CASE STUDY

COLONY BRANDS LEVELS UP ITS CUSTOMER SERVICE WITH UNYMIRA

AT A GLANCE

Company: Colony Brands
www.colonybrands.com

Industry: Retail

Key figures:
Agents: 2,400 at peak
Call Centers: 4

Products used: Knowledge Center

Challenges
- Homegrown system with 961 text-only MS Word documents
- Search required agents to type exact match terms only. Even small typos or synonyms would return no results.
- Agents expected an instant, Google-like search
- Long handling times (AHT) due to limited search capability
- High volume of duplicate and outdated information
- Multiple documents created on one topic, each for different support levels
- 74% of the business is incoming calls
- Inconsistency of answers and service quality among agents
- Peak season mean onboarding up to double the number of regular agents

Requirements/Goals
- Faster, more accurate search engine
- Easy and intuitive user interface for agents
- Reduce call volume to the help desk
- Increase first call resolution rate
- Reduce customer effort (hold time, call backs)
- Increase agent contributions to articles
- Shorten and improve feedback process
- Built-in reporting and analytics

Why Unymira
- Knowledge Center interface was intuitive and easy to use and understand
- Exceeded feature requirements and expectations
- Integrated e-learning was important since they were also considering LMS options
- Competitive pricing compared to other tools

Solutions/Benefits
- Rolled out Knowledge Center April 2019 to all call centers
- Reduced internal documents by 59% from 961 to 395
- Information easier to maintain, less errors and much faster to search
- Conditional documents were a game changer. Were able to merge 18 different documents into 1 for example.
- Editorial process automated with custom review and approval workflows
- They now receive an average of 45 agent feedback responses per week leading to continual knowledge sharing and improvement.
- High agent adoption and satisfaction with Knowledge Center

About Colony Brands

—— Founded in 1926 and headquartered in Monroe, Wisconsin, Colony Brands is a successful, multifaceted enterprise consisting of numerous retail brands, operational support companies and affiliate businesses. Through catalog and online shopping, Colony Brands offers a wide range of products including apparel, home décor, outdoor, health and beauty, electronics, toys and food.

Powerful Search is Key

—— Colony Brands' biggest pain point was the search feature of their existing knowledge base. Having been in business for nearly a century, Colony's homegrown system eventually became a victim of their success. As the business grew along with the volume of data, the simple "Find" function which required exact match terms (e.g. "how to fix" v.s. "Howto fix") became the source of longer call times and frustration. With no error tolerance, auto-suggest or auto-complete, service representatives were required to type the full exact document name to find what was needed. That means searching for "Return Policy 2019" would yield zero results if the document was just "Return Policy." Average handling time and customer effort was creeping upwards as callers had to hold or be called back at a later time.

Being a mail-order and e-commerce company with no physical stores, delivering excellent customer experiences is critical for repeat business and customer satisfaction. Colony Brands recognized the need opportunity for improvement and quickly prioritized the change. This impacted both the end customer as well as agents who expected a "Google-like search" in their business tools.

Knowledge Center offers the same simple yet powerful search including tolerance of misspellings, synonyms and incomplete phrases. Moreover, it actively learns from user behavior, constantly the improving autocomplete and auto suggest features. This led to a dramatic cut in search time, effort and call handling time, not to mention much happier agents.

Streamlined Workflows & Feedback

—— As the volume of business and agents grew, their internal editorial process became unwieldy. While emailing MS Word™ documents or even giving physical documents to supervisors worked initially, it became error-prone and time consuming. Agents and management have been equally satisfied, and Knowledge Center will enable the company to move towards a more KCS-like knowledge management paradigm.

"Knowledge Center's feedback feature is the greatest update!"

Call center agents

The Colony Brands team immediately took advantage of Knowledge Center's custom and automated workflows to digitize their editorial process. Documents are now regularly resubmitted and checked to ensure they are accurate and up-to-date. In addition, the ability for agents to instantly submit feedback while viewing an article has also been a game changer. In the past, feedback went through up to six people before the editor. Today, editors receive an average of 40 to 50 submissions a week. They are more effective, and agents are thrilled that their suggestions are quickly reviewed and implemented leading to more mutual appreciation, employee satisfaction and better document quality.

59% Reduction in Documents

—— The transition to a professional knowledge management system meant deciding what to do with over 900 documents that had accumulated over the years. Unymira's on-site consultants developed a migration plan and recommended first manually reviewing existing material before migration to avoid potentially importing duplicate, outdated and low-quality documents.

Colony Brands reduced internal documents by 59% from 961 to 395

Colony Brands reduced their customer support documents by 59% from 961 to 395 while simultaneously increasing the quality of the remaining ones. Agents immediately benefited from the drastically faster search, document quality and accessibility. Moreover, Knowledge Center supports multimedia within documents meaning images, videos and charts could finally be added.

About Unymira

—— Unymira is a provider of customer service and enterprise knowledge management software solutions. It transforms how businesses engage with customers and fosters customer success. Its knowledge management platform centralizes internal knowledge, captures new customer service insights and empowers agents to provide better service. This creates a future-proof foundation for any customer service strategy to deploy chatbots, voice assistants, self-service and more.