

## Case Study

# Asian Paints Ltd.

Asian Paints improves customer interactions, loyalty, and organizational productivity with unified solution from Aspect

### The Company

At \$1 Billion turnover, Asian Paints is India's largest paint company operating in 17 countries. It has 22 paint manufacturing facilities in the world, servicing consumers in more than 65 countries. The group also operates around the world through its subsidiaries Berger International Limited, Apco Coatings, SCIB Paints and Taubmans.

### The Business Challenge

When the company decided to embark on an expansion plan, a key focus area was to empower its 25,000 strong dealer network—its prima facie go-to-market—which was faced with rapidly evolving consumer demands and rising expectations.

While consumer demands for better service, more responsiveness and consistency were the key asks, Asian Paints also found that customers were getting increasingly involved in the painting process and expecting consultancy as part of their purchase interactions. With industry analysts asserting that poor customer service is one of the key reasons for consumers to move to a competing brand, Asian Paints was well aware that the quality of customer interactions had become a competitive differentiator, and they viewed this as an opportunity to reinstate customer confidence and build strong loyalties in the bargain.

To support the large dealer base spread across the country, Asian Paints has approximately 80 sales offices with a 500-person strong sales force. The sales force plays a key role in managing dealer relationships, explaining schemes, resolving complaints, etc. "We were, therefore, on a lookout for a strong, flexible and scalable IT infrastructure to manage customer interactions in line with our organizational efforts to become truly customer centric," said Mr. Deepak Bhosale, Chief Manager, Systems, Asian Paints Limited.

Moreover, since dealers are the company's primary channel of interaction with the consumers, contributing to more than 70 percent of the company turnover, Asian Paints also needed a solution that would make it extremely convenient for the dealers to do business with them. Dealers connect with Asian Paints by phone on a near-daily basis to place their orders for paint products and to resolve any queries. Asian Paints also offers different consultation and support services to their end customers. For example, Colour Consultants help customers choose the best colour combinations for their home/personal spaces. Several other allied components of the business include marketing and pre-sales campaigns, customer loyalty programs and after sales, and complaint handling systems, many of which are managed in collaboration with the dealers. "We wanted to ensure that our entire organization's supply/value chain was well integrated with this channel," added Mr. Deepak Bhosale.

### The Solution

After extensive market research, the company decided to implement Aspect® Unified IP® 6.6 SP2 to set up a next-generation dealer management system. Aspect Unified IP offers functionality like automatic call distribution (ACD), predictive dialing, voice portal capabilities, Internet contact, workflow management, multichannel recording and quality management to help organizations achieve their customer service, collections and sales and telemarketing business process goals. "While we were researching different vendors and getting references, the best remarks and kudos were given from customers using Aspect to organize its customer interactions. Since we wanted a cost-effective way to have several solutions in our contact center, Aspect was the right choice for us," said Mr. Deepak Bhosale.



### Products or Services

Aspect® Unified IP®

### Results

- Reduced access issues in terms of waiting time
- Increased service availability window significantly
- Reduced average handle time by nearly 40 percent
- Increased satisfaction of dealers by 80 percent

"While we were researching different vendors and getting references, the best remarks and kudos were given from customers using Aspect to organize its customer interactions. Since we wanted a cost-effective way to have several solutions in our contact center, Aspect was the right choice for us. We needed a little bit of everything, improved quality interactions, dealer interaction and high operational efficiency. With Aspect every piece fell into place smoothly."

**Mr Deepak Bhosale**  
Chief Manager, Systems  
Asian Paints Limited



The technology deployment was undertaken in two stages.

#### Stage 1 – Pilot

Asian Paints implemented Aspect® Unified IP® for 50 seats at four sales offices. This pilot was set up for two different services, with multiple telephone connectivity circuits—one for order taking and the other for query handling. Aspect's solution also integrated well with the newly launched web-based user-friendly dashboard built on the SAP platform that was designed to take orders and answer all queries. A toll-free service was also launched, which allows calls to be monitored at the agent level.

Even at this early stage, Asian Paints witnessed reduced waiting time for callers and a 33 percent increase in service availability.

#### Stage 2 – Expanding the Horizon

The company also activated its automatic outbound calling and added 16 more units into the setup, covering 5,500 dealers. Aspect integrated seamlessly with the technology used to create the web-based interface.

A profile change among agents was affected, with order taking and order punching being merged into a single entity, and agents were trained to become more service oriented. "The innate efficiency of the system allowed the agents to spend more time on value addition such as consulting and up-selling, in turn delivering not only better customer and dealer satisfaction, but also higher revenue," said Mr. Deepak Bhosale.

Several other mechanisms were built in at this stage, such as process re-engineering and standardizations for dealers. Agent training is standardized around high quality interactions calls and for calls with poor CSAT levels, those are tracked and an automatic outbound call is made to deliver a more effective customer experience.

#### Results

After the implementation, Asian Paints achieved significant improvements in the productivity of contact center agents due the technology. Customer satisfaction levels also improved. As a result of the deployment, agents now have a 360 degree view of dealers and dealer histories before calls are taken. Consequently, Asian Paints witnessed a 40 percent drop in average handling time, and an 80 percent satisfaction increase among dealers. The average service availability window increased by 33 percent and overall waiting time was reduced significantly, leading to an effective 40 percent reduction in manpower.

Asian Paints has extended the same technology to its second contact center, which is being designed as a disaster recovery site.

The company now observed that its 'go to market' programs were implemented faster. Scaling up operations in terms of opening new sales offices was far more seamless. Moreover, Asian Paints saw a well connected and collaborative organization that's in line with the demand of its dealers and their customers.

#### Looking Ahead

Armed with the positive experience of the initial two stages, Asian Paints set about creating a full-fledged next-generation customer interaction operation based on the contact center model.

Evaluation or planning is underway to undertake several of the following:

- Performance matrices reporting through business warehouse
- Providing fax channel for the dealers
- Self-service options implementation
- Introducing newer channels like chat, web portal, VoIP, etc.
- Extending Aspect infrastructure to other stakeholders—end customers, contractors, Applications/ Influencers/Dealers (AID), etc.
- Communication channels to penetrate within the organization. The Intranet collaborative framework (email and messaging) to be integrated with Aspect Unified IP
- Performance management and workforce management

#### About Aspect

Aspect is a global software and IT services firm specializing in applying Microsoft unified communications and collaboration to help customers achieve optimal results through enhanced business processes across the enterprise and in the contact center. Aspect provides IT consulting, integration services and business applications. For more information, visit [www.aspect.com](http://www.aspect.com).

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