

# The Houston Astros deployed ComputerTalk's ice Contact Center to Increase Efficiencies with Ticket Sales Processes



The Houston Astros use ice Contact Center, with ProVenue and Dynamics 365 to deliver excellent customer experiences to fans. ComputerTalk supported the team on their journey from multiple PBX systems to ice Contact Center for Skype for Business and expanded their customer communication channels.

## The Houston Astros

The Houston Astros are an American Major League Baseball team based in Houston, Texas. In 2017, they won the World Series championship, the first World Series title for the team and for the state of Texas.

## Ticket Sales Objectives

The Astros wanted to take their customer service to the next level by equipping their employees with the tools to personalize fans' experiences. Chris Hanz, VP & Chief Information Officer with the Astros, is focused on managing end-to-end information technology projects. He and his team are responsible for making customer experience improvements both internally for staff and externally for fans. Ultimately, their focus is on improving these operational areas through new initiatives and increased process efficiencies.

*"ComputerTalk developed the integration between our ticketing platform, Tickets.com ProVenue, and our CRM platform, Microsoft Dynamics. This integration helps our business in saving time on manual entry by our sales reps and also provides accurate reports when comparing outputs from the two systems."*

*- Chris Hanz, VP & Chief Information Officer at the Houston Astros*

## Challenges with their Previous Solutions

One of the Astros' primary pain points was manually duplicating sales entries from their ticketing system to their CRM, which took up employees' valuable time. Naturally, with manual entry, there were opportunities for mistyped names, dollar values, and products. The ability to automatically sync orders was important to the Astros as they wanted to build a repository of customer information on their CRM platform, rather than having it centralized on their ProVenue backend system.

Before implementing ice Contact Center, it was a challenge for the Astros to monitor call activity as they were operating on multiple PBX systems and the call history was not readily available. They wanted to gain better insight into their operations to facilitate improvements with their sales strategies.

As the Astros' previous web chat solution on MLB.com was not Java-based, it would break when the website upgraded. They needed a web chat solution that would continue to operate smoothly after the website updates.



## The Transition to ice Contact Center with Skype for Business

The conclusion to move to ice Contact Center started with the Astros' decision to transition from a legacy PBX phone system to Skype for Business. They were looking for a contact center solution that managed interaction workflows, queues, and provided metrics for contact center activity.

Another reason the Astros decided to make the move to ice was ComputerTalk's ability to integrate their CRM and ticketing platform. This provided more accurate records of sales orders which lessened the burden on the sales team to manually enter purchases.

## Optimizing Ticket Sales Processes

The Astros have always been dedicated to creating excellent customer experiences for their fans, utilizing technology and operational data to put them ahead of the game. ice allowed them to consolidate interaction activity into one solution, gain additional insights into the effectiveness of their ticket sales team, and create greater efficiencies within their organization.

With the ability to import both historical and real-time data from ProVenue into Dynamics 365, the Astros' ticket sales team saves a significant amount of time with manual entry. They can spend more time focusing on revenue-generating strategies to optimize ticket sales and discover new sales opportunities.

The Astros' ticket sales team have added integrated communication channels such as web chat, voice, and email to connect with fans. The more channels added, the more options fans have to connect with the Astros on their preferred communication channel. With ice Contact Center, their sales team can answer customer inquiries from different media channels on one platform.

## An Out of the Park Customer Experience Strategy

Chris Hanz cites ice Contact Center as a solution to increase efficiencies with their ticket sales team's daily activities. By using ice, the Astros' goal was to gain improvements in productivity and time savings for their sales team's day-to-day operations such as handling inbound and outbound customer calls and IMs from queues. "We recognize the ability to provide better feedback to staff, and consistently and accurately measure the inbound and outbound call activity."

One of the unique items in the Astros' implementation of ice Contact Center is the integration between their ticketing platform and their CRM platform. According to Hanz, "This integration helps our business in saving time on manual entry by our sales reps and also provides accurate reports when comparing outputs from the two systems."

Currently, the Astros are working on lead scoring, outbound email campaigns, and identifying and targeting their most valued customers—ultimately, making each moment of their fans' experiences more memorable and enjoyable.



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