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Call center industry not participating in the recession

Akron, Ohio, August 25, 2009 – With national and local unemployment rates growing month after month, it must seem to job-seekers that every industry is shrinking instead of hiring. However, there is an industry that, especially here in our region, is seeing job growth despite the current recession.

According to [a recent study](#) by CB Richard Ellis (CBRE)'s Labor Analytics Group, call center jobs in the United States grew by 17,000 in the first five months of 2009. In addition, overseas call center job growth has slipped slightly.

Many call center companies in the Northeast Ohio area continue to hire workers while companies in other industries tighten their belts, waiting for the economy to bounce back. For example, [InfoCision Management Corporation](#) has recently ramped up hiring to meet client needs. The Akron, Ohio based call center provider has expanded many of its locations throughout Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia and added nearly 1,000 jobs over the last three years. So what about the call center industry has allowed it to remain somewhat vibrant while other industries are stagnant?

“Now more than ever, companies are realizing the importance of providing excellent customer service to retain their current customers,” said InfoCision Executive Vice President [Mike Langenfeld](#). “It costs less to keep a current client than it does to go out and try to get a new one. There are less consumers out there looking to make purchases than there used to be, so as a company you have to protect your current customer base. You do that by providing top-notch customer service – in person, over the phone, and through every avenue through which customers want to communicate.”

With less consumer dollars to go around, the ability to keep customers coming back is instrumental in helping companies remain viable. The key is creating the best possible customer experience by answering questions thoroughly and honestly and resolving issues quickly and completely to build customer confidence and maximize the lifetime value of customer relationships. The better the customer's experience, the better the chance that the customer will be a customer tomorrow, the next day and for years to come.

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“When it comes to the American market, American contact centers have proven to provide increased quality over offshore centers,” said InfoCision Senior Vice President of Corporate Affairs [Steve Brubaker](#). “At the mere mention of offshore call centers, people will inevitably bring up stories of bad interactions they’ve experienced. There are simply language and culture barriers that are very hard to overcome, and can be frustrating for the customer.”

Many consumers become increasingly upset when they have what they believe is a simple problem, but a language barrier prevents them from getting it resolved in a timely manner. Employing [quality domestic call centers](#) to represent your company has become a distinct competitive advantage for firms that have competitors utilizing overseas call centers where agents answer the phone in thick accents.

Most companies have been aware of the difference in quality between domestic and offshore call centers. Still, many operate or contract with overseas call centers simply because the cost of operating those call centers is lower, based largely upon lower wages commanded by overseas workers. In fact, some companies that utilize offshore call centers have even offered their customers the opportunity to speak to agents from the U.S., but make them pay a monthly fee for that service.

However, many companies are now realizing that most of the promised cost savings are a short-lived benefit. In fact, several companies have brought their business back to the states because the loss of customers and profits has outpaced any operational savings, and now they must focus their efforts on repairing broken relationships.

“Companies that make customer service a top priority are willing to pay more for their contact centers, because they understand that the long term return on that investment is happier customers,” said Brubaker. “It seems like more companies are beginning to think this way, and that’s the reason why call center job creation has remained high despite the down economy. We’re very proud to be part of an industry that is helping provide jobs to American workers while the rest of the economy is stagnant.”

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In 2009, there have been several examples of high profile companies moving call center jobs back into the United States from overseas in an effort to improve customer service and reduce customer complaints stemming from poor interactions. With unemployment in many regions within the U.S. at very high levels, the number of qualified, available workers has risen recently and companies are looking to take advantage of this and put these people to work.

So despite the current economic conditions and gloomy unemployment outlook, the call center industry is at least one option for job-seekers who desperately need jobs and benefits to provide for their families.

About InfoCision

Founded in 1982, InfoCision Management Corporation is the second largest privately held teleservice company and is a leader in customer care services, commercial sales and marketing for a variety of Fortune 100 companies and smaller businesses. InfoCision is also a leading provider of inbound and outbound marketing for nonprofit, religious and political organizations. Headquartered in Akron, Ohio, InfoCision operates 30 call centers at 12 locations in Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. InfoCision has been named one of the top ten best employers in Ohio by the state chamber of commerce. For more information on InfoCision please visit www.infocision.com.

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