

Blended Interaction™

Unified Communications Application for the Contact Center



Whether you're servicing customers, selling products and services, or collecting debt, your success depends on your ability to respond to your customers and to market changes. Yet, reacting to increasingly dynamic conditions and strategies is often a struggle.

Blended Interaction delivers a new way to simplify and automate your customer services, sales and collections processes. A unified communications (UC) application for the contact center, Blended Interaction unites inbound routing, Internet contact, voice portal, outbound dialing, and workforce management capabilities. Leveraging either session initiation protocol (SIP)-based voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) or traditional voice, Blended Interaction scales from tens to thousands of agent positions in a single- or multisite environment.

Whether you are opening a branch office, a brand new contact center, or expanding your services as an outsourcer, Blended Interaction brings your business rules, hard-learned best practices and administration into a centrally-managed platform. Unifying command and control of your contact center operations reduces costs and simplifies training for your managers and supervisors.

- Provide multichannel capabilities to handle inbound, outbound and Internet contacts with the same agent resources.
- Engage customers with automated welcome calls and reminders using proactive customer service.
- Speed response times by providing agents with desktop scripting and customer specific data.
- Leverage workforce management capabilities to staff the right agents with the right skills at the right time to reduce staffing cost.

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

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.

On a day-to-day basis, you may discover that you have too many agents scheduled or that 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 that each generate their own separate reports. There is also a strong likelihood that you're challenged with absorbing increasing call volumes while managing within flat year-over-year budgets.

Blended Interaction™ unites inbound routing, Internet contact, voice portal, outbound dialing, and workforce management capabilities to meet the needs of your enterprise or outsourcing contact center. With contact center applications in a single software platform, the cost and complexity of maintaining and integrating legacy point solutions is eliminated. 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 the self-service session 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 interaction 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 profile, service level goals and agent availability. Advanced features include:

- Skills-based Routing
- Rules-based Routing
- Data-Directed Routing
- Multisite Routing
- Queue Optimization
- Abandoned Call Recovery
- On-Demand Agent
- 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, Web chat or Web collaboration. Deploy any or all of your agent population as fully blended to suit your business needs, optimize your staffing levels, minimize idle time and boost overall agent productivity. Internet contact capabilities include:

- *Email Management* – efficiently handle email volumes by providing service levels, prioritization, queuing, auto acknowledgement, auto response and reporting. Leveraging your 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 customers who visit your Web site:
 - Web Chat and Web Collaboration
 - Web Callback
 - “Talk to a Live Agent Now”

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

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 and expert agents.
- Reduce costs through proactive and automated outbound notification.
- Improve workforce effectiveness and decrease costs by planning for the right agents at the right time.

Unified Administration – leverage a single administration point for managing all interaction types. Enable your contact center managers to configure and provision inbound and outbound voice, email, Web and fax services and campaigns all from a single desktop. Dynamic provisioning capabilities, allow you to make real-time changes to agent and system settings as you manage contact center service levels without requiring that you 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 a comprehensive view of your contact center performance by eliminating the need to integrate reporting data from multiple point products. Gain visibility into your customers’ experiences, both historically and in real time. 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, versus using multiple logins to access multiple systems. Agents can seamlessly transition between inbound and outbound services, change from answering a call to answering an email, 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 immediately available to your

agent for the live call. Knowing your customers’ histories enables your agents to provide better service, which saves your customers time and improves customer experiences.

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 callback 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 notifications and proactively contacting customers allows you to reduce contact center costs associated with anticipated inbound volumes while improving customer service. Blended Interaction™ can engage customers for automated welcome calls and reminders using outbound voice portal and proactive contact strategies.

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.

Additionally, a proactive approach to service significantly improves the quality of your customer’s experiences. By leveraging proactive customer service, you can preempt inbound inquires 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 substantially 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. For these types of accounts, you can utilize outbound capabilities to call customers. Instead of transferring customers to a collections agent when they answer, Blended Interaction enables

“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*

you to use a 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, so you can ensure you are managing to plan. All of this functionality provides you with a set of essential tools that ultimately allow you to decrease your staffing costs while maintaining and improving response times.

One of the best ways to boost employee morale and reduce costly agent turnover is 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 schedules changes in real time.

Blended Interaction is a UC application for the contact center that provides inbound, outbound, self service and workforce optimization capabilities. By eliminating complex integration and providing common management, reporting and administration, Blended Interaction gives you greater visibility, control and staffing efficiency in your multichannel contact center to enhance customer satisfaction and improve business results.

Blended Interaction includes:

Inbound Call Routing - intelligently route contacts to available agents based on customer profile, service level goals, and agent availability.

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

Outbound Dialing - utilize multiple dialing and advanced pacing options, campaign and call list management, while providing industry-leading voice, fax, modem, pager and answering machine detection.

Internet Contact - allow your prospects and customers to contact your business via their preferred channel, whether it's email, Web chat or Web collaboration.

Workforce Management - leverage industry-leading automated workforce management software that enables you to accurately plan, manage and optimize your staffing resources.

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About Aspect

Aspect provides software and consulting services that turn the potential of unified communications into real business results across the enterprise and in the contact center. Applying 35 years of insight and experience, Aspect helps more than two-thirds of the FORTUNE Global 100, as well as small and medium enterprises, power their business processes with communications. For more information, visit www.aspect.com.

