From Complexity to Competitive Advantage

Strategic Desktop is Key to Helping Leading Marketer Deal with Success and Customer Retention

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If you are one of the fastest growing mobile phone and broadband providers in your market, ranked number one in customer satisfaction and in the top 10 places to work, what do you do next? You do what got you there in the first place – focus on customer experience, employee effectiveness and employee morale.

Telefónica O2 is the UK's leading provider of mobile phones and broadband service and was recently ranked sixth in the Best 20 Big Companies to Work for in the UK by *The Sunday Times*. Telefónica O2 UK now boasts 18.7 million Pay As You Go and Pay Monthly customers.

As the business has grown, so have the costs to support it. Telefónica O2 UK has hired thousands of customer service advisors to support the growing customer base. And, to support the wide variety of product offerings and customer contracts, a multitude of information systems have been built or purchased, and deployed in the call centres. This has resulted in a complicated mosaic of screens, systems and tools on the advisors' computer desktops.

In the Pay As You Go call centre in Bury, England, the 850 advisors struggled with the growing complexity of the numerous systems and processes. Certain call types, such as Data Settings (correcting issues with data services on the customer's mobile device), became so complex that specialisation was required. Only 100 advisors were trained and equipped to handle these call types, causing customer calls to be transferred and resulting in cumbersome IVR menus and call routing.

To turn chaos into a competitive advantage, in 2006, Telefónica O2 UK established the Transformation Team and tasked it with some mighty objectives: improve operational effectiveness and continue to lead the market in customer service, while reducing the cost of operations. One of the key initiatives identified by the team was the need for a strategic call centre desktop.

"This is one of those rare cases where both IT and business leaders recognised an urgent need and began to address the matter as a team," said Gareth Turpin, Head of Customer Service Transformation for Telefónica O2 UK. "The advisors and their managers were clear that the current desktop environment was limiting their ability to drive an excellent customer experience, and IT recognised something new and innovative was needed to take O2 to the next level. We needed to enable our advisors to focus on our customers rather than on the systems on the desktop, improve our success rate on process fulfilment, and reduce the amount of after-call

Benefits of a Unified Customer Service Desktop:

- **Average handle times have been reduced by 12%**
- **Data Settings now happen in real-time; 30% of call backs have been eliminated**
- **Customer service advisors are more empowered**
- **Customer experience has improved**
- **Migration to a virtualised contact centre has begun**

work and duplicate keying our advisors had to perform. In short, we needed to make the lives of our advisors easier."

"Synergy", Telefónica O2 UK's new advisor desktop, was born.

Finding a Solution

The team set out to evaluate third-party solutions that could simplify, automate and unify the customer service desktop. Initially, 12 vendors were evaluated, ranging from new CRM/BPM-oriented applications to unified customer service desktop offerings. In the end, a unified desktop solution was selected as the preferred approach.

"A new CRM application would have required significant changes to established business processes and data management tasks across the enterprise," said Susan O'Dea, IS Major Programmes & Project Delivery Manager for Telefónica O2 UK. "We have over 20 business systems in the call centre, all of which serve a purpose in the enterprise but create havoc for our advisors. We needed a solution that would be non-disruptive to the enterprise and, at the same time, would transform the way our advisors work."

After significant due diligence, Telefónica O2 UK selected Jacada. Jacada® WorkSpace was chosen as the unified service desktop for Synergy, and Jacada® Fusion provided an all-important integration capability to satisfy the quick time-to-market requirements of the project.

"We have made a lot of progress with our SOA initiatives, but not all of our business applications have been service-enabled," remarked O'Dea. "The non-invasive integration capabilities in Jacada Fusion provide a critical component that allowed us to get Synergy rolled out quickly – we did not need to wait to have all the integration points figured out."

Because of the urgent business need, it was critical that Synergy be introduced to the call centre quickly. The Jacada technology made this possible and an innovative implementation approach made it happen.

"The Jacada team proposed an agile development methodology for the project," said O'Dea. "Getting value delivered quickly to the business was paramount to demonstrating the value of a unified desktop solution. The whole point of our strategic desktop

initiative is to bring agility and flexibility to our contact centre operations; we could not wait 12 months or more to deliver results."

The first release of Synergy was deployed in three months, and the results are impressive.

Synergy Delivers

Synergy is a simplified, automated desktop that presents an intelligent view of customer data and the processes required to support various call types in the Telefónica O2 UK Pay As You Go call centre. It has significantly improved advisor efficiency and effectiveness and improved the customer experience, too.

Average handle times (AHT) across the Pay As You Go call centre are down 43 seconds, representing a 12% reduction in time and costs, and an improved interaction for the customer. And by automating complex call types Telefónica O2 UK can now move to a virtualised contact centre environment.

One of the most complex call types is Data Settings – less than 20% of the advisors were equipped to handle these calls. The provisioning system used to reset data services on the customer's device was not accessible to the advisors, so any service changes were queued-up and batch processed, taking as long as 24 hours to be implemented. This required a scheduled call-back by the advisor to insure that the changes were made and that the customer was satisfied – typically a lengthy call with an average handle time of 12 minutes.

With Synergy, Data Settings is now an intuitive and automated call process, integrated with the provisioning system in real-time. Average handle times for Data Settings calls have been reduced by 120 seconds. The customer's data services are now fixed during the first call. Today, this eliminates approximately 15,000 outbound call-backs a month (a reduction of 30%), which improves the customer experience and results in significant savings. The savings are expected to continue to grow as the automated procedure is rolled out across the call centre.

Synergy will eliminate the need for specialised data advisors, which will drive tremendous economies of scale throughout the centre. The solution is also expected to boost advisor morale as they can now handle more call

types and don't have to transfer the customer. The success of the Pay As You Go Synergy project has resulted in the company extending the Jacada unified desktop solution to the Pay Monthly call centres.

"Virtualisation is an important initiative for us, which will have significant benefits for our customers and our advisors," said Cheryl Black, Customer Service Director for Telefónica O2 UK. "We want to provide our customers with a seamless experience, regardless of the products and services they have. Synergy will enable any advisor to support any customer and any call type, which will simplify our interactions with our customers and drive significant cost savings for Telefónica O2.

"Most importantly, we want our advisors to be able to focus on our customers and their needs, and not on the systems they have to use. We are very pleased with our decision to partner with Jacada. Their innovative unified desktop solution will help Telefónica O2 achieve our goal to be the most recognised and respected brand in mobile and broadband services."

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