

White Paper: Deploy a Customer Contact Centre that Outpaces Your Competition

Integration and Implementation are the Keys

The Harvard Business Review reported that increasing customer retention rates by 5% increased profits by between 25 and 95 per cent¹. Here we see an important business fact: the contact centre is no longer just a purveyor of customer service, it can be very much responsible for profit and revenue growth through customer retention.

Today, customers want interaction in a manner that is convenient to them. They want their information **NOW**. Whether the interaction comes by telephone, email, instant messaging, web or fax, the goal must be to provide the correct response in that one telephone call. To satisfy these demands, your agents will need unfettered and immediate access to the information your clients are requesting. How your internal business systems process, manage and present this to your agents may make all the difference between a satisfied and unsatisfied client – or simply put, client retention or client loss. Therefore, to provide a consistent and efficient service across all of these channels, a company has to deploy the right contact centre technology.

Regardless of what technology you use to support your business, you will find you either have good business process methodologies or you have insufficient (or even bad) business process methodologies. There has to be a process that in some way, shape or form, holds the information your agents need, and that process is generally referred to as “Business Process Management,” or just BPM. BPM methodologies align an organization (and its information) with the wants and needs of its clients. Without this proper alignment, the “unfettered and immediate” access to the information needed by your agents will simply not be available in a manner that allows them to satisfy your clients in the timeframes demanded in today’s corporate environment.

As organizations strive for the attainment of their objectives, BPM attempts to continuously improve the processes through the analysis of the information provided. This ‘process optimization’ is a mechanism to define, measure and improve your business, and which stems from internal workflows around understanding the **Three “W”s**.

Workflows: Who? What? When?

Workflow software doesn't create business processes, but applying workflow to a business process certainly brings the details of that process into focus. A workflow can be thought of as the implementation of the answers to the questions: Who? What? When? in a business process.

¹ Reichheld F.F. (1996), *The Loyalty Effect: The Hidden Force behind Growth, Profits and Lasting Value*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston, MA.

Who?

Who are the participants involved in the flow of the business process? What roles do they play? How are they organized? Are the groupings flexible and dynamic? Or are they more fixed and static? How do they interact? Organizations, applications, employees, Web services, and other workflows can be answers to the “Who?” question.

What?

What is it that the participants do? How do they do what they do? What tasks have they fulfilled, or are yet to fulfill? Do they approve things? Do they perform transactions? Do they create documents? Track inventory? Call vendors for prices? Execute a campaign? Transfer information to other participants? Some workflows are completely automatic, and some consist of manual tasks that must be performed by people.

The “What?” question can generally be addressed conceptually if one thinks in terms of tasks. Each participant has a series of tasks to complete, and in order to address client demands, your agents need to know the status of each of these tasks.

When?

How do participants know when to start? When is the work finished? In what order do participants do their tasks? Do they do them sequentially or in parallel? If only sometimes, under what conditions? How long should each task take? Are there hard deadlines or not? If a task is not successfully completed, should it be tried again?

The PipeVines Advantage

PipeVines Business Process Management (BPM) on Demand suite meets the needs of the client looking to improve upon their BPM tasks, which ultimately gives their agents the information they need to satisfy the clients.

PipeVines’ BPM service can integrate with your internal systems if necessary, or may “stand alone” in a browser based environment. Either way, we can pull together the **Three “W”s** in a manner that presents the information to your agents in a way that allows them to satisfy your client’s questions.

Typical Contact Centre Design Considerations

Designing a contact centre is a challenging task, with broader operating implications. Which applications are going to be used? Which media (telephony, email, chat, instant messaging, fax, etc.,) are you going to use to support your customers? Do you need work-at-home or remote agents?

In a traditional contact centre it is not unusual to have 10 different products that need to be integrated together. An example integration effort might include these critical elements:

- the PBX
- the IVR,
- the agent facing tool
- the database
- the fax server
- voice logging/quality monitoring tool
- the ACD
- the Email router
- the self-service tool
- the reporting tool
- the co-browsing tool
- the voicemail tool

The technical complexity of the contact centre requires experts from every technical domain listed above to work together to architect the solution. This is a considerable drain on a company's resources.

The PipeVines Advantage

PipeVines Contact Centre On Demand is a hosted service with a complete suite of contact centre applications. To ensure a successful integration, the only thing that you need to focus on is your individual business needs. We take away all the pain, cost, time and resources of vendor selection, due diligence, and compatibility issues. Because you can get up-and-running with a PipeVines Contact Centre in a very short time, you never lose focus on your customer.

Typical Maintenance Considerations

The biggest hidden cost of deploying a contact centre is the cost of maintenance. It is essential to employ a telecom expert, a Networking expert and to keep IT staff abreast of training, updates and additions associated with the different applications in your contact centre. Even a simple function such as adding a new agent is an administrative challenge in a traditional contact centre. Staying with that example, it can take days to properly provision an agent in the PBX, CTI, ACD Email router, reporting system, and any other system that you may have. If a mistake is made during the provisioning, your contact centre will not function properly.

The PipeVines Advantage

With PipeVines, everything is integrated not only from an agent's perspective, but also from an administrative standpoint. Adding an agent is a breeze. Simply select his skills and access rights and he is automatically provisioned in the all the subsystems (PBX, ACD, etc.) You can be confident that the reporting and management tools are synchronized. A call centre manager can provision an agent in the system in less than a minute. This is how effortless it is with PipeVines. The same goes for queues and recordings. You can make changes on the fly to the configuration of your call or email routing without involving a technical resource. This represents tremendous savings in time, dollars and frustration.

Typical Implementation/Integration Considerations

Once you have selected your vendors, you need to put together an implementation plan where you would mobilize your technical people (or hire an outside system integrator) to plan the integration and implementation of the different solution components that you selected. You may also need to send some of your people to specific vendor training to make sure that they are knowledgeable with every component that you will be integrating. Part of the challenge you will face is that although you have a clear understanding of your requirements it might be particularly difficult to implement with your selected vendors because they were not designed or optimized to work together. Your phone switch may not have been designed to work with the email router which was not designed to work with your CRM solution which was not designed to work with your fax server and so on. As you can see, there are numerous points of potential failure in the integration effort, and for this reason, many integration efforts are never fully realized.

The PipeVines Advantage

Through PipeVines Contact Centre On Demand, you have access to components that are already integrated together. This saves you time and money. You don't have to plan or budget for an integration project or hire or train additional staff to manage the systems. PipeVines provides a complete solution – across the entire Contact Centre platform – from the moment the call is received to the workflow that happens in the back room - and does this quickly, personalized for your needs, and with no capital investment from you.

In other words: **No Software + No Hardware + No investment = Total Success.**

This product adoption strategy allows you to be up-and-running much faster, much more economically, and with better tools than had you done all the work yourself. We can integrate virtually any existing application into the PipeVines Contact Centre On Demand solution.

Conclusion

Hosted contact centres such as PipeVines Contact Centre On Demand with Business Process Management are becoming more popular for obvious reasons, namely:

- 1) No upfront capital investment
- 2) Predictable and low monthly fees
- 3) Access to technology that was recently only available to the largest companies
- 4) Quick deployment and scalability
- 5) Minimal support from your team
- 6) Easy integration ensures technical success

For more information, visit www.PipeVines.com