

COMMITMENT TO CUSTOMER SERVICE MIRRORS HISTORY OF PRODUCT LEADERSHIP

ACIST Medical Systems Partners with Omega to Define and Implement Winning Customer Experience Management Strategy



Market leader in contrast delivery systems for cardiology and radiology has discovered that exceeding customer expectations for service quality is a lot easier – when you take the time to learn what customers want.



In pursuit of the perfect image.

COMPANY

ACIST Medical Systems, Inc.

CHALLENGE

Establish a process for gathering customer feedback to better understand customer needs and expectations of the service and support provided.

SOLUTION

Partner with Omega Management Group Corp. to implement a Customer Experience Management (CEM) strategy to continually deliver services that exceed customer expectations.

RESULTS



- 82% renewal rate on service contracts
- Achieved a consistent turnaround of depot/factory repair at industry standards.
- Consistently high rankings for customer satisfaction, resulting in earning Omega's coveted NorthFace ScoreBoard AwardSM for 2010 and 2009.
- Field Service & Customer Support organization received Customer Experience Management Certified Professional (CEMPROTM) status in 2011 from the Customer Relationship Management Institute (CRMI), Omega's strategic training partner.
- ACIST is the first company in North America to be a NorthFace ScoreBoard Award recipient and also CEMPRO certified.

Filling the Knowledge Gap

ACIST Medical Systems is dedicated to helping clinicians provide the best patient care possible by delivering innovative solutions that aid in obtaining quality images with greater ease and control during every procedure, in every case.

For a company respected around the world for its innovative contrast delivery systems, ACIST desired precise knowledge of how well it was meeting customer expectations. So, with the help of Omega, the company did something about it, and has become more customer centric -- and financially stronger -- in the process.

“Our key driver in seeking a customer satisfaction solution was, quite simply, to gain a better understanding of our customer needs” says Kristi Timmer, senior director of global service for ACIST. “First and foremost, we needed to understand our customers’ expectations, and perceptions of service. We had no formal process for gathering customer feedback on the services and support we provided. We wanted to better understand our customers’ key drivers and hear directly from our customers what is important to them and how we were performing in those areas in order to implement customer satisfaction solutions.”

Evolution of a Customer Care Program

ACIST, and its parent Bracco, began gathering customer satisfaction data back in 2001. These surveys focused on the performance of sales reps, and did not delve into customer satisfaction with service incident transactions. Kristi and senior management realized that was an important gap in the customer experience management (CEM) area.

To augment resources and expertise in this arena, ACIST set out to find a specialist in the field, and selected Omega Management Group Corp. as their CEM strategy partner in 2008.

“We felt that it was important to utilize an organization that specialized in customer satisfaction surveys,” Timmer says. “We don’t have the resources or bandwidth to take on this task internally and felt that customers would be more open with and confident in providing feedback to an external organization. We chose Omega because it was highly recommended by a consultant/CEM expert whom I had worked with over the past several years.”

ACIST had specific and highly measurable goals to achieve, with Omega’s help:

1. Obtain immediate feedback from customers
2. Obtain baseline results and a general knowledge of how they are performing in each key area based on Omega’s 5-point NorthFace ScoreBoard AwardSM scale
3. Define gaps or areas of weakness in service/support per customer transactions
4. Implement plans to address and improve the company’s baseline results.



“I didn’t need to sell the CEM program – it sold itself,” says Kristi Timmer, senior director of global service. “Management was impressed with having immediate feedback on specific transactions and comprehensive summaries on how we’re doing in key accounts, territories, products and processes. Comments from customers really hit home.”

Omega: Ensuring Value to Customers

Omega’s CEM - DNA Playbook Strategy outlines key principles and processes associated with improving revenue and profits by developing and implementing a successful CEM strategy. The CEM Strategy Playbook explains exactly how an organization goes about consistently exceeding customer expectations by proactively “managing” -- in four phases -- every interaction they have with a company’s organization.

By proactively managing the customer experience, Omega has helped ACIST understand how customers feel emotionally about interactions with the company’s service and support staff, whether this is onsite at a customer location or through ACIST’s call center. As a result, ACIST has achieved its objective of consistently exceeding customer expectations, as demonstrated by being a two-time recipient of Omega’s prestigious NorthFace ScoreBoard AwardSM, pre-

sented annually for excellence in customer service and support.

Focusing on Service Transactions

ACIST's current focus is on U.S. customer transaction surveys in five areas pertaining to the service and support of contrast delivery systems for cardiology and radiology:

- Installation and training
- Follow-up visits by product specialists
- Customer support
- Field service
- In-house (depot/factory) service.

The company has a call center and a service/repair center at its corporate office in Eden Prairie, Minn. "Corporate service provides domestic and global support," Kristi says. "My team supports our colleagues at ACIST Europe in The Netherlands and ACIST Asia in Singapore, who ultimately provide regional support to our distributors and end customers at the country level. Corporate also supports distributors in Canada, Japan and Latin America. We handle field service directly in the U.S. and also provide coverage via a third party."

Now that ACIST has gathered experience and insight from its implementation in the U.S, Kristi plans to expand the use of customer transaction surveys. "As a global organization, ACIST needs a service foundation built on common attributes and performance measurements," Kristi says. "Launching surveys within our European and Asia Pacific organizations will allow for standardization in gathering customer feedback. It will also give us insight into what is important for customers within different regions."

Customer Feedback Has Produced Bottom-Line Benefits

ACIST has found that the most valuable measurable benefits of the Omega CEM program are the actual survey results, including baseline at program launch then monthly and year over year. "These results help us measure and improve performance," Kristi says. "Our baseline average across all categories in 2009 was a 4.4 out of Omega's maximum score of 5.0 using the NorthFace ScoreBoard Award methodology. This score increased to 4.5 in 2010. Omega has determined that responses over 4.0 fall into the 'Loyalty Zone,' so we feel very good about our survey results."

Omega's surveys are conducted regularly and the resulting "Action Alerts" – triggered by urgent positive or negative customer comments – enable ACIST to learn about customer satisfaction issues as soon as a survey has been completed. "Our managers get these alerts and have the opportunity to quickly address issues with our customers," Kristi says.

A key service metric for any organization is response time. ACIST has learned that this is the most important thing to customers. "Omega survey results and customer comments indicated a limitation in this area," says Kristi. "We formulated customer satisfaction plans to improve responsiveness timeliness. Both field service onsite response and in-house (depot/factory) repair turnaround times reduced month over month in 2010 – in house repair by over 50% at year end. We are proud to report that all of this is paying off as service contract renewals are up to 82 percent."

"Building a customer-centric organization is a key priority," says Timmer. "Omega has helped us promote service and customer care both externally to our customer base and internally at all functional levels within the organization."

Expansion of CEM Program

ACIST is moving beyond transactional surveys and plans to implement the full CEM strategy offered by Omega. "I want to take it to the next level," Kristi says. "I feel it is important to bring this program full circle by engaging employees more fully in creating loyal customers. Working with Omega's CEMPROSM (Certified CEM Professional) program, we have continued to develop employees' customer relationship skills to further highlight ACIST's commitment to customer service."



ACIST's Field Service and Customer Support organization has received CEMPRO certification in 2011. More than 90% of those in this group have successfully completed the training. Some of ACIST's senior service managers plan to enroll in the CEMPRO Advocate training in 2011 as well.

About ACIST Medical Systems

ACIST Medical Systems, Inc., (www.acist.com) a Bracco Group company, is a pioneer and market leader of advanced contrast imaging system technology in the fields of cardiology and radiology with a global clinical presence in over 40 countries.

ACIST is dedicated to helping clinicians provide the best patient care possible by delivering innovative solutions that aid in obtaining quality images with greater ease and control during every procedure, in every case. ACIST Medical Systems is relentlessly “in pursuit of the perfect image” through continuous research and development of new products and technologies – supporting today's needs and anticipating those of tomorrow.



- 200+ employees,
- 40+ countries
- Annual revenue \$100M+
- Design, manufacturing, sales and service of contrast delivery systems used in cardiology and radiology imaging

About Omega Management Group

Since 1984, the Omega Management Group Corp. (www.omegascoreboard.com) has been a recognized expert in developing and implementing customer experience management strategy (CEM) programs that lead to increased product and service revenue and profits.

Services include customer and employee surveys, employee incentive programs, employee CEM certification training, in customer relationships, benchmark research, competitive analysis, consulting, key account retention strategies, win-back strategies and marketing of customer satisfaction results to stakeholders and the marketplace.

Established in 2000, the **NorthFace ScoreBoard Award** is presented annually to companies who, as rated solely by their own customers, achieved excellence in customer satisfaction during the prior calendar year.

Omega's methodology measures customer satisfaction and loyalty levels for all clients on a 5-point scale four times during the year in such categories as technical support, field service, customer service and account management.



- Part of a consortium that includes Customer Relationship Management Institute – CRMI -- (education & training), and Anthony & Alexander Group, LLC (CEM Consulting);
- Industry verticals: Healthcare, Medical, Manufacturing, Technology, Services, Supply/Distribution

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