

# RMA optimization delivers dramatic results

## Problem. Solved

### Technical support not equipped for complexity

The digital revolution is in full swing. Millions of people worldwide have fully embraced the digital lifestyle, from smart phones and online gaming to video chats and cloud storage. The proliferation of networked devices within the home has increased the complexity of the home network beyond what was imagined a decade ago, and this trend shows no sign of slowing down.

This complexity presents challenges to broadband service providers. Servicing subscribers is no longer as simple as providing basic support. When there is a problem with a device or service, consumers often look to their trusted service provider for a quick, low-hassle resolution.

Without adequate product training, Technical Support Representatives (TSR) may have trouble identifying the source of technical issues. As a result, faulty CPE is often assumed the root cause, Return Merchandise Authorizations (RMAs) are issued, and CPE is replaced. Such was the case for one major service provider who enlisted CommScope to help eliminate costly false RMAs resulting from support calls.



## RMAs optimized

- 86% of RMAs were “No Trouble Found” units
- False RMAs were costing over \$3.5 Million per year
- False RMAs led to higher call volume, low customer satisfaction, and increased customer churn
- CommScope evaluated the RMA process
- CommScope proposed steps to drive agent performance to decrease RMA rates
- CommScope created custom training and agent compliance policies
- A 55% reduction in RMAs resulted

## The problem: “No Trouble Found” returns

CommScope determined that many of this service provider’s RMAs were found to be without defect, leading to a high No Trouble Found (NTF) rate. Far-reaching consequences included high shipping fees, administrative costs, and technician time. The hard costs alone from these NTFs totaled an annual loss of over \$3.5 million a year. Considered from the perspective of the subscriber, there

could potentially be a recurrence of the same problem with their replaced device, adding to the volume of support calls and diminishing the subscriber’s satisfaction. One subscriber had processed through no fewer than 17 false RMAs.

With an RMA rate four times greater than the rate within other call centers, it was clear that false RMAs resulting from support calls were potentially impacting customer satisfaction and churn.

## CommScope solution: root cause analysis, revised protocols, training

CommScope has been operating call centers for some of the world's largest broadband service providers for over a decade, during which CommScope has surpassed customer and market benchmarks for performance standards like customer satisfaction (CSAT), first-call resolution, and RMA rates. CommScope call centers consistently outperform other customer call centers, onshore or offshore, setting the standard for call center operational excellence. In addition, as the first point of contact for major service provider subscribers, CommScope offers in-depth knowledge of subscriber needs and challenges.

To help the service provider replicate this success, thereby minimizing costs and reducing churn, CommScope Customer Care performed a thorough analysis of their call center operation.

The challenge was to analyze the service provider's call center operation to identify the root causes of the problems and develop cost-effective solutions to drive those issues out of the business permanently. The CommScope RMA Optimization service provided the benchmarks, analyses, and structure for evaluating the service provider's RMA process. Leveraging proven expertise in driving down customer RMA rates, CommScope call center experts began a deep investigation into the root causes for the high volume of false RMAs.

The data indicated a wide variation in RMA rates across different locations, demonstrating a potential lack of a comprehensive, standardized system. CommScope also found that the protocol for RMA authorization did not accommodate the wide variety of technical issues that their agents were confronting. The lack of

standard procedures encouraged an inappropriate level of agent discretion in the early discovery phases in the support process.

A deeper evaluation of agent call practices revealed that there were also performance problems. Agents at one center, motivated to end support calls within specified time periods, would fail to adhere to scripts. As a result, many RMAs reported were done so as a stopgap measure. CommScope created agent compliance models for call center managers to train and motivate the agents. We proposed actionable steps to drive desired agent performance, including frequent supervisor "check-ins" and a customized training package.

## The result: 55% reduction in RMAs

CommScope created a customized training package, including a detailed checklist for agents to follow to accurately identify the root causes for technical issues. The checklist incorporated fail-safe measures to help them determine whether issues described by subscribers were genuinely due to defects in the gateways. The training program, service checklist, and fail-safe measures not only helped agents resolve issues faster and more accurately, but significantly reduced needless RMAs stemming from issues falsely attributed to CPE.

Agent compliance to established procedures increased significantly, and within just a few months, the service provider noted a 55% decrease in their RMA rate and cost.

## CommScope—Problem. Solved.

**Optimize your RMA practices to reduce costs and improve subscriber satisfaction. Contact your CommScope Account Manager for more information. [www.commscope.com/professional-services/customer-experience/](http://www.commscope.com/professional-services/customer-experience/)**

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