



# AT&T Frontline Agent

CONTEXTUAL INQUIRY AND  
USER INTERVIEWS

July 2018

# Goal and Methods

**Goal:** Learn and discovery insights from in-person field studies and conversations. The effort is a foundation to empathize with our AT&T Frontline Agents and uncover any insights from their experiences. The data we capture are recommendations we will advocate to our journey teams and prioritize for future development.

## Methodologies:

- A** **Contextual Inquiries:** To learn how and why users do what they do; to discover needs and attitudes that might not emerge in an interview to map how tools, digital and otherwise, interact during complex activities.
- B** **User Interviews:** A wide-spanning set of semi-structured questions with participates who are experts in their subject that could provide insights, stories, experiences.



### “Be a fly on the wall”

Participates space, observe, curious, minimal questions



### “Conversational”

Transparency, their needs, uncovering roadblocks

# Content Coding and Emergent Themes

AT&T User Research 2018

**Facilitated by:** Eric Song and Kristian Dela Cruz

**Dates:** May 22-23 2018

**Number of Users:** 6

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**Qualitative Data Collection:** 30 minute to 1 hour and user interviews with guided scripts

**Qualitative Data Analysis:** content coding leading to trending themes

- Break up findings into discrete data points
  - Group data points into categories
  - Infer broader themes from these categories
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**Hours of Observations and Interviews:** ~9 hours total

**Hours of Recording:** ~5 hours total

# A. Observation Evaluation | “How I enter to work”

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## 1 The Call Center is located at the back of the Grassmere location

As visitors enter the location Agents are greeted with signs signaling the direction where the call center is located. Some AT&T Agents commute 30 minutes or 1 hour away for work and usually will go to the back of the building to get started on their shift. There is a disconnect on the overall presence of Frontline Agents and their importance should be pushed in the forefront.

### Recommendation:

1. Have Agents go through the front doors often to be part of the team. This will give them exposure to the larger team
2. Create another sign in front of the building that is prominent. Make them feel they are part of the team.
3. AT&T Frontline agents are important for the overall customer experience— involve Agent’s in every process in the product development or any effort that involves any customers.



# A. Observation Evaluation | “This is where I work”

## 1 Frontline Agents are showcased for their performance

AT&T Frontline Agents names will be displayed on their performance. Managers will present their NPS scores publically that provides a competitive environment. Shootouts are also presented on the walls for team morale and motivation.

## 2 The Agent space is loud when it is busy

The call center gets jarring and loud once Agents come on their shift. Some agents even voiced that it is difficult to speak to customers once the room is filled. Agents also consistently ask to repeat instructions to customers because of signal service or headphone issues which disrupts the customer experience

### Recommendations:

1. Create a space that is spread out or configured differently to reduce noise at high volume hours.
2. Explore different headsets for Agents to provide clear voice interactions with customers.



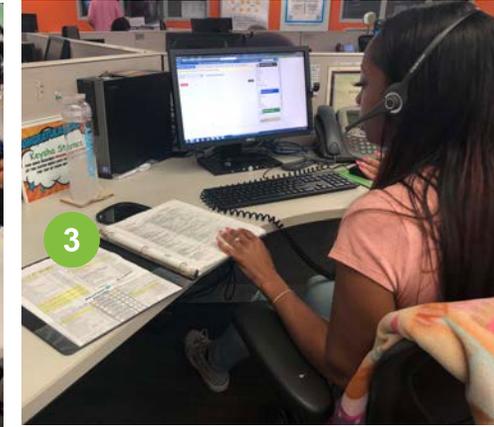
	94	110	80	11		
	Reliability	Aux	HERO	NPS	AHT	ACW
TEAM	91	122	77	79	302	13
Leslie	97	135	77	80	426	27
Ramon	96	119	89	83	287	16
Que	98	115	80	77	364	21
Sara		143	95	80	352	8
Clay	97	121	80	75	455	6
Adam	99	126	74	74	405	38
Shanna	99	106	70	76	302	3
Britt	99	106	80	81	352	6

## A. Observation Evaluation | “This is my desk”

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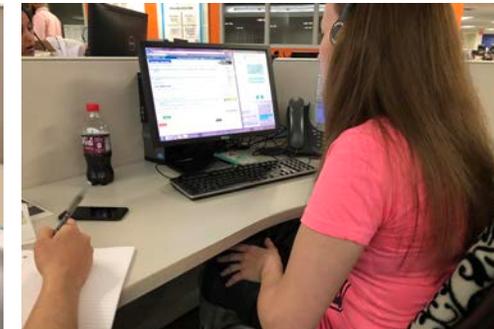
### 1 Agents get back to back calls

Users will receive a variety of calls in the span of 30 minutes. In some cases, Agents will get 4-5 calls in 15 minutes. But depending on the complexity of the call (transfers, team chat assistance, etc) the influx of calls will vary. Once call ends the Agent might get another call in the queue. iCare will automatically configure to the need a sound on the headphones will help indicate the agents that they received a customer.



### 2 Agents will always have help from coaches and advisors

Users have an opportunity to use group chats to assist them if there is a question they could not answer. They will do this during a call and try to notify the customer that they will get the answer. These chats are a double-edge sword because coaches might take a little longer to answer.



### 3 Agents use notes to help a customer

Users working area consistent of helpful material that can help them with a customer. Some users have a black binder that shows all of the extension numbers another user put the extension on a picture frame. One user analyzed all reoccurring customer concerns and documented it on her desktop notes and will copy and paste it into iCare Notes.



## B. User Interview Findings

### 1 Latency is a problem agents are experiencing on iCare

Multiple users mentioned that speed and latency is a on-going challenge for agents. Most incidents they will go through a flow then the next screen will be loading. Agents will need to inform the customers that the system is loading to fill the gap.

### 3 Frontline agents have prior call center experience with AT&T or Verizon

Multiple users mention that they worked at a AT&T or Verizon call center prior to working with Asurion. One user mentioned that AT&T was very strict on their 13 week training. It involved 1 week of customer service training (tone, triggers, etc.) a week of system training and other components involving customer service.

Some participants even mentioned their prior training from other companies gave them the foundation on their current job with Asurion. One participant has been with Asurion for 5 years and first worked at ATAC, then to retail chat then to mobility. This specific participant had a long line of family experience which helped her with her tone control and customer service.

### 3 Scripts are important when you start but they expect us to sound ourselves

Numerous agents mentioned scripts are good guide them on the process. It shows them where they current are and it helps them throughout the flow. One participant mentioned it was her first time seeing a system that has the script right in front of them. Agents also mentioned that once they used to the process they will try incorporate some of their personality into the scripts.

### 4 Training was valuable but wished there was more hands on training

Multiple agents had previous experience with call centers. They mentioned that the first week of training at Asurion will be:

- First week, module training on the computer
- Second week, you will go out on the floor listen and take one call at a time
- Third week, they take live calls

An agent recommended that training would do more live calls to prepare them on the amount of calls they will receive.

### 5 Affidavits is a part of the process agents know customer experience will cause friction

All Agents mention that once the Affidavit action occurs on iCare that customers will question what is it. Numerous agents even mentioned that customers do not have time to print out the paper work and sending a picture of an ID. Agents even mentioned that it only occurs on special moments. One Agent analyzed that it might occur<sup>1</sup> during:

- If the customer has changed their last name
- If the customer has changed their address
- If the customer has filed too many claims
- If the customer has not filed a claim after a long period of time

Two Agents mentioned that we should have a PDF form for this process so its easier for the customer and have them electronically sign it. Agents also said for AT&T the primary account holder will be the only one that can sign the documents which can cause friction for the customer experience. If non-primary account holder calls to file a claim.

<sup>1</sup>=These scenarios are hypothesis from the agents.

### 6 Agents choose their hours through 'Shift Bids' and overtime is given— if needed

Agents will be able to choose the hours they are able to work. In some cases, hours might be prioritized to individuals that will need it most. One participant was a expecting mother and she was an individual that bid on the hours first. There are shifts<sup>2</sup> throughout the morning, afternoon and third shift that agents can 'bid' on.

<sup>2</sup>=The specific shifts we captured were 12-9 and overnight shifts

### 7 Frontline Agents use group chats to ask questions that they don't know, but it takes time to get answers from coaches

Some agents mention that group chats are a great source to ask their questions but some times it takes time for them to get their answer. One Agent mentioned she needed to put the customer on hold to get the question answered from the group chat. Another Agent mentioned anything that involves CST she will just transfer the customer to CST and they will help the customer finish the claim.

## B. User Interview Findings (continued)

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### 8 Agents know that 'register' and 'de-register' language causes friction on the customer

Multiple Agents said that 'registering' and 'de-registering' a device on the claim flow can open up questions for the customers. All Agents mentioned that although it is outside the scripting **they don't say 'de-register'** to a customer. Numerous Agents said that mentioning 'de-register' will open up questions, such as: "Why are you de-registering my device?" "If you de-register that device will it still have insurance on it?"

The original scripts opens up gaps on the claim experience and Agents will explain to the customer that they will still have insurance on the device. One Agent uses a analogy and described the process similar to a carwash. You can't fit so many cars in the carwash that you will need to remove one car in the carwash to keep the process going. When Agent's see that the account has more then three devices registered— she or he will de-register the oldest claim on the account and register the new device that the customer is calling about.

This process relieves the agent from further questions and provides the customer ease of mind

### 9 AT&T Representatives are not providing accurate answers to customers

Agents voiced their concern on how AT&T representatives are providing lackluster answers to customers. All participates mentioned that AT&T representatives will provide incorrect deductible numbers to customers and once customers file a claim with Asurion friction will occur with the experience. This occurrences is happening more often according to the participates and it's causing customers to escalate because of the false information provided to them. Secondly, three participates mentioned that AT&T representatives will argue with them while the customer will be on the line. Although this happens Agents will resolve the issue and provide the best customer experience for our customers.

### 10 New iPhone releases causes bottlenecks

Participates mentioned that new iPhone releases causes back order bottlenecks. One participant mentioned a customer did not have a phone for two months. PFR or reserve PFR's occur more often on iPhone releases. Multiple Agents mentioned that stolen claims also occur most when new iPhone releases occur.