

Delivering Superior Customer Experiences in the Contact Center

How Cincom® Synchrony™ addresses six impact points of customer experience in the contact center

WHITE PAPER

A companion piece to IBM's white paper:
The Customer-Focused Contact Center



SIMPLIFICATION THROUGH INNOVATION®

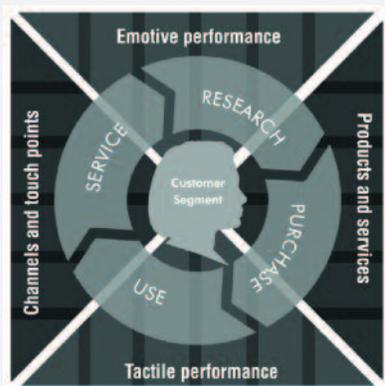
Deliver Superior Customer Experiences with a Realistic, Achievable, Operational Model for the Contact Center

A companion piece to IBM's white paper: *The Customer-Focused Contact Center*

Since contact centers have become more complex and customers more demanding, your customer-facing employees—regardless of experience or knowledge—are expected to deliver personalized, positive experiences in every customer interaction. Yet inefficient processes, silos of knowledge, multiple communication channels and a host of disparate, disconnected applications often result in sluggish and ineffective service. Companies are searching for ways to remedy this situation and equip their employees to deliver consistently superior customer experiences while improving operational efficiency.

In the IBM white paper, *The Customer-Focused Contact Center*, the “Customer Experience Framework” is introduced (page 11). This Framework identifies six categories that impact the customer experience, each with its own corresponding contact center implications:

1. Interactions
2. Channels and touch points
3. Tactile performance
4. Emotive performance
5. Products and services
6. Customer expectations by segment



Source: 2006 IBM Customer Experience Research

In this paper, Cincom examines each of these six categories and answers the questions: How does Cincom Synchrony address each specific area, and how does it deliver value? We aim to help readers understand how Cincom Synchrony uses a realistic, achievable, operational model to deliver competitively superior experiences in the contact center.

Cincom Synchrony™

Cincom's customer experience management solution—enabling smarter interactions.

“Smart companies want to build strong bases of loyal, profitable customers who are also advocates for the company. In order to drive sustainable, profitable, organic growth and competitive differentiation, organizations must better integrate and align the way they treat customers with their sales and service strategy at each touch point of the relationship, especially those that occur within the contact center.”

— IBM, *The Customer-Focused Contact Center*

“When you recognize that the employees in the contact center hold the powerful role of delivering the experiences that build (or destroy) loyalty and advocacy, it becomes clear that you can't leave these interactions to chance. Intelligent, adaptive guidance, a single view into the customer and a contextual framework to provide personalized, value-added service across all channels becomes paramount to Customer Experience Management (CEM) success.”

— Cincom Systems, Inc., *Delivering Superior Customer Experiences in the Contact Center*

CATEGORY 1

Interactions

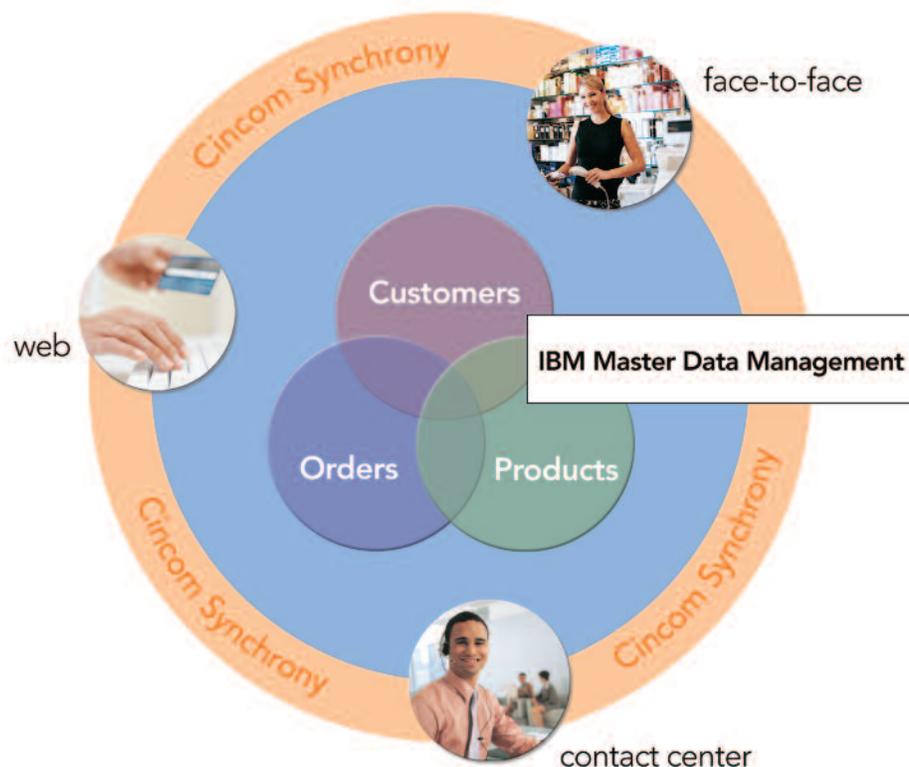
IBM: According to IBM, "Customers increasingly expect their information to be available for every interaction, regardless of channel, over the course of their relationship. This means if they call on Wednesday, the company is aware of the online order they placed on Tuesday, and if they resolve a problem this year, the company knows about it next year The operational implications stretch well beyond the purview of the contact center and become a data-sharing and experience definition imperative for the entire enterprise."

Cincom: What is needed is a single, shared view of all customer information, transactions and products across all touch points. Synchrony works as the interface to all of the data about each customer and then presents the right information at the right time—giving employees fingertip access to a complete view and understanding of the customer. It leverages the information from IBM's Master Data Management (MDM), DB2 and other databases, applications and systems to create a single view and interface into the customer. Synchrony uses this store-house of information as well as input from analytics and feedback to deliver optimal customer experiences through its Intelligent Guidance center.

According to Ranjay Gulati, a distinguished professor of strategy and organizations at the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University, "For years, enterprises have been product-driven businesses. Now, the shift is underway to become more customer-centric, and that's going to require MDM. Driven by the commoditization of products and services—such as faster product life cycles, more informed consumers, constantly shifting market pressures and competitive forces—organizations are finally looking to implement enterprise-wide information strategies. Linking up customer data isn't enough, though it's a good start. To become more customer-centric, all enterprise data—including product, accounting, supply chain, etc.—has to be brought together under a single layer of data that gives the enterprise flexibility and adaptability."

Synchrony works as the interface into that single layer of truth. Regardless of how a customer chooses to interact, the information for and about that customer is shared and easily accessed.

Data sharing across all touch points



CATEGORY 2

Channels and Touch Points

IBM: “Customers are growing to expect the same level of service over the web, over the phone and through other channels (devices, ATMs, branches, stores),” according to the IBM framework authors. “This means providing consistent treatment and ‘one-company/one-voice’-type messaging across the phone, e-mail and non-contact-center locations.”

Cincom: Inconsistent customer experiences across touch points are a critical shortcoming for many organizations. Too often customer channels aren’t tightly connected and they may even operate as separate business silos. In addition, the intended customer experience is not well-defined, much less consistently carried out.

Cincom Synchrony addresses key areas for delivering consistent experiences across all touch points.

- A single view of the customer and the underlying data—regardless of how a customer chooses to interact—eliminates tedious look-ups and conversation inefficiencies.
- Voice, e-mail, chat and fax interactions are handled within a single interface using the same tools and guidance. Synchrony’s OpenCIM platform (Customer

Interaction Management) enables existing third-party CIM components (such as Genesys, Cisco, Avaya, etc.) to interoperate with Synchrony.

- Customers who engage in self-service benefit from the same underlying platform, resulting in a consistent experience with other channels.
- Intelligent, adaptive guidance leads agents through even the most complex processes, leveraging the insight you have about each customer in the context of every interaction. Synchrony leads agents down the best course of action, insulating them from processes that simply waste time and instead focuses their efforts on meaningful and valuable dialogue.
- Success-based routing, utilizing IBM’s RAMP (Real-time Analytics Matching Platform), leverages sophisticated applied analytics and patented call routing processes to successfully match customers and employees for more productive conversations and outcomes. A sophisticated alternative to skills-based routing, success-based routing combines data about the individual customer with each contact center agent’s specific skills, expertise and past performance to match the right contact center agent to the right customer for the best results and the best customer experience.

Cycling new insights for smarter guidance



Using business intelligence and performance metrics fueled by IBM Cognos, coupled with customer-experience metrics like advocacy, loyalty and value, Synchrony guides employees to consistently deliver the intended customer experience. As information is collected, it is cycled back into the guidance system resulting in even smarter, more personalized interactions that are highly valued by the customer and the organization.

CATEGORY 3

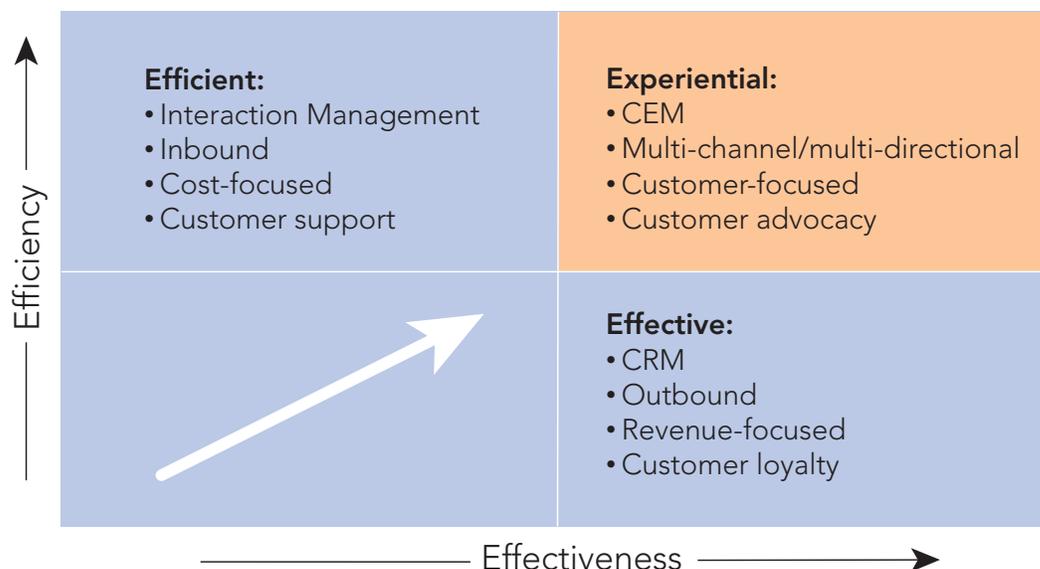
Tactile Performance (efficiency)

IBM: "Tactile performance in the contact center has been a long-standing historical focus, with many of the tactile measurements being the primary indices of the contact center's operation," says IBM. "Think average wait time, average handle time, abandonment rate, etc. In customer terms, these are represented in more qualitative measurements such as 'they answer quickly' or 'they were able to resolve my problem efficiently.' Customers expect service to be quick and efficient."

Cincom: Synchrony's Intelligent Guidance and a unified desktop gives employees fingertip access to the right information at the right time. This results in improved first-call resolution rates and reduced average handle times.

Employees consistently respond faster and with more accuracy, which drives efficiency and effectiveness. Customers value the faster responses and the experience of working with a well-equipped employee who can respond accurately, without escalation, hold time or call-backs to speak to an expert. And with Synchrony's built-in personalized correspondence and communication, you can automatically provide immediate and personalized follow-up.

Moving toward an experiential contact center



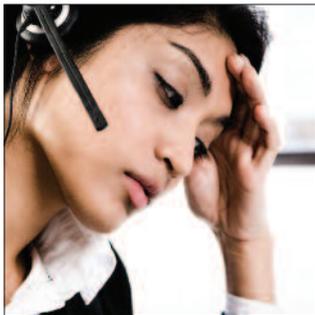
Synchrony enables organizations to not only perform efficiently and effectively, it moves the bar upward toward an experiential contact center with a greater focus on the customer's experience in interacting with your business.

Internal contact centers and contact center outsource providers alike are looking for ways to differentiate and grow. It is no longer adequate to focus solely on cost savings and operational efficiencies. In Gartner's report, "Competitive Landscape: Customer Management BPO Providers, 2010," the authors recommend that CM BPO focus on "solutions and services that solve client issues—such as growth, improving customer experience and retention, and cost containment, and clearly articulate the financial impact and value that CM BPO can deliver to the buyer." Mega-BPOs such as IBM's MBPS (Managed Business Process Services) are pursuing this strategy by "positioning its CM BPO services as part of a broader business transformation services offering that taps significant technology assets (specifically multichannel services) and program management expertise."

CATEGORY 4

Emotive Performance

IBM: This category includes such things as how friendly agents are, how considerate they act and how well they express concern for customers. “The brand messaging that companies blasted through the airwaves may have told of ‘caring service,’ but its execution was often a sore point for customers and contact center managers alike,” write the IBM authors. “Companies must take charge of the emotive equation and not delegate it to the chance behaviors of individual agents.”



“Help me do my job better!”

Cincom: Taking charge of the customer experience is at the core of Synchrony’s value proposition. Companies invest enormous amounts of money in building brand awareness and communicating their brand promise. But in the end, the experience that the agent delivers in a given interaction has the power to strengthen and build that brand in customers’ eyes,

or leave it in ruins. Adaptive guidance and expert recommendations equip agents to deliver smarter interactions that are consistent, intentional, personalized and valuable—all hallmarks of a successful customer experience. Through workflow, process automation and Intelligent Guidance, agents are insulated from unnecessary activities, enabling them to connect with customers at a deeper, emotional level with relevant and personal conversation.

“Companies must take charge of the emotive equation and not delegate it to the chance behaviors of individual agents.”

— IBM

One major contributor to poor experiences stems from agent frustration—frustration in being ill-equipped (and therefore often ill-tempered) to expertly respond to customer inquiries. This not only affects the customer experience, but is a major factor in employee attrition. Cincom Synchrony is proven to reduce agent frustration (and attrition) by empowering agents to respond intelligently and professionally. When employees feel better about their skills and tools, they naturally interact with customers in a more meaningful way, resulting in a better experience for the customer and the agent.

CATEGORY 5

Products and Services

IBM: In addition to being a place for problem resolution, billing questions and account information, the progressive contact center must evolve to deliver on key features of products and services. Depending upon the industry, this may include transferring funds, renewing a prescription, upgrading service packages or assisting with a purchase over the phone. This “cross-pollination” of products and services expertise is now expected to be handled in the contact center.

Cincom: To bridge beyond just customer service, contact center agents must have access to the multitude of applications that support a given business line. This might mean legacy mainframe, Windows or web-based applications. But access alone doesn’t really solve the problem because agents must then be trained in all of these systems. Plus, there is typically a great deal of process inefficiency because each application is operating as a separate silo.

Cincom Synchrony takes a unique approach. Access to the required business applications and systems is happening behind the scenes. Leveraging technology such as IBM’s FileNet for document management, workflow and process capabilities to automate and drive content-related tasks and activities, agents are insulated from time-consuming and mundane activity. Often, the agent isn’t even aware that applications and databases are being accessed. As the agent is guided through an interaction, such as opening a new loan application or upgrading a product order, Synchrony automatically accesses, pulls the data and updates the appropriate systems and applications, taking the agent out of these tedious and error-prone steps.

Synchrony helps make agents more productive and effective:

- Even in the most complex environments where employees are expected to represent multiple products and services, Synchrony can guide them and provide expert recommendations.
- No silos. When a customer calls, the agent has access to a full view of the customer, history and preferences regardless of channel or type of inquiry.
- Synchrony insulates agents from the processes, workflow and integration so that the agent doesn’t need to be trained on, or understand all of the underlying nuances of a product or services—they are intelligently and expertly guided to assist customers.

CATEGORY 6

Customer Expectations by Segment

IBM: “The segment challenge presented to contact centers is by no means simple: There are intriguing plays to differentiate service by customer value while they also may set expectations for differentiated treatment in both positive and negative lights,” explain the IBM authors. “Segmentation allows contact centers to extend better service, say with live agents, to high-value customers, while migrating less-profitable customers to self-service channels.”

Cincom: Cincom recommends taking segmentation to a higher level that nurtures and grows your most valuable customers.

When you are able to track the value and the advocacy of a given customer, you can then guide agents to deliver different types of personalized experiences. For example, suppose you have a customer who is of high value, but their advocacy is low. This implies he may have had some

poor experiences yet he has continued to make purchases. The contact center employee is in a unique position to deliver the kind of experience that will start to build greater loyalty. The agent may be guided to offer this customer extra savings, free shipping or some other valuable service. A customer with low value and low advocacy, on the other hand, may be routed to an IVR, web self-serve or if it is a live call, the agent could be guided to deliver an efficient, streamlined interaction without any valued offers or recommendations.

Segmentation is not just about how the interaction gets routed; it is more about using customer intelligence to guide agents to deliver the best experience for that particular customer.

Guiding agents to deliver the best customer experience



Summary

When you recognize that the employees in the contact center hold the powerful role of delivering the experiences that build (or destroy) loyalty and advocacy, it becomes clear that you can't leave these interactions to chance. Intelligent Guidance, a single view into the customer and a contextual framework to provide personalized, value-added service across all channels becomes paramount to Customer Experience Management (CEM) success.

Cincom's CEM initiative is focused on helping companies to consistently deliver personalized experiences that not only build your brand, but are valuable to both your customers and your organization. Organizations around the world use Synchrony to drive their CEM strategy, reduce operational costs and drive revenue in the contact center and beyond.

Cincom Synchrony guides employees to deliver smarter interactions. We invite you to learn more at www.synchrony.cincom.com.

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About Cincom

Cincom and its partners deliver and support innovative software and services to simplify complex business processes. For over 41 years, Cincom has empowered thousands of clients worldwide to transform their businesses and outperform the competition by providing ways to increase revenue, control cost, minimize risk and achieve rapid ROI.

Cincom is an IBM Premier Business Partner and has been integrating IBM technologies and leveraging IBM services for over 10 years. For more information about Cincom, visit us on the web at: www.cincom.com.



IBM and Cincom Synchrony Technologies at a Glance

Depending upon the customer environment, Cincom Synchrony utilizes numerous IBM technologies and services to enhance its functionality. Below is a brief outline of key components at work:

PureSystems provides expert integrated systems for simplified deployment and maintenance of Synchrony.

Lotus Expeditor for a unified client framework, automated data exchange and single sign-on.

IBM WebSphere Application Server, a J2EE platform for essential application services.

IBM DB2, employed at the data tier, is utilized as the transaction database.

IBM InfoSphere Master Data Management (MDM) Server retrieves customer data from a centralized data hub shared by numerous back-end systems. Its web services are consumed by Synchrony, and the resulting data guides contact center agents.

IBM Cognos drives business intelligence and performance analytics.

IBM Filenet and **Advanced Case Management** provides workflow and process capabilities to manage customer cases and drive task automation.

Tivoli provides secure, single sign-on capabilities.

IBM RAMP enhances Synchrony's routing capabilities with a success-based call routing engine.

IBM Unica provides greater customer insight and delivers highly personalized and relevant offers.

IBM Global Business Services provides business transformation, application and IBM software implementation, back-office integration and infrastructure implementation.