for each of our user groups. That’s one of the things that impresses me about the KANA solution — that it enables you to intelligently use one source of information for many different audiences, and you can segment it so that each group sees the appropriate piece. It makes life easier for everyone.”

KANA technology delivered includes:

- KANA Response for email and Web form management, which automates the process of capturing, documenting, interpreting, routing, and recommending answers for high volume email.
- KANA IQ knowledge management for customer service agents (CSAs) and Web self-help, which delivers a guided knowledge approach that dramatically reduces the time it takes to answer customers’ inquiries. The solution delivers on-demand advice that intelligently helps agents through the process of diagnosing the inquiry and determining the right answer.

Carphone Warehouse has completed Phase I of the customer service system implementation and Phase II is currently underway, which includes knowledgebase enhancements, integration of Web self-help, and enhancing and extending the email system across the Retail and Distribution departments. This will enable CSAs to quickly respond to customer contacts as the information channels needed will be simplified into one central system, thus ensuring a higher customer satisfaction rate.

A Better System for Agents and Self-Help Options Improve Customer Service

Carphone Warehouse is benefiting from KANA's best practice and strategic consultancy through eVergance, the professional services company that is helping them design and deliver self-help using the KANA solution.

KANA has had a demonstrable impact in Carphone Warehouse's ability to handle customer service emails. "It's much more successful than our old solution. These days, we know for sure that emails will be managed correctly, and we can collaborate between departments and customers with confidence," Wood commented.

The Knowledge Management Team is acknowledged within Carphone Warehouse as the primary source for post-sales support for stores, advisors, and online content. Process and procedures are documented. The system has provided the foundations for customer self-care through email and knowledge management integration, and ultimately customer choice.

Wood continued, "The KANA IQ system makes it very easy for the advisors to use, and it's also very easy for them to provide feedback if they need more information or the current information is incorrect. The system is updated two or three times a day, whereas before we often had several versions of the same information stored in different places and consequently some of it never got updated at all."

KANA guides the user to solutions based on "What questions are customers likely to ask?" rather than "What would you need to know to help a customer?" For example, if a customer says, "I've lost my phone, what do I do?" the CSA can simply enter that question into the system to reach the appropriate content. This is a much more intuitive approach than previously when inquiry solutions were stored in different places, depending on which network provider the customer uses. In addition to improving the efficiency of the contact center, this helps reduce training costs for new CSAs.

Key benefits also include the following:

- Staff attrition rates have been reduced since the implementation, and staff productivity in the correspondence department has increased by 39%.
- The technology has reduced average handling times for contacts.

- The KANA system has helped introduce a consistent 'tone of voice' across responses to customer inquiries as all standard paragraphs and templates are written by specialist copy- writers rather than untrained product owners.

The Carphone Warehouse has implemented a customer feedback program enabling customers to rate their experience of the company's customer service. Wood said, "We now have a first-time fix rate of 89%, which is amazing. KANA is a key part of the toolkit that helps us to achieve that result."

The KANA solution has the scalability to support tens of thousands of agents, millions of customers, and billions of interactions and can potentially be used in future Carphone Warehouse implementations.