Philips Chooses Communications-as-a-Service Solution for Global Contact Centers

Cost-effective cloud solution results in faster, more reliable, and flexible customer service

Summary

Customer: Philips

PHILIPS

U.S. Headquarters: Atlanta, GA

Industry: High-tech – healthcare, consumer lifestyle and lighting

Solution(s) Replaced:
- On-premises contact center

Number of Users:
- 2,300 employees worldwide

Challenge: Replace outdated on-premises contact center solution with a more cost-effective cloud solution that could scale to hundreds of users across global sites, while providing additional multichannel functionality.

Solution(s) Deployed:
- Interactive Intelligence CaaS℠

Benefits:
- Virtualization enables agents to work at home when needed to ensure uninterrupted customer service
- Fast roll-out of wide range of contact center technologies for overall improved customer service and investment protection
- Fast roll-out of new routing scheme for increased imaging center uptime
- Common global platform to support worldwide contact centers for reduced costs
- Reduced pressure on IT department for increased operational efficiencies
- Disaster recovery minimizes downtime

About Philips

Royal Philips of the Netherlands is a highly diversified technology company, and a global leader in the healthcare, consumer lifestyle and lighting industries. At the core of the Philips mission is the use of meaningful innovation to improve the lives of their customers, consumers and stakeholders.

www.usa.philips.com

The Challenge

The hospital imaging centers that purchase systems from Philips have always needed to make the most of their investments by keeping downtime to a minimum. "Utilization of this equipment has always been critical," said Erwin Thomas, senior director of the customer care solutions center for Philips. "To ensure maximum use by these centers, we've made resolving their questions and problems a top priority."

Toward that end, Philips had opened a contact center at its U.S. headquarters in Atlanta with about 650 engineers, radiation technologists, and clinical personnel such as nurses. All staff members were tasked with fielding queries from imaging equipment users. At the time, the contact center was supported by an on-premises system.

"Our on-premises system had major limitations," Thomas said. "For instance, it limited the number of virtual engineers we could have available to callers at any one time. At peak times, we needed to have 200 clinicians accessible, but the system only allowed 64 of them in the queue."

The on-premises system was also limited in its ability to manage multichannel interactions. "We could accept email inquiries from our customers, but we needed to add another application so these emails could be placed into the queue," Thomas said. "The bottom line was that our system was at the end of its life span and out-of-date."

In addition, the old system was costly. "We were planning to move out of our office building and we realized that the cost of moving our on-premises system would be significant – especially since it wasn't even meeting our functional requirements," Thomas said.

The Solution

"Given the high cost of owning and managing an on-premises system, we decided to review our cloud contact center options," Thomas said. "We also knew we needed multi-level call routing that went beyond just skill sets. We wanted to make routing customer-centric – for instance, we wanted to make sure some customers were always routed to the same engineer. We also needed an ACD that was flexible enough to be associated with any phone so that our technicians could be reached even when they were working remotely."

Thomas considered both on-premises and cloud solutions from Avaya, British Telecom, IBM, Interactive Intelligence, and Nortel.

"During the review process it became obvious that a cloud solution was best for us," Thomas said. "In addition to the cost savings and reduced pressure on our IT and contact center staff, a cloud solution would enable us to have a common global platform to support our other contact centers in Japan, Germany, and the United Kingdom."

Philips ultimately selected Interactive Intelligence Communications-as-a-Service℠ (CaaS). "We chose Interactive Intelligence CaaS℠ because of its ease-of-use, its predictable and cost-effective pricing model, and its breadth and depth of features," Thomas said. "The deployment went even smoother than expected. We were able to configure our Interactive Intelligence CaaS℠ prior to the move, and we never dropped a call during the entire transition."

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Philips is using Interactive Intelligence CaaS℠ for multichannel routing and queuing, interactive voice response, unified messaging, and presence management.

In addition to its U.S.-based contact center, Interactive Intelligence CaaS℠ supports Philips' 35 global healthcare sites and five human resource sites, with plans to add more over the next two years for a total of nearly 100 sites. Currently, Interactive Intelligence CaaS℠ supports more than 2,000 clinicians worldwide.

The Benefits

"Interactive Intelligence CaaS℠ has given us true virtualization," Thomas said. "The benefits of this are numerous. As an example, during a recent ice storm we were able to have our agents work at home, thus preventing any interruption to customer service. And with our 'follow-the-sun' configuration, we can give customers 24/7 service regardless of where they're located."

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Philips also cites its ability to more quickly adapt to changing customer needs as a benefit of Interactive Intelligence CaaS℠.

"We've been able to immediately leverage many of the sophisticated Interactive Intelligence applications that would've taken us months or longer to deploy on-premises," Thomas said. "For instance, our imaging devices have phone-home capabilities that automatically alert customer service reps to technical problems. Interactive Intelligence quickly gave us the ability to associate these phone-home alerts with a specific clinician for immediate routing. This has enabled us to more efficiently resolve potential equipment problems, thus increasing uptime for our imaging center customers."

Philips also sees its Interactive Intelligence CaaS℠ as protecting its investment well into the future.

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"Our market changes fast," Thomas said. "For instance, today's new crop of imaging technologists frequently communicates via Web chat and email. So we're exploring the ability for a customer to open a Web chat window from within our devices and be directly connected to support. With the sophisticated multichannel features that Interactive Intelligence offers, along with its CaaS model that eliminates the need for us to set up infrastructure and manage applications, we can execute on ideas like this quickly and cost-effectively, thus ensuring we can meet whatever challenges and opportunities the future holds."

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