

Aspect Announces eWorkforce Management Version 6

- Aspect eWFM v.6 balances needs of contact centre staff with business requirements for better bottomline results -

Aspect Communications Corporation (Nasdaq: ASPT), the contact centre expert, today introduced Aspect eWorkforce Management (eWFM) version 6.0 for multiskill, multisite and multichannel contact centres.

Aspect eWFM v.6 offers a unique self-service scheduling functionality that allows companies to balance employee's schedule preferences with business requirements. According to industry experts, flexible workforce scheduling can improve employee job satisfaction, help to achieve revenue goals and ultimately, improve customer service.

"When employees are harried, and customers are frustrated due to the effects of understaffing and incorrect routing in the contact centre, everyone pays-the business, the customer and the employee," said Mitchell Nitzan of Gartner Inc in the US. "Managing staffing effectively is critical for companies that want to optimise the revenue-generating ability of their centres. New automation features truly empower employees and free managers to focus on customer issues."

The first step to building a reputation for delivering quality service is to properly staff the contact centre with well-trained and motivated employees, said Peter McNamee, Aspect Communications' managing director for Australasia.

"Flexible work schedules enhance motivation and reduce costs associated with staff turnover, reduced productivity and poor customer service. Using Aspect, companies can satisfy both employees and customers and thereby improve their financial performance."

The Aspect software is unique because it balances employee preferences with business requirements and offers tremendous self-service capabilities and automatic notification capabilities that keep operations running smoothly. Aspect's software forecasts the volume of incoming contacts (phone, Web and email) and generates work schedules based on (1) employees' preferred hours (2) business requirements for meeting the revenue and service goals or (3) a combination of employee preferences and business requirements by the weighting of each on a sliding scale. Then it assigns the optimal schedules to employees based on the criteria, such as seniority, that the manager chooses.

To cut administration costs and improve responsiveness, the Aspect solution automates how employees are notified of real-time changes to their work schedules. Customer service representatives (CSRs) can receive automated email messages, for example, when they need to take breaks or lunches at newly scheduled times due to changes in the volume of incoming contacts. The automation eliminates the manual performance of a normally time-consuming and reactive workforce management task. Aspect eWFM offers the ability to quickly and automatically notify CSRs of schedule changes, as well as self-service scheduling functions around the clock.

All employees have "anywhere access." They can use the Web or telephone to access the system, which then responds to requests for vacation, overtime, unpaid time off and more. Managers can define the work rules and business policies that result in the software automatically issuing "accepted," "declined" or "wait-listed" responses to requested schedule changes and can override the results when necessary.

Additionally, an Aspect Contact Server eWorkforce Management Toolkit delivers fast, out-of-the-box integration of workforce management data with contact management software. For example, if the Aspect Contact Server, learns from integrated eWFM software that a CSR set to receive the next contact is scheduled for a break in 30 seconds, the Server could instead direct the contact to an agent who is scheduled to be logged on for the next 25 minutes.

The toolkit includes a palette of pre-written software objects that can be developed within Aspect eBusiness Architect, a graphical interface for building such process flows.

Too few CSRs mean unhappy customers and a burned out staff, which can lead to employee retention issues. Too many mean unnecessary payroll expenses, which erode profit margins. By calculating how many employees will be needed to work specific shifts in order to respond to customer inquiries within a set time, Aspect eWorkforce Management takes the guesswork out of staffing. Aspect eWFM v.6 is available for both non-Aspect and Aspect-based

environments. Aspect's solution is rooted in TCS SeriesFive and designed to further advance the art and science of managing a contact centre's workforce. Aspect acquired TCS in October 1995.

More than 150 customers in Australia and New Zealand have selected Aspect's technology to enhance their CRM strategies. Companies who have selected Aspect include Western Power, BankWest, Carlton and United Breweries, E-trade, Microsoft, Vodafone, American Express, AXA Australia, Avis, Cellular One and Amway.

About Aspect Communications

Aspect Communications Corporation is the leading provider of customer relationship portals, contact servers for managing dynamic customer contact transactions across all wired and wireless communication channels. The Aspect Portal contact server allows businesses to manage all customer contacts dynamically and turn them into relationships, opportunities and loyalty. Aspect is the only company today that delivers a complete multichannel contact centre - the core of any company's CRM strategy. Aspect's contact server synchronises all contact points, including live and self-service, with demonstrated customer return on investment. Aspect's recently launched VoIP product, the IP Contact Suite has won Best of Show at the Communication Solutions Expo in Washington, D.C. Aspect's leadership in CRM is based on more than 15 years of experience and over 7,600 implementations deployed worldwide. Aspect powers 78 percent of the Fortune 50. Aspect is headquartered in San Jose, Calif., with offices in major cities worldwide. For more information about Aspect, visit the company's Web site at <http://www.aspect.com> or call the Sydney Head office on (02) 8923 1300.

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