

KEEP A CLEAR HEAD ABOUT HEADSETS

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For call centres or contact centre to be able to provide high quality customer service, depends on many critical and interrelated factors. Not the least of these is the quality of the voice communication between caller and agent. Poor voice quality results in frustration, misunderstanding, increased stress levels, (both agent and caller) significantly increased average handling time and in many cases, a total waste of costly resources.

High quality headsets, designed specifically for call centre or contact centre use, and appropriately configured to the call centre telephony platform, alleviate poor voice quality issues, whilst enhancing the overall customer experience.

Utilising modern noise-cancelling headset microphones, typical high levels of call centre background chit-chat and ambient noise are all but totally eliminated. Similarly, lightweight, comfortable earpieces provide crystal-clear sound quality; agents can hear every word during their conversations with customers. Quality conversations go a long, long way to creating optimised customer service.

ARE HEADSETS EXPENSIVE CONSUMABLES or VALUABLE ASSETS

If your operation buys the cheapest headsets that you can find, then it is probable that your company views headsets as *expensive consumables*. Over even two to three years, this policy will cost your organisation a fortune. Cheap headsets don't give the sound quality that's conducive to quality customer engagement. Longer calls and confused callers and agents adds up to significant costs. Poor physical quality means that they break easily. And, agents are notoriously rough on headsets. Often, cheap headsets can't be repaired. They are simply thrown away. More costs!

But high value headsets, with noise-cancelling technology to eliminate background noise, superb audio quality, and high durability, presents a totally different value proposition. Particularly when quality headsets can be easily serviced with low-cost, on-site spares such as ear cushions, microphone foam and quick-release lower cables, then headsets start becoming valuable assets. Then, when you add on-line asset tracking, fast, fixed cost repairs, full refurbishment and sanitization services

and extended warranties, the Return-on-Investment starts to make the Financial Director smile from ear to ear.

Yes. Headsets can be valuable assets and not expensive consumables.

HEADSET HEALTH AND HYGIENE

Headsets can be a leading source of infection in the workplace if proper hygiene measures are not in place. Best practice recommends that call centre and contact centre operators draw up a *Headset Health & Hygiene Standard Operating Procedure* (SOP) in association with the organisation's Health & Safety officer or team, to ensure good hygiene practices.

These SOP's would differ from one call centre to another but generally they will be built around two basic principles: *Ozone Sterilizing* and *Scheduled Cushion Replacement*.

Ozone Sterilization

General Hygiene & Sanitation: All headsets should be Ozone Sterilised on a regular basis; at least once a month and even better, once a week.

Onset of Infection: Any employee exhibiting symptoms of flu, a cold, coughing, throat infections, ear infections, or any other contagious or infectious diseases should Ozone Sterilise their headset **daily** until their symptoms have passed

After being Sick: Any employee who has been booked off work with flu, a cold, coughing, throat infections, ear infections, or any other contagious or infectious diseases should Ozone Sterilise their headset daily for 3 to 5 days after returning to work in order to avoid re-infection

Re-Issue of used headsets: Any used headsets that are re-issued to new employees should be Ozone Sterilised prior to being re-issued.

Sharing of headsets: Headsets should not be shared under any circumstances. This is very unhygienic. If headsets are shared, they must definitely be Ozone Sterilized between users.

Ozone Sterilising Cabinets

The Crystel Ozone Sterilising cabinet looks something like an oversized microwave oven and can sterilise 30 to 40 headsets in a single cycle lasting between 15 and 20 minutes. Any call centre or contact centre or office environment using telephone

headsets should have their own ozone cabinet on their premises. Several headset supply companies are now providing regular on-site headset sterilisation as a service.

Cushion Replacement:

General Cushion Swops: Depending on wear & tear, all headsets should have their cushions and microphone foam pads replaced every 6 or 12 months (this can be established by a visual inspection)

Re-Issue of used headsets: Any used headsets that are re-issued to new users should have their cushions replaced and be ozone sterilized before being re-issued.

What is Ozone

- Ozone is the most powerful disinfectant available to man and reduces bacterial, viral and parasitic contamination by up to 99%.
- Ozone is a naturally occurring inert gas that is found in the earth's atmosphere. Ozone is made up of 3 atoms of Oxygen (O₃) as opposed to the Oxygen that we breathe which is made up of 2 atoms (O₂).
- Ozone the strongest natural disinfectant available on the market and works more than 3,000 times faster than Chlorine.
- Ozone has a pale blue colour in its natural state but is colourless at room temperature. Ozone has the same smell as you would experience after a thunder storm

For more information about call centre or contact centre or back office headsets see www.crystal.co.za