Transforming Customer Service

Cloud-based, omnichannel communications, collaboration, and CRM data improve the customer experience and contact center productivity.

MISS DIG System, Inc. is a Michigan nonprofit corporation that provides a free service to homeowners, excavators, municipalities, and utility companies throughout the state. When one of these entities is planning a project that requires digging that might affect underground utility lines, it submits a notification via the MISS DIG 811 website or toll-free phone number, which is then handled by notification centers in Auburn Hills and Gladstone.

MISS DIG 811 notification system representatives (NSRs) then transmit the notification to more than 1700 MISS DIG 811 members, requesting that they locate their underground facilities at the excavation site. Once members receive a transmission, they send out a crew to place flags and paint indicating the location(s) of their facilities.

The customer summary

Customer name:
MISS DIG System, Inc.

Industry:
Utility location services

Location:
Auburn Hills, Michigan

Number of contact center agents:
30

Business challenge summary

- Inconsistent customer experience
- Blind call routing
- Difficult call recording management
- Lack of granular insights

Network solution summary

- Unified voice, email, and chat contact center communications
- Integrated collaboration with unified communications

Business results summary

- Increased agility with omnichannel communications
- Improved productivity through intelligent routing and collaboration
- Improved customer service and experience through intelligent routing and collaboration
- More granular insights with cloud-based analytics
- Automated call recording logging

Business challenges

Challenges of on-premises, voice-only systems

MISS DIG 811 had been using an outdated call center telephone system for 10 years, which prevented them from achieving their vision of being a more agile organization. Bullfrog, their local communications provider, encouraged them to move to soft phones and the cloud for a more sophisticated communications and customer interaction infrastructure.

Inconsistent customer experience

The old call center system supported taking notifications only through telephone calls. MISS DIG 811 had two 800 numbers, each with its own team of NSRs with different scripts and processes. This meant that callers were getting an inconsistent experience based on the number they dialed.

Blind call routing

MISS DIG 811 callers, and their personalities, vary widely, ranging from experienced contractors and construction workers to inexperienced residents planning their first digging project. With the old system, every caller was randomly sent to whomever was available to take the call at the time, regardless of the caller's or NSR's experience, role, or personality. Often callers dialed the wrong number or made the wrong interactive voice response (IVR) selections, and ended up in the wrong department. When these calls were transferred, there was no way to know whether the recipient was available to answer the call or whether the caller would end up in another queue or voicemail.

Difficult call recording management

Another challenge was the inability to integrate the old call recording system with the MISS Dig 811 CRM, Newtin, which made it extremely difficult to associate inbound notifications with call recordings. This integration was an important requirement, as a new law requires MISS DIG 811 to maintain all inbound notifications for six years. MISS DIG 811 personnel spent hours trying to match recordings with notification tickets, wasting valuable time and energy that could have been spent serving customers.

Lack of granular insights

The MISS DIG 811 board of directors consists of representatives from utilities, communications providers, and municipalities. The board requires the reporting of notification volumes and the time spent on each call. The old system tracked all callers in the same way, without making a distinction between first-time residential callers needing education and repeat callers. As a result, MISS DIG 811 did not have the data to back up its intuition that first-time callers were inflating its time-on-call metrics.

"We used to have to use a blended approach to taking inbound notifications, with them all being treated the same. Now, we've gone from having just one job description for NSRs to seven, resulting in greater efficiencies and employee productivity. This was simply not possible with the old call center system."

Bruce Campbell
CEO, MISS DIG

Business results

Increased agility with omnichannel communications

With the Cisco Customer Journey Platform, MISS DIG 811 has become an agile and modern organization. When someone submits a notification, by either phone or the web, the NSRs follow up with the notifiers via email, chat, and phone. These new communications channels make the NSRs significantly more productive.

Improved productivity through intelligent routing and collaboration

Now, MISS DIG 811 can route calls to the NSRs that can best meet the needs of the callers, based on the request and profile of the caller. For example, experienced contractors can be connected with NSRs that are able to get down to business quickly. Tentative or first-time callers can be routed to NSRs that can provide education.

Improved customer service and experience through intelligent routing and collaboration

With the Customer Journey Platform, MISS DIG 811 has a centralized queue for all callers. Callers of the same type with the same need get routed to NSRs trained to meet that need, helping ensure consistent user experiences and information.

Because the Customer Journey Platform has an open architecture, MISS DIG 811 will integrate it with its Newtin ticket-entry software—an industry-specific CRM—to display all data about the caller within the Customer Journey Platform agent desktop. NSRs will see previous tickets placed by the caller, which will expedite retransmits and allow the NSRs to provide the caller with their ticket number if they have lost it. This information will also allow the NSR to determine whether the caller is a repeat or first-time caller, so they can interact with the person appropriately. With this integration, the NSRs can provide customer service, in context.

And with the Customer Journey Platform's collaboration features, if a caller's issue requires escalation, the NSRs can see which manager is available and chat with them before they transfer the call. This has eliminated blind transfers, which makes the callers happier and saves the NSRs time and inconvenience trying to guess who might be available to take the call.

More granular insights with cloud analytics

With the rich data that the Customer Journey Platform collects during customer interactions, it is now easy to match each customer interaction with corresponding Newtin records. As a result, the company is now able to distinguish between the length of time first-time callers need versus repeat callers. Since MISS DIG 811 is required by law to educate their callers on process and safety, it can use this data to ask the board for more funding for education programs.

Poised for the future

Since the implementation, the team has taken 9% more notifications than the same time period the year before. Many of the MISS DIG 811 processes have been streamlined, and productivity has improved for NSRs and the management team.

"70% of our employees are younger, and the majority are tech savvy. So, it's important that we have technology that not only makes them more efficient at what they do, but that they can embrace and use to its fullest capacity."

Bruce Campbell
CEO, MISS DIG 811

Automated call recording logging

The Customer Journey Platform's call recording automatically associates ticket numbers with recordings, which makes it easier for MISS DIG 811 to meet legal requirements. And since the cloud architecture allows call recordings to be stored anywhere, MISS DIG 811 has elected to store them locally, giving it control over the recordings, and enabling it to meet regulatory requirements.

Increased agility and mobility with unified communications

A significant benefit of the Cisco solution is that MISS DIG 811 employees no longer need a phone on their desk to communicate, which has resulted in an 83% annual savings on phone rental. And since both centers are staffed 24x7, it's important for management to stay connected 24x7. To achieve this, managers use Cisco Unified Communications on their smartphones to be available on demand and to know who is on calls or available—even in the middle of the night.

Trusted partners

The value of the Cisco® Customer Journey Platform wasn't just the technology. MISS DIG 811 put its trust in both Cisco and Bullfrog, to ensure a successful migration from the old system to the new one.

> **"When issues developed and the 'going got tough,' the team stuck with us until the issues were completely and successfully resolved. They provided the calming force and authority to get the right people involved at the right time to get 'stuff' done. Always professional and pragmatic."**
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> **Bruce Campbell**
> CEO, MISS DIG 811

The Cisco and Bullfrog team was genuinely interested in helping MISS DIG 811 make its vision a reality, and genuinely invested in elevating it from a telephone call center to a multifaceted omnichannel contact and notification center. The Cisco project management team was instrumental in getting the solution up and operating successfully, working closely with MISS DIG 811 IT staff and coordinating all technical support activities.

Next steps

MISS DIG 811 is taking a three-step approach. The first step was to reproduce what they initially had with the old system and make sure everything was up and running smoothly. The second step is to integrate the Newtin software with the Cisco Customer Journey Platform. The third step will be to bring in social media so people can make requests via Twitter and Facebook.

"Our goal is that callers contact us by whatever means is most comfortable to them."

Bruce Campbell
CEO, MISS DIG 811

"Being the CEO of a small organization with 63 employees, I was impressed by the support and attention we received. They were in full support of helping us accomplish our goals, including whatever resources it took to do so. This is when I knew for sure that we were with the right company, but more importantly, that we were with the right people to bring our vision to life. We are very proud to have done what we did, and Cisco has been a great partner. It makes it easy for me to recommend them to others in our industry."

Bruce Campbell
CEO, MISS DIG 811

Start improving your customer's journey today

Turn your contact center into a strategic asset that optimizes your customer's journey and maximizes your business outcomes. Visit for more information. Or start the conversation now about how the Cisco Customer Journey Platform can benefit your business by contacting your Cisco Services sales representative or Cisco channel partner.