



“Awesome.”

Help/Systems' Customer Service Has The Commerce Group, Inc. Covered

by Josh Richards

When it comes to running mission-critical applications, customer service can be as important as the software. When asked to sum up Help/Systems' customer service, Wendy O'Brien provided one word: Awesome.

Wendy is a Data Center Technical Analyst with The Commerce Group, Inc., at their corporate office in Webster, Massachusetts. Through their subsidiary companies, The Commerce Group, Inc. (CGI) writes policies in 15 states and is among the largest personal auto insurers in the United States.

To manage their large volume of business, CGI runs two IBM® System i™ 570s, with a total of 13 partitions. One system runs all the production LPARs®; the other system runs development LPARs and backs up one of their production systems. Currently, CGI uses Robot/SCHEDULE® (the batch job management software), Robot/NETWORK® (network control software), and Robot/CONSOLE® (automatic message, resource, and log management software) to automate their operations. According to Wendy, Robot/SCHEDULE handles the bulk of their work. “We have hundreds of jobs in Robot/SCHEDULE. We run all our backups, do all our restrictions, and a majority of our nightly batch processing. I'd say at least 90% of what we do is managed by Robot/SCHEDULE. It's a great product that anyone looking to automate processes should take advantage of.”

CGI uses Robot/CONSOLE with Robot/NETWORK to monitor the 13 partitions that they use for messaging. The Computer Operations team at CGI likes this because they can do all message monitoring on one console. Wendy says using Robot/NETWORK saves time and eliminates redundancy. “If you have similar jobs, you're creating it once, not re-creating the job 12 times.” Currently, CGI's Data Control group is looking at ways to incorporate Robot/REPLAY®, the interactive job management software, into their suite.

Although Wendy and her group are very happy with the Robot products, it's customer service that really puts Help/Systems ahead of the competition. “I would say that Help/Systems far exceeds what I encounter with other businesses.”

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— Wendy O'Brien, CGI



So what sets Help/Systems' customer service apart from others? Having technical consultants that are available, detailed-oriented, and provide timely communication is important. As Wendy explains, "Being able to call on Sunday and having someone available to return your call is great. Also, I've posted questions on the discussion threads on the Help/Systems Web site, and the staff is always quick to get back to you, as well as posting answers online."

One specific situation that impressed Wendy was when CGI had an issue interfacing their High Availability (HA) product with Robot/SCHEDULE. Wendy called Help/Systems' customer support on a Sunday and received a call from a technical consultant almost immediately. After some initial troubleshooting, the technical consultant asked Wendy



to send some information to share with the Help/Systems technical team. "Probably a week and a half went by. If I didn't talk to her at least once a day, I spoke with her three or four times a day. The consultant had me try several approaches to solving the problem. She was always there and always following up—she was awesome."

Wendy was also impressed with how the Help/Systems Technical Consultant tried to fully understand CGI's environment before proposing solutions. "She asked about release levels, mod levels, license setup information, our interactive job log, and feature codes—all important information to diagnose the problem."

With the help of the Help/Systems Technical Consultant, Wendy and her department were able to find the root of their problem and fix it. As Wendy explains, "It was a lesson learned on our part, but the consultant was terrific to deal with and helped us every step of the way."

Wendy believes that other Help/System customers should take advantage of their customer service, and not to call only when there is a problem. "Consulting with a technical person at Help/Systems to make sure that you're doing what you should be doing in your environment and to make sure you've got the process down, is important." Monthly phone calls from the sales representative, informational e-mails, Robot/NEWS, and the Web site have all contributed to a positive support experience for Wendy and CGI. "It's not like we just purchase something and then we never see you [Help Systems] again. I think all of Help/Systems' customers should take advantage of that." When purchasing new software, an important part of the decision process at CGI is based on the vendors' customer service. According to Wendy, "With the nature of what we do—servicing customers—a 24/7 environment is becoming increasingly important. To have a relationship with a vendor that can provide that type of customer service is very important. If it's Sunday, or the middle of the night, you need to make sure they're available and can provide that level of support."

Wendy also likes the fact that Help/Systems listens to customers' suggestions for improving their products. "I can certainly say that they were very responsive to a suggestion we had last year. The Technical Consultant that I dealt with even worked with IBM. We will be able to take advantage of using the new function when we upgrade."

When you are ready for your next System i software purchase, remember that you are getting more than a few lines of code. With Help/Systems, you are also getting the people and support behind that product.

