

PureGym solves peak demand challenges while significantly improving customer satisfaction and the agent experience



The Challenge

Founded in 2008, PureGym Group holds market leading positions across the UK, Denmark, and Switzerland with recent entries into the US, Dubai and Saudi Arabia. Unlike traditional fitness centres, its disruptive customer-centric proposition is based around affordable membership fees (achieved through minimum staffing and unmanaged receptions), no fixed term contracts, and 24x7 access to most of their high-quality gyms.

However, rapid business growth came with a penalty. The company's contact centre in Leeds was predominately call-based and soon became stretched. In addition, agents were slowed down and couldn't perform at their best because of different systems such as Mitel on-prem telephony, Citrix virtual desktops, and multiple third-party apps.

Overview

PureGym has completely transformed its operating model. Now, a 100 percent digital contact centre provides customers with consistently great service, regardless of whether they prefer email, chat, or social platforms. Contacts don't abandon during busy periods, enabling the company to capitalise on revenue opportunities and process more member applications than before. With satisfaction scores trending upwards, PureGym no longer has the expense and headache of recruiting temps and managing incoming calls.



“We weren’t able to connect previous member interactions, or accurately plan and schedule resources,” said Michelle Kaye, Head of Member Services at PureGym. “And it was virtually impossible to upgrade our IT due to continuous 24-hour operations.”

Like most gyms, peak demand occurs from new joiners every January (New Year fitness regimes) and September (when people return to work or study). To keep pace PureGym would recruit temps for up to three months, which was hugely expensive.

Increased demand also inevitably impacted customer experience (CX) and employee experience (EX) by creating longer wait times, frustrated customers, and abandoned contacts. With ambitious business growth plans over the next few years – and realising a recruitment-heavy contact centre model would be unsustainable – PureGym set about transforming its operating model.

“We’d launched digital initiatives before, but they hadn’t been widely adopted by our members,” added Michelle Kaye. “So, our goal was to move to a more proactive, digital-first approach to stem rising operational costs without compromising service levels.”



The Solution

The first step was retiring on-prem systems and moving to an all-in-one, cloud contact centre platform. Following an extensive tender, the company chose a proposal from Kerv Experience and Genesys.

“Kerv Experience showed us how easy the solution was to use and to turn on new omnichannel features, AI automations and workforce management tools,” said Scott Adams, Member Services Manager for PureGym. “And, with Genesys, we also got the advantage of pre-built integrations and AppFoundry add-ons.”

The project was executed in four workstreams to enable channel migration and home working: ensuring seamless experience for members and employees; creating a knowledge library; introducing a chatbot to alleviate advisors of repetitive tasks; and developing internal apps and tools to enhance service.

Guided and supported by Kerv specialists PureGym had a smooth migration with virtually zero disruption. Several months on, it’s reaping the benefits.

“Our contact centre is now 100% digital. As well as increasing self-service and deflection rates we’re able to take advantage of automation opportunities that we simply never had before. And we no longer have the cost or logistical headache of call management.”

Scott Adams
Member Services Manager, PureGym

Front of house is an online members area supported by a 40-strong customer service team. They efficiently manage email, chat, and social media (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) interactions from a single unified desktop. Asynchronous Genesys Web Messenger was recently added, enabling international members in different time zones to start a conversation and return to it.



The Results

Importantly, the company's contact centre is now able to manage peak demand more effectively thanks to improvements in tools, data, and resource management. Agents feel empowered and engaged, as opposed to frustrated and demotivated by legacy systems.

“ This January we had a 72% increase in demand on the previous month, which was 16% higher than the previous January. Despite this huge demand spike, we managed to grow our member base by 10 percent, while reducing agent hours by 15%.”

Michelle Kaye
Head of Member Services, PureGym

In previous years, PureGym would recruit as many as 10 temporary staff, carrying their pay costs from mid-December (for training) for anything up to three months. Last January it didn't have to take on any, testimony to the improvements.



4% decrease
in contacts requiring agent assistance



~300% increase
in call deflection and auto handling



15% reduction
in the number of advisor hours



18% increase
in contacts handled per agent per hour

“AI and new automations have also allowed us to focus the human touch where it matters most,” noted Adams. “For example, when handling safety issues and sensitive complaints such as possible harassment and welfare concerns in our gyms. Similarly, with the cost-of-living crisis showing no signs of abating, we are having to manage more payment issues, where agents need to show more empathy and care.”



PureGym can do many things it couldn't do before. Like adherence monitoring and seeing which agents are on and off queue. Now, with the correct tools, agents no longer struggle to work from home and perform better with data at their fingertips. In addition, gamification has injected fun and helped keep agents engaged, especially home workers.

"We run regular competitions with leaderboards and rewards based on points, which can be spent on Amazon vouchers, Virgin experience days and other prizes," added Adams. "Likewise, improved quality management processes mean our team leaders save time and provide more accurate feedback."

Built within two weeks, the first PureGym chatbot handles around 6,000 inquiries a week with many email requests successfully resolved through auto-replies. Should further assistance be required, agents can see all previous interactions at a glance, avoiding the need for members to repeat themselves. Other routine tasks, like scripting and form completing, have been automated as well.

“ Since implementing Genesys we've seen CSAT climb, with a consistent score of above 4 out of 5.”

Michelle Kaye

Head of Member Services, PureGym

Get in touch with us

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