

Dear Client

We hope you and your colleagues are staying safe. As you will be well aware, the far reaching consequences of The Covid -19 pandemic, the guidelines on staying at home, self-isolation if showing ANY symptoms and most recent government guidelines on safe social distancing in the UK are creating extremely challenging times for ABS. Governments across the world are now enforcing lockdown and travel restrictions that are directly impacting upon our outsourcer partners and our ability to maintain some of our customer services. Here is the latest Air Business Subscriptions Update on what we are doing and specifically on the first area of our business that we now have to introduce a Covid-19 BCP core service offering.

### **We Remain Committed**

- To prioritise safeguarding staff health and wellbeing for ABS and our partners.
- To provide the service our clients require and are used to where possible – however, as I am sure you are aware this is becoming more and more challenging for all businesses in areas where resources are required to be working together in a common environment
- To continually evaluate and improve the ‘worse case’ core services offering in the case of an enforcement of BCP.

### **BCP Invoked for Voice Customer Services:-**

Although there is not a UK forced office shutdown yet, 60% of our inbound customer services is provided internationally, and we have now been impacted by government enforced shutdowns for all of our outsource partners

- HGS: Asia Pacific inbound calls and email (Metropolitan Manilla) have been in lockdown since 16/3. There is no ‘Work From Home’ capability here at this time, inbound calls for this region are currently being handled at ABS in the UK through a night shift.
- Customer Direct Americas inbound calls (St Louis, USA) ALL voice reps are now all working from home for all US customer services. St Louis state in an enforced work from home lockdown for 30 days from 23/3.
- Merit (Chennai India) as of 6pm local time tomorrow 24/3 India are shutting down regional transportation and forcing a lock-down across a number of states. Currently there is no ‘Work From Home’ capability but we are working with the India team on infrastructure to introduce home working for email, and web chat activity in the next few days.

Based on these enforced situations our established BCP for customer services (utilising local capacity at our 4 different call centre locations around the world) is not possible. We have therefore had to make the difficult decision to move our business critical UK voice customer services back to the UK, hereby invoking our Covid-19 BCP for voice customer services. This will involve prioritising all ‘Order’ or ‘revenue’ generating calls for ALL clients, order and renewal calls to optimise our limited



From A  
to Beyond



inhouse capacity having lost overnight 60% of the inbound capacity available to us through our outsourced resource, details as follows:-

- Asia pacific regional calls sourced through Manilla will be maintained through a UK based nightshift
- We will be re-routing all Order and Renewal calls from India to the UK.
- We will need to restrict UK call opening hours to 9-5 Monday to Friday to ensure maximum capacity for these periods.
- Prioritisation of Order and renewal calls across all Clients.
- Adding pre-recorded messaging on these lines to endeavour to manage customer expectation along the lines of:

“I’m sorry but due to the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic, we currently have a reduced workforce available so there may be a delay in answering your call today. If you can, please visit our website to self-serve or email our team. We thank you for your understanding and patience during these unprecedented times”

- Closing customer services only lines for the time being due to resource constraints.
- Adding pre-recording messaging up on the closed customer services lines advising customers to email or use websites.

“I’m sorry but due to the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic, our global customer service offices are closed and we’re unable to take your call. Please visit our website to self-serve or if urgent then please email our team and we’ll endeavour to answer you as quick as we can. We thank you for your understanding and patience during these unprecedented times”

Next Steps:-

- We will continue to work with our outsource partners to set up ‘Work From Home’ voice customer services capability (we are working through local hardware challenges with our partners).
- As and when outsourcers are able to add resource back to the voice customer services pool, we will continually review what we can offer our client base, with an aim to being able to bring back services as our capacity improves.

### **What We Are Doing-**

Following on from our detailed last update, we still retain a core working staff in Rockwood House, but please see the following updates:-

- All staff with full capability are now working from home.
- Remaining staff within the offices are all adhering to government guidelines on social distancing.



- IT infrastructure and development services continue as we continue to encourage staff where possible with the capability of working from home.
- Daily management meetings on Covid-19 to ensure staff briefed and up to date.
- Daily stand-ups for all staff working from home.

### **Can You Help?**

We all need to pull together in these times, and therefore:

- We'd ask clients again to put up messaging to their customers where possible advising them to use email and online customer services.
- We'd ask clients to appreciate that bespoke development in support of subscriptions systems will inevitably slow down due to the amount of technical effort going into revising BCP, helping continuity and safe-guarding key services.
- We'd ask clients to be understanding with SLA agreements as our available global resource is shrinking as the Covid-19 virus and its effects increase.

### **Stay Positive**

Things may take slightly longer than usual, but this is the case across all services and across the world, things might slow down but they will not stop. We will continue to have a functioning core services team and continue to serve your business to our utmost in these extremely challenge times. Stay positive, work together and note there is a good understanding and support across our clients, suppliers, customers and partners.

Kind regards

Stuart Lacey

Managing Director

Air Business Subscriptions

