

Warranty management on a national scale

How call centers can improve the facilitation of customer claims

While automotive recalls always present challenges, in many cases, the issue can be resolved with a visit to a service station where a maintenance technician can remove and replace the affected component. In some instances, it is not necessary to replace the vehicle, or involve the dealer in the repair.

When an automotive recall includes older model vehicles, some customers may have already remediated the issue before the recall was announced. When this happens, vehicle owners can usually submit a warranty claim for reimbursement. Fielding calls from customers who need the issue repaired, and from those seeking reimbursement, can quickly overwhelm a typical call center, especially when the number of affected vehicles is sizeable. Leveraging the additional support of a third party can ensure that customers' calls are quickly answered and directed to the correct department, while ensuring there are no duplicate or fraudulent claims.

Challenge

A global automaker voluntarily recalled 1.3 million vehicles across several models and years to replace a faulty component.

After receiving reports of a faulty component, one of the world's leading automakers initiated a recall on 1.3 million vehicles. Given that the recall affected multiple models across several years, some owners had already had repairs completed on the faulty component. Consequently, when the voluntary recall was issued, the automaker was left fielding reimbursement claims from customers, as well as inquiries from affected customers, and the dealer network who were conducting the necessary repairs.

While the automaker had an existing customer service call center, the large volume (and varied nature) of inbound calls quickly overwhelmed the operation. There was also the matter of obtaining the required information and supporting documents to validate the significant surge in warranty claims. At this point, the global automaker turned to Sedgwick brand protection for help scaling their call center and claims processing efforts.



1.3MM
affected units



30x
uplift in call volume



90%+
SLA achieved



5,000
warranty claims
processed in 60 days

Solution

Sedgwick brand protection leveraged its call center capabilities to meet the surge in inbound calls.

With more than 25 years of experience managing automotive recalls, Sedgwick brand protection was able to quickly scale the call center operation and meet the increased demand. Utilizing its existing automotive specialty call center program and infrastructure, Sedgwick quickly added additional agents – as required – to field calls on behalf of the client. The agents' expertise allowed them to swiftly and accurately address customers' questions and handle warranty claims on the affected vehicles. Creating a separate call center specifically for the recall prevented disruption and delays to the automaker's normal customer contact.

To address the challenge of obtaining the required information and supporting documents for warranty claims, Sedgwick brand protection developed a customer web portal specifically for the client's recall. This portal was integrated into Sedgwick's proprietary recall and warranty application system, allowing customers to submit their warranty claim and upload supporting documentation.

Upon receipt of the documentation, Sedgwick leveraged cross resource utilization and the recall and warranty application to review and process warranty claims, including quality inspections for accuracy and the elimination of duplicate claims and potential fraud.

Results

A quickly scaled call center resulted in shorter average call times despite the large uplift in inbound activity.

With Sedgwick brand protection's call center support, the global automotive manufacturer was able to handle 30 times the normal amount of customer calls while simultaneously achieving a 90 percent Average Service Level. In total, Sedgwick successfully received, reviewed and processed over 5,000 warranty claims in just 60 days.

Key takeaways

- Dealing with automotive component recalls that affect older model vehicles can be challenging, since customers may have already completed repairs themselves. Be prepared to handle reimbursement claims.
- When managing a recall that affects millions of units, no matter how large your company, third-party help can provide the assistance you need to effectively manage the event and prevent disruption to regular operations.
- Collecting documentation from customers can be confusing for the customer and company managing the recall. Establishing a clear platform and protocol for collecting these materials can streamline the process and improve the customer experience and outcomes.

Sedgwick brand protection

Brand and reputation are the most valuable and vulnerable assets a business has. Brands embody and encapsulate everything a business does, and its customers expect. Nothing says more about a company's commitment to its customers than its efforts to uphold promises of safety, quality, and service. That's why companies are often remembered more for how they handle an in-market challenge than for the problem itself. We know what it takes to manage recalls in a way that upholds your commitments to customers, supply chain partners, industry and regulators.

Trusted by the world's leading brands and businesses, we work in partnership to manage the risks and minimize the impacts of in-market business and product crises. Since 1995, we have managed more than 5,000 of the most sensitive and time-critical recall and remediation programs - spanning 60+ countries and 20+ languages.

To learn more about our recall, remediation and retention solutions, contact us today.

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