



Simply Halton

Your Halton
Connection
December 05

On January 1, 2006 we will
officially transition to a
new, easier-to-remember
Web address
www.halton.ca

November 2005 Access Halton Statistics

Number of telephone calls answered
by Access Halton annually: 275,740
(2005 estimate)

Top three subjects of customer
inquiries:

- Waste management
- Social & community services
- Travel protection services

Number of walk-in customers served
to date in 2005: 50,440

Number of West Nile Virus calls
handled in 2005: 2065

Most popular publications or
documents requested by our
customers for 2005:

- Passport Applications
- Ontario Parks 2005
- Lost Wallet Life Event Bundle

Latest award for customer service:
Service Quality Management Group
Award of Excellence for call centre
performance in the government sector

Favourite compliment received:
"Call Halton – they know everything"

Biggest surprise to our customers:
Access Halton provides basic information
on Provincial and Federal services too

Halton Meetings & Events

December Meetings at Regional
Headquarters

Thursday, December 1
9:30 a.m. Administration & Finance
Committee

Monday, December 12
9:30 a.m. Budget Review
Committee

Wednesday, December 14
9:30 a.m. Regional Council Meeting

Offices Closed for Holidays
Friday, December 23 - Friday,
December 30

Simply Halton: Easy Access to Government

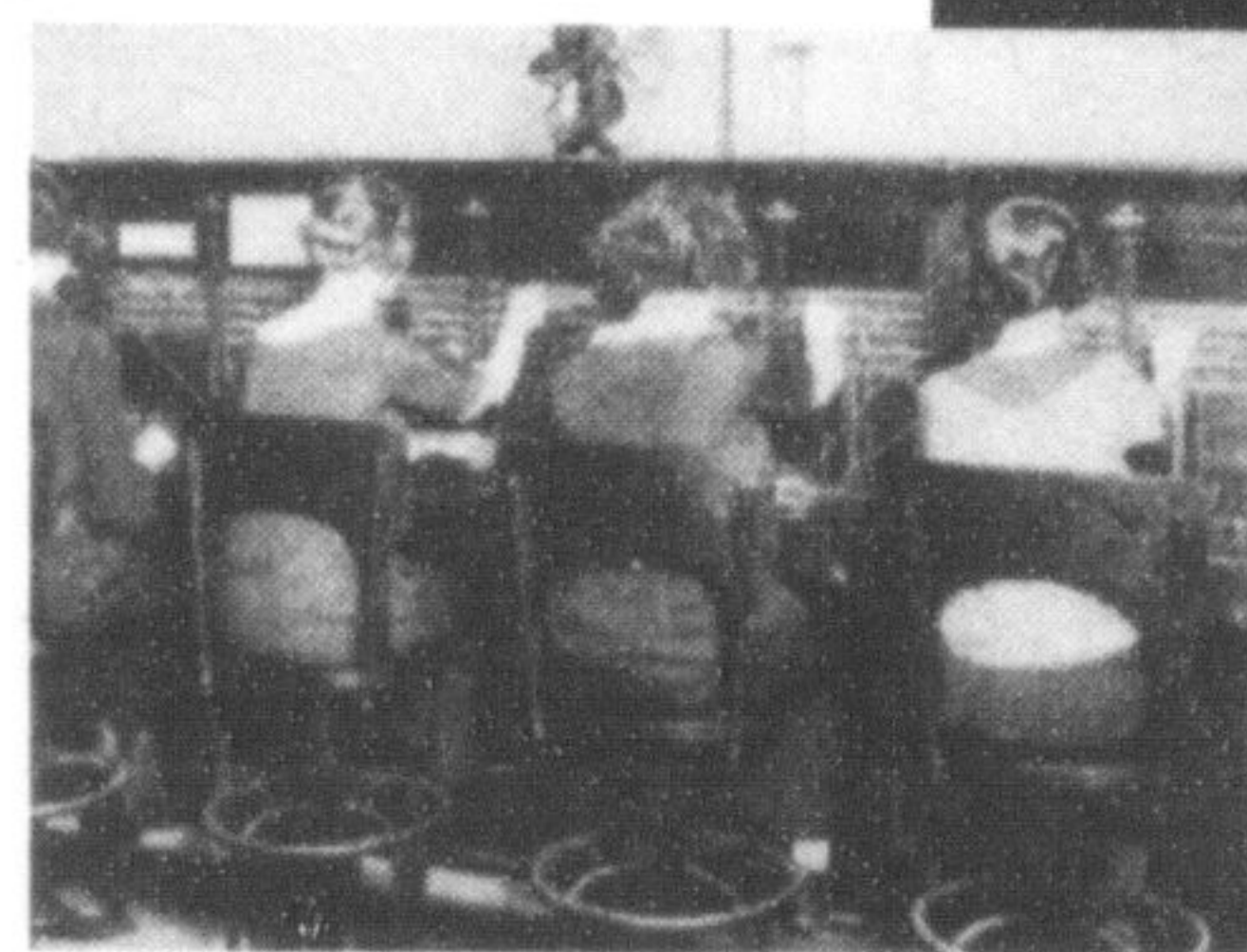
Regional service model emphasizes access,
simplicity, communications and quality
customer service



Joyce Savoline
REGIONAL CHAIRMAN

Residents of Halton Region are the
beneficiaries of a focus on customer
service and public communications.
Offering a single point of access for all
government services and programs –
regardless of whether the information
comes from the federal, provincial, regional or local
level is truly a customer service
enhancement.

The vision began with Halton's
Chief Administrative Officer, Brent
Marshall. A 35-year veteran of
regional government service, he
challenged the organization to create
a level of customer service predicated
on the "one-stop-shopping" model.
Subsequently, Halton Region made a corporate commitment
to citizen-centred service and fundamentally changed the
way customer service is delivered within the organization
and to the Halton community. Integral to the strategy was
centralizing the customer service and communication
(public relations) functions in a new Community Relations
Division to align the key messages of the organization with
enhancements to our service delivery. This strategy has
seen a decrease in customer complaints, raised awareness of
the Region through media and advertising, and supported



Courtesy of Halton Region Museum Archives



Customer service then and now:
switchboard operators in 1924;
Access Halton today.

efforts to increase opportunities for public input into
decision-making.

Halton's commitment to two-way communication with
residents has significantly evolved. In keeping with Halton's
principles of transparency and accountability, the public
has been engaged in the strategic planning process, the
Official Plan process, the Comprehensive Housing Strategy
and the design of a new water purification plant in Oakville,
among a myriad of open houses and town hall discussions.
Other new customer service initiatives include a centralized

advertising
page, web site
enhancements,
the establishment
of a physical and
virtual citizen's
reference library
and the creation of
Council-adopted,
public consultation
guidelines.

Recently, the
Region hosted a
town hall focus
group on our
communication

practices. The feedback from residents will guide
decisions as to what communication channels are used
most frequently and identify areas for improvement. Staff
will be reporting back to Council on this in the New Year.

Success with our customer service strategy has brought
dividends to both residents and staff. Recently, Halton
achieved national recognition in an industry specific award,
as one of the highest performing customer service call
centres in the government sector. Achievement on this level
as measured against our peers, tells us that we are doing
something right.

Award Winning Service Through Access Halton



A. Brent Marshall
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Access Halton, Halton Region's award
winning call centre, is the cornerstone of
quality customer service delivery to our
residents. Even its very name, "Access" says
everything about who we are and what we
do.

Some of the first steps we took in simplifying access to
government included establishing a single contact number
for Halton Region (905-825-6000), replacing over 30 phone
numbers previously used to reach different services. An
easy to remember toll free line was introduced for our
long-distance residents 1-866-4HALTON (1-866-442-5866).
More trunk lines were added to reduce busy signals and
shorten response times. Customer service standards were
implemented and "after hours" service was improved.
And the goal of "one-call-does-it-all" became a formula for
success.

Today, callers speak to a Customer Service Representative
(CSR) – a person who has extensive knowledge of regional
programs and services. The result is that fewer calls need to
be transferred, but when transfers occur there are processes

and standards for efficient resolution.

Access Halton responds to 240,000 telephone inquiries per
year and service is available 24 hours a day, seven days
a week, 365 days of the year. An Environics Research
public opinion survey conducted in 2003 indicated that our
residents view us as "going that extra mile." Supporting
those findings is a 2005 survey undertaken by Service
Quality Management (SQM), a renowned industry leader in
service quality measurement. Results indicated that 83 per
cent of Access Halton customers are very satisfied with the
service they receive. This result has earned Halton Region
the coveted title of "World Class" customer service provider,
which is achieved by only five per cent of the companies
SQM benchmarks, including banks, telecommunications
companies, utilities and retailers across North America.

Over the past several years, Halton Region has employed a
number of methods to promote an effective and accountable
relationship between regional government and Halton
citizens. We have explored new ways to raise awareness,
enhance accessibility to services, improve customer
relations and increase citizen involvement. Continuous
improvement in customer service and communications
is an on-going process. Being good isn't good enough.
Being better isn't being best. Daily we ask ourselves how
we can serve you better. Delivering on our vision of "one-
stop-shopping for Halton residents" and making access
to government simple is simply Halton's way of doing
business.

We welcome your feedback. Contact Access Halton at accesshalton@region.halton.on.ca
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