



Case Study

Government

Project Fresh Start: Helping Gulf Coast Residents Rebuild After Hurricane Katrina



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Nasdaq:TTEC

INDUSTRY **Government**

THE ORGANIZATION **A U.S. government services agency that helps citizens recover from natural and man-made disasters.**

LINES OF BUSINESS **Disaster Preparedness, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery**
Terrorism Preparedness
Emergency Management Information Portal

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES **More than 2,500 full-time employees and 4,000 standby disaster assistance employees.**

PROGRAM **Inbound inquiries from hurricane survivors requesting government grants and assistance.**

ESTIMATED TELETECH FULL-TIME EQUIVALENTS (FTES) **Tiered staffing of up to 4,000 customer service representatives (CSRs) in the following TeleTech locations:**

- _ Enfield, CT
- _ North Hollywood, CA
- _ San Diego, CA
- _ Birmingham, AL
- _ Deland, FL
- _ Sergeant Bluff, IA

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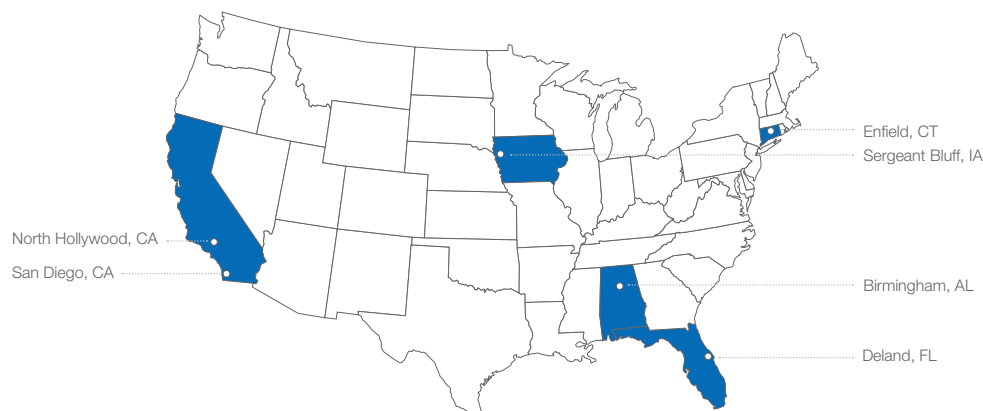
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Business Challenge

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, one of the deadliest and costliest U.S. natural disasters, several hundred thousand Gulf Coast residents were displaced from their homes. The federal agency tasked with helping the victims of the storm needed to quickly and rapidly respond to requests for assistance, but did not have the internal resources to deploy contact center operations, facilities, technology, or agents to accommodate the surge in incoming calls.

Solution

TeleTech's efforts helped make it possible for Gulf Coast residents to begin the process of filing claims to gain government aid for their losses. Two factors made TeleTech's achievements remarkable: speed and scope. Within one week, TeleTech had six contact centers up and running, hiring and training 500 agents to take calls from hurricane victims, a number that would grow to 4,000 at the project's highest point. TeleTech created two new contact centers in San Diego, California and Sergeant Bluff, Iowa especially for the program. TeleTech customer management centers (CMCs) in Birmingham, Alabama; Deland, Florida; Enfield, Connecticut; and North Hollywood, California – were already in existence.



TeleTech® OnDemand™ Technology

TeleTech's On Demand™ technology platform was critical to the implementation of the project. TeleTech® GigaPOP™ centralized data centers and Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) network delivered the necessary contact center infrastructure to each location, enabling TeleTech to manage six centers centrally from Denver and North Hollywood. A completely dedicated and secure LAN/WAN network infrastructure was installed in each location. Included in the infrastructure plan was the provisioning of dedicated circuits to the secure data center and the command center for live client enterprise access.

Designing the network was the first step; the next step involved acquiring the components needed to build it. The technical staff spent hours on the phone with vendors, determining the availability of parts and coordinating shipping schedules. Acquiring components in the right order was critical, as certain parts were needed in the early stages before the technical staff could complete the network build-out.

By using a dedicated circuit approach, TeleTech was able to supply workstations and headsets to each site in order to make them operational. Had it been necessary to supply



switches and routers, TeleTech would not have been able to get the contact centers up and running in the time allotted. Therefore, the OnDemand™ technology approach enabled TeleTech's IT staff to install the equipment and applications in near record time.

To ensure deadlines were met, TeleTech chartered a plane and flew the technical staff and network components from center to center, allowing them to complete installations in five states within four days. In addition, an interface with the government agency's network was created that worked in conjunction with its call management system. The dedicated nature of this newly installed network created some immediate challenges with TeleTech's enterprise back-office systems. Working around the clock, TeleTech created operational interconnects between its timekeeping, workforce management, quality assurance, and database systems.

People and Processes

Communication was a major factor because six separate locations were involved, as well as the overall project management team. TeleTech designated an overall project manager at headquarters in Denver, Colorado and a project lead at each contact center. Representatives from the government client were also based at each center. To facilitate communications, TeleTech held daily phone conferences to review all issues, such as hiring, media, or reporting as well as critical path issues – those items that had to be completed each day in order to make total program goals happen. Calls were held twice daily and cut back to once each day as activities progressed.

In the early days of the project, TeleTech garnered extensive coverage in print and broadcast media in markets where the contact centers were located. Much of the coverage focused on the fact that TeleTech was recruiting customer service representatives (CSRs) to help Katrina victims. Simultaneously, advertising was run in newspapers and on television stations in each market to further drive recruiting. Because media activity affected recruiting, the headquarters team had to keep the centers informed about daily coverage as well as paid advertising. TeleTech purchased space in 20 print and broadcast media outlets around the country as well as on popular Internet sites Monster.com, HotJobs, CareerBuilder, and Craigslist.

As part of the project, TeleTech needed to develop a security plan to help ensure confidentiality, protection of consumer data, compliance with the Privacy Act of 1946, and compliance with requirements set forth in the Technical Agreement provided by the client. These guidelines were reviewed and approved by the client and distributed to all operations leaders and agency customers in positions of responsibility.

Building and Recruiting

TeleTech had four CMCs available to handle the government project, but additional capacity was required. Immediately, the search began for locations that could be expanded or developed. The Sergeant Bluff, Iowa location was a good example of how TeleTech could quickly ramp to meet demand. TeleTech leased another company's contact center and assigned an experienced manager to open it. Within nine days, the 250-seat center was up and running. For the sixth center, TeleTech found space within a subsidiary and created a temporary contact center there.

Recruiting was key to the project's success due to its magnitude. TeleTech needed a steady applicant flow in order to recruit 4,000 agents. TeleTech's Web-based facility, www.hirepoint.com, enhanced the ability to hire the right people by offering applicants the chance to preview what the jobs were like prior to applying, and then send resumes via email. This automated

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approach improved the hiring process because applicants had already begun the selection process before arriving at the contact centers for interviews. Once hired, CSRs only had to take a four-hour training course to prepare them to handle calls.

Learnings and Outcomes

Client Kudos

Serving a client with little experience in operating contact centers offered TeleTech the opportunity to shine – and to teach. TeleTech helped the government agency improve its own contact center operations, specifically in the areas of security, training, documentation, and quality improvement. The agency is now implementing TeleTech’s best practices internally.

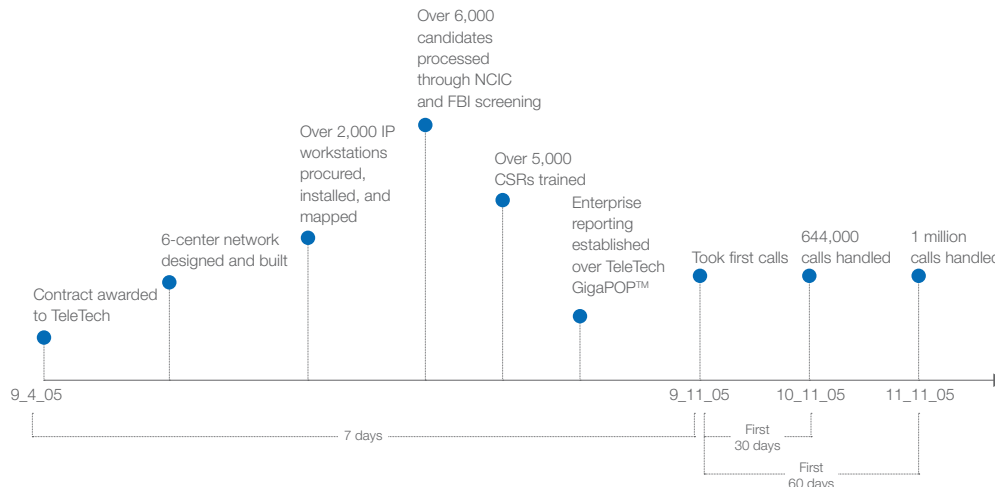
Experience and Excellence

Experience is always valuable, but in the case of a 4,000-CSR project, it is imperative. TeleTech implemented the project in record time thanks to well-honed processes, as well as professionals with extensive field experience who understood operations, launch processes, human resources, technology, and how to lead activities at each location. TeleTech stationed tenured people at each center prior to calls arriving so they could thoroughly prepare for the go-live date.

Putting the Pieces Together

TeleTech succeeded in delivering the results needed by the government client due to its excellence across many disciplines. TeleTech’s robust VoIP network and OnDemand™ technology platform made it possible to build and operate six contact centers within a week. Recruiting, hiring, and training processes enabled TeleTech to staff the project with the most qualified CSRs. A solid communications plan kept the centers and headquarters informed about issues both large and small. Best practices, experienced managers, and a thorough understanding of the contact center business allowed TeleTech to quickly accomplish its goals of helping hurricane victims rebuild their lives.

Timeline



North America

Latin America

Europe

Asia-Pacific