During QATC in Nashville, Sheri Greenhaus, Partner, CrmXchange, had a chance to talk with Andressa Marlin, Product Strategy Manager for Verint.

How would you describe Verint to our audience?

Verint is a customer engagement solutions organization. We cover everything for the customer's experience, from knowledge management or engagement management all the way through the customer journey. We focus on Voice of the Customer and traditional workforce optimization such as quality management and workforce force management.

What trends are you seeing with agent evaluations?

We are seeing changes in the ability to monitor and understand quality at a higher rate. There has been an increasing need for organizations to make sure they are complying with corporate as well as government regulations. To ensure this, there is a greater need ask the right questions and use the correct forms. Many organizations are re-evaluating to ensure that they have the employees, customers and enterprise in mind when scoring the evaluations.

Major trends we are currently seeing:

- Automation helps with the ability to gather information quickly while ensuring compliance.
- Quality analysts are inspiring employees to watch for behaviors which will help them be more successful.
- A greater focus on the customer journey in order to fit the voice of the brand in the organization.

Are you seeing any trends on allowing the employees evaluate themselves?

We are finding that employees are hard on themselves. By proving them the tools and technology to hear how they sound on calls, and to see how they're interacting with their customers, lets them hear their own behaviors and autocorrect.

I have seen at this conference, more and more customers that we interact with are giving this information to their employees so that they have a chance to grow, hear themselves, and really evaluate what they would like to do differently in their own calls.

In regards to agent evaluations, if an agent disagrees with what's been recorded in the evaluation, what voice do they have in the dispute process?

I ascribe to giving the voice of the employee as well as the voice of the customer experience. We suggest giving employees a chance to provide feedback to the coach, whether negative or positive. There should be a methodology in place where the agent to go back, ask someone else from the same team to evaluate they.

Forms are always a big topic. Are there any changes that you're seeing in forms?

Yes, there are two. Of the subjective questions that they're asking, for example, how are they brand impacting and how do they impact the division the customer interacts with?

We can both think of organizations where we make a phone call and we don't want to talk to the billing department. They're starting to evaluate how they're impacting that brand or how the customer thinks of the division within the organization; what are the questions they should be asking that impact what that would be. And then on the objective side, its really interesting when you listen to the calls, how many things an employee has to say that are script adherence ensuring that they've covered everything... from an interest rate or making sure the customer understands that if they make a late payment there will be late payment fees and wanting to cover those things on an objective level and just getting it out of the way so they're making sure that all of those different questions are covered on a form.

Are you finding that agents have input about what goes on a form?

This was the topic of a break-out session I took part in yesterday. Employees have been asking for peer focus groups to provide inputs for the form. This information may give an outsider a new perspective that could be used in surveys. Having input from a wide array of different people - from employees on the front lines, quality analysts, and trainers - leads to a greater visibility of what goes into that form.

I imagine with all the input agents have today agent turnover would start to decrease.

Voice of the Employee is definitely implemented to reduce turnover and give the employee a greater voice into what they can contribute to the organization. We've seen the research where employees that feel they have a voice and feel like they're making a difference for their organization have a higher tendency to stay with that organization because they can see where they attribute to its success. This is exactly why we want to give those employees a voice.

It sounds like in order to keep the customer happy you also need to keep the employee happy. Is this what you're finding?

There have been statistics that show when using Voice of the Employee, giving employees a greater engagement, increases the dollars attributed to the customer experience. Customers have greater loyalty because they're interacting with more positive employees.

As we wrap up, what are some final thoughts that you would like to convey to the CrmXchange audience who is thinking about a VOE program? What should they be focusing on or considering?

In a Voice of the Employee program several factors are important to remember:

- When Coaching, allow the employee the ability to gain the same insights you have
- Employee should have the chance to provide feedback on information they've been given
- Providing Milestones or Measurements allows the employee to see their own improvement
- Employees should feel there's a journey to success available to them

Using these factors, you can help make your employees part of the success of your organization.