



Dialing to Serve

Responding to Customer
Needs in “real time”

ABB Value Paper Series



Dialing to Serve

ABB customer service centers – Responding to customer needs in “real time”

by Bill McGovern

Dateline: 08:01:00 EST; Wickliffe, Ohio, USA; Customer Service Center <phone rings>

A Customer Service Representative [CSR] activates the telephone headset, and responds:

“Thank you for calling the ABB Customer Service Center. This is John speaking. How can I help you?”



The Wickliffe Customer Service Center

Another 60-80 further calls will be answered in this way today, and indeed every day, for this representative alone. Such a call can be for service dispatch, parts and repair logistics, technical phone support, training or general helpdesk services. It could be for any products that ABB offers, supporting any of the industries that it serves. It could be at any time of the day, or from any part of the world.

Each phone call, email, fax, instant message; webchat, or walk-in to the center is another opportunity for ABB to “satisfy the requirements of customers”. In addition, the CSR will process email cases and faxes, research cases, escalate cases to product specialists, track orders, update web pages, and review product training materials.

The primary task of Customer Service Centers is to connect callers with an appropriate ABB representative within the first minute; CSRs balance calls and cases while minimizing hold-times for callers. The Customer Service Center in Wickliffe, Ohio is one of several that ABB operates around the world to meet the needs of its global customer base.

Service operations were not as complicated a decade ago. The Customer Service Centers (CSCs) were decentralized and focused only on a few products and their related services. The result was multiple CSCs, each supporting a narrow range of ABB products. Customers who used a broad range of ABB product were forced to deal with multiple ABB locations for support. As the Millennium year approached, ABB realized there were opportunities for streamlining CSCs

using a centralized hub connecting its regionally located field staff and specialists. The Wickliffe CSC became the main hub for ABB’s North American support activities. As the Wickliffe CSC expanded its offerings to the ever-growing needs of the North American customer base, additional synergies were identified across multiple ABB product lines. A uniform support process evolved and a customer relationship management tool Powerhelp | CRM¹ was implemented. This was used to capture important transaction information that would become the basis for the key performance indicators that would soon be adopted into the Quality Management System. This process foundation, coupled with the development of a flexible case tracking web tool, soon allowed the Wickliffe CSC to serve all the needs of ABB customers, regardless of product or industry, thus making it very easy for customers to get support. The business models and success of the Wickliffe CSC soon became a model for other units to adopt in Europe, Asia, and other regions where ABB operates (Fig 1). Each business and region offered suggestions, improvements, and ideas leveraging shared knowledge and automated notifications in order to improve overall customer awareness and responsiveness. Soon additional CRM modules were customized into the Powerhelp | CRM tables which provided features such as account team notification, SolutionsBank interface, customer satisfaction survey tool, CSR competency management with a quizzing process, and global case escalation of 800xA products and systems for resolution. The challenge of CRM is to make all channels open to the customer. The call center is equipped with modern tools and closed-loop processes for logging and tracking customer contacts through to completion.

ABB's "One Call Resolution" targets single call resolution, eliminating the need for customers to call multiple ABB locations for support.

What ABB does

Customer Service Centers provide a simple, single phone number to connect customers to the appropriate ABB resources. The Wickliffe facility hosts a consolidation of many, many other ABB toll free numbers and field offices in order to improve service reliability and availability while reducing costs of an around the clock operation. A single contact point in multi-media environment with uniform service(s) following a foundational yet flexible process provides a consistent presence of ABB Service. For ABB's more sophisticated and self-sufficient users, the Customer Service Center has configured IVRs (interactive voice response) for faxback of ABB Automation University schedules, guides to BusinessOnline (BOL) web ordering of parts or repairs, product detailed descriptions, established email auto-generate technical support cases, and disaster recovery measures for seamless business continuity to all customers.

What defines a world-class customer service center? For ABB customers it is being available

Call Center Mouse Pad Diagram

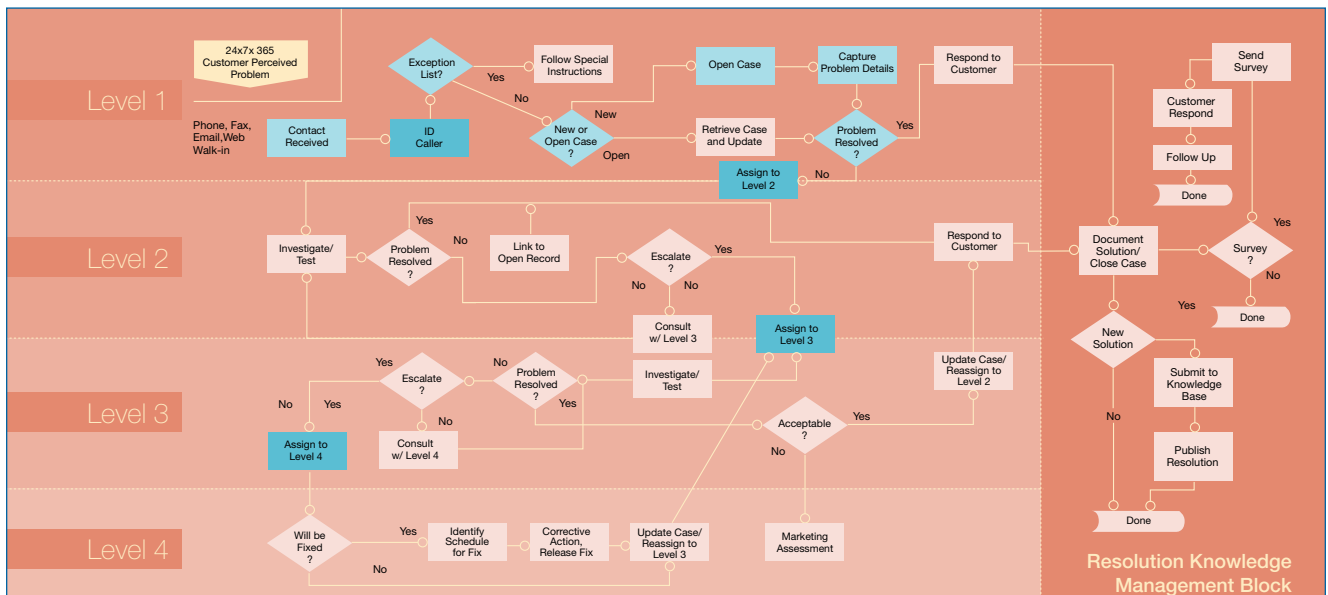


Contacting the service center Help Desk

Helpdesk option 6 or Dialing 0 from the main menu, provides an abbreviated menu and direct connect availability for:

- 1) For SupportLine contract subscribers
- 2) For sales Inquiries including ABB Supportline subscription services
- 3) For new product offerings
- 4) For accounting or invoice matters
- 5) For ABB employees seeking IT support
- 6) For ABB Low Voltage Control Products
- 7) For ABB Power Technology products
- 0) To speak with an ABB customer service representative

Fig 1. Supportline Process Diagram: this is the cornerstone for customer interface and case escalation



responsive, competent, competitive, innovative, and value-based. 'Bringing value to customers through cross-selling and up-selling enables Customer Service Representatives to match features and benefits to customers needs. This understanding of how to combine sales and service is the best way to serve customers and create a top-performing team', concludes Stan Wojciechowski, Vice-President of ABB Automation Technologies North American Service Logistics & Assembly Operations. Each contact is a unique opportunity to exceed a customer expectation or provide a corrective action; these challenges reflect the continuing effort of the management team to deliver a positive experience for each of the Center's 150,000 contacts per year. "Our mission is to provide a state-of-the-art contact center where ABB businesses in the America's region can add value and enhance the level of customer service.", states James Crowl, Vice President of Customer Support and Platform Services.

Customers say it best: "My question was answered in a way that anyone could understand the answer and it was answered very promptly! ... This problem was resolved very quickly, and the explanation on how to resolve it was detailed... No problems getting it taken care of over the phone." "The CSR was exceptional in handling our problems... The issues identified were critical to us being able to run

Factbox 1

2006 Global Service Center Summit - Best Practices

- Customer Relationship Management
- Web-based order Management
- Key Customer Management Strategies
- Resource Scheduling, Dispatch
- Value Based Sales Strategy
- Customer Service Representative Training
- Product Life Cycles & New Product Readiness
- Knowledge Management
- Customer Facing Product Support Tools
- Customer Contact Process mapping
- Customer Satisfaction & Surveys
- Regional and Global Interface / Interaction

our plants. He worked diligently with ABB R&D to determine how these issues would be resolved and provided me timely feedback that I could take back to my management." These customer comments demonstrate the fact that ABB Service acts as "One ABB" by cutting across many borders and potential barriers to meet or exceed the customer expectations.

Factbox 2 Contacting the service center

The North America Customer Service center is accessible to customers via telephone, email and web automatic call back. Normal operating hours are from 8 am to 6 pm eastern time. Emergency support service is available 24 hours a day.

Telephone; 1-800-HELP 365 from Canada and United States; **1-440-585-7804** for international callers

Web: www.abb.us (click "ABB customer Service Center" link), complete the on-line form to place a request for service and click the "Call now" button. This technology rings the provided phone number and connects to the first available support resource - available 8 am to 6 pm ET.

Email: The following email addresses access the Customer Service center and generate a support case record. mails are answered within 24-hours. AutomationSupportLine@us.abb.com
ABB.HelpDesk@us.abb.com (for non-product specific requests)

ABB University: NAtraining@us.abb.com provides a direct link to training support including registration, training schedules, course descriptions and driving directions to ABB training centers.

Visit **SolutionsBank** on the web at <http://solutionsbank.abb.com>.

<Agent transaction conclusion>

"Thank you for contacting the ABB Customer Service Center today. Is there anything else I can help you with from our portfolio of products and services? I hope that we have satisfied your inquiry and look forward to our next business transaction."

ABB's service center is here to HELP three hundred and sixty five days a year. One customer survey response says it all: "The Customer Service Center was very helpful and knowledgeable about what our technical problems with the controller happened to be... It was so nice to use remote diagnostics capability to 'chat' with the Specialist on-line and also to allow him to take over our computer and diagnose and fix the problem. We thank him and all of ABB Service again. Your company ABB ranks at the very top of solving customer related problems promptly."

W. D. McGovern

Call Center Operations Manager

Wickliffe, OH, USA

bill.mcgovern@us.abb.com

Footnotes

1. POWERHELP I CRM is a product of Vertical Solutions, Inc. (VSI); www.verticalsolutions.us or call 1.800.466.0238.
2. ABB Service is ISO9001-2000 registered and also holds an IQNET Certificate