Zendesk is our secret for customer service, says Connection Telecom

Hosted PBX provider Connection Telecom has revealed the secret of a supreme customer service experience. The company uses Zendesk, a popular cloud-based incident management application, which integrates feeds from multiple customer communications channels, social media and business information systems, thereby improving customers' experience of its service.

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Specifically in Connection Telecom's case, Zendesk offers a comprehensive view of customers by pulling in their prior support requests (telephonic, email or instant messaging), their service history and even their Facebook and Twitter postings about the company, said Rob Lith, director of Connection Telecom.

In addition, Zendesk offers an open application programming interface (API), allowing users to write apps that pull information feeds from business applications via the Zendesk interface.

"It serves to streamline communication with customers, greatly improves the customer service experience and makes the agent's task easier."

In the Connection Telecom environment, Zendesk has a voice API into the company's Telviva contact centre application. When calls come in, Zendesk picks up the caller ID, and if it is recognised, brings up the prior service history. If not, a new service ticket is opened and populated by the agent on which to build with future customer service engagements.

No switch

If the agent is asked to pull information from another application, no switch between applications is required. "It makes life a lot easier for the agent, who typically draws on four or five or more applications to serve customers at any one time. Less toggling means less hassle, and this, in turn, has additional knock-on benefit for the customer as well," Lith said.

Zendesk can also be deployed as a standalone customer service application.

The talk in call centres has for long been of constructing contact centre environments, with multiple converged services such as Zendesk improving the experience. But with a dearth of affordable bandwidth it has not really been possible until now, said Lith.

"Recently, however, fibre-based broadband access is becoming more affordable and abundant," he said. "Based on this, Connection Telecom has been able to build a portfolio of services around its core voice platform. We started with other communications services like email and hosted video, and are now evolving into customer service applications and other communications-enabled business applications. And the development is ongoing."

Ancillary services

In fact, with voice at the core, ancillary services other than communications and support services are also possible.

Cloud is an elegant provisioning channel allowing hosts easily to extend business process functionality to their customers and channel partners with their multi-tenant architecture. Software services such as sales pipeline management and quotation tools can even provide recurring revenue to hosts (and partners).

"When we said cloud is the future, we didn't quite anticipate these rich customer experience and on-sell opportunities," said Lith. "We urge corporates, small businesses and industry to make full use of it in the era of more affordable broadband, to overcome traditional application inefficiencies."

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