

How Customer Service & Relentless Support Increased One Company's Profitability By 40%



A BELDING GROUP CASE STUDY

Solutions for **Standing Out**



by creating world-class customer experiences

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Produced by: The Belding Group of Companies Inc.

Overview

Worldlynx Wireless is a dominant operator of wireless retail stores for one of Canada's largest telecommunications companies. It was created through the merger of over a dozen of independent dealers, and consists of over 80 retail stores.

Prior to the merger, each dealer had its own culture, and its own operating systems and processes, the first challenge for *Worldlynx* was to create a single, cohesive entity.

As a dealer, *Worldlynx* was tied to the pricing, product and positioning of the brand. The primary independently controllable marketing element for *Worldlynx* was the customer service and selling skills of its people.

To address these challenges, The Belding Group was retained to help *Worldlynx* create a strong, consistent customer service and sales culture – introduced as *The Worldlynx Way*.

After the first full year of implementation, *The Worldlynx Way* has resulted in dramatic changes in both the consistency of sales and service, and financial results. The program was introduced in five clear stages, outlined in this case study.



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Stage One – Development

a) Needs Assessment/ Gap Analysis

Working with the senior and regional management teams, an assessment was conducted of current performance levels of staff at all levels. The assessment also included reviews of all existing business practice and operational policies and processes that impacted customer touchpoints.

A subsequent gap analysis identified the high-yield opportunities for growth and development. Key performance and financial metrics were established to evaluate the ongoing impact of changes introduced.



b) Initial Performance Standards

Belding and Worldynx developed a preliminary set of behavioural performance standards for front-line employees and managers, and methodology for tracking execution of those standards.

c) Managers' Roles Redefined

The role of store managers was redefined. The new mandate was a primary focus on continuous improvement of their teams. Although managers still retained their administrative functions, their main role was now on daily coaching and mentoring.



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Stage Two – Customer Service Training Rollout

a) *Worldlynx Way* Training to all Employees

Over the course of two months, Belding's certified training team delivered highly targeted *Worldlynx Way* training to all employees in the organization. The interactive program was focused on transferring core customer service skills and behaviours. As part of the training, Belding created a number of tools for employees to use in their live environment.



b) *Leading The Worldlynx Way* Training to all Managers

Concurrent with the *Worldlynx Way* training, regional managers and store managers participated in extensive training to provide them with the skills for coaching and motivating their teams. This program showed managers how to set daily performance goals, observe live interactions, assess performance levels and respond appropriately.

The training focused on changing the existing feedback coaching paradigm to a more effective, proactive, feed-forward approach.

c) *Live Environment Coaching*

Immediately following the training, Belding trainers and *Worldlynx* coaches spent a full day in each location, working with the staff and managers to help them execute the skills in the live environment. During this time, employees were evaluated as to their understanding and retention of *The Worldlynx Way*.



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Stage Three – Program Support

a) Post-Workshop Follow-Up

Belding created a web-based assessment tool for all employees. The purpose of the tool was two-fold: First, to assess retention of the skills and principles; and second, to encourage employees to revisit the key elements of the training. This was rolled-out one month following the live environment coaching. The assessments were scored by Belding personnel, and feedback was provided to each employee.



b) Worldlynx Manager/Coaching Log

A coaching log was created for all managers to complete on a weekly basis, outlining their coaching efforts for that week. A process was established for review and response to activities placed in the log by Worldlynx coaches and regional management.

c) Worldlynx Coach follow-up

After the second stage of the training was completed, Worldlynx coaches were deployed to the stores, conducting ongoing store visits, and coaching employees in *The Worldlynx Way*.



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Stage Three – Program Support (Cont'd)

d) Worldlynx Coach Train-the-Trainer

Worldlynx coaches participated in an intensive five-day train-the-trainer program to certify the Worldlynx coaches in delivering *The Worldlynx Way*. This enabled coaches to ensure that all new hires could be trained on *The Worldlynx Way*.

e) Biweekly Support Tools

Every two weeks, store managers received new skills drills and other activities to share with their teams. This kept the momentum of *The Worldlynx Way* alive, and ensured that the skills continued to be used in the live environment.

Stage Four – Raising the Bar

a) Compensation Alignment

Worldlynx implemented a company-wide change to compensation with a sliding scale of bonuses based on monthly measurement of service and sales behaviours. This was specifically targeted to managers, and was structured to encourage them to proactively drive the behaviours in their locations.

b) Adjusting Non-Negotiable Standards

Once it was clear that there was sustained traction with the existing employee behaviour expectations, Worldlynx narrowed the focus to mandate and drive the highest yield behaviours. The measurement tools were adjusted, along with the compensation plan, to reflect this change.



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Stage Five – High-Intensity Relentless Support

c) The Adopt-A-Store Concept

To demonstrate the full potential of *The Worldlynx Way*, each Worldlynx coach selected one location as a dedicated pilot site. Each coach was embedded in their location for a one month period. This was a high-intensity initiative to see the effect when *The Worldlynx Way* was executed consistently at the highest level.

During the month, coaches would interact with managers and employees following each transaction throughout the day. They did not provide feedback, but instead implemented the proactive, motivational feed-forward approach. They created a strategic performance development map for each employee to ensure the coaching efforts were focused and effective.

The *Adopt-A-Store* initiative was measured weekly, with the year-over-year gross margin results of the Pilot stores being compared to the overall company average

Results: The results of the initial *Adopt-A-Store* program were startling. By the end of the second week, ***Pilot stores were exceeding the gross margin average for the company by over 40%***. This trend continued throughout the program.



d) The Adopt-A-Store Rollout

Following the tremendous success of the pilot project, the *Adopt-A-Store* initiative was rolled out in waves, using coaches from Worldlynx and Belding. The results were consistent with the initial pilot, with **gross margin increases hitting as high as 53%**.



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Conclusions

The Worldlynx Way initiative illustrates three key conclusions:

1. Growth Opportunities Are Greater Than We Think

Most organizations do not envision that the opportunity exists for dramatic change in business results. Business plans that project ten or twenty percent increases in profitability are often viewed as idealistic or unattainable. This case study illustrates that opportunity for growth can be far greater than imagined, when a company makes a commitment to changing the way they do business.

2. Customer Service Training Impacts Business Results

Customer service training has historically been referred to as a 'soft skill.' This is largely due to the difficulty in attaching any real cause-and-effect benefit to improvements in business results. The Worldlynx Way initiative was able to show a direct and significant correlation between improved customer service performance and business results.

3. Behaviour Change Requires Relentless Support

The dramatic improvement in customer service performance and business results from the *Adopt-A-Store* component of *The Worldlynx Way* highlight the impact of a high-intensity approach to change.



About The Belding Group of Companies Inc.

The Belding Group has been helping companies stand out with customer experience for 23 years. It has two divisions that provide consulting, training and measurement in customer service, workplace performance and leadership. It has two divisions:



Belding Training designs, develops and delivers customer service training, leadership training and workplace performance. Belding Training has earned accolades globally, and has won international awards for the innovation, effectiveness and results of its programs.



RetailTrack conducts mystery shopping and customer and employee satisfaction surveys throughout North America. RetailTrack's unique approach provides critical insights that help companies identify opportunities for Standing Out in Customer Experience.



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