



Financial indicators very positive for UK contact centres

Salaries, headcount, Capex show strong growth with more to follow in 2013

*** Newcastle-upon-Tyne, UK – 6th November 2012 ***

New research published by ContactBabel, the contact centre industry analysts, reveals that the UK contact centre industry is shrugging off the effects of the economic downturn.

"The UK Contact Centre HR & Operational Benchmarking Report (2nd edition 2012/13)", is a major study of 216 UK contact centre operations, looking in depth at salaries, attrition, absence, recruitment, training, operational performance benchmarks, budgets and growth, with forecasts to 2015. The report costs £295 + VAT and is available from www.contactbabel.com/reports.cfm

Some stand-out findings from the 90-page report include:

- Contact centre salaries outpaced inflation in 2011-12, with management salaries in particular bouncing back with a 6.1% average increase
- 54% of respondents expect headcount growth in the next 12 months, with only 29% forecasting a drop in agent numbers
- Capex (investment) rose in 30% of contact centres last year, dropping in only 18%. Capex is forecast to grow in 30% of UK contact centres in 2013, decreasing in only 11%. However, Opex (ongoing expenditure) will remain very tight across the board
- Talk-time continues to drop (now only 52%), although the proportion of time spent on handling multichannel customer contacts has increased by 50%

The report's author, Steve Morrell, commented:

"A number of financial indicators seem to suggest that the UK contact centre industry is repositioning itself successfully for growth. The increase in salaries at both agent and management level, matched with actual and planned headcount changes, show that the demand for customer communication is continuing to grow. However, the nature of this communication is changing significantly, with different agent skills and abilities being sought-out and rewarded.

"Businesses seem to be loosening investment restrictions, recognising that they are in danger of falling behind their competitors. However, operating expenditure – the month-by-month costs – are coming under even greater scrutiny."

About ContactBabel and *"The UK Contact Centre HR & Operational Benchmarking Report (2nd edition 2012-13)*

"The UK Contact Centre HR & Operational Benchmarking Report (2nd edition 2012-13)" is the major annual quantitative study of the operations and HR aspects of 216 UK contact centre operations across all sectors and size bands.



Findings are segmented by 11 vertical markets, 3 contact centre size bands, inbound/outbound activity and services/sales focus to give readers the most accurate comparison with their own operations.

Historical data going back to 2003 are also used to identify key patterns in the industry, enabling the report to forecast how salaries, HR and performance benchmarks are likely to look in 2015, making this report unique in terms of the level of research or analysis behind it.

Contact:

Steve Morrell (Principal Analyst) / smorrell@contactbabel.com / +44 (0)191 271 5269 / www.contactbabel.com