

NCTeleserve

Call Center

Winthrop, Washington

www.ncteleserve.com



In 2000, after 25 years in call center development and consulting, George Dale and his wife were ready for a change. They fell in love with Winthrop Washington in the Eastern Washington, joined forces with a team of investors and started the plans for a new business in their new community. The business was NCTeleserve, a call center that provides technical and customer service support for companies that want to lower call center expenses and improve their customer service. But George planned to do more than build another call center. His experience had taught him that it was time for some innovative thinking about the call center model and he decided to implement those new ideas into his Methow Valley facility from day one.

Their first major challenge for such a high tech company was creating the powerful Internet infrastructure they needed. It took some time, but by working with the community and with the local telephone company, they set a strong technology foundation for the new business. The next step was implementing the innovations that would be such an essential part of NCTeleserve. According to George, most outsourcers live off call volume: the more problems a company is having with product or services, the greater the revenue for the outsourcer. George decided to do things a little differently, by tracking and reporting back to the client the most frequent complaints coming into the call center. The client can address those problems and reduce the number of calls, improving customer service and generating repeat business. George believes in the long run, it creates a much better business relationship. He explains, "We want to partner with companies to increase their customer satisfaction, and the only way you can do that is to understand your client's problems and help fix them. It's a win-win for everyone."

But George didn't stop there. He knew that most outsourcers provide their clients a standard set of reports and the client must assume that the data they are receiving is accurate and complete. NCTeleserve enables clients to go into their own computer-based account and check the call data for themselves. They can retrieve whatever reports they want. George believes this is another way to build trust and communication with clients and leads to long and satisfying business relationships.

Customer service is not the only innovation to be found at NCTeleserve. From the beginning George and his investors planned to focus on employing local workers for his business. There are currently 25 employees; the company

plans for 100 over the next five years. George explains, "Once we reach 100 employees here, we will probably open an additional call center in the Okanogan, Omak, Wenatchee area. When those two centers are fully functional, we plan to go into a full force telework organization." With a distributed telework model, NCTeleserve will employ workers who are local to the clients' business area. The workers will train in the client headquarters, and then work from their own home offices as employees of NCTeleserve. George says, "The beauty of this is that if I sign a contract with a client in Spokane, I can put people in Spokane to work. Evolving telephone technology like Voice over IP [Internet-based phone service] will be the key to effective teleworking."

George is very confident that with creative thinking, businesses can do well in rural areas. He feels it's important to research the resources carefully first and work closely local government and public agencies to create the Internet infrastructure needed for success. George says, "Your business can prosper out here. It takes a little more work, so you need to have the heart to do it. In Seattle, other companies are competing for your employees, but here the main thing vying for their attention is their family. Keep that in mind and the end result is a far more dedicated and stable workforce."

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- George Dale
CEO, NCTeleserve