

STUCK ON CALL WAITING: UNLV ENCOUNTERS TROUBLE MANAGING STUDENT CALLS

Four years ago, the team in the Cashiering and Student Accounts Office at University of Nevada – Las Vegas (UNLV) was ready for a change in student call management.

“Before we partnered with our last vendor, (calling into the Cashier’s Office) was first come, first serve,” said **Juanita Saucedo**, Student Accounts Manager. “Phones would be ringing all throughout the Cashier’s Office, and there was no way to track who was calling or how long they waited to talk to someone.”

“I started with the team in 2004, and the phone would constantly ring off the hook right into your ear,” added **Rose Cummings**, Cashier’s Office Supervisor. “It would constantly divide our attention between helping people out in person and answering calls.”

UNLV partnered with a phone vendor for over six years, sharing a license with various enrollment offices. The partnership helped slightly condense their lengthy backlog of student calls, but it still wasn’t enough. It cost the school more than \$1000 per license, and the ease of using the lines depended on whether the other office was using them. It created a bottleneck of traffic, with 90-minute wait times becoming the norm. The system could only manage 12 calls in the queue at one time – and when you have a student population exceeding 20,000, that simply is not acceptable.

That was when the Controller told Juanita about ECSI’s OutsourceSelect – a solution allowing her team to fully outsource their student calls to a dedicated team of ECSI Customer Service Advocates.

UNLV COMES TOGETHER FOR THE COMMUNITY

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, UNLV is doing their part to navigate this changing world. Among faculty actions: devising methods for contact tracing, treating patients at local hospitals, vaccine development, studying the economic impact on local businesses, developing viral transport media (VTM) for testing kits, and donating 3,000 masks from their athletic department to the University Medical Center.



WHEN UNLV DECIDED TO IMPLEMENT ECSI'S OUTSOURCESELECT CALL CENTER SOLUTION

Having utilized ECSI’s ServicingSelect solution for over 20 years, UNLV decided it was time to start exploring OutsourceSelect. UNLV’s borrowers were already receiving excellent service on the loan servicing side, so it only made sense to expand the relationship with ECSI to better serve all UNLV students. As an added benefit, the OutsourceSelect solution came at a lower cost, allowing UNLV to pay for their Outsource services through a self-funded account accruing fees from students’ payment plans.

While preparing for OutsourceSelect to go live, the team received dedicated in-person training from ECSI’s Jeanine Ferguson. The UNLV team was impressed by Jeanine’s willingness to come directly to their offices, so she could understand the University’s processes and systems, learn how the school interacts with its students, and then relay that information to the ECSI team. Once OutsourceSelect went live in December 2016, the relief was immediate, especially with a new semester of registrants coming into the school and needing support.

“Having the call center up and running for spring registration was fantastic,” Juanita said. “This was definitely one of the easiest implementations with which I’ve been involved.”

CONTINUED GROWTH AND BONDING: HOW ECSI AND UNLV'S RELATIONSHIP HAS STRENGTHENED DUE TO OUTSOURCESELECT

Since implementing OutsourceSelect, the bond between UNLV and ECSI has only grown stronger. Juanita and Rose both consider their ECSI Customer Service Advocates an extension of their team, and that sentiment is spreading. Multiple departments within UNLV have begun including ECSI in meetings, and University staff has been able to shift their focus to critical responsibilities such as better understanding the MyUNLV software, professional development, and focusing on one-on-one interactions with students during orientation. Juanita is finding she now has the time to stay on top of regulatory changes and has joined two task forces for policy change at the University.

In the cashier's office, Rose has found her team has more flexibility to focus on time-sensitive projects, without having to stop or lose their place to answer calls and answer the same questions over and over again. Rose is particularly impressed by the OutsourceSelect staff's unwavering professionalism, knowledge, and commitment to customer service when taking these calls.



UNLV BY THE NUMBERS

During the 4th quarter of 2019 (October 1 through December 31), OutsourceSelect had **11,023 queued calls from UNLV students and borrowers**. These calls had:

- An **average speed to answer of 1:49**
 - An **average talk time of 5:19**
 - An **abandon rate of 4%**

"I was listening in on a call as we were trying to find something for a student," she recalls. "Every call, every student, even if it was a repeat question, it was like they were answering it for the first time. We feel like we have an extended family with this team, and that helps us a lot."

Above all else, Juanita most appreciates the peace of mind OutsourceSelect has afforded her and the team, by not having to manage phone calls. Student satisfaction has gone through the roof since implementing the solution – a first satisfaction survey indicated greatly improved response times, and no hours-long wait times in a queue. The call-back function was a game-changer for the school – their students can now leave their number, go about their day, and get a call back from a representative without having to wait on the phone or lose their place in line.

"You can't put a dollar sign on peace of mind, especially with the world we're in right now," Juanita declares. "I can't imagine what things would be like if our students didn't have the support of ECSI, now and in the future."