



AWARD-WINNING ENTRY: SAVING A CRITICAL ENTERPRISE CUSTOMER

The situation was as straightforward as it was dire: a leader in networking technology was in danger of losing one of their largest enterprise customers.

The customer, one of the world's largest banks, held an entitlement contract. That contract guaranteed, in 95% of cases, parts and labor would be on site anywhere in North America within 120 minutes if the bank's operations were compromised by a network issue. But for months, coordination issues between the order management team, field engineers, warehouse partners, and logistics partners had led to delivery delays. KPIs were being missed. After several months where on-time delivery results sank as low as 71%, the bank threatened to find a new networking technology provider.

The loss of the bank as a customer would be a significant blow in and of itself and ripple effects could include loss of confidence from other major customers and, possibly, loss of investor confidence. Failure was not an option.

Since 2007, Blue Ocean had been providing 360-degree order management support for their networking technology client. As a long-standing, trusted partner, they were now tasked with creating a recovery plan to ensure consistent on-time delivery of parts and labor for this critically important customer.

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The solution took inspiration from America's favourite game – football. A special 24/7/365 Proactive Operations team was created to prevent delivery delays or failures with *quarterbacks* at the core of the concept. Prior to the launch of the Blue Ocean Pro-Ops team, each case would have been touched by up to eight different resources including an RMA agent, warehouse partners, field engineers, logistics agents, and in some cases, would have required customer-side security resources – with each functional area operating in a silo or combination of siloes. Under Pro-Ops, the quarterback now had full visibility and direct access to each required resource.

Quarterbacks chosen for the Pro-Ops team were selected for their subject matter expertise, their ice-cold ability to make smart decisions when the stakes were highest, and their agility to manage changing dynamics using multiple tools and systems. They are responsible for reading the field, designing the play, making the calls, and ensuring that the team reaches the “end zone” – before the clock runs out.

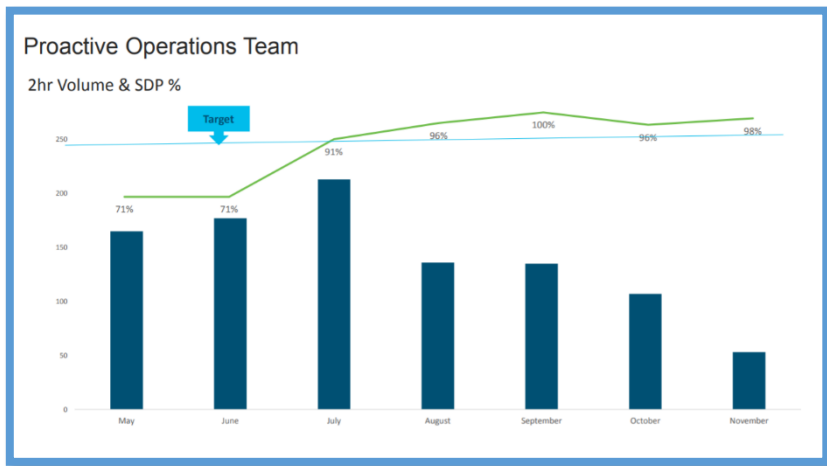
A pre-alert system was established to provide QBs with 26 points of data *before* the part order is even created – allowing them essentially to see into the future. The Pro-Ops team gained a 15-minute head start over their previous operating procedure with the pre-alert. Using that 15-minute advantage, the quarterback assigned to the case assesses the situation, mobilizes the right resources, identifies (and overcomes) every possible obstacle to on-time delivery.

Each case requires unique situational awareness and creative strategizing. When wildfires triggered evacuations of parts depots in California, quarterbacks proactively created plans to source parts from other regions and designed specific shipping strategies to meet on-time targets. With the game plan in hand, the team was prepared to respond quickly *in case* there was an issue in the affected region.

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In other cases, small changes made a big impact. Prior to the launch of Pro-Ops, field engineers arriving to make repairs at the bank’s various locations were losing precious minutes trying to locate the person who had received the necessary parts from the courier. Under Pro-Ops, armed with real-time location knowledge of both courier and engineer, quarterbacks now coordinate the direct hand-off of parts.

When the Pro-Ops team launched in July 2018, program coordinator Craig Isles noted “There was senior executive attention on every single case. At four a.m., we’d have a vice-president asking for minute-by-minute updates on individual cases. We knew we had earned their trust when eventually those executives started dropping off group chats after-hours instead of monitoring progress all night.”



Averaging 96% on-time delivery since their launch – a 25-point increase in consistency – the Pro-Ops team earned back critical customer trust, ultimately saving the relationship.

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