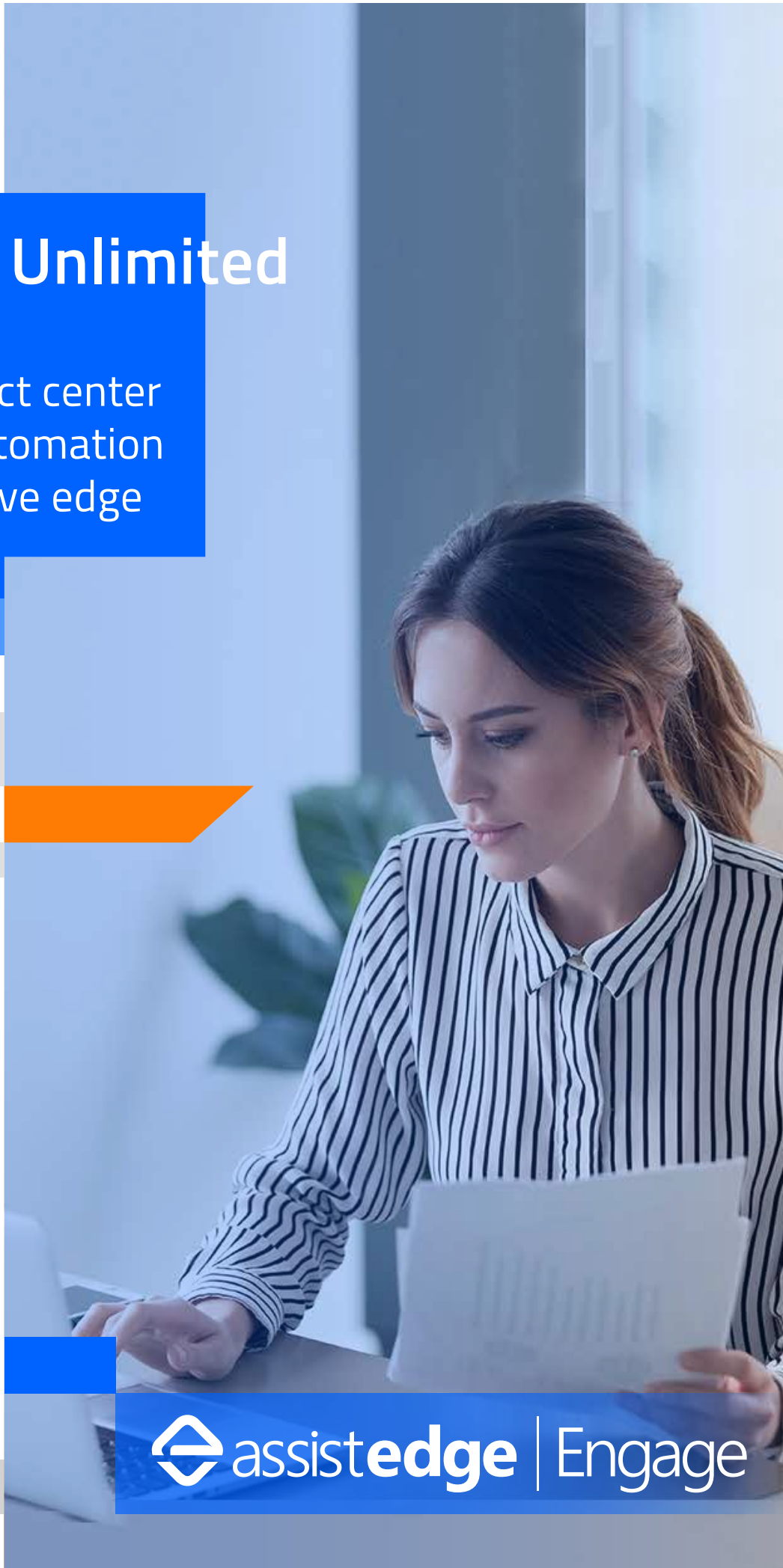![edgeverve - An Infosys company]

Possibilities Unlimited

Reimagining contact center
with Intelligent Automation
to gain a competitive edge

assist**edge** | Engage

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Executive summary

As new-age consumers continue to leverage multiple channels to interact with service providers, crafting unique customer experiences is about building successful end-to-end journeys. The consumer demand for round-the-clock support continues to create unprecedented challenges for contact centers.

Only businesses that can find a balance between faster problem resolution and personalised service will be able survive these challenges and win the customers over. This whitepaper explains how Intelligent Automation (IA) helps to improve the quality and efficiency of contact centers, delivering business benefits at various customer touchpoints. It further discusses how AssistEdge Engage can automate contact centers to enhance operational efficiency and increase customer satisfaction. With its latest technologies, AssistEdge Engage enables consolidation of data from multiple systems and applications to offer a unified view of the customer profile, helping contact centers deliver better customer service at reduced costs.

Introduction

The imposing speed and scale at which technology has been evolving and adapting in recent years is such that business enterprises cannot help but be a part of this wave of transformation - whether they are ready for it or not. The consumers of this era have grown accustomed to the personalization that technology offers them, and want their issues to be resolved quickly and effectively. They demand to be heard, understood and acknowledged. Perhaps no other function finds these expectations harder to meet than contact centers as their very existence is based on customer engagement and satisfaction.

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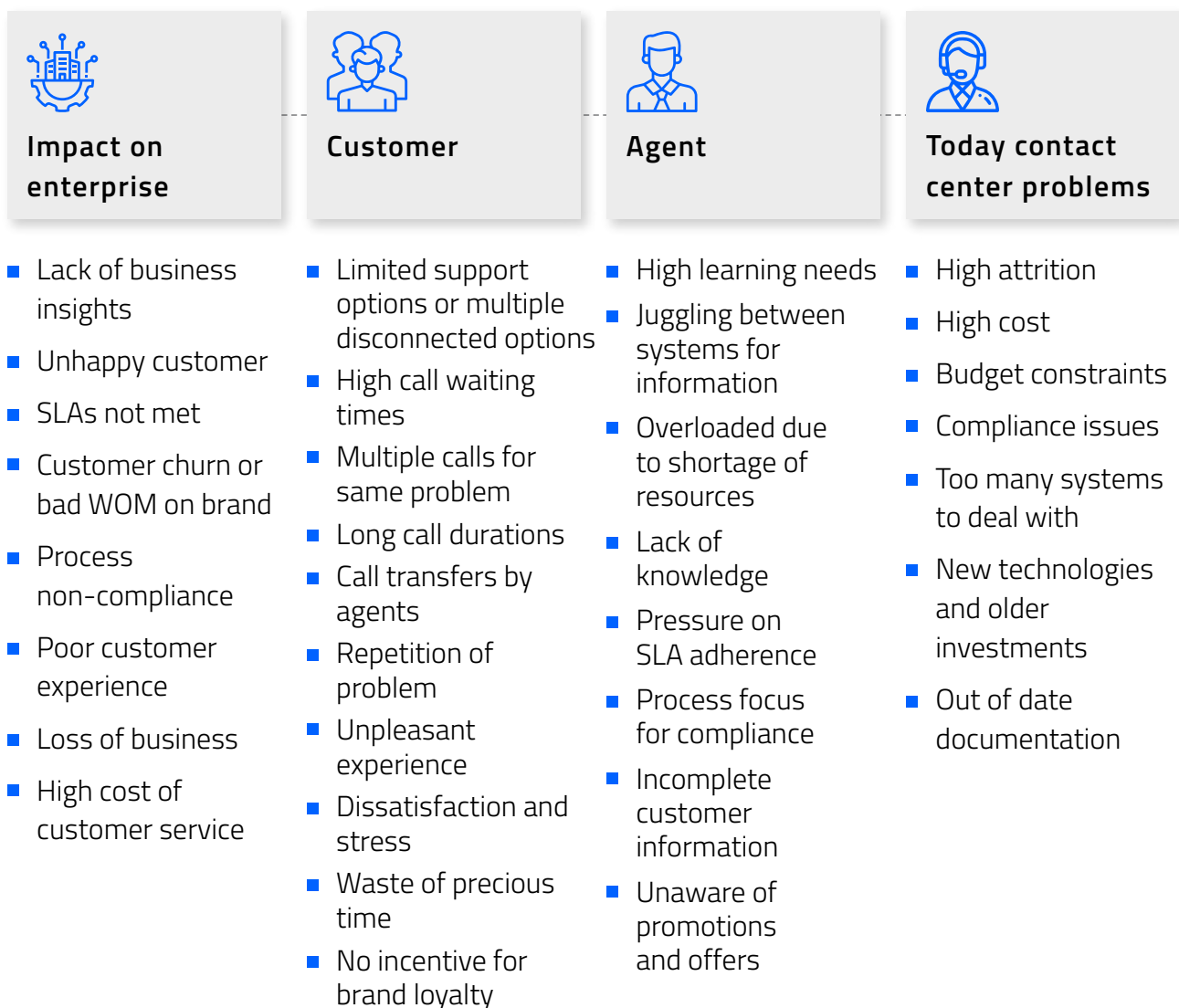

In a bid to drive business growth by offering better customer experience, contact centers across the world have been investing big on consumer needs and preferences. By 2022, global businesses will spend more than $407 billion on contact centers to handle customer service issues, up from $310 billion in 2014, as the industry looks to keep up with the ever-growing consumer demand. However, the output has been far from optimal so far. New research reveals that US companies are losing $72 billion a year due to poor customer experiences, which is a $13 billion increase from 2016. It also claims that new-age consumers have become "serial switchers", and have no qualms about leaving a business for a rival if they feel customer experience is compromised.

Challenges facing the Contact Center industry

Increasing competition and customer expectations have been devising new ground rules for contact centers. Customer relationships and loyalty have taken center stage as the new driving forces for business success, leading to disruption of traditional methods. Gone are the days of single-channel contact centers, which focused on phone calls as the sole mode of communication. Now, customer interactions with the contact center are expected to be omni-channel and more intricate than ever. However, this also presents a variety of challenges that directly impact customer satisfaction and experience.

Todays contact centers challenges

Impact on enterprise	Customer	Agent	Today contact center problems
■ Lack of business insights	■ Limited support options or multiple disconnected options	■ High learning needs	■ High attrition
■ Unhappy customer	■ High call waiting times	■ Juggling between systems for information	■ High cost
■ SLAs not met	■ Multiple calls for same problem	■ Overloaded due to shortage of resources	■ Budget constraints
■ Customer churn or bad WOM on brand	■ Long call durations	■ Lack of knowledge	■ Compliance issues
■ Process non-compliance	■ Call transfers by agents	■ Pressure on SLA adherence	■ Too many systems to deal with
■ Poor customer experience	■ Repetition of problem	■ Process focus for compliance	■ New technologies and older investments
■ Loss of business	■ Unpleasant experience	■ Incomplete customer information	■ Out of date documentation
■ High cost of customer service	■ Dissatisfaction and stress	■ Unaware of promotions and offers	
	■ Waste of precious time		
	■ No incentive for brand loyalty		

Contact centers are always looking to improve Average Handling Time (AHT) and achieve First-Call Resolution (FCR) to enhance customer experience and reduce operational costs. Customer agents who work with legacy systems struggle with various job related demands, such as high learning needs to keep track of the ever-changing processes, juggling multiple applications to collate customer information for a unified view, focusing on compliance and SLA adherence, tackling outdated systems and documentation. The tedious nature of legacy model puts them under tremendous pressure to improve individual productivity and enhance customer satisfaction, leading to high attrition rates and agent turnover.

Unhappy and in-productive customer agents contribute to unhappy customers and seriously impact customer experience KPIs. Agents shuffling between disparate channels to access data shifts focus away from the interaction, leading to customer pain points such as high waiting times, multiple call transfers, repeated calls to resolve the problem, limited or disconnected support options and recurrence of the problem, leading to an unpleasant experience. This comes at great cost as new-age customers are willing to "punish" a business for poor customer service, which translates to bad word-of-mouth or massive customer churn, making it increasingly hard for the contact center to meet SLAs. Such situations often force the business to take hasty measures, such as investing in more manpower, leading to an increase in cost of operations and eventually loss of business.

These challenges beg for contact center automation beyond the quintessential call routing and scheduling software. It's critical that industry leaders are prepared to explore and leverage this business transformation trend in order to keep pace with the evolving consumer demands.

How Intelligent Automation can help reimagine contact centers

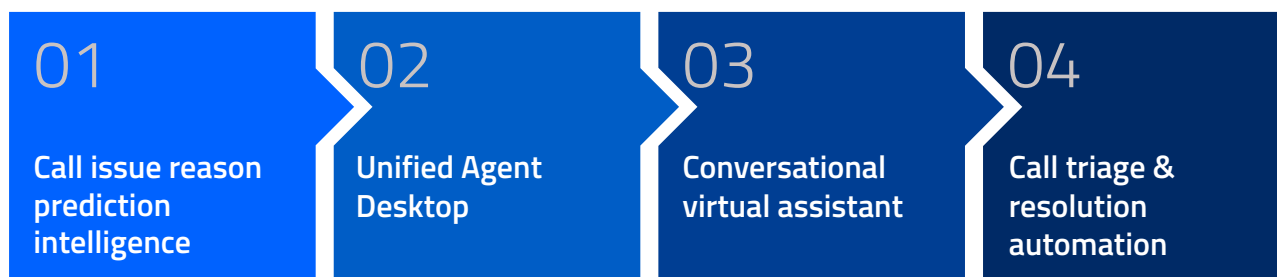Contact center automation is opening the door to better interactions between businesses and customers. Intelligent Automation (IA) helps to automate business and technology processes effectively and provides contact center agents with a unified and intuitive dashboard. It also enables single sign-in so that agents can enter or update information on various systems simultaneously, without shuffling between applications. Through technologies like interactive voice response (IVR), virtual assistants and automatic call distributors, agents can streamline customer experience. Having a unified knowledge base and predictive intelligence tool helps agents to access the required data in real-time, which often helps them to foresee problems and act early. IA-based models also offer seamless integration with CTI systems and other standard industry applications.

Intelligent Automation (IA) helps to automate business and technology processes effectively and provides contact center agents with a unified and intuitive dashboard

IA archives data from every step of each process for a complete picture of all cases and captures what you learn from each interaction, extracting key business insights in the process. An automated system can proactively identify callers and create a personalised experience that anticipates customer needs. This allows agents to move away from mundane and tedious tasks, especially in self-service, and focus on stress-free and customer centric actions, reducing AHT and call abandonment rates. The interface will also provide agents with cross-sell recommendations, creating an opportunity for contact centers to maximize revenues.

Businesses are gradually realizing the value of automating contact centers, not just in resolving customer issues faster but also as a potential source of revenue through upselling and cross-selling. Telecom has been one of the early adopters of the model with banking, insurance, travel and logistics industries gradually following suit.

Contact center – Reimagined

Next gen customer service functions

01	02	03	04
Call issue reason prediction intelligence	Unified Agent Desktop	Conversational virtual assistant	Call triage & resolution automation

Service performance management Available dashboard for

- Service metric
- Call handling metric for productivity analysis
- Operational efficiency
- Customer satisfaction

01 Predict the call reason based on
  - Past history of transactions
  - Call logs history
  - Behavioral patterns

02
  - Predict the call reason based on
  - Past history of transactions
  - Call logs history Behavioral patterns

03
  - AI chat for business functions
  - Voice recognition engine
  - Incident automation through RPA
  - NLP engine and sentiment analysis

04
  - Integration with CTI and call issue prediction
  - Customer data aggregated for transactions and call logs
  - Integrated discrete apps billing/claims/CRM/contracts/ticketing
  - Incident automation through RPA

05 Actionable Business Insights for performance management

What can Intelligent Automation do for contact centers:

Predictive intelligence

Predictive intelligence helps you anticipate the intent of the customer based on past interactions, call logs, transaction history and behavioural patterns, improving FCR.

Automated call triage and resolution

Automating your triage process removes bias in the process to support customer needs. It also ensures workloads are spread evenly to conserve manpower resources.

Unified agent desktop

The unified view of disparate systems and applications gives agents easy access to service and call handling metrics, making customer interactions more effective.

Actionable business insights

By aggregating customer information from multiple sources, businesses can generate actionable insights for process optimization and performance management.

Virtual assistants

Virtual assistants are highly effective for first-level support, guiding customers in self-service and addressing FAQs, freeing agents to address more complex issues.

In an era where customer experience could make or break your business, contact center automation is key to gaining a competitive edge; which is why identifying and implementing the right automation solution is critical. As enterprises consider investing on IA solutions that can offer efficiency and growth, it's paramount to comprehend how business operations will transform in the near future, instead of looking to incrementally improve what you have today. The right automation solution will both dramatically improve contact center processes and elevate customer experience, while increasing long-term revenue potential.

Gain a competitive edge through AssistEdge Engage

AssistEdge Engage is a ready-to-deploy, configurable solution that automates contact centre consoles. It helps to build an efficient omni-channel contact center by identifying the best automation opportunities that can drive immediate results. AssistEdge Engage can be implemented out-of-the-box and integrated with the existing enterprise systems in a non-intrusive way, leading to reduced costs, time-to-market and faster ROI.

With its intuitive interface and best-in-class feature sets, AssistEdge Engage helps you interact with multiple back-end systems and applications simultaneously to access customer data and achieve a seamless cross-channel customer service experience.

It pulls relevant information from multiple systems and applications onto a single dashboard. With a 360° view of customers across all channels and predictive intelligence inputs, your business can anticipate customer needs. This helps to improve FCR and reduces AHT to take customer service to new levels that build brand loyalty.

Features

Unified dashboard templates

Offers multiple dashboard templates that provide a unified view of all customer center applications by integrating and presenting them in a single user interface.

One-click attended automation

Attended automation feature allows agents to engage with data in real-time, putting more focus on the customer and less on the process of recalling information.

Notesmaker

Notesmaker is a customizable feature that enables agents to wrap-up the call or key in closing comments easily.

Seamless CTI integration

Integrates with CTI applications hosted on Citrix environment to provide a seamless automation journey.

Quick and easy deployment

Plug-and-play solution that aids faster deployment, generating profits much earlier in the investment-to-ROI cycle.

Data analytics and reporting

Generates detailed and custom reports to offer in-depth analysis and insights, making customer interaction more effective.
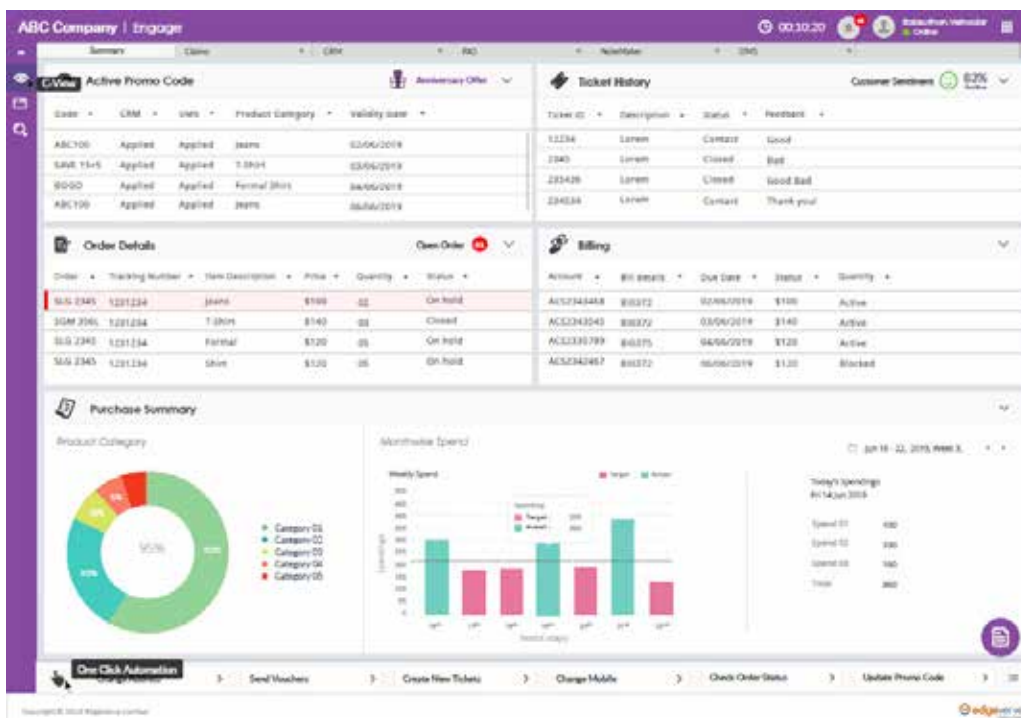
Use case

The client, a European multinational telecommunications company, is ranked the fourth largest mobile operator in the world as per customer base. It serves mobile, fixed and TV network to its consumers and also offers cloud, security, and carrier services to enterprise customers. While the business counts superior network infrastructure and global scale among its competitive advantages, customer experience remains central to its sustained growth and leadership.

Opportunity

In the telecom industry, where prices are mainly homogenous, companies have always relied on service quality and customer experience. The resource-intensive nature of a global customer service operation that is heavily reliant on contact centers means companies have to continually strike a balance between efficiency, quality and satisfaction of both agents and customers. This balance presents several challenges such as:

Improve agent efficiency while reducing agent churn	Create a single view across mobile and fixed CRMs, and train agents to use both	Unify user views from several IT and mobile stacks in the enterprise business	Eliminate the need for multiple application logins	Save time for agents while enhancing the customer experience

Why AssistEdge Engage

A European telecom multinational experienced a staggering decrease of 54.29% in process AHT through AssistEdge Engage

The client was looking to undertake a comprehensive process redesign that would free up agent time while enhancing customer experience. To do this, they were looking for a strategic partner to drive a collaborative audit, design, development and implementation process. There were only six weeks to generate a comprehensive consumer profile across platforms, while showcasing capabilities in delivery and management. AssistEdge was identified as the partner of choice because the client was impressed by:

The delivery team's ability to work in a legacy environment fraught with complexity

The power of AssistEdge Engage and its ease of deployment

The team's ability to match SLAs and security requirements owing to their integration expertise in this space

The implementation of AssistEdge Engage comprised the delivery of multiple automated login modules and dashboards for mobile agents serving enterprise customers in the client's offices in the UK. Each of these tasks were carried out by agents on a day-to-day basis to serve customer queries and needs, making this a high impact and high-value exercise. Six operations were identified and optimized through the solution.

| Sim swap | Single user name change | Front office disconnect |
| Unlock VCOAc count | Account address change | Last connected date check |

Outcome

40%
Average reduction in AHT across operations

54.29%
Maximum reduction in process AHT

By pulling relevant customer information from disparate applications into a single panel, AssistEdge Engage eliminated the need for multiple logins into various legacy applications, significantly reducing AHT. Furthermore, a unified view across touchpoints offered a comprehensive picture of the customer, allowing agents to understand the customer intricately before identifying and triggering appropriate processes. The ability to use time more efficiently also meant that the client's agents were empowered to ask and answer questions on a range of products in a meaningful way: the result - a significant spike in productivity, quality and time savings.

Conclusion

Automation is poised to level up the workforce, productivity and bottom line across industries, disrupting how business operations are conducted. To win out in the automation revolution, enterprises need to act fast and make smart decisions. More so in the context of contact centers as they continue to depend on repetitive and time-intensive tasks, which are critical to the way they operate yet do not require manpower resources. The industry has to rethink their approach on operations and look to improve customer journey by automating customer experience and back-end processes. The massive scale of the rule-based systems at contact centers across the world means that implementing IA will have a positive impact in its functioning, enhancing not only the operational efficiency but also the overall experience for both agents and customers.

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