

[About Us](#)[Clients](#)[Contacts](#)[Forum](#)[Reference](#)[Home](#)

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Contact Centres

[Go to Full Case Studies Menu](#)

Tesco Stores Limited: The Tesco Call Centre Story

When Tesco opened their new national call centre in Dundee, they estimated they would receive 45,000 calls a week. Eighteen months later, calls were averaging 130,000 a week. The Tesco call centre, an amalgamation of a number of former help desks, handles customer service calls, as well as enquiries from ten million Clubcard holders.

With 15% of the UK's retail grocery market, almost 600 stores and 12 million customer transactions a week, it was clear to Tesco that pressure on their call centre would continue to increase. The key question for them was how would it cope? To find the answers Tesco asked Commslogic to check out the call centre in a business audit. The audit covered every aspect of the centre's activities including the existing use of computer and telephone systems, future business requirements, the training of agents and internal processes.

We found that the demands made by the business were going to grow dramatically, beyond the capacity of the centre to deal with them. As a result we identified the need for 100 extra staff to be recruited within the next year and suggested detailed improvements in the computer systems and other areas, where staff training could be enhanced.

The business benefits of having an accurate assessment of this kind are invaluable, according to Steve Leach, Tesco Customer Services Director. "In the highly competitive sector in which we operate, customer service issues are of paramount importance. With this audit, we have been able to identify areas where improvements can be made to develop our call centre towards world class standards."