

A&E FACTORY SERVICE

Company Background

A global manufacturer and marketer of major home appliances with annual sales of \$13 billion operating 13 manufacturing locations throughout North America.

Their products include washers and dryers, built-in ovens, countertop appliances, dishwashers, freezers, microwave ovens, ranges, cooktops, refrigerators, water dispensers and air purifiers.

Reasons for choosing A&E

- Coverage to provide quality service to national customer base
- Repair technicians trained in creating positive customer experience
- Technical support to help increase percentage of first-time completes

Original Equipment Manufacturer Case Study Collaboration drives new efficiencies and sustains a superior customer experience.

Challenge and Goals

For years, the manufacturer had a wholly-owned service arm, comprised of employees as well as independent contractors. As their business and customer base grew, managing a larger service fleet became more and more complex and expensive, both in manpower and in parts sourcing. The decision was made to outsource their repair service and focus on manufacturing while assuring that their customers continued to receive the high standard of service to which they were accustomed.

Implementation Process

The A&E solution offered experience, national coverage, and an understanding of the importance of customer satisfaction and brand loyalty. Converting from a wholly-owned to an outsourced service arm—while assuring the customer experience remained equal if not better in quality—required a tremendous amount of collaboration. The A&E and manufacturer teams worked together on all processes, procedures, training, and standards to assure a seamless transfer.

Teamwork

To improve the repair process, A&E and the manufacturer are in constant interaction regarding ongoing initiatives. Together they work to solve current problems, proactively prevent potential future problems, and identify new business opportunities.

Such initiatives have addressed issues in a wide range of areas, including:

- Claims processing
- Systems
- Technician processes
- Customer service resolution

The result is a superior customer repair experience constantly subject to review and improvement.



Training

Training is also a team effort between the A&E and manufacturer's training staffs. Training includes:

- Product updates are delivered in person, and via DVD and training bulletins
- New product training, driven by the manufacturer
- Customer relationship training, driven by A&E (how to interact with customers)

In addition, A&E technicians can contact technical support personnel at A&E thus increasing the likelihood of a first-time complete and a positive customer experience.

Call Centers

The manufacturer manages their own call center, which is fully integrated into A&E's scheduling and dispatching system.

Customer Experience

Increased customer satisfaction translates directly to deeper brand loyalty:

- Product feedback from the field gave a better overall picture to the manufacturer than from smaller sources whose methods & training varied

Growth opportunities

A&E assigned a dedicated account manager to focus on the manufacturer's business. Significant time is spent interfacing with all levels of their management, to identify mutually beneficial business opportunities. This is a proactive approach that improves the customer experience, generates loyalty to the manufacturer's brand, and creates growth opportunities for both organizations.

Conclusion

Through highly qualified and uniformed technicians, flexible scheduling, and an increased first-time complete rate, the overall customer complaint rate has been reduced. The manufacturer also enjoys access to the resources and technology to follow up and resolve issues on a nationwide basis.

A&E now runs more than 50% of the manufacturer's total service calls. By no longer having to manage a service fleet the manufacturer realized multiple efficiencies, and enjoys significantly decreased operational expenses—yet retains control over the all-important customer experience.



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