

# Improving Desktop Productivity with Accenture Integrated Desktop and OpenSpan

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*High performance. Delivered.*

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## INTRODUCTION

This paper highlights the background and benefits of Accenture Integrated Desktop (AID), a framework improving desktop productivity, and one of AID's key enabling technologies, the OpenSpan Platform, which enables the automation of business processes across enterprise front and back office desktop environments, especially contact center agents.

### **Contact Center Challenges in Business Performance**

Contact centers are a key nexus of customer service and sales. They are critical to any business such as telecommunications providers, financial institutions, B2C manufacturers, and others that have a broad customer base. Contact centers must maintain customer satisfaction so as to maintain repeat customers and create new offer opportunities, as verified in the Accenture 2008 study on Customer Satisfaction which found that "67 percent of respondents reported moving their business to other companies as a result of poor service."

Customer service agents, serving as the front-line, customer-facing representatives of the contact center, must have the best, most efficient means of communication, fastest possible access to a 360° view of customer data, and the ability to recognize high-value customers and deliver crafted sales offers to all customers based on account metrics. But the most common stumbling block to agent success is a disconnected suite of legacy applications; sometimes as many as 20 different windows that an agent flips between to access account data, transaction histories, CRM records, and other dispersed information. Often, agents must copy and paste data, risking costly errors, and continually look up reference information, all the while incurring longer AHTs, diminishing the prospects for favorable FCRs, and irritating customers. The combined hassles can have a very bad impact on agent retention and training.

The impact of those factors on agent performance and overall efficiency is measured by several first-order contact center metrics related to time and capacity – Average Hold Time (AHT), numbers of calls or cases processed in a given shift or time period, and First Call Resolution (FCR), which tracks whether a customer's original query was solved. Additionally, up- or cross-sell programs can be measured in numbers of offers made, accepted or rejected, and the success of follow-on offers.

Murkier to define, and harder to measure but just as sensitive to agent productivity, are important factors like customer satisfaction and how the customer perceives the transaction with the agent. Outcomes of those exchanges influence brand loyalty, referrals and customer-generated publicity, and outside ratings which, when transmitted via social media, sometimes eclipse the marketing and public relations programs of the company itself.

Additionally complicating matters, economic downturns have created additional productivity pressures, and another issue is the endless cycle of mergers and acquisitions that mean new business partners enter your contact center's domain faster than you can integrate them, creating bottlenecks and inconsistent operating models. And as business units, contact centers are under close budgetary scrutiny to "pull their own weight" or make a profit, all in the framework of efficiency and professionalism.

Despite the continual challenges, many of the quantitative and qualitative measures of agent performance – and customer satisfaction – can be solved today, by optimizing the desktop.

## ACCENTURE INTEGRATED DESKTOP

### **An Optimized Agent Productivity Solution**

Accenture Integrated Desktop (AID) is a proven desktop productivity solution that addresses the challenges outlined above. With AID, you can keep legacy line-of-business applications, and going forward have a direct means of integrating future applications, minimizing your risk, and gaining even more return on investment.

Accenture Integrated Desktop is a requirements-based solution that integrates applications within the desktop operating system, via the presentation layer, and can be deployed enterprise-wide. It spares the complexity and expense of full back-end integration, but is compatible with existing efforts, such as SOA.

Once the requirements have been analyzed, and a design made for a solution, AID can be presented on the agent desktop in different ways. A common option is combining application features in a unified interface, possibly hiding those that aren't directly necessary. Mashups and portals are examples of this method. The second technique is a variation of the first, and displays the all the agent's familiar applications, not hiding any; through automation it harnesses the most common objects and tasks. But regardless of approach, the Integrated Desktop configuration is requirements-driven.

The critical technical challenge to any desktop productivity solution is making applications work fluently with each other, even when they weren't originally designed to. Applications that can't communicate have few chances of truly functioning together, unless through one-to-one connections via SOA or other costly and relatively static solutions, which rarely yields the application interoperability that best solves the overall productivity problem. Sometimes piecemeal server-side integrations create more problems than they solve.

**OpenSpan – A Key Application-Enabling Technology for AID.** OpenSpan technology opens virtually any legacy application for inclusion into an AID architecture. Many legacy applications have no obvious APIs, adapters, or ways to integrate non-invasively. IT staffs are understandably conservative regarding modifying application code or working on coded integration solutions that might succeed, but end up being incompatible with other parts of the architecture. OpenSpan solves this challenge by employing a presentation-layer approach to integration that delivers a number of unique benefits including:

- Effectively creating an API where none exists – non-invasively without requiring access to or modification of source code.
- Simplifying and expediting the integration process – via a visual drag-and-drop development environment that eliminates the complexity for developers. This enables a much broader set of developers to now integrate applications and create business process automations.

### **Broad Integration Enablement**

OpenSpan enables integration across a wide range of applications and systems – including the following:

- Windows applications – including PowerBuilder, VB, C, C++, C# and other technologies
- Desktop productivity applications – such as Microsoft Office and IBM Lotus Notes
- Java-based applications
- Host applications
- Web applications – including SaaS, cloud and any third-party web applications without access to source code
- CRM applications – including Siebel, Amdocs/Clarify, salesforce.com, Right Now, Microsoft Dynamics and other leading CRM applications
- Other packaged applications – including SAP (R/3 and Web versions), Siebel and other Oracle applications and other leading packaged applications
- Virtualized applications – including applications hosted in a Citrix environment.
- Web services – extend an existing application to consume a Web service, or service-enable multiple applications
- Messaging platforms – including TIBCO EMS, JMS, IBM MQ Series and MS MQ
- Databases – supports Oracle, Microsoft Access and any SQL-compliant database.

OpenSpan is highly complementary to other integration technologies and partners with leading providers such as Software AG (webMethods) and TIBCO, among others. OpenSpan extends these providers' integration/ESB, SOA, BPM and business intelligence solutions to the user desktop environment. Additionally, OpenSpan enables developers to rapidly service-enable or message-enable desktop and other legacy applications so that they can participate in service – or event-based architectures.

## HIGH PERFORMANCE FOR CONTACT CENTER AGENTS

Accenture Integrated Desktop and OpenSpan work together to move agent performance to a much higher level – agents can better concentrate on assisting customers and use experience and knowledge to solve problems rather than battling a maze of open application windows and complex steps. Here are some of the common solution categories.

**360°customer view.** Agents can immediately access customer data from virtually any corporate system or application, and the data can be presented in almost any existing interface, dashboard, or portal. This speeds customer service by eliminating keystrokes, multiple screens, or repetitive customer questions. Customer focus is therefore much improved, which also helps additional agent tasks such as up-sell performance.

**Identify and automate business process bottlenecks.** Time-consuming, troublesome manual processes such as copy-and-paste within or between applications can be fully automated, and data synchronized between applications to eliminate manual errors and enhance compliance (such as ensuring that regulatory messages and procedures are followed and journaling is complete and automatic). Because of these speed and efficiency improvements, agents handle calls faster, with greater accuracy, and the same number of agents can potentially handle more calls with better outcomes. Additionally, training new agents becomes much simpler.

**Improve up-sell and cross-sell performance.** AID deployed with OpenSpan can help get timely custom offers to your agents by adding business logic (including extending existing applications and services), providing an offer mechanism in the agent user interface, and monitoring the results to gauge the effectiveness of field sales programs. Revenues increase because of the immediacy of the process, and the process can be deployed to existing user desktops without extensive agent retraining.

**Extend BPM processes to the desktop.** BPM often operates server-side, monitoring and checking that certain outputs of agent workflows are accomplished, but Accenture Integrated Desktop and OpenSpan can function at a more granular level to monitor completion of critical user tasks such as exact fields entered or proper completion of discrete application steps such as filling out sequences in call journals or communicating regulatory information.

### Top 10 Reasons to Use AID / OpenSpan

1. 360°Customer View
2. Identify and automate business process bottlenecks
3. Improve up-sell and cross-sell performance
4. Extend BPM processes to the desktop
5. Extend MDM concepts to the desktop
6. Contact channel integration
7. Call center monitoring enhanced with click tracking
8. Knowledge management integration for context-sensitive help
9. Composite CRM
10. Extend SOA to the desktop

**Extend MDM concepts to the desktop.** Master Data Management was until very recently seen as a back office analytics function or an invisible “hub” component. New MDM technology from Initiate Systems is fast enough to be accessed in real time. Together, Initiate Systems, Accenture and OpenSpan enable MDM views in the contact center, improving screen pop hit rates and speeding access to customer data. This “registry” approach can be achieved without cleaning or changing the source data.

**Contact channel integration.** As all the traditional computer telephony vendors move to new voice-over-IP (VOIP) and unified communication strategies around voice, chat, email and co-browsing, all have a need for cross channel screen pops at the desktop. Accenture partners with leading providers such as Aspect and Nortel and also has implementation experience with Genesys, Avaya and Cisco.

**Call center monitoring enhanced with click tracking.** There is tremendous value in merging telephony call time data with desktop video and audio recordings of calls to gain insight into what is happening during a call. While you can identify start and end call times, little information is available about what occurs during the call unless someone watches and listens to thousands of calls. With OpenSpan Events, every agent click can be tracked to generate reports of which applications and which screens were used on every call.

**Knowledge management integration for context-sensitive help.** While many companies have multiple sources of help information available, few have integrated these information sources with their call center systems. AID and OpenSpan provide the ability to concurrently load the right knowledge management system or Web site for a given call type and “turn the pages” in the background as the call progresses to provide likely relevant information. This allows an agent to find help more quickly than having to always start at the initial step within a knowledge management search.

**Composite CRM.** Expedite your move towards SOA by employing AID and OpenSpan to create a composite CRM solution. As noted in the Accenture CRM Ecosystem Matrix study, this is ideal where business process uniqueness and enterprise data density are both high. A composite CRM solution is “orchestrated” by a separate mechanism rather than hard wired into applications. This means that highly adapted company-specific services can be created to drive a high level of uniqueness for individual business processes, by tapping into new custom functions, existing legacy applications or external services.

**Extend SOA to the desktop.** As referred to in other sections, AID and OpenSpan offer exceptional integration value for existing and planned SOA implementations. Virtually any of your applications can be service-enabled, as can entire business workflows. Additionally, any existing application can be extended to consume services, by exercising control over every property, method, and event of interface objects to easily add new logic.

## CASE STUDY

This section draws on an actual case study in which the Accenture Integrated Desktop and OpenSpan technology enabled the client contact center to change the way its agents' application architecture worked together without changing the applications themselves. For the purposes of this white paper, some of the implementation details are condensed, but the main takeaway is that AID and OpenSpan allowed the enterprise to gain significant productivity improvements in a matter of weeks or months, while deploying the solutions to tens of thousands of desktops for quick ROI.

**A major cable and telecommunication provider's contact center** used a hybrid mix of in-house and OEM agent applications. The resulting complex steps needed for CSR operations were perceived as a productivity drain, and the client wished to move to an integrated, SOA architecture. Prior to implementing Accenture Integrated Desktop and OpenSpan technology, various back-end integrations had been tried to different levels of success, using a mix of in-house and heavily customized middleware applications.

**To solve the challenge**, Accenture Integrated Desktop and OpenSpan technology non-invasively connected Convergys ICOMS and CSG as well as the Avaya Interaction Center with a new dashboard which alerted agents to issues such as modem trouble or late payments.

AID and OpenSpan further delivered around 25 automations to replace many of the manual processes such as copy-and-paste between applications, with no application modification. The benefits delivered from this AID / OpenSpan deployment included elimination of manual data entry (and the potential costly errors and compliance problems), 15-20% reduction in AHT for key processes, and 50% faster training time. The solution also generated reporting benefits such as real-time reporting on call type and customer region and provided faster and more complete access to operations data; previously, data was only available the next day and was segmented across multiple reporting sources. Also, an Outage Notification System was created to monitor context data in real-time and detect abnormalities in call levels and modem signals within each region. This triggered an alarm for a potential outage, allowing for more proactive identification of network issues. Finally, the new dashboard consumed SOA services as they became available, giving agents a common toolbar regardless of underlying architecture. All of these functions were implemented in just 7 months.

## SUMMARY

### **Improve Agent Performance and Productivity by Reducing Desktop Complexity**

Ongoing shifts in the economic and business climates are projected to continue to cause changes in overall CRM strategies and investments for the foreseeable future, while contact centers will be expected to maintain high standards of performance in customer retention and satisfaction. Continued organizational challenges, including cyclical rounds of mergers and acquisitions, will stress both the centers' current and future IT architectures and the daily productivity of contact center agents.

Contact centers and other similar enterprises seeking to maximize investment and boost productivity from legacy line-of-business applications, as well as retaining the experienced core of their agent force, can reach higher levels of performance by deploying Accenture Integrated Desktop and OpenSpan's integration and automation capability. The payoff will be in shorter average call times, better and faster call resolutions, greater customer focus, improved up-and cross-sell, better agent retention, and shorter agent training requirements.

## LEARN MORE

For more information on Accenture Integrated Desktop and OpenSpan, please contact your Accenture or OpenSpan client representative. Additional information is available online by visiting: <http://www.openspan.com/accenture>

### **About Accenture**

Accenture is a global management consulting, technology services and outsourcing company. Combining unparalleled experience, comprehensive capabilities across all industries and business functions, and extensive research on the world's most successful companies, Accenture collaborates with clients to help them become high-performance businesses and governments. With more than 181,000 people serving clients in over 120 countries, the company generated net revenues of US\$23.39 billion for the fiscal year ended Aug. 31, 2008. Its home page is [www.accenture.com](http://www.accenture.com).

### **About OpenSpan, Inc.**

Global 2000 enterprises leverage the OpenSpan Platform to integrate applications, service-enable legacy systems, automate business processes, extend functionality and build new composite applications in order to realize immediate value on their IT investments. OpenSpan is now deployed on more than 100,000 enterprise desktops, helping customers accelerate service-oriented architecture (SOA) projects and increase enterprise desktop productivity. The OpenSpan Platform will support more than 1 billion customer support calls in 2009, saving organizations more than \$100 million. A venture-backed company, OpenSpan is headquartered in Alpharetta, GA. More information about OpenSpan is located online at [www.openspan.com](http://www.openspan.com).

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