

# Call Center Times

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## A Case Study

**MediCall Relieves Headaches For Health Insurers And Overworked Nursing Staffs Through Echopass Contact Center Services**

### **CHALLENGE**

Create world-class contact center capability for a company providing outsourced inbound/outbound nursing communication services to U.S. health plan customers Support VoIP (Voice over IP), web chat and email capability at Philippine contact center to service U.S. insurance plan members, patients and medical groups

Ensure seamless and accurate data collection, reporting and integration, while improving patient care at lower cost



## **SOLUTION**

Echopass EchoSystem™

## **BENEFITS**

On-Demand, Web-based service eliminates upfront capital investment  
Ability to add agent capacity and feature functionality as needed in response to market changes  
Fully integrated, out-of-box IVR (Interactive Voice Response), ACD (Automatic Call Distribution), and CTI (Computer Telephony Integration) with screen pops  
HIPPA Compliance through Echopass Network Operations Center data security

## **RESULTS**

Better patient follow up and care, with labor costs reduced up to 75%  
Nurses relieved from time consuming data gathering and administrative tasks  
Fast feature deployment and service additions meet changing market needs  
Medicall growth accompanied by 5 fold increase of Echopass services over 18 months

## **TECHNOLOGY PARTNERS**

Genesys  
MCI

## **Background**

There is a chronic condition plaguing the U.S. healthcare industry, with no cure in sight: the shortage of qualified

nurses. For the first time ever, The U.S. Department of Labor, in its February 2004 *Monthly Labor Review*, cited registered nursing as the top occupation in terms of job growth through the year 2012. Yet according to National Council of State Boards of Nursing, the number of candidates taking the NCLEX-RN Exam, the national licensing exam for registered nurses, actually decreased by 10% from over the last decade, declining to only 87,085 in 2004.

In response to this growing problem, MediCall, a California-based healthcare services company, was formed in 2003. MediCall is dedicated to providing world-class communications services to hospitals, health plans and physician group practices who are facing increasing challenges due to overworked nursing staffs, growing patient loads, and ever-more-stringent reporting and compliance requirements.

MediCall was designed to be a professional extension of the health network for labor-challenged providers and insurers, as well as for pharmaceutical companies and medical device manufacturers requiring medically-trained patient interaction. MediCall's founders understood that by

creating a contact center, their company could supply highly skilled, well-educated, experienced healthcare professionals who would address routine inbound/outbound patient communications. The services would run the gamut from new member welcome calls, health risk assessments and compliance calls to disease and case management support services, patient satisfaction follow-ups and more—duties that in the past have often fallen on nurses to complete.

## **Understanding the Requirements**

MediCall's business model is both innovative and sorely needed. In order for it to work, however, two key elements were necessary. "It was imperative for us to have access to a ready supply of qualified, experienced, English-speaking healthcare professionals," noted John Chess, CEO of MediCall. "The other was a top-notch communication center infrastructure."

To satisfy the first requirement, MediCall's executive team partnered with Ayala Systems Technology, Inc., a subsidiary of Ayala Corporation, one of the oldest and largest public companies in the Philippines. By leveraging Ayala's extensive resources, MediCall was able to assemble a

Philippine-based pool of certified and experienced nurses, physicians and pharmacists. All of MediCall's contact center personnel have a minimum of ten years' English education in school. They also are required by the company to take courses in American English and business idioms to ensure even greater fluency with MediCall's specialized work.

For the second requirement—a world-class communications platform—Chess and his technical team, led by VP/Operations Jeff Williams, drew up a stringent list of voice and online service specifications. "Because communications are our lifeblood, it was critical for us to find a technical infrastructure that would be available 24/7/365, guaranteed," Williams said. "We also needed voice, web chat and routed email options for patient contact, with the ability to add other capabilities in the future. Finally, we needed to be able to integrate our platform with existing customer applications, from Customer Relationship Management (CRM) to Electronic Medical Record (EMR) and Medical Practice Management (MPM) systems."

## **On-Demand Drove the Choice of Echopass**

Because in 2003 MediCall was



a start-up operation, an on-demand, web-based contact center platform made sense since it would eliminate the large upfront capital layout required to purchase hardware and software. But there were other advantages of on-demand as well. "Using a hosted system would allow us to add capacity and features whenever needed," Chess noted.

With these imperatives in mind, MediCall's executives researched various on-demand contact center alternatives. After narrowing their search to 3-4 providers, they finally settled on Echopass and its EchoSystem™ contact center service integration platform.

"Echopass' EchoSystem is a complete, full-featured and end-to-end contact center solution," noted Williams. "Echopass guarantees the availability of all its integrated services, which gave us a great degree of confidence. Echopass also partners with Genesys Telecommunications for its interaction management software, which assured us we would be getting a first-class environment."

**HIPPA Compliance Assured**  
Williams also noted that the location of Echopass' Network Operations Center (NOC) solved a key regulatory

concern—one that both MediCall and its customers would face. "According to the mandates of the U.S. Government's Health Information Portability and Accountability Act, better known as HIPAA, housing medical records offshore is a problem," he stated. "Echopass' NOC is located in Salt Lake City, Utah, which meant that all data would remain within the continental U.S. As long as our Manila-based agents had no ability to print out or otherwise save or duplicate a record on their end, we could assure total HIPAA compliance for our clients."

In February 2003, MediCall went live with Echopass and its services. One of its first major customers was a home diabetes supply company in Florida. Using MediCall, the company was able to provide callers with health and lifestyle management education, as well as ready information on nutrition and other daily diabetic concerns.

#### **End to End Integration**

Integrating MediCall's Philippine contact center with Echopass' stateside operations center went smoothly, according to Williams and Chess. Training for the nurses who would staff MediCall's workstations was also a straightforward

process, mostly centering on how to work from MediCall developed and customer-approved scripts.

"I can honestly say that outside of investing in our own infrastructure, we couldn't have a greater sense of ownership in our call center technology than with Echopass," Chess says. "Recently one of our healthcare clients needed to conduct a public health survey and had already begun advertising an 800 number and web address in the New York area. We had to very quickly establish the voice and email routes to accommodate this project. Echopass did seven days' worth of work in three. They saved us *and* our client."

The Echopass EchoSystem service integration platform combines best-of-breed technologies from across the telecom and call center industries in a unified, flexible, and affordable call and contact center solution, delivered as a service over the Internet. In addition to inbound and outbound call processing, Echopass' integrations include IVR (Interactive Voice Response), ACD (Automatic Call Distribution), CTI (Computer Telephony Integration), database screen pops, universal queuing, and routed email. And because Echopass is VoIP-based, calls are placed over the Internet at

remarkably low rates.

Chess also states that in MediCall's new business presentations, all it takes is one call to the company's Philippine contact center to make believers of a prospective customer's nursing staff. "Nurses are understandably concerned that their patients will be well cared for. After hearing the quality of the phone call via Echopass and the professionalism of our staff, they tell us our services are superior to their own internal systems. Our demonstration never fails to produce a "Wow."

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