

A Chicago-based event housing company migrated from a timeworn on-premise system to Sharpen's cloud-native platform.

Introduction

onPeak is an event housing company with headquarters in Chicago, IL. 200 employees across four U.S. locations help onPeak plan and execute some of the largest conventions, tradeshow, and events around the country. It also connects consumers with hotels, and sells more rooms than Orbitz and Hotels.com.

onPeak mostly operates "behind the scenes" – orchestrating notorious events like the National Restaurant Association Show which attracts 70,000 attendees; Comic-Con International, attracting 100,000+ attendees; and the Republican National Convention.

onPeak had traditionally relied on a premises-based call center solution. But shortcomings in functionality, geographical limitations, costly and painful update processes, and durability ultimately led onPeak to adopt Sharpen's cloud-native contact center solution.

Challenge

John Hunt, Director of Reservation Services at onPeak, described the company's previous on-premises platform as being cumbersome, antiquated, and simply accepted as the standard.

onPeak was also saddled with upwards of a dozen separate support contracts. Most of these third party vendors were not strike local. That's not even the worst part – the company only used about 5% of these enterprise support contracts.

Hunt recalled that around 2011, they began identifying the inadequacies of the installed PBX system, and thinking about cloud on a larger level. "We did understand VoIP technology had started to hit and stick. But it was something we'd never really considered in the past because there were so many issues with voice quality and Internet," Hunt added.

Additionally, onPeak realized it wouldn't be able to expand its customer service team at scale as the company grew. Development in terms of headcount and resources became hindered as individual systems had to be set up in each office. This pigeonholed every team.

onPeak realized that in order to support growth of its customer service function – and to ensure support representatives were well-equipped to handle increasing volumes of inbound traffic – it was time to start thinking about investment in a tool that was born in and lived in the cloud. onPeak needed flexibility, scalability, and simplicity. That's when it turned to Sharpen.

"Our generic PBX system was like a Mack Truck and just wasn't nimble. We accepted that as the norm, and never really did anything different with it," Hunt said.

Solution

Technological Innovation Leads to Change

In 2013, Hunt facilitated cross-functional discussion with counterparts in IT, client services and operations. It was time to make a fundamental shift in how the team thought about technology, its customers, and the future.

"It didn't make sense to continue down a road that was going to segue [in directions we didn't want to go]," Hunt said. He understood technological changes that were unfolding, and needed a contact center solution that wouldn't be obsolete in 3 to 5 years.

"Sharpen was a backdoor into the customization [we needed]."

"I felt heavily it was time to jump. Sharpen was a backdoor into the customization [we needed]."

Once onPeak engaged Sharpen, it became immediately clear both organizations were like-minded and deeply committed to providing an excellent customer service experience.

"Their philosophies and work ethic just bled through. We talked to many other companies, and we understood this was a company that was really interested in us – not about selling us something."

Results

Initial and most obvious results were finance-related.

Prior to investing in Sharpen's platform, onPeak had to go through 13 invoices every month. These included long distance carriers, local carriers, and redundant circuits. Now, Hunt and company receive one prepaid invoice, and don't worry about paying another bill for 24 months.

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Additionally, onPeak was no longer renting server space in numerous buildings. This had been very costly and hard to maintain. Instead, as a result of consolidating telephony infrastructure from a single platform, agents no longer needed multiple phones for work. All they need to do their job is a laptop and a headset. This ease-of-use wouldn't be possible without real-time access to meaningful customer data.

Since Sharpen's platform runs in Amazon Web Services' global data centers, onPeak understood it would run no risk of losing data or encountering systematic failure. "With people in four offices and many remote staff, we had to rest assured that if certain sites went down, we'd never be dark," Hunt said.

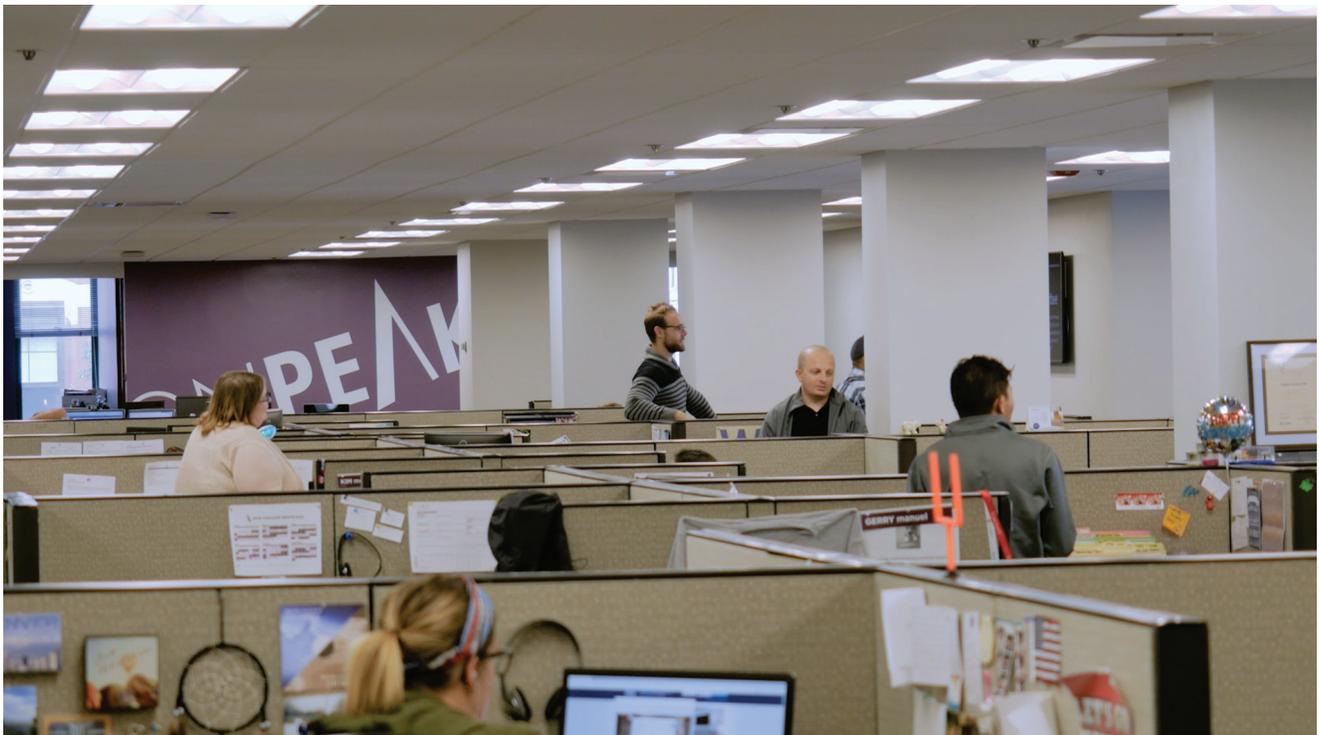
But most of all, Hunt said it's the character, helpfulness, and willingness of Sharpen's support team that's made the partnership so terrific.

"Sharpen does a great job of hiring the right people," Hunt said. "[You've got an incredible] mix of human and nice people and intelligent and bright people."



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nice...and intelligent people.”*

With Sharpen’s help and technology, onPeak was able to scale its operations across the country, achieve new levels of efficiency, boost employee satisfaction, and improve customer relationships.



onPeak Chicago call center

You’re good. Let’s get better.

Sharpen is a cloud native contact center platform that enables customer experience teams to establish a better relationship with their customers. This global platform eliminates costly on premise hardware, increases agent efficiency and makes customers happier through frictionless interactions. Sharpen is committed to building a global community of companies who believe that a happy customer is a loyal brand advocate waiting to happen. For more information about Sharpen’s products and services visit sharpenx.com or contact us at **855.249.3357**.

