CASE STUDY:  
CIGNA HEALTHCARE

BENEFITS
CIGNA HealthCare became the first in the health insurance industry to offer round-the-clock coverage to subscribers, providing the company with a major competitive advantage.

- Maximized the usage of resources within the organization without negatively impacting staffing or service results
- Achieved accurate round-the-clock staffing and scheduling in the six target contact centers

ABOUT CIGNA HEALTHCARE
CIGNA is a global health services company dedicated to helping people improve their health, well-being and security. CIGNA Corporation’s operating subsidiaries provide an integrated suite of medical, dental, behavioral health, pharmacy and vision care benefits, as well as group life, accident and disability insurance, to more than 46 million people throughout the U.S. and around the world.

THE CHALLENGE
CIGNA HealthCare recently became the first national health services company to provide 24/7 customer service. Before this was achieved, however, the company needed to take steps to prepare its six target contact centers to respond to U.S. customer service telephone inquiries 24 hours per day, seven days a week, for all its medical, dental and pharmacy health benefits plans. In addition, CIGNA planned to dedicate several agents to proactively monitoring social networking sites and Web logs to find subscribers in need of assistance with their health plans. In those cases, it was intended that CIGNA service representatives could reach out to those individuals with an offer of help, with the goal of assisting them with their CIGNA health plans.

To accomplish these goals, CIGNA needed to expand its forecasting and scheduling to deliver accurate and consistent interval results that would allow the organization to move six of its contact centers from...
standard hours of operation to the new, round-the-clock coverage. Prior to the change, forecasting processes provided interval results from Monday to Saturday, on standard hours of operation (6:00 am to 1:00 am, EST) with a 21-day outlook. It was critical that the transition go smoothly; these contact centers receive an average of 100,000 service calls and e-mails per day, for a total of 20 million contacts a year.

THE SOLUTION

The company had been successfully using NICE IEX Workforce Management for its previous contact center schedule, but required assistance in implementing the changes that would meet the new demands. To prepare for the transition, NICE's trainers and professional services staff members helped CIGNA define their desired changes for the contact centers' schedules, and then helped map out the process for reaching those goals. IEX personnel were available for questions along the way, which ensured a successful implementation for the new round-the-clock coverage.

The forecast and schedule generation process was expanded to provide a 60-day outlook for 24/7 coverage. The goals of the company's new schedule were achieved with ease, because NICE IEX Workforce Management provides 30-minute interval data/results up to 24 hours per day, and offers features to allow cross-midnight scheduling/schedule generation. CIGNA was able to quickly identify call trends and patterns of the new schedule, rather than working via guesswork and trial-and-error. CIGNA was able to maximize their resources without negatively impacting service results. In addition, the IEX software provided solid interval data which allowed CIGNA to proactively determine round-the-clock staffing needs, helping the company make the transition quickly and accurately. Workforce Management's unique features allowed CIGNA to be first in the health care industry to successfully implement round-the-clock customer service coverage, which has proved to be an important competitive advantage.

THE CONCLUSION

Following the expansion of customer service contact hours at the six contact centers, CIGNA HealthCare became the first in the health care industry to allow subscribers to call with questions and issues at any time of the day. Both staffing levels and forecasting continued to be accurate, and the transition was extremely smooth.

NICE IEX Workforce Management provided the technology that made it possible for CIGNA to maximize the usage of resources within its organization without negatively impacting staffing or service results.

Finally, forecasting and staffing continued to remain accurate even after the transition to round-the-clock schedules/FTE requirements.

Since the change to round-the-clock staffing was implemented, CIGNA has received a flood of positive customer testimonials from grateful individuals who needed help after hours and during holidays, and received it—quickly and accurately. In addition, in the three months following implementation, CIGNA representatives monitoring social networking Web sites were able to initiate 50 outreach calls to individuals who were clearly in need of assistance.

Since the implementation, CIGNA has been recognized for call center operation customer satisfaction excellence for a fourth consecutive year under the J.D. Power and Associates Call Center Certification Program. J.D. Power cited “a strong commitment by CIGNA HealthCare’s call center operation to provide ‘An Outstanding Customer Service Experience’” as a criteria for bestowing the award. Brett Browchuk, senior vice president of CIGNA’s service operations organization, summed up the company’s continued pursuit of excellence noting that “Each year the challenge seems greater, and so we cannot be content to rest on our laurels.”