

Warehouse Retailer Reduces RFP Process by Three Months and Identifies the Right Contact Center Outsourcing Partner

Situation: Existing Partner Fails on Delivery

Customer service leaders at a warehouse retailer were unsatisfied with the level of performance and partnership provided by their existing contact center partner. Ten years prior, the retailer outsourced their service operation. The relationship had deteriorated, and the outsourcer was sold to another company that had limited eCommerce experience. While the outsourced services enabled the retailer to easily operate in Jamaica and reduce costs, it was time to evaluate new outsourcing partnerships and explore other near-shore locations that could offer even greater ROI. If the business case was strong enough, the leaders would consider outsourcing even more of their contact center work with the new partner.

The potential of a new partnership was exciting, but the time and knowledge needed to evaluate companies and conduct an RFP process was overwhelming for the leaders. They needed an outsourcing expert to assess their needs and lead in due diligence. Most of all, they wanted someone who could advise them on contact center technology platforms, help them disconnect from the existing partner's CRM system, and make a seamless transition across the board—partnership, platforms, and operational performance.

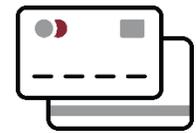
EPIC Connections was selected for the work because it brought outsourcing industry veterans, pre-qualified partners to consider, as well as ready-made RFP templates customized for the retail space.

Solution: RFP, Evaluations & Analysis Made Easy

After evaluating the retailer's business, EPIC experts designed an RFP solution that included strategic direction to achieve their biggest goals:

- **Enhance Partner Management and Performance:** EPIC guided the retailer in governance best practices, contact center pricing models and contract negotiations that emphasized KPIs and performance guarantee practices. With per-minute pricing models and checks/balances with penalties and bonuses, the new contract would drive corrective action and higher performance.
- **Gain Technology Independence:** The retailer had never invested in its own CRM technology, which made it reliant upon the partner's system and opened data vulnerabilities. EPIC advised the client to first purchase their own CRM and helped them pursue new partners that used the same operating system.

Case Study



INDUSTRY: Retail –
Brick & Mortar
Membership Warehouse

SERVICES/PRODUCTS:
Consulting

METHODOLOGY: Assess,
Design

SOLUTIONS:
RFP Services, Partner and
Program Management,
Performance
Governance and Best
Practices in Pricing
Models and Technology

Reduced the
RFP process by
an estimated
3 months

- **A Seamless Transition with the Right Partner, Location, Technology:** EPIC guided the retailer in implementing a comprehensive transition plan to address the CRM implementation and operational transfer to the new partner. Additionally, EPIC augmented the retailer's near-shore market analysis with a matrix comparing each country's pricing, capabilities, scalability potential, and risks.

RFP Design & Partner Assessment Services

- Modified RFP template, provided due diligence and scoring methodologies
- Gathered stakeholder feedback and provided approval
- Introduced three new outsourcing partners who aligned with requirements
- Facilitated RFP distribution and managed Q&A follow up call
- Gathered and cataloged responses, scored responses
- Managed oral presentations, driving out risk and incongruity with proposal
- Offered feedback and recommendations, reducing 6 candidates to 2 finalists
- Supported due diligence and partner site visits
- Supported contracting and negotiation phase

Results: The Right Partner & Technology

In the end, the retailer accelerated the RFP process to procure the best-matched outsourcing partner with a cost-competitive operation in the near-shore region. EPIC estimates that the retailer reduced their RFP process by at least three months and made significant improvements in partnership contracts, defining performance expectations and securing a stronger relationship that could achieve higher KPI performance.

"There were not enough teeth in the existing contract, so we helped our client craft a rigorous program management structure with more modern pricing models designed to drive down the cost of service. These foundational elements added governance to the partnership and increased potential savings," explained Steve Weston, Senior Consultant, EPIC Connections.

With guided CRM and technology investments, the retailer built an agnostic technology strategy, freeing them from their partner dependency and enabling the company to take their contact center operations in-house at any time. These best practices alongside the enhanced contract, meant the retailer could now protect the future of the business and influence the right behaviors in the outsourced contact center.

Leveraging EPIC's operational and partner management expertise, the retailer also ensured each site visit was an effective step in further evaluating the two finalists. As a result, the retail leaders felt confident that they had conducted a comprehensive inspection prior to making their final decision. After the selection, EPIC continued to support operational negotiations to confirm the best contract, service level agreements and long-term outcome.

Case Study

Contract
negotiation
support
ensured
**long-term
success**

Targeting Right-Sized Partners

EPIC's insight widened the initial list of potential partners, helping the retailer diversify their list with Tier-2 partners. This advice proved critical in the end, as it was a Tier-2 partner who was ultimately selected.

Tier-1 partners are the largest outsourcing companies serving the world's biggest brands, while Tier-2 companies are mid-sized and serve large and mid-tier brands. Buyers often forget to take into consideration how much their business will mean to their partner. Will your account be one of your partner's top 10 accounts or will you be completely irrelevant? The answer could mean a drastic difference in the quality of the relationship.