SKILLS & ABILITY BASED ROUTING ENGINE (SABRE™)

SMARTBOUND™

Noetica.

SABRE™ (Skills & Ability Based Routing Engine) is a technological innovation boosting the performance of contact centres.

Skills Based Routing is a mature technology that has been in widespread use over several decades. SABRE™ is a recent innovation building on the old concept of Skills Based Routing, by adding a dynamic dimension to it. In SABRE™, a call centre agent's skills and ability levels are not fixed but can fluctuate in real time depending on their most recent performance.

When using SABRE™, each outbound campaign or inbound queue is assigned a "skill condition" which designates a particular skill as the most important for that campaign or queue. Each agent has a set of skills and an ability score (0-100) for each skill. When a new call is ready to be delivered to an agent (either inbound or outbound via a dialler), SABRE™ will choose one with the highest ability level for the skill required by the campaign or queue. The main innovation is in the way agents' individual skill ability levels are adjusted automatically in real time by the system through a microservices set of APIs responding to the agent's recent performance in relation to each skill the agent possesses.

INSTANT PROFITABILITY BOOST

Consider the following scenario. A contact centre is using a team of 100 agents for a particular outbound charity fundraising campaign.

To start with, all agents will be assumed equal in their ability to convert calls to donations, so they are given an ability score of 50 (out of 100) with respect to a skill called "Ability to fundraise". As the campaign progresses, an algorithm can analyse the performance of each agent in real time and adjust their ability scores according to the amounts raised per hour worked.

As this is done in real time, ability scores can go up or down depending on the agent's performance history and their current performance on the day. As a result, as the algorithm uses the SABRE™ APIs to adjust agents ability scores in real time, the high performing agents will be delivered more calls whilst the less effective ones will wait longer for their next call.

As a result, on average, the same number of connected calls will result in a higher total donation value for the call centre. Our calculations point to a 15-25% increase in direct revenues when using SABRE™ with no added costs resulting in large overall profitability gains.

AGENT INCENTIVE & GAMIFICATION

The new SABRE™ technology innovation, when utilised correctly, can lift the general performance of the entire call centre and not just the high performers. It is important that agents are fully engaged in the technique which should be used to incentivise and not penalise them.

If agents are well-informed and have full visibility of their automatically adjusted skill ability scores, they will be aware that when their scores drop this is not done at the whim of some human supervisor, but it is fairly calculated in real time by a non-discriminating algorithm. As such, when a score drops, agents will simply become aware that their performance compared to the rest of the team has objectively slowed and will then make a conscious effort to do better.

There is an element of true gamification built into this new technology. The conversion of calls to revenues becomes a challenge. As the "player" falls behind in the chase, they get fewer opportunities to shoot at baddies. Therefore, they will make sure to take better aim and hit a bullseye each time an opportunity does come their way. Psychologically, by involving all agents in the challenge, the overall average performance will rise.

CUSTOM REFINEMENT OVER TIME

Because SABRE™ is built as a set of microservices APIs, it separates the scoring algorithm from the mechanics of call delivery to the best scoring agent. Therefore, the algorithm can be adjusted and improved over time.

Looking again at the fundraising call centre example, we could start with a very simplistic scoring algorithm by looking only at today's performance and dividing the total funds raised by the number of hours worked today.

Every time an agent has a successful call and raises a sum of money, the algorithm will increase their SABRE™ score and as the time passes without any success the score will slowly slide downwards. However, after using this algorithm for a few days, it would become clear that it does not take into account the historical performance of agents.

An excellent agent can have a bad day and a less successful one can get lucky on the day. It would therefore make sense to add an element of historical perspective to the scoring algorithm by taking into account each agent's "funds per hour" ratio over the past week or month as well as today's performance. Having the ability to improve the scoring, results in net business gains.

REDUCED WASTED OPPORTUNITIES

It is important that each interaction with a customer or prospective customer achieves its full potential. Not only is it expensive to get new business leads, it is also important that each customer is able to speak to the best agent available when contact is established.

In any call centre operation, there will be a cohort of experienced high-flying agents and perhaps a group of novices or strugglers. However, these things are not fixed, and they change over time sometimes quite rapidly. As each interaction is valuable, it is important that each one is treated with the respect it deserves.

SABRE™ can be configured in such a way that the most important calls will always be handled by the best agents. In some cases, a good agent can drive much more business value out of each call than a less experienced one. Handing out calls randomly will therefore reduce the total value that a call centre can derive from all calls handled.

This is why SABRE™, by ensuring that at any given time all the best agents are busy, will minimise wastage of opportunities whilst still giving less successful agents the chance to improve their performance and therefore their rewards.

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