

NYC Customer Service Newsletter

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CUSTOMER SERVICE BY THE NUMBERS

For the first time, in September 2011 the Mayor's Management Report featured current and prior year agency customer service data, enabling easy comparisons in year-over-year performance. This was the culmination of a multi-year project by the Mayor's Office to develop uniform customer service indicators across all 37 customer facing City agencies.

From Fiscal 2010 to 2011 the total volume of customer contacts across all service delivery channels increased by approximately six percent (4.5 million contacts) to nearly 83.3 million. Consistent with Fiscal 2010, phone calls to agency call centers and visits to websites

were the top two forms of contact. Together these made up over 91 percent of the total. The least common contact methods, hard mail and email correspondence, also remained the same making up less than one percent of the total.

Response times to mail saw mixed results, with agencies responding, on average, four days faster to hard mail – 11 days – while the average time to answer e-mails increased from five to seven days. Customer traffic at agency walk-in facilities grew by over eight percent to almost 7.2 million and the average wait time to speak to a customer service agent also grew by over one-third, from 28 minutes in Fiscal 2010 to 37 minutes. Changes in

request volumes, average wait time and average response time varied significantly by agency. A table showing changes by agency can be found at http://www.nyc.gov/html/ops/download/pdf/cs_fy11_vs_fy10.pdf.

For the twelve agencies that also report data on how quickly they respond to specific requests for some type of service from the public, Fiscal 2011 performance was moderately better. Overall, 82 percent of requests were answered within the previously agreed-upon timeframe (service level) compared to 79 percent in Fiscal 2010.

Additional information on agency performance can be found in the Fiscal 2011 MMR.



Department of Environmental Protection's Patrick Hendricks assists a customer at a DEP walk-in center.



“Customer Service Excellence” Training with NYC DOHMH Disease Control Clinic Staff, 12/2/2011

Public Health and Customer Service

Why should we dedicate resources to customer service training when we are laying off staff and cutting services?

Because excellent customer service generates satisfied patients (and other customers), that leads to increased compliance, freer information relationships, increased trust, and, potentially, decreased burden of disease.

Staff Feedback

“I appreciated learning that we could think of our co-workers and bosses as “customers.””

“Excellent trainers, excellent training. Reinforced my self-knowledge about customer service.”

“The customer service training was helpful in improving my skills interacting with the public.”

NYC DOHMH’s Division of Disease Control Delivers High Impact Customer Service Training

The Division of Disease Control within NYC DOHMH safeguards the health of New Yorkers by detecting, treating, and preventing infectious diseases. This mission is achieved through the activities of the Bureaus of Communicable Disease, HIV/AIDS Prevention & Control, Public Health Laboratory, TB Control, STD Control, Immunization and the Office of Viral Hepatitis Coordination. As part of the Mayor’s mandate to improve customer service in all NYC government agencies, in late 2010, Disease Control senior leadership began collaborating with Human Resources and Labor Relations to train all division staff in “Customer Service Excellence”.

A planning committee was formed to help develop a program that was relevant to the clinic services environment (as well as for office staff and senior leadership), and was comprised of staff from Disease Control, Chief Operating Officer, trainers from Training and Professional Development within the Bureau of HR and Labor Relations. The Liaison to the Mayor’s Office of Operations Customer Service Group also served on the committee.

The planning committee met weekly to plan implementation, from logistics to curriculum design to evaluation. The committee relied on staff

feedback to design evaluation surveys. In early February 2011, the Committee announced the mandatory training program in an e-mail to all Disease Control staff and asked that they complete an online anonymous needs assessment about customer service.

Working with senior leadership, the planning committee organized Disease Control staff into three groups: general office staff; senior leadership; and clinic services staff. Training modules included “The Vision,” “The Big Picture,” “First Impressions,” “Common Courtesy in the Workplace,” “Cultural Awareness,” “Communicating Effectively,” “Managing Conflict,” “Dealing with Difficult People” and “Service Recovery.”

Although the training consists of core modules based on the Mayor’s curriculum, it also allows for flexibility in content so that modules speak directly to specific audiences. This flexibility enabled the committee to tailor trainings to a specific group, such as general office staff, senior leadership and clinic staff.

Sixteen training courses were scheduled throughout 2011 to reach approximately 1,000 Disease Control personnel: five trainings for general office staff; five for senior leadership;

and six for clinic staff. Disease Control’s public-facing programs include nine STD Clinics, three Immunization Clinics, and five TB Chest Centers. These clinics are located throughout the five boroughs of NYC. Clinic staff members serve thousands of New Yorkers annually.

Committee members representing the Bureaus of STD, TB, and Immunization provided a wealth of knowledge to help the trainers develop role plays and group exercises meaningful to clinic staff. The committee utilized feedback from the needs assessment survey to design clinic-based scenarios and situations in role-plays and group work. Additionally, a “Supplement for Clinic Staff on Customer Service” was made available online and in-print.

All Disease Control staff members were asked to complete an online evaluation survey after training. The committee will present a final report incorporating the evaluation results as well as an initiative overview, staff participation data, lessons learned and next steps to senior leadership in early January 2012.

DCAS Waives Civil Service Exam Fees for Veterans

On November 11, Veterans Day, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn announced that the City will soon offer military veterans a waiver of the fee required to take a civil service test. With the withdrawal of troops from Iraq and the reduction of forces in Afghanistan this initiative is particularly timely.

“This fee waiver is a small token of our appreciation for the dedicated men and women of our Armed Services,” said Mayor Bloomberg. “They have given so much to our country, and we would be lucky to have them serving our City.”

Applicants can request a waiver at the time of

submitting an exam application either online or by mail, and then mail in documentation supporting their request.

Instructions will be available on the website of the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, which will administer the program and launch within the next few months. The civil service exams most frequently taken by veterans are those for uniformed positions at the Police Department, Fire Department and Department of Corrections. The fee waiver applies to one civil service exam application per veteran.

Currently, many veterans receive civil service exam credit for their military

service. By State Constitution and Law, veterans may use this credit once. This means that a veteran’s position on a civil service list is determined by their exam score, plus between 2.5 and 10 points in credit, depending on the exam and veteran’s status. For more information about the existing exam credit program, or other exam applications inquiries, go to www.nyc.gov or call 311.

Veterans can also sign-up to receive email updates whenever new civil service exams become available. Veteran can simply click on the Newsletter Sign-Up page, complete the form and select the City Jobs and Civil Service Announcements option.

Civil Service Exams Data FY 2011

Total Number of Civil Service Exams (Multiple Choice, Education and Experience): 99

Total Number of Applicants Taking Exams (Open Competitive, Promotional): 101,906

Customer Wait & Processing Times 2nd Quarter, 2012

DCAS 14th Floor – Exam Support Window – 7 mins
DCAS 21st Floor – Certifications Window– 2 mins

The screenshot shows the NYC Citywide Administrative Services website. The header includes the NYC logo and navigation links like Home, About DCAS, Exams & Jobs, Auctions & Sales, For City Employees, and Vendor Resources. The main content area is titled 'CIVIL SERVICE EXAMS' and features three key announcements:

- Apply for Exams Online and Save!**: DCAS now offers a discount for applying online – part of our new schedule of exam fees. [Learn more](#)
- DCAS 5-Year Plan Regarding Provisional Appointments**: DCAS has submitted a five-year plan regarding provisional appointments. [Learn more](#)
- Apply For Exams Online**: Signing up for a civil service exam is easier than ever! Apply online and pay your application fees by credit card, debit card or bank card. [Apply online now](#)



311's Deneise Ramnauth handling customer calls at the 311 Call Center

NYC311 Recognized as Tops in Customer Service Industry

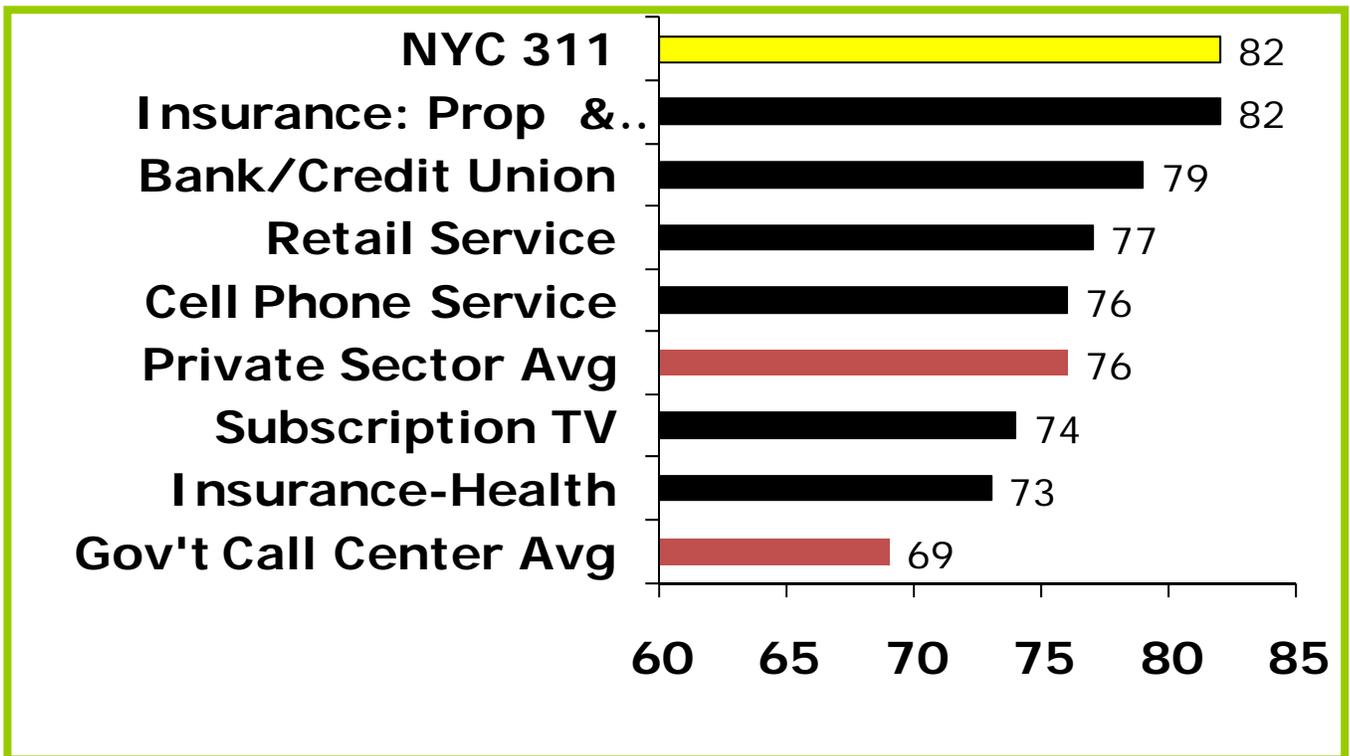
311 recently hosted the Chief Customer Officers (CCO) from private sector companies Amazon, Chase, DirectTV, Hyatt, Vivendi and 800Flowers. The session was lead by Call Center Director Saadia Chaudhry and Kristina Sell, head of the 311 Performance Management department, and marks the recognition of New York City government's success in generating a culture of customer-service through 311 initiatives and the "Great Service Great City" program. As industry leaders in customer service, the CCOs shared their own

experiences and latest trends and initiatives in service strategies and technology, while reviewing the 311 operations and programs as inputs to their process improvement programs.

311's standing as a leader in customer service across all sectors was confirmed with the release of a 2011 Customer Satisfaction Survey report by CFI Group Inc, in October. CFI Group patented and manages the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), a national measure of quality of goods and services,

and administered a survey of 764 NYC customers who called 311. Customer satisfaction with 311 improved from the already high baseline set in 2008 and CFI Group noted "NYC311 outperforms all recent government measures...and is on par with the top scoring industry-wide mark". The report also recognized 311 customer service representatives as "highly professional in determining customer needs and communicating information that is understandable."

Private sector industry benchmarks: NYC 311 is on par with top scoring industry-wide.



FREE Translation and Interpretation Services!

Need an interpreter or work-document translated? Register with the Volunteer Language Bank (VLB) and complete these requests at no cost to you or your agency.

There are over 500 NYCertified volunteers (bilingual/multi-lingual City employees) who have successfully completed a language assessment and attended interpretation and/or translation training.

Our volunteers are proficient in over 50

languages and requests are accepted minutes after submission.

Why pay for translation services when they can be completed by fellow City employees that have proven their proficiency in another foreign language?

These services are available to City employees. To submit an interpretation/translation request:

- Create an account in the VLB

(<http://vlb.cityhall.nycnet/>)

- Click on the "New Request" tab

Please pass along this information to other City employees who may be in need of translation/interpretation assistance.

For more information or if you have any questions, email us at NYCertified@cityhall.nyc.gov



Department of Consumer Affairs Hosts Educational Open Houses for Business Owners

As part of its ongoing commitment to help business owners do right by their customers and improve compliance with regulations, DCA launched a series of industry-specific, after hours Open House events last year.

Targeted exclusively to its 78,000 licensees, each Open House focuses on one of the 55 licensed industries and features a review of licensing laws and regulations, enforcement issues and plenty of time for Q&A. DCA invited staff from relevant sister agencies to join the evenings to enhance the events. Hundreds of business owners attended the 2011 Open Houses, which focused on secondhand dealers, stoop line stands, employment agencies

and sidewalk cafes. In 2012, DCA plans to hold eight more events, the first of which is scheduled for February 8th for parking garages and parking lots licensees.

The Open House initiative expands on DCA's annual Business Education Day to educate businesses about key consumer protection laws and requirements without issuing violations. In 2011, during the Ninth Annual Business Education Day, more than 100 DCA staff visited 1,600 businesses in 29 neighborhoods in all five boroughs throughout the City.

To further accommodate businesses, DCA also instituted an array of efficiencies in its

Licensing Center and Administrative Tribunal with early and late hours; shorter wait times; starting hearings earlier; and giving businesses the opportunity to speak directly with settlement officers without appointments before their hearing dates. DCA streamlined its licensing applications and issues business licenses within an average of four days, a 40 percent reduction. Finally, businesses can visit nyc.gov/consumers to apply for and renew licenses, make changes to data on file, get helpful publications and tips, find industry-specific laws, pay fines and fees and more.



Fred Riley, DCA Senior Community Relations Coordinator, presenting at the Open House to members of the employment agency industry at DCA's Licensing Center at 42 Broadway.

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About the Customer Service Group

The Customer Service Group (CSG) was established by Mayor Bloomberg's Executive Order 115 to support and implement the mandates of the order. CSG is part of the Mayor's Office of Operations.

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