

Alpha Services, Inc.

Adapted from Clean Sweep, Inc. in Service Management by Fitzsimmons & Fitzsimmons, 2008.

Alpha Services, Inc. is a provider of IT support services. It provides 24/7 phone support to many client organizations from four locations: San Jose, CA; Raleigh, NC; Sydney, Australia and Mumbai, India.

Each location is staffed for a shift of eight hours by a crew of technicians. Some overlap of coverage was built-in to the shift schedule to ensure a coordinated crew transition. Sometimes if a technician cannot solve a problem during one shift, he will pass on the problem to the next shift and inform the supervisor. Table 1 shows the staffing of crews and the assignment clients. A seat is defined as one computer/network connection and could be put to use by any person in the client organization. Table 2 shows the number of complaints for each crew for a period of nine months. Table 3 shows their customers' satisfaction ratings (on a scale of 1-10, ratings under 5 is felt to be poor, and 8 or above is good).

Table 1. Crew and Client Assignments

Crew	Number of Staff	Clients assigned and Number of seats	Total Seats Assigned
San Jose	6	A 3000, C 4500, F 3500	11,000
Raleigh	8	Be 9500, H 5500	15,000
Sydney	9	Bw 9500, G 8500	18,000
Mumbai	8	D 4000, E 7500, I 4200	15,700

Table 2. Complaints by Client by Month

Month	Complaints by Clients									
	A	Be	Bw	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	2	5	7	3	2	3	2	4	3	4
2	1	6	8	2	1	1	2	3	2	5
3	0	6	8	1	0	2	2	4	0	1
4	1	5	4	1	0	1	1	4	1	3
5	1	3	2	2	0	1	1	3	1	2
6	2	5	3	0	1	0	0	2	1	0
7	0	4	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
8	1	2	4	2	1	0	1	2	1	1
9	1	2	4	1	1	0	1	1	3	0

Table 3. Ratings by Client by Month

Ratings by Clients										
Month	A	Be	Bw	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	7	5	3	6	7	5	6	5	4	5
2	7	5	3	6	6	5	6	5	5	4
3	8	5	4	6	8	5	6	6	6	7
4	7	5	5	8	8	6	7	5	6	6
5	6	6	6	7	8	6	7	5	6	6
6	7	6	6	7	7	8	6	5	5	7
7	8	7	7	6	6	8	8	6	7	7
8	6	6	5	7	7	8	7	5	6	7
9	7	7	5	6	7	8	6	5	5	8

Some of the clients of Alpha Services are agencies of the State Government. These agencies have conducted occasional random audits of service quality of their vendors. The management of Alpha Services is well aware that maintaining high customer service quality is very important for the company. With the renegotiation of contracts with the State Government several months away, the management of Alpha Services would like to monitor the performance to identify variations in services. If degradation of service performance were detected, management would like to identify the cause of the problem and institute corrective actions.

1. Prepare an X-chart for complaints and plot the average complaints for each crew during the nine-month period (see template below). Do the same for performance ratings. What does this analysis reveal about the service quality of the crews? Discuss possible ways to improve service quality.

Alpha Services, Inc						
Month	Range for all clients	Average for all clients	Average by Crews			
			1	2	3	4
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
Average						