

RAC Auto Windscreens

RAC Auto Windscreens improves customer service by investing in new intelligent call routing application

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Jim Lowe

*Epos and Telecommunications
Manager,
RAC Auto Windscreens*

The Company

Since 2001, RAC Auto Windscreens Ltd., based in the United Kingdom, has been part of RAC Plc, the famous motoring and vehicle solutions company, which has many other businesses, including RAC Travel Insurance, BSM Driving School and a source of Travel Information. The company stocks more than 10,000 different vehicle window types and manufactures 225,000 pieces every year.

The Business Challenges

- Handle customer service calls more efficiently
- Maintain a consistent level of customers service while:
 - Eliminating 'where are you?'/order status calls into the contact center
 - Managing Abnormal Weather Conditions
 - Routing overflow calls to appropriate centers

The Solution

Aspect® Spectrum® ACD, from the Aspect Software Signature product line, supports critical, high-volume customer interaction by tightly integrating reliable ACD functionality with sophisticated Computer Telephony Integration (CTI) applications in both traditional circuit-switched infrastructures and software-only IP environments. It offers an open interaction architecture, which provides a flexible, integration-friendly platform that readily adapts to dynamic conditions and future needs and offers 99.999 percent availability.

The Results

- An ROI within 6 months of implementation
- Fitting centers are successfully handling calls during peak call times
- Increased customer satisfaction levels
- Improved job satisfaction for agents



An efficient call center operation is a critical business requirement for RAC Auto Windscreens, a national 24-hour windshield repair and replacement service. At the company's headquarters in Chesterfield, Derbyshire, United Kingdom, 50 agents handle the complex task of coordinating thousands of jobs each day between customers, 161 windshield fitting centers across the United Kingdom and 800 mobile engineers. The call center operates a 24 hour, seven days a week service which handles more than 2 million calls a year.

In 2002, the company identified the need for an intelligent call routing solution to handle customer service calls more efficiently, improve customer service levels and ensure the business is prepared to respond instantly to sharp peaks in demand created by bad weather.

In March 2002, the call center replaced its previous contact center platform with Aspect® Spectrum® ACD, from the Signature product line, which offers a unique open architecture, allowing uniform reporting, routing and administration for all of the applications integrated with the system, as well as 99.999 percent up-time.

The Business Need

Following the successful implementation of Aspect Spectrum ACD, RAC Auto Windscreens asked Aspect Software to submit a proposal to demonstrate how its Advanced Intelligent Router™, an enhancement for the Aspect Spectrum ACD, could further improve the call handling process. RAC Auto Windscreens needed an advanced routing capability in order to solve a number of business challenges and maintain an exemplary level of customer service:

1. Eliminate 'where are you?' calls into the call center

The existing business process required agents to get customer information, including contact details, location, vehicle type and windshield required and then refer the job to the nearest fitting center. The fitting center would then contact the customer and confirm the dispatch details for a van to provide the new windshield.

The process sounds simple, but was generating a high level of "where are you?" calls from customers awaiting confirmation from the local fitting center. To handle these important customer contacts efficiently, the agents needed to take the customer's details a second time in order to trace their original inquiry and then check the job status with the fitting system before calling the customer back.

This process was not only time-consuming for agents, but also frustrating for both customers and agents, with an inevitable impact upon customer satisfaction levels. The challenge for Aspect Software was to demonstrate how Advanced Intelligent Router could eliminate "where are you?" calls and improve the call/sales ratio.

2. Managing abnormal weather conditions

The windshield fitting industry occasionally experiences days, when, usually as a result of severe weather, there is a sudden peak in demand, placing an enormous strain on fitting centers in that region. RAC Auto Windscreens needed to eliminate the risk of losing business through lack of call center capacity.

3. Routing overflow calls to fitting centers

RAC Auto Windscreens also wanted the capability to utilize local fitting centers to provide extra call handling capacity when peaks in demand placed the national call center under pressure. To meet this requirement, the company needed a system that could automatically determine the location of the caller and route calls to the nearest fitting center when the main call center is busy.

Identifying the System Requirements

A team of sales consultants from Aspect Software carried out a high level requirements exercise in order to determine the precise system requirements. The team suggested the following requirements to RAC Auto Windscreens:

1. Identify the caller and/or their location

In order to route calls to local fitting centers, the system would need to capture a caller's location, identify the nearest fitting center and route the call using data-directed routing. In addition, to achieve the objective of eliminating "where are you?" calls, the system would also need to determine whether this was a repeat call received from a customer on the same day.

2. Monitor status of the call center and each fitting center

In order to deal with call overflow, the solution would need to continuously monitor the status of, not only the national call center, but also the 161 local fitting centers, to ensure that RAC Auto Windscreens could automatically respond to peaks in demand.

RAC Auto Windscreens agreed precisely with the requirements. Aspect Software then produced a detailed Proposal showing how Advanced Intelligent Router could meet these requirements. The Advanced Intelligent Router runs on the Aspect® Spectrum® ACD platform and offers three types of enhanced routing: data-directed, skills-based and multi-site. The team from Aspect Software recommended a solution based on data-directed routing, which can capture data from any company database, evaluate the data and route the interaction based on it without the need for third-party applications or CTI middleware.

The Solution

Since Advanced Intelligent Router runs on Aspect Spectrum ACD, a minimum amount of integration was required to implement the solution. Software created new databases to hold customer and fitting center details and ensured that the data-directed routing custom scripts and stored procedures could interface with the databases. Finally, modification of the RAC agent application also took place in order to write information to the databases. The implementation took less than 20 days and was completed on time and within budget. No faults or problems have been experienced, either immediately after implementation or in the subsequent months.

Business Benefits

As a result of the Advanced Intelligent Router solution, "where are you?" calls have been virtually eliminated. When a call is received by the call center, the system identifies the number using caller line identity and checks the jobs database to confirm if and when the caller last phoned. If it is less than 30 minutes since the last call, the call is routed directly to the fitting center handling the job. If more time has lapsed, the call is referred to an agent in the national call center, who can ensure that there are no problems with the job and that the customer is satisfied with the service they received.

In addition, RAC Auto Windscreens is successfully using local fitting centers to handle peaks in demand for their service. When the call center is heavily loaded, the system 'dips into' the fitting center status database and routes the calls to the nearest available center. When this happens, the fitting centers in the affected region can be blocked for calls, so that they can concentrate on roadside activity. Calls are routed to the call center which is supported by local fitting centers in unaffected regions to ensure no business opportunities are lost.

Return on Investment

The lack of complex integration and successful implementation of the Advanced Intelligent Router™ enhancement has resulted in a return on investment within six months. This is even more impressive given that RAC Auto Windscreens has not experienced a day affected by very severe weather since the system implementation. Jim Lowe, Epos and Telecommunications Manager at RAC Auto Windscreens is confident that the system will pay further dividends when one of these days does occur, by ensuring the company can deal with any surge in customer demand. He adds: The call center is absolutely critical to our customer service operation and is one of the most important touchpoints between our brand and our customers. Advanced Intelligent Router has greatly increased the sophistication of our call routing processes, improving job satisfaction for our agents and satisfaction levels for our customers. In particular, the facility to ensure certain calls are handled within the center allows us to continuously monitor the levels of service we provide, so that customers receive a faster, smoother service and any delays are dealt with immediately.

Best of all, we can see how our technology investment has added real value to both our customer service operation and customer perception of the brand. For us, that is the real test for our technology providers and Aspect Software has passed with flying colors.

About Aspect Software

Aspect Software, Inc. founded the contact center industry and is now the world's largest company solely focused on Internet Protocol (IP) and traditional voice-based products and services for customer service, collections, and sales and telemarketing business processes. Each day, Aspect Software powers more than 125 million customer-company interactions at thousands of in-house and outsourced contact centers around the globe. Its trusted Signature product line offers automatic call distributors (ACDs), dialers, voice portals and computer telephony integration (CTI). The company's leading Contact Center Performance Optimization product line provides workforce management, quality management, performance management and campaign management applications. And, its pioneering Unified IP Contact Center product line delivers a comprehensive, multichannel solution. Headquartered in Chelmsford, Mass., Aspect Software has operations across the Americas, Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Asia Pacific. For more information, visit www.aspect.com.

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