TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMPANY USES RCA TO IMPROVE AND ENHANCE BUSINESS ANALYST ROLE

Bell

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OVERVIEW

As Canada's largest communications company, Bell Canada is committed to delivering an outstanding customer experience, giving careful consideration to each step of the customer order from the initial sales enquiry through to the final billing.

Maintaining and consistently improving internal customer-related business systems is imperative to maintaining a competitive advantage. The customer service effort is supported by Professional Business Analysts (BA), who solve customer interface-related problems, which requires effectiveness and speed when recognizing and defining customer-related problems and providing effective solution recommendations. To improve service to its internal customers, the Western Region Billing and IT group launched a pilot project to prove how root cause analysis could help to:

- Maintain and increase internal confidence in the way Business Analysts solve complex organizational problems.
- Improve internal confidence in IT systems and IT-related decision making.
- Improve accuracy of the metrics reports for the company's billing integration system.
- Avoid spending money on billing applications and software that are not providing a desired ROI.
- Review other scorecard metrics reports in order to proactively address potential problems in other business areas.

CHALLENGE

Any company's competitiveness and market share can be impacted by inefficient customer billing and the costs associated with trying to fix it. By solving problems that impact customers as well as revenue flow, Business Analysts play an important role in helping Bell Canada remain competitive and achieve its business goals.

BAs assess the degree of significance and organizational impact to determine the best approach or degree of analysis. Typical business problems encountered include: lost revenues, increased operating costs, and decreased market share.

Common challenges in the problem-solving process include: lack of resources to provide input and support, competing priorities, tight deadlines, 'just get it done' requests, incomplete or inaccurate understanding of problems, and lack of agreement among stakeholders. To augment the BA's tool kit, in early 2009 the team initiated a pilot project applying RCA to Bell's billing integration system, which seemed underutilized. A review of metrics reports showed a problem redefinition was in order: "Unable to determine the actual percentage of orders entered into the billing integration system."

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SOLUTION

Utilizing newly learned skills from RCA training, along with cause and effect charting software, Business Analysts applied the RCA methodology. With consulting from our RCA experts, the following outcomes were achieved:

Step 1: Define the Problem
- The problem was accurately defined.
- Before starting a formal analysis, other problems that needed to be examined were realized.
- Stakeholders were aligned, creating better working relationships during the analysis.
- The significance of the problem was clearly identified, so the appropriate attention, priority and resources were dedicated.

Step 2: Create a Causal Understanding of the Problem
- The organization understood all the reasons WHY the problem was occurring. This resulted in a broader and more logical understanding of the problem, which in turn facilitated a better overall problem analysis.
- Using cause and effect charting software, the RCA team was able to visually represent the logic and provide just the right amount of
- information to help identify solutions.
- The problem analysis outcomes were enhanced because identified causes were supported by real evidence

Step 3: Identify Effective Solutions
- More solution ideas were generated because a structured brainstorming activity led to solutions that were directly tied to the
- specific causes.
- Solutions were assessed and selected using a solutions criteria check. This ensured that solutions would be targeted and effective.
- The ability to demonstrate the logic behind each proposed solution helps facilitate participant alignment and efficiently yield a comprehensive set of effective solutions.

Step 4: Implement the Best Solutions
- The Team felt confident about identified solutions, so also felt confident about solution implementation and effectiveness.
- A problem sponsor was identified and solution implementation was assigned to specific people.
- Next steps for solution implementation and monitoring were clear and well supported.

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BENEFITS

The RCA pilot project provided Bell with specific business benefits, including:

- Improved confidence in IT systems.
- Enhanced confidence in the problem-solving capabilities of Business Analysts due to formal training in Root Cause Analysis.
- Enhanced ability to make cost-effective IT decisions regarding billing system applications.
- A systematic way for Business Analysts to engage people in the process of solving collective problems in a timely manner.
- Enhanced ability to generate buy-in from stakeholders and decision makers.
- A strong business case for allocating appropriate resources for each problem analysis and solution implementation.
- Inspiration and impetus to proactively apply RCA in other business areas.

BELL CANADA

Bell is Canada's largest communications company, providing communication services to residential and business customers in Canada. The company's services include local and long distance phone service, mobile cellular phone capabilities, wireless and high-speed Internet, direct-to-home satellite and VDSL television, IP-broadband services, and information and communications technology services. Bell utilizes Professional Business Analysts to help achieve its business goals and maintain its market share. The role of a Business Analyst is to analyze the needs of clients to help identify business problems and propose solutions.

For more information on Bell go to: http://www.bce.ca/en/aboutbce/

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