



ZCorum™

The Benefits of Outsourced Technical Support for Broadband Providers



Introduction

Reliable broadband service is more important than ever to consumers, which means providing an exceptional broadband experience for your customers is also more important than ever. The level of technical support you offer is one key way to differentiate your service from your competitors. It's also an important factor in whether you retain or lose subscribers when things go wrong.

There are generally two options for how broadband providers offer Internet support. You can set up and manage your own Call Center, or you can outsource to a company that will handle support requests for you.

You may think that setting up and managing your own in-house support group will mean a higher level of support and better experience for your subscribers. That may be the case. However, often the opposite is true due to the costs and resources required to consistently maintain a high level of customer service. Often the best option is to outsource technical support to a highly rated company that specializes in providing the type of support your customers will need. Here are some reasons why.

Cost Considerations



Of course, one of the biggest advantages of outsourcing technical support is avoiding the high upfront and ongoing costs involved in setting up and managing your own Call Center. In addition to having to set up space in an existing facility or finding a new facility, there are the additional personnel costs and the equipment your support staff will need. You will also need to hire support representatives, and depending on the size of your subscriber base you will need some number of supervisors and a Call Center Manager.

If you outsource support, there is no need to find the space or a facility, and you don't need to worry about staffing. Also, when you outsource you generally pay for support as you go, by the customer or the call. As your subscriber base grows, you don't need to worry about adding more space, additional staff, and the equipment they will need. You pay for just the support resources you need at that time you need them.



Training

If you run your own Call Center you will need to do initial training for your staff to get them up to speed. Every new hire will need to be trained, and ongoing training for your entire staff is also a necessity to make sure that they stay on top of the latest technology.

In contrast, if you outsource to the right company, you will have access to a group of representatives who are already well-versed in handling customers and troubleshooting issues, and who will provide your subscribers with a quality support experience right from the start.

Managing Resources

If you will be managing your own Call Center, in addition to determining the right number of representatives to hire, you need to think about how to best use those resources. How do you manage staffing levels during different hours of the day and days of the week? Will you be running a 24x7 operation? Will your center be open on holidays?

If you outsource support you don't need to worry about those kinds of questions or resourcing challenges. A competent technical support company will have representatives available to troubleshoot and assist customers every hour of every day, 365 days a year. They know how to best staff over time, and will have the resources available when needed. This also allows your employees to work a more traditional schedule while ensuring your customers are always looked after, even if your business office is closed.

Maintaining Your Business Focus

Managing a Call Center can take up a lot of company focus along with resources. Dealing with hiring and training staff, equipment costs, and even the maintenance of equipment and facilities can distract from the main focus of your business.

If you outsource support, your business can focus on what it does best. You can concentrate on improving your core competencies, investing in the technology and people required to provide an outstanding data, video or voice experience for your subscribers, as well as marketing those services to your community.



What to Look for in an Outsourcing Company

If you decide to outsource your support, it is important that you pick the right company. Picking the wrong company can have the opposite affect on customer satisfaction. That is one reason why companies are hesitant to let another company provide support for their customers. Here are some things to think about when looking for a company to outsource support to:

Experience

How long have they been in business? Can they provide references?

Do they focus on broadband support? It's best to go with a company that has deep experience in helping broadband customers and the services they use, and not necessarily a big company that also supports multiple consumer products and services that are unrelated to broadband.

Do they support multiple broadband technologies? If you currently provide broadband over multiple access networks (DOCSIS, DSL, Fiber, Fixed Wireless), or expect to do so in the future, going with a company that is proficient in all access types is a must.

What kind of training programs do they have in place for new hires, and how do they provide ongoing training for their staff? The level of training for the representatives who will be assisting your customers is critical in order to provide a consistently superior support experience, whether you outsource or not.

✓ Depth of Support Services

Do they provide support for more than the internet connection? Many of the calls received from subscribers regarding their internet connection are actually related to their home WiFi network. Do they support the home network? Do they help set up popular security suites? Can they determine if a customer's PC has a virus and help them remove the malware?

✓ Accountability

Will you have the ability to view the status of open and closed support tickets? Can you listen to recordings of calls with your subscribers?

✓ Philosophy

What is their philosophy on supporting the customer? Some companies are more concerned about how long their representative is on the phone, preferring the call be ended the call as quickly as possible, rather than whether the customer's problem was ever resolved. Look for a company where their desire, from management on down, is that the customer's issue be resolved, even if that call takes a long time. You want a company that will treat your customers the same way you would.

In summary, with the right partner, outsourcing technical support can allow a broadband operator to reduce operational costs, while actually increasing the level of support their subscribers receive. Freeing up those resources also allows the company to focus on their core mission, which is to deliver a solid broadband connection to their community along with a quality suite of services delivered over that connection. This will further increase subscriber satisfaction and average revenue per user.

Additional Resources



Whitepaper: [Best Practices for Providing Uncompromising Broadband Support](#)

Case Study: [San Bruno Cable TV needed skilled tech support for after-hours CATV without breaking the bank](#)

For more information on ZCorum's Comprehensive Broadband Support Services:

[Visit our Website](#)

[Read the Product Sheet](#)



ZCorum provides broadband Internet and communication solutions to telcos, cable companies, utilities, and municipalities, assisting in all facets of broadband implementation, integration, engineering and consulting, network monitoring and diagnostics. ZCorum also offers wholesale, privatelabeled Internet services, including data and VoIP provisioning, email, Web hosting, and 24x7 support for end-users, enabling service providers to compete effectively in their local rural and suburban markets. ZCorum is headquartered in Alpharetta, GA. For more information, please visit ZCorum.com or contact us at 1-800-909-9441.