

2007

F R O S T & S U L L I V A N

North American Product Differentiation Innovation Award

Cincom Synchrony™ Recipient of the 2007 North American Product Differentiation Innovation Award

The 2007 Frost & Sullivan Award for Product Differentiation Innovation in the North American Hosted Contact Center Markets is presented to Cincom. Cincom was selected for the award based on the unique usability and end-user value engineered into the unified agent desktop of its Synchrony offering. Synchrony is a customer experience management solution that enables small- and mid-size organizations and enterprise departments to deliver consistent and highly responsive customer interactions. Its unique architecture links multi-channel contact center functionality with a smart agent desktop that provides a consolidated portal of the resources and information necessary to optimize each customer interaction.

Synchrony's unified desktop reduces operating costs, improves agent satisfaction and streamlines customer interactions. In recognition of the best practices in providing a tailored, customizable feature within its hosted contact center solution, Frost & Sullivan recognizes Cincom with the 2007 Product Differentiation Innovation Award for the North American Hosted Contact Center Markets.

| Award Description | Research Methodology | Measurement Criteria |
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| <p>The Frost & Sullivan Award for Product Differentiation Innovation is presented each year to the company that has best demonstrated the ability to develop and/or advance products with more innovative capabilities than competing vendors and products. This award recognizes the company's successful adoption of new or existing technology that has become a part of its well-designed product family. Such innovation is expected to significantly contribute to the industry in terms of product performance and degree/rate of technical change.</p> | <p>Before considering the recipient of this award, the analyst team tracks competing market participants' product differentiation strategies through ongoing research. This research consists of market participant interviews, end-user surveys and extensive secondary research. The data compiled through this research is analyzed based upon specific measurement criteria for this award. Participants are then ranked with respect to the measurement criteria. The award recipient is ranked number one in the industry.</p> | <p>In addition to the methodology described above, there are specific criteria used in determining the final ranking of industry competitors. The recipient of this award has excelled based on one or more of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degree of differentiation innovation compared to other market participants • Positive impact on sales directly related to product differentiation • Time-to-market improvement based upon product differentiation strategy • Benefit to end-users due to product differentiation • Effect of product differentiation on ease of adaptability for new end-user applications • Effect of product differentiation on market maturation |

Best Practices Summary

The importance of the agent desktop cannot be overstated in the quest to deliver consistently outstanding customer experiences. Agents today are required to respond quickly to inquiries and issues associated with multiple products, services, billing systems, knowledge bases, pricing schemes and the like. This critical tool can help reduce complexity and have a huge impact on overall customer satisfaction.

“Today’s contact centers are challenged by too much information in all of the wrong places. Agents are expected to know how to drill into a sea of applications, databases and resources for every customer interaction. Cincom Synchrony’s unified agent desktop brings order to the chaos by dynamically presenting exactly what the agents need from all of the relevant sources. We found the Synchrony agent desktop to be an extremely practical and useful tool for any contact center.”

– Michael DeSalles, Strategic Analyst, Frost & Sullivan

Cincom Synchrony

Multimedia Channel Support

It is vital to have the ability to communicate with customers based on their touch point of choice. With Synchrony’s unified desktop, all customer interactions – voice, e-mail, chat, fax and self-service – are handled through a single, comprehensive interface allowing agents to handle customer exchanges across multiple channels, simultaneously. In addition, agents have a view into the universal queue to seek assistance from a subject-matter expert if necessary while online with a customer. This kind of continuity across the various channels enhances agent productivity and can simplify agent training. What this does is enable agents to resolve customer issues on the first call at an enormous cost savings. Multiplied by hundreds of agents, one can visualize the significant reduction in operating costs over time to an end-user organization.

Smart Tabs

Synchrony’s unique Smart Tabs provide agents with a differentiated method with which to expose an application or system such as billing, inventory, order entry and others on the agent desktop. What makes them unique is that Smart Tabs change dynamically based on the activity or contact type, presenting only what agents need for a specific interaction. With a single agent desktop and Smart Tabs, agents process more quickly and are more responsive to customer needs before moving on to up-sell or cross-sell activity. It enhances the customer experience by serving the customer needs rather than pushing the company’s product or service.

Simplified Data Entry

Rather than entering information into multiple systems (a time-wasting and error-rife feat), Synchrony equips call center agents with a single point of data entry. Agents simply enter data from the Synchrony agent desktop and it is passed back into the exposed system. This single data entry point increases agent productivity and accuracy by eliminating the need for re-keying into multiple systems.

Display of Relevant Information

When deploying a new hosted contact center technology, most businesses have to deal with trying to integrate multiple legacy systems that are already in place. These are applications that agents must access for a full view of the customer. Synchrony’s agent desktop exposes only the relevant information and resources for each specific interaction. A data access layer allows Synchrony to leverage data that resides in existing front-end and back-end systems versus replacing or integrating systems. This is a radically different approach than that taken by most hosted providers that tend to attempt “seamless integration” that can sometimes result in added complexity, additional cost and time-consuming development work. The end result is increased end-user satisfaction through the elimination of integration challenges for data replication and associated data currency and accuracy.

Resource and Content Management

Synchrony’s agent desktop organizes and leverages existing content and resources such as websites, intranets and other knowledge sources into decision trees or access lists. Agents see only those information resources that are relevant to the interaction. By automatically exposing and organizing these underlying resources, agents save time that is otherwise spent on searches, logins, navigation and toggling between sources.

Enterprise-wide Agent Desktop

Synchrony empowers each business, division, department or group within the enterprise to completely customize the type of information presented on the agent desktop down to a very granular level. The unified agent desktop can be utilized in sales, marketing, finance and other business disciplines to gain valuable customer insight as well as better coordinate activities with the “tip of the spear”: the contact center. This flexibility helps to increase revenues through cross-selling and up-selling, improving service levels and agent productivity. For customers, this means consistent and memorable experiences with a company’s front-line force.

Addressing the Market

Hosted contact center solutions have presented an attractive and cost-effective alternative to premise-based solutions for the past couple of years. Reductions in upfront capital expenditures and associated lower total cost of ownership represent some of the drivers for the hosted contact center market. Remote/at-home agents are permeating the structure of contact centers due to advances in technology and benefits such as reduced seat costs, higher agent retention rates and expansion of the labor pool to include more qualified agents. Hosted offerings in most instances do not require any hardware installation beyond a PC, browser and phone. Ease of deployment and on-demand availability makes this model extremely suitable for remote/at-home agents and outsourced operations.

The small-mid market has been an early adopter of hosted contact center solutions. During the past year, large enterprises, especially those operating distributed customer-care operations with remote agent support, have been drawn in by the benefits of hosted IP contact center solutions. Business development efforts for this region thus need to cater to the needs of all sections of the market from a pricing, channel and product perspective. The hosted contact center solution deployment value chain is comprised of multiple stakeholders. An understanding of this value chain and an effective partnerships and alliances strategy is a critical success factor for this market.

Market Overview/Key Challenges

Frost & Sullivan defines a hosted contact center as a network-based service in which a service provider owns and operates a contact center technology platform and leases its applications and features to end-users for a monthly or usage-based fee. The hosted contact center market is currently moving out of the early adopter stage, with immense growth potential for the future.

Hosted contact center solutions are being deployed in the contact center marketplace to meet the need for customer service, help desk support, technical support and outbound customer contact. Reductions in upfront capital expenditures and associated lower total cost of ownership (TCO) are key drivers in this market. In this way, hosted contact center solutions continue to offer an attractive and cost-effective alternative to premise-based solutions.

Adoption has been increasing over the last three years, as end-user education grows and acceptance in the market begins to rise. The pay-as-you-go model continues to attract new market users who look to reduce IT costs, manage a distributed workforce and move from a capital expenditures (CapEx) model to an operational expenditures (OpEx) model.

Enterprises continue to move to a nimble contact center posture – one requiring flexibility, scalability and ease of provisioning.

Contact centers continue to face pressure to reduce cost and maximize operational efficiency. Key challenges for the hosted model include the perceived lack of control over operations and the security of critical customer data. These issues continue to frame end-user concerns. However, tenant self-administration capabilities in newer releases of the technology along with process/methodologies with enhanced security options, have played a critical role in overcoming these reservations.

Implication to Market Participants

The hosted contact center market has been energized by new offerings from leading vendors. In addition to basic automatic call distributor functionality, solutions now encompass advanced contact center functionality such as speech self-service, outbound dialing, workforce management, quality monitoring, etc. Small to mid-size enterprises have been major adopters of hosted solutions due to the lack of technical staff availability in managing premise-based solutions in these enterprises.

A reduction in upfront capital expenditure is a key driver that is promoting growth within the price-sensitive mid market. However, the availability of feature-rich and architecturally strong solutions, coupled with more widespread acceptance of the hosted services deployment model, has resulted in an increased uptake within the large enterprise segment of the market in recent years.

Award Categories and Relevance

Vendors will have to excel in all areas of market development including the identification of market challenges, drivers and restraints, as well as strategy development and methods of addressing these market dynamics. Efficient and economic migration paths, a variety of options that fit different business sizes, completely integrated solutions that will enhance productivity and map into the company's business processes, and competitive pricing are some of the features that a business searching for the optimal hosted contact center solution is seeking.

Robust multi-tenant architectures that leverage shared resources and provide enhanced tenant self-administration capabilities are features that are an integral part of hosted contact center solutions. Standards-based integration tools and flexible customization capabilities are other technology considerations that end-users are seeking.

A strategic analysis of these factors has not only aided Frost & Sullivan in identifying a set of best practices followed, but also companies that have been the leaders in some of these initiatives. These best practices can potentially accelerate the adoption of hosted deployment models by customers of all stripes.

About Best Practices

Frost & Sullivan Best Practices Awards recognize companies in a variety of regional and global markets for demonstrating outstanding achievement and superior performance in areas such as leadership, technological innovation, customer service and strategic product development. Industry analysts compare market participants and measure performance through in-depth interviews, analysis and extensive secondary research in order to identify best practices in the industry.

About Frost & Sullivan

Frost & Sullivan, a global growth consulting company, has been partnering with clients to support the development of innovative strategies for more than 40 years. The company's industry expertise integrates growth consulting, growth partnership services and corporate management training to identify and develop opportunities. Frost & Sullivan serves an extensive clientele that includes Global 1000 companies, emerging companies and the investment community by providing comprehensive industry coverage that reflects a unique global perspective and combines ongoing analysis of markets, technologies, econometrics and demographics. For more information, visit www.frost.com.

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Award Recipient
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