



Beck Ag Maximizes Customer Engagement Using PGI's Operator Assisted Audio



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BECK AG MAXIMIZES CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT USING PGi'S OPERATOR ASSISTED AUDIO



Beck Ag specializes in facilitating conversations with agriculture professionals. Using unique experience-sharing marketing (ESM) strategies, Beck Ag accelerates the word-of-mouth marketing process for agriculture industry leaders by providing audio conferencing forums for their clients' customers to connect, share and learn. These live, interactive and mutually beneficial conversations help Beck Ag's clients (agriculture manufacturers) influence buying behavior and offer valuable insights to their clients' customers (agricultural professionals) to help grow their own businesses.

PGi's Operator Assisted Audio afforded Beck Ag more conversation control in these events to produce high-quality conversations with customers. In turn, engagement increased, and customers reported a positive experience. These results led to repeat clients and new business, driving revenue and contributing to Beck Ag's fast growth over the last 18 years.



HOSTING CONVERSATIONS, NOT CONFERENCE CALLS

Taking shoptalk to a virtual forum helped Beck Ag's clients connect with a larger audience without geographical limitations, but it also produced new challenges. For example, how would they maintain authenticity, high attendance and engagement?

Beck Ag's audio conferencing solution needed to address these and other challenges like:

- **Authenticity:** To deliver people-centric, productive conversations, Beck Ag needed a solution with the utmost reliability and ease-of-use to eliminate distractions so moderators could focus on creating an authentic experience.
- **Accessibility:** Beck Ag wanted the entire process to be as simple as saying "yes" for participants. They needed high-touch services to remove barriers for participation, as well as the flexibility to join calls from anywhere.
- **Time Sensitivity:** Beck Ag promises one-hour calls, so every call had to start on time and end on time. Timeliness impacts participation rates, contributes to the positive guest experience and is essential for calculating continuing education credits for Beck Ag's instructional courses.
- **Consistency:** A negative call experience can not only impact Beck Ag's industry reputation, but also their clients'. Beck Ag required more than just a conferencing provider; they needed a trusted partner to provide a world-class experience for their clients.
- **Complexity:** Events ranged from one-on-one calls to groups of 10 on a call, and during their busy season from December to February, the company had up to 300 people on a call multiple times a day. Beck Ag's provider had to confidently handle the task of managing that variety, without sacrificing quality or customer care.

After billing complications, Stephanie Liska, Beck Ag's CEO and president, replaced their previous provider with PGI's simple, customer-focused services.

PGi OPERATORS SIMPLIFY HIGH-TOUCH CALLS

Beck Ag delivered core client services using PGI's [Operator Assisted Conference Calls](#) and [Integrated Audio Solutions](#) with a dedicated team: account specialist, event manager, call delivery team and 12-year account manager James Burton.

This streamlined point of contact scaled down the call process complexity, ensured consistency and saved the company time on support and call communication. Instead of contacting support lines, Beck Ag could go directly to operators for help and, with a dedicated team, only had to update PGI once with changes to their call processes.

Beck Ag's events had to feel effortless for participants in order to be successful, but to accomplish that behind the scenes, their customer-centric calls mandated unique back-end services. In fact, Beck Ag needed to be able to introduce new clients to the ESM process and close deals with "proof of concept" calls to demonstrate call operations.



"When PGI operates the calls, *they are Beck Ag*. Letting PGI be the face and voice of Beck Ag says a lot about our partnership."
— Stephanie Liska, CEO and president



To meet these needs, PGI’s high-touch, operator assisted services included:

- **Dial-out to up to 300 participants.** To maximize attendance, operators made three call attempts to 10-12 participants each within 10 minutes.
- **One-hour pre-conference prep.** PGI’s team spent an additional 60-75 minutes setting up for smooth calls and accommodating last-minute changes in attendance, even by as many as 250 participants.
- **A full-time second operator.** The lead operator monitored the entire call to ensure clients’ messages wouldn’t get lost in background noise. This additional operator worked alongside the lead to monitor and manage Beck Ag’s entire checklist: dial-outs, participant data collection, back-end communication, pre-conference “green room” processes, post-conference debriefing.
- **Remote call control.** Moderators polled up to 34 questions in one call, so operators empowered them with remote call control. This way, moderators could initiate questions more naturally, while operators oversaw nuances like muting and unmuting lines.
- **Ongoing event management training.** Because Beck Ag customized each call, PGI used Beck Ag’s “off season” to perform refresher training and coaching to minimize errors. Event managers constantly revised call instructions and updated every operator.

POSITIVE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES YIELD BUSINESS GROWTH

Positive customer experiences resulted in audio conferencing ROI for Beck Ag. An average **85-100 percent** of participants polled after each call found the event valuable and worth attending.

Additionally, the majority of **participants reported a favorable experience** in 2004 and 2011 studies with more than 4,500 agricultural professionals.

Due to the learning, sharing, content *and format*, this positive experience translated into an average of 71 percent of participants sharing what they learned, as well as 90 percent saying the experience impacted their own buying behavior.



“If they’re on hold too long, if they have background noise, if the operator puts them in the wrong conference or if they can’t hear people, we know that customer experience number could drop dramatically. When the sound quality is managed, the polling is seamless and the operator-moderator engagement is behind the scenes, it really feels like this group of people on the call was sitting at your kitchen table having a conversation.”

— Stephanie Liska

Measuring Customer Satisfaction of PGI’s Operator Assisted Audio

Every quarter, PGI polls their own customers to assess the success of operator assisted services. Here are the combined, average results from eight of those surveys from 2013 through 2014:

- **93.18 percent** said they were very satisfied or satisfied with the overall conference.
- **96.05 percent** said they were very satisfied or satisfied with the reservations agent’s assistance.
- **95.14 percent** said they were very satisfied or satisfied with the operator’s assistance.



These better business results for clients meant repeat business and growth for Beck Ag. The company landed on the Inc. 5000 list five times among the fastest-growing private U.S. companies, and from 2010 to 2013 alone, the company grew by 74 percent. As a 15-year partner, PGI has worked with Beck Ag for the majority of the company's existence, contributing to their milestone of facilitating more than 1 million conversations since 1997.



"We've seen repeat client business – that's significant. We know that if our client didn't have a good experience with PGI, we would reconsider our services. We've grown, and part of that has a lot to do with PGI's continued delivery of excellence."

— Stephanie Liska

ABOUT PGI

PGi is the world's largest pure-play provider of collaboration software and services. PGI's unified collaboration platform empowers business users and teams to connect, share ideas and manage projects with the simplicity and everywhere-access of the latest cloud technologies. PGI has a global presence in 25 countries, and its award-winning solutions provide a collaborative advantage to nearly 50,000 enterprise customers, including 75% of the Fortune 100™. In the last five years, PGI has helped over a billion people worldwide connect, collaborate and get work done—in teams, large groups and one-on-one. For more information, visit PGI at pgi.com.

Beck Ag's Success

Challenge

To efficiently manage complex, custom calls, Beck Ag needed a simpler, more reliable audio solution to save time while fostering engagement.

Solution

PGi's Operator Assisted Conference Calls and Integrated Audio Solutions produced personalized, efficient, interactive events that maximize participation.

Results

Increasing participation, customer value and client satisfaction, PGI helped Beck Ag host more than 1 million conversations, with 7.2 percent year-over-year call growth in 2014 alone.

