



Fonterra opts for cloud solution to modernize contact center

When dairy Co-operative Fonterra modernized its global contact center platform, Genesys Cloud and implementation partner Black Box did the job.

For many years, New Zealand's Fonterra ran its farmer and customer facing service centers on a collection of non-integrated, on-premise contact center solutions. When the Co-operative sized up digital channels to transform customer experience and operating efficiency, the chasm between traditional technology and possibilities in the cloud drove the selection of Genesys Cloud and implementation partner Black Box.

Now, with Genesys Cloud at the center of Fonterra's contact center operation, a critical piece in the dairy Co-operative's overall customer experience has moved from the dark ages to light years ahead.

DIVERGENT TECHNOLOGY OBSCURES SINGLE VIEW OF CUSTOMER

Fonterra produces 30% of globally traded dairy products and yet runs a lean contact center operation – around 70 seats – across four separate contact centers.

The biggest center, known as Farm Source, supports the Co-operative's around 10,000 New Zealand farms. During peak milk season Farm Source can manage up to 1,100 calls a day, and over the full season around 145,000 inbound calls and 70,000 outbound calls. Other call centers support Fonterra's Australian farmers, brands including Anchor and Mainland, and a credit control team.

PROJECT SNAPSHOT:

With Genesys Cloud managing every customer service center touchpoint, integration with Salesforce ensures the company fulfills its vision for a single view of the customer.

Client:	Fonterra Co-operative Group Limited
Industry:	Dairy processing and nutrition
Location:	Global operation, head office based in New Zealand
Company size:	Over 24,000 employees. Around 10,000 farms
Challenges:	Establish a scalable contact center platform, including Salesforce integration, to unite contact center operations Empower managers with management tools and information Set the stage for a single view of the customer
Platform:	Genesys Cloud 3

However, with each contact center operating independently, and the prospect of integration unlikely, Fonterra had to look past its on-premise platform to improve both customer and end-user experience.

UPGRADE DECISION LEADS TO CLOUD

Five market-leading providers were put through their paces, with Fonterra selecting Genesys Cloud 3 and implementation partner Black Box to spearhead the transformation of its enterprise service management capabilities. Moving to the cloud was the first step.

“Genesys Cloud delivers the omni-channel experience today’s customers expect, including the ability to remain innovative and providing the opportunity for farmers and customers to engage in multiple ways beyond voice communication,”

Fonterra’s Farm Source Service Centre manager **Melanie Tuck** said.

Developments supported by the new platform have reduced the number of inbound calls by 29%, enabling the Farm Source Service Center to move six full-time equivalents to higher value-add roles.

Combined with broad benefits delivered by cloud services – including simple licensing, continuous upgrades, and seamless feature enhancements – Fonterra’s Service Centers can flex and adapt call center technology with minimal development and support costs. Recent service additions include call-backs to suit farmer schedules, web chat, screen shares and co-browsing.

“Genesys Cloud, with Black Box, has transformed the way we work.”

SMARTER RESOURCING IMPROVES AGENT PRODUCTIVITY

Fonterra’s Service Center managers now work more proactively to support resourcing requirements, call flow changes, agent on-boarding, and queue management, driving efficiencies across the service center.

Specifically, managers use agent and call arrival data to make smarter rostering and scheduling decisions, confidently redeploying contact center staff to other parts of the business as call volumes ebb and flow. Managing this task is easier too, with rostering that once took two weeks of work now completed in just two hours a month.

On the training front, richer information ensures Fonterra team leaders identify struggling new hires for additional training. Agents themselves directly benefit from more information and control, trading shifts and lodging leave requests online. The net effect has boosted agent adherence to schedules by 10% and reduced calls overflowing to a third-party provider by 21.8% over the past year. Agents also said improved work-life balance made them happier in their jobs, easing the load on Fonterra workforce analysts.

Building on these successes, the Service Center has introduced a work-from-home policy to encourage more flexible working arrangements to further improve work-life balance.



CLOUD AGILITY BEEFS UP BUSINESS CONTINUITY

Newly nimble in the cloud, Fonterra's contact center operation manages unforeseen events with ease. A flood event in the South Island of New Zealand demonstrates the adaptability of its platform.

When rain bucketed down and calls from both farmers and internal stakeholders spiked, Fonterra was able to ring fence calls originating in the South Island, managing them in a single high-priority queue staffed by the company's most experienced agents. Additional self-service options diverted inbound calls to an after-hours provider, freeing up agents to assist farmers with urgent needs.

"The team responded to this event in the moment, prioritizing calls with farmers most affected while ensuring services to other farmers and customers were maintained,"

More recently, when pandemic measures came into play, Fonterra was able to shift its entire Service Centre to 'virtual' at-home working. At the same time, it launched a new 0800 online sales channel to handle sales orders and enquiries to support the retail stores network, which had refocused on product distribution, without missing a beat.

The move to at-home working has also helped to retain high-performing agents who otherwise would have left the business. Keeping these agents in the fold ensures Fonterra is covered for peak calls throughout the milk season.

"Having to move to remote working proved how agile the team could be and provided a very high-speed proof of concept in relation to the technology,"

RESULTS

- ▶ **Omni-channel capability** ensures farmers and customers engage in multiple ways beyond voice communication, while also providing continuous innovation opportunities
- ▶ **Developments supported** by the new platform reduced the number of inbound calls by 29%, enabling Fonterra's Farm Source Service Center to move six fulltime equivalents to higher value-add roles
- ▶ **Agent scheduling** is more precisely matched to call volumes, including variable contact center loads and big events, such as weather bombs
- ▶ **Agent adherence to schedules** improved 10% in just four months, in turn reducing the number of calls overflowing to a third-party provider by 21.8%
- ▶ **The Service Center's risk profile** has significantly reduced, thanks to tested and proven options assuring business continuity in the event of major unplanned events, such as floods and pandemics

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This work was delivered by customer experience and communications technology expert Pyrios, now operating as Black Box.

