



BLENDED INTERACTION™ FOR INBOUND AND OUTBOUND

Unified Communications Application
for the Contact Center

Today's consumers - Consumer 2.0 - are hyper-connected and surrounded by sophisticated communications technology that provides a user experience that makes today's customer contact experience seem antiquated. Yet, your success depends on your ability to find and engage this new consumer, and the dynamic web 2.0 world in which they live.

Doing business in this new environment requires a change in mindset. At the very least, your customers expect to receive voice self-service options that can be seamlessly escalated to agents without forcing them to repeat information. Many situations require agents to enlist support from key functional areas within your enterprise. It is essential that organizations be able to conduct a two-way dialog and provide a consistent service experience across all channels, including voice, web portals, internet contact channels and short message service (SMS), while also factoring in increasing demand to deliver service to customers through social networking platforms.

Blended Interaction delivers a new way to engage Consumer 2.0, leverage your enterprise resources, as well as simplify and automate your customer services, sales and collections needs. A unified communications (UC) application for the contact center, Blended Interaction is a next-generation customer contact solution that fully leverages Enterprise 2.0 technologies like unified communications and collaboration, to seamlessly connect contact center agents, consumers and enterprise knowledge workers through virtually any channel. Blended Interaction unites self-service, inbound routing, outbound dialing, workforce management and Internet contact. It integrates with session initiation protocol (SIP)-based voice over IP (VoIP) or traditional voice, and scales from tens to thousands of agent positions in a single- or multi-site environment.

Whether you're managing a small branch office, or orchestrating interactions across multiple environments, Blended Interaction enables centralized management, reducing costs, simplifying supervisor training, giving your managers the power to respond more rapidly to customer demands, and eliminating the need for dedicated IT staff to address the complexities of an integrated environment.

Capabilities

- Provide multichannel blend capabilities to handle inbound, outbound and Internet contacts with the same agent resources
- Enable real-time ask an expert and enterprise search through unified communications and collaboration capabilities
- Proactively contact customers through voice, SMS or email to reduce costs, while delivering a consistent channel experience through common business rules
- Take advantage of unified reporting capabilities to extract visibility and insight from interactions, regardless of where they occur
- Align your contact center stack with today's enterprise architectures
- Flexibly and rapidly respond to changing conditions by quickly enacting new business rules



Reduce Cost and Complexity by Eliminating Computer Telephony Integration (CTI) Expenses

Legacy contact center architectures can no longer meet the needs of Consumer 2.0 or align with your modern enterprise architecture.

Introducing new customer contact channels, like email or chat, can lead to poor or uneven service levels. Offering voice self-service options, while ensuring your customers don't have to repeat themselves to an agent, is a complex undertaking. Reaching out to customers for proactive contact or to collect outstanding debt is often cumbersome and expensive. Responding to inquiries that require expertise from outside of the contact center can give rise to costly and time-consuming transfers and call backs.

You may discover you have too many agents scheduled or you don't have enough agents with the right skills or access to subject matter experts. This can lead to higher expenses and increasingly unhappy customers. Managing this dynamic environment requires that you analyze sometimes conflicting metrics from many applications, each generating their own separate reports. Absorbing increasing call volumes while managing within flat year-over-year budgets is often today's norm. What's more, as customer conversations spill into social media environments, you lose control and visibility into that interaction.

Your interactive voice response systems (IVRs) often fail to share customer-furnished information with agents. Yet making your disparate IVRs and automatic call distributors (ACDs) work together requires complex computer telephony integration, if they can be tied together at all. Keeping current with the latest product releases and programming interfaces is a full time job for a single site, let alone when distributed across multiple sites. And, when something breaks, troubleshooting problems means deciding what product is to blame and then coordinating multiple vendors to find a resolution.

Aspect's software-based application model supplants traditional architectures, breaking the tyranny of CTI to simplify management, minimize integration and reduce maintenance costs. Blended Interaction unites self-service, inbound routing, outbound dialing, workforce management and Internet contact, enabling you to leverage unified communications and collaboration infrastructures to meet the needs of your enterprise or outsourcing contact center.

Capabilities include:

Voice Portal – deliver rich voice self-service applications, either premise-based or hosted, leveraging VoiceXML-based speech functionality. When your customer needs to speak with a representative, the information gathered during self service is made available to your agent, enhancing your customer's overall experience.

Inbound Routing – deploy advanced routing strategies across inbound contacts to deliver a consistent customer experience across voice, email, chat and instant message (IM) channels. Apply dynamic business rules across your enterprise to respond to changing market conditions and consumer demands. Blended Interaction intelligently routes contacts to available agents based on customer profiles, service level goals and agent availability. Advanced features include:

- Skills-based, Rules-based, Data-Directed and Multi-site Routing
- Queue Optimization
- Abandoned Call Recovery
- Controlled Call Connection

Outbound Dialing – leverage the capabilities needed to make your outbound collections, sales or telemarketing strategies successful:

- Multiple Dialing Options
- Advanced List Management
- Answering Machine Detection (AMD) with 95% accuracy
- Outbound Speech

Internet Contact - give your prospects and customers the ability to contact your business via their preferred channel, whether it's email, instant message (IM), short message service (SMS) or Web collaboration and deploy agents as fully blended to meet business needs. Internet contact capabilities include:

- *Email Management* – efficiently handle email volumes by providing service levels, prioritization, queuing, auto acknowledgement, auto response and reporting. Leveraging existing Microsoft® Exchange Server and Microsoft® Outlook® applications, you can seamlessly deploy email management capabilities in your current environment.
- *Web Interaction Management* – offer assisted service to customer who visit your Web site:
 - Chat, IM and Web Collaboration
 - Web Call back
 - "Talk to a Live Agent Now"

Key Benefits

- Reduce cost and complexity by eliminating CTI expenses
- Improve operational efficiency with a universal agent pool for inbound, outbound, Web chat and email contacts
- Increase first call resolution rates through data directed routing, expert agents and ask-an-expert capabilities
- Reduce costs through proactive and automated outbound notification
- Improve workforce effectiveness and decrease costs by planning for the right agents at the right time
- Deliver a consistent experience across all contact channels

Knowledge Base – manage a repository of frequently asked questions (FAQs) and empower your agents with information to quickly respond to customer inquiries.

Ask an Expert/Enterprise Search (optional)

– use presence-enabled inclusion of enterprise experts to resolve customer issues with unified communications capabilities, leverage sophisticated productivity and collaboration tools to ensure your agents are finding the right experts with the right capabilities to deliver first call resolution. In addition, agents can collaborate with contact center peers and supervisors to solicit help with an interaction.

Unified Administration – leverage a single administration point for managing all interaction types. Enable managers to configure and provision voice, email, chat and IM campaigns all from a single desktop. Dynamic provisioning capabilities allow you to make real-time changes to agent and system settings to manage service levels without requiring you to stop and start systems, campaigns or services. In addition, workflow management capabilities enable you to automate back office tasks, and make help desk and customer service business processes more efficient with service level management and routing for work tasks, trouble tickets, faxes and other non- traditional contacts.

Unified Reporting – deliver an end-to-end, real-time and historical view of your contact center performance without time-consuming data and reporting integration from multiple point solutions. With unified reporting, you can:

- View agents across all contact types
- Generate reports on operational metrics
- Gauge inbound, outbound, chat, email, workflow statistics and agent performance
- Receive standard reports that reveal service and campaign performance
- Generate enterprise reports across multiple systems
- Customize and save reports in an on line analytical processing (OLAP) database and perform multidimensional analysis of business data

Manage Inbound and Outbound Contacts with a Universal Agent Pool

With Blended Interaction™, agents log into one system one time. Agents can seamlessly transition between inbound and outbound services, change from answering a call to answering an email to participating in a chat session, or move from one campaign to another when traffic changes. As a result, they have more time to focus on customers.

If you offer voice self service to your customers and they indicate that they need live assistance from an agent, the information captured by the voice portal is used to determine the best agent to satisfy the inquiry. Skilled agents can be readily blended across voice or Internet contact channels as volumes rise and fall throughout the day. Strategically evaluating multiple staffing plans ensures that you have the right number of agents with the right skills at the right time. And, knowing your customers’ histories enables your agents to provide better service, which saves your customers time and improves customer experiences.

When a customer conversation requires assistance from a supervisor or a peer, Blended Interaction leverages your unified communications infrastructure and collaboration technology for assessing skills to resolve the issue in a single interaction. Importantly, end-to-end real-time and historical reporting provides visibility and insight across interactions regardless of where they occur.

During those times when agents are not immediately available and queue times are high, Blended Interaction gives your customers the choice to be called back. Customers provide the call-back time and number that works best for them, leading to improved customer satisfaction due to minimized hold times and enhanced service levels.

Reduce Costs with Proactive and Automated Outbound Notification

Automating proactive customer contact allows you to reduce contact center costs associated with anticipated inbound volumes while improving the customer experience. In fact, notifications about things like prescription refills, low balance alerts and payment reminders are courtesies that Consumer 2.0 expects. Blended Interaction can engage customers for automated welcome calls and reminders using outbound voice portal and proactive contact strategies.

“We wanted to turn our contact center into a strategic asset for NorthShore, but we needed leading-edge technology. Blended Interaction really offered all of the capabilities that we needed to transform our contact center into a high-tech, high-touch competitive advantage.

The patient experience doesn’t begin when they step into the hospital or doctor’s office, it begins the minute they pick up the phone and we believe that technology, like Blended Interaction, is helping us achieve our strategic business objective – making the patient experience as valuable and as pleasant as possible.”

*Senior Director of Patient Access
NorthShore University
HealthSystem*

By anticipating inbound inquiries before they take place, your contact center can replace high, unpredictable queue times and costly agent-assisted interactions with controlled contact volumes and automated transactions that cost less. These proactive and automated outbound notification transactions allow your center to handle more interactions while maintaining or even reducing staffing levels.

By leveraging proactive customer service, you can preempt inbound inquiries with answers to frequently asked questions or solutions to product or service issues before the customer is even aware of them. Such proactive care demonstrates the extent of a company's commitment to customer satisfaction and allows you to exceed customers' expectations, creating a competitive differentiator and ensuring continued customer loyalty.

Outbound notification capabilities within Blended Interaction™ can also automate collections for low-risk or infrequent debtors who may simply need a payment reminder. Instead of transferring customers to a collections agent when they answer, Blended Interaction enables you to use a dual tone multi frequency (DTMF) or speech-enabled voice portal application to relay your message. This can be a reminder notice or an outbound self-service call scripted to capture promise-to-pay information or offer immediate pay-by-phone options.

Using outbound notification capabilities frees collectors to work on riskier accounts and helps automate early-stage collections efforts. This is especially valuable if your center has a large number of early-stage account records because it helps you absorb increased business volumes with a flat or reduced budget.

Improve Workforce Effectiveness While Reducing Costs

Blended Interaction provides automated workforce management that enables you to accurately plan, manage and optimize your staffing resources. The end result is enhanced productivity and revenue, improved customer service and agent performance, reduced staffing and operating costs, increased profits and customer satisfaction, and a rapid return on your investment.

Blended Interaction's core workforce management functionality accurately forecasts contact data, creates efficient agent schedules and tracks staffing performance for single, multiskilled, multichannel, multisite and outsourced contact centers. The system provides "what-if forecasting" for improved strategic planning, along with intraday performance evaluation and schedule tracking, to ensure you are managing to plan.

The workforce management capabilities allow you to boost employee morale and reduce costly agent turnover by empowering your agents to control their own schedules and giving them access to information regarding their work. Blended Interaction gives you the capabilities you need to:

- Empower agents by allowing them to bid on shifts, vacation and overtime, and to request schedule changes within controlled parameters
- Enable supervisors to change agent schedules, providing more flexibility to meet daily operational needs
- Streamline and automate schedule changes and notifications to reduce administrative costs and increase efficiency
- Give managers and supervisors more time for coaching and supervision
- Notify agents and supervisors of schedule changes in real time

Like all Aspect customer contact applications, Blended Interaction helps organizations realize increased productivity by leveraging unified communications capabilities, including IM, multimedia conferencing and screen-sharing for agent-to-agent communications, agent-to-supervisory escalations and manager-initiated process changes.

Blended Interaction is extensible to meet your future needs while delivering the next-generation of customer contact today.

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