



Call Accounting and Analytics:

Benefits to your Business

The importance of call accounting to maximise ROI

Communications technology and services are becoming more complex and expensive, particularly with a greater proportion of employees now working remotely.

That makes being able to capture, record and cost telephone usage events through call accounting software increasingly vital for organisations that want to gain visibility into usage - and control over their spending. Costs can be allocated more accurately by department, division, or location, turning an uncontrolled expense into a managed, planned and optimised service.

From identifying and preventing fraud, billing errors and telephone misuse to increasing visibility and control over your network, a modern call accounting solution can deliver multiple benefits across the business.

Importantly, its solution goes beyond recording traditional telephony to measuring everything from audio to video conferencing, instant messaging, file transfers and peer to peer calls.

As well as a comprehensive analysis of call usage, powerful call accounting and analytics solutions can combine this with data from other communication and collaboration platforms, such as cloud-based solutions including Microsoft Teams, to provide a consolidated view.



Lowers total phone bills by
10-30%

while helping to increase employee performance by reducing unproductive time spent on the telephone.



This enables managers to measure and track trends across the business, maximising the return on investment of these business-critical services.

Call accounting is an approach that organisations must ensure is flexible enough to enable optimal reporting for different environments – from traditional audio or public switched telephone network (PSTN) data to cloud-based solutions such as Teams or more general unified communications technology.

As well as the big picture, it needs to be granular to analyse events at the network level, focusing on areas like quality of service, packet loss, latency jitter or overall performance to ensure optimal efficiency of the voice network.

Effective call accounting helps all parts of the organisation, extending far beyond the contact centre and customer-facing business units through to the back office. This guide outlines six key benefits – and how call accounting can optimise your business.

1. Communications Network Migration



For companies looking to migrate their communications networks, call accounting provides the data required to build a compelling business case and then measure the effectiveness of the new solution, supporting them all the way through the migration process from beginning to end.

Firstly, it delivers a clear picture of current usage, justifying the need to transition from existing communications infrastructure such as TDM, on-premise PBX systems or Skype for Business to a more advanced, cloud-based solution such as Microsoft Teams. Hard data underpins the business case, helping identify ROI, cost savings and other benefits that migration can bring.

Before the migration begins, call analytics data helps organisations create a clear plan by identifying existing systems, their users and the impact of the process on day-to-day operations. This minimises the complexity of migration and helps guard against unforeseen issues that hit productivity and uptime during the process.

During the migration process all systems and activity calls are logged, enabling monitoring and insight into how it is progressing, enabling adjustments to ensure the project runs smoothly and effectively.

Finally, having a call accounting solution that can measure activity after the migration, empowers managers to evaluate the effectiveness of the new solution on an ongoing basis to help identify assets that are now no longer needed (such as old extension numbers) achieving cost savings and ROI.



2. Cost Management

We have identified four key ways to understand, manage and ultimately reduce an organisation's telephony costs.



First, to enable businesses to analyse all of their call costs in detail, covering both internal charges and external call costs from fixed line and mobile PSTN providers. Given that most organisations have access to multiple carrier tariff and even various carriers, you need a system with the flexibility to include all of these different plans and then run cost comparisons to optimise spend by ensuring that every department, and user, is on the right tariff for their needs. This is particularly effective for organisations working across multiple countries and geographies who have to manage a wide range of tariffs, providers and call plans.



A second analysis will identify underutilised (or even completely unused) assets within the organisation, which can either be switched off without impacting performance or shared across other parts of the business. By rationalising infrastructure, organisations can see a quick, and dramatic, return on their call accounting system investment.



Another way to effectively reduce costs is by collecting and analysing granular call detail record (CDR) data. This gives information on every number dialled, incoming call origins, extensions used to make calls and then length of conversations. To aid budgeting and making management easier, costs can easily be allocated and charged back to specific departments, cost centres or individuals. Using this analysis also helps select the best providers for your business, reducing overall telecommunication costs in the long run.



Finally, call accounting systems make service billing simple and straightforward for businesses, such as law firms, with multiple clients. By allocating every client an individual code, the call costs for each can be easily tracked and billed, with a full audit trail in place – it's simple, fast and an efficient way of managing call accounting.



3. Network Optimisation

Ensuring an organisation has the right network capacity in place is vital for delivering business and consumer needs while keeping costs down. Call accounting helps businesses understand if their voice and data networks are being utilised efficiently, are at capacity, or are underutilised, and how this varies over time. While this is crucial for large organisations with multiple sites, it also delivers benefits to smaller businesses looking to optimise their communications infrastructure.

Service levels can be greatly improved by enabling managers to see queue times, abandoned call rates and other information that can be used to identify peaks. Organisations can then plan and allocate the right resources, such as staff numbers and external lines, to meet customer needs.

Because web-based call accounting can also be platform independent, organisations can access network data from any device, with individual managers receiving tailored reports on any laptop, tablet or mobile device.

Leading edge systems can provide the data required to optimise your network. For example, an organisation can assess average peak utilisation across its network and look to ensure that it is using least cost routing to route calls internally before breaking them to the PSTN network.

They can also deliver the data you need to successfully plan future capacity. By understanding trends, organisations can predict when they are likely to reach capacity and manage growth accordingly. Alternatively, they can identify any likely declines over time, helping to see where they can reduce the number of assets and achieve cost savings as a result.



4. Security and Compliance

This involves monitoring telephone interactions for events and activity that the business was not expecting. Such as out-of-hour calls which might indicate some sort of toll fraud, which is a threat most businesses do not truly understand or defend themselves against.

So having the ability to protect the organisation against fraudulent activity or misuse of company facilities is crucial. You need a system to be able to quickly notify the organisation if suspicious activity occurs, for example monitoring in real-time and then sending emails or text alerts to managers if rules are broken, even when the office is shut.

Amanda Pearson, Head of Product Management – Call Accounting, Enghouse Interactive commented:

“Unfortunately, abuse of communication facilities is now becoming a widespread issue in most businesses. We are hearing more and more instances of companies being targeted by scams, such as premium rate number companies paying cleaners to dial a number and leave it hanging while they are in the office, only hanging up at the end of the evening when they leave the building. In today’s tough economic situation, businesses are looking to cut costs and make processes as efficient as possible”

On the security side, it is important to report on any network attacks or attempted intrusions by automatically flagging any activity that deviates from normal usage. Malicious behaviour, such as hoax calls to emergency services or repeated calls to specific numbers can be tracked, and quickly notified to authorised personnel.

In highly regulated industries such as finance and banking, organisations are held liable if staff break rules, such as around insider trading. By pinpointing who the employee is calling – and how frequently – managers can both ensure that they are monitoring activity to ensure compliance and that call costs are justified. Additionally, call accounting helps enforce compliance with corporate accounting practices and automates the monitoring of sales and financial performance.

A strong focus on security and compliance is not solely about protection against fraud. It is about a system that can detect abuse or misuse of telephony, such as unauthorised personal calls or out of hours use of company-provided mobile phones. Putting clear rules in place not only reduces misuse but increases productivity – if employees are aware that they are being monitored, they may be less inclined to use a phone for their personal use.

5. Agent Productivity and KPI Measurements

Most modern call accounting applications are central to measuring and monitoring staff activity, whether employees are based in the office or are working remotely.

Not only can this data be used to optimise productivity, but it can be vital to ensuring work-life balance, which is essential to preventing staff burn-out, demotivation and churn.

By monitoring metrics such as call length, managers can use this hard data collected to coach staff on how they can better communicate and improve their work practices. For example, managers can evaluate the differences and effectiveness of sales employees and responsiveness of customer service staff by seeing their calling patterns and phone activity metrics. At the same time, internal misuse of the phone system (such as personal calls) can be easily identified and used to improve workforce efficiency and productivity.

Through call accounting, organisations can monitor performance against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in real-time. Most modern systems have the ability to display activity on a wallboard or dashboard which can monitor metrics like inbound call times or call wait times and compare these to pre-set targets. So, if wait times are exceeding internal KPIs the wallboard changes colour from green to amber and red, alerting managers and enabling them to take swift action.

The data collected by call accounting systems allow organisations to monitor staff productivity in detail within the wider contact centre environment. Systems make it simple to answer questions such as which members of staff are making the most calls a day or are on the phone for longest or if a set call time is being exceeded by member of staff on a regular basis, as well as checking to ensure that staff are taking the appropriate breaks. The wide range of in-depth statistics produced by call accounting systems helps organisations manage staff productivity and well-being, achieve SLAs and meet KPIs for telephony within the organisation.





6. Quality of service

Delivering a high quality service has always been vital to winning and retaining customers. However, the move to remote working has made monitoring and ensuring quality more complex and difficult than when all staff were together in a single location.

At the same time, customers are demanding greater levels of reassurance from the companies they deal with, putting the focus firmly on quality.

Through data delivery, you want a call accounting application that can provide the ability to monitor service levels in real-time to ensure performance is maintained across the wider organisation. This facilitates issues to be identified and acted on quickly, wherever staff are based.

For example, managers can monitor quality levels on customer care by analysing data around incoming consumer calls. Are they being answered or are they going to voicemail? Do customers have to repeatedly call back to speak to an agent? How long on average does it take to resolve a customer call?

By analysing these types of questions organisations can pinpoint areas of concern and take action to fix any issues, such as through adding resources or coaching staff.

Overall service quality can be easily measured by using call accounting systems to set specific business KPIs (for example around abandoned calls, call transfer times or hold times), monitored through real-time reporting. Organisations are able to capture the whole call flow and measure the wider experience, from when the phone first rings to when it is resolved. This goes beyond simple metrics – for example managers can measure average talk time versus time the customer spent on hold. This enables the measurement of overall quality – if an issue is solved in a minute but the caller had to wait for 30 minutes to be answered, clearly the experience isn't meeting quality standards.

Given the importance of effectively managing communications a call accounting solution is invaluable to better monitor, understand and manage these costs across every business. It delivers greater control, prevents fraud, boosts productivity, and gives the insight required to reduce communications expenditure and plan for the future, whatever size your organisation is.

To find out more about how Enghouse Proteus can help your business to maximise your investment in your communications systems visit <https://enghouseinteractive.co.uk/products/quality-control-customer-insights/call-billing/>

About Enghouse Interactive

We are the world's most reliable customer contact technology provider. Our global brand is built on our track-record of consistently honouring our commitments to our customers, our staff and our shareholders.

Enghouse Interactive, a subsidiary of Enghouse Systems Limited (TSX: ENGH), is a leading global provider of customer contact software and service solutions that deliver enhanced customer service and transform the contact centre from a cost centre into a powerful growth engine.

Our practices and solutions enable businesses to leverage meaningful, daily customer interactions to extract key insights used to deepen customer loyalty and uncover new opportunities to add value, profitably. Supporting over 10,000 customers, in 120+ countries, Enghouse Interactive works within any local regulatory environment and supports any telephony technology, whether deployed on premises or in the Cloud, ensuring that our customers can be reached by their customers – anytime, anywhere and via any channel.



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