

Aspect Communications Introduces Winning Combination for Businesses and Their Customers

New Scheduled Callback capabilities provide contact centre benefits even after the call

Aspect Communications Corporation (Nasdaq: ASPT), the leading provider of enterprise customer contact solutions, has announced Scheduled Callback, the best way to exactly match contact centre personnel resources with customer needs. Aspect solutions help contact centre executives reduce costs and provide superior customer service with no waiting, delivering a win-win for Aspect customers and their callers. The solution lets customers, instead of waiting on hold, choose to schedule a time for the company to call them back, which reduces cost and the frustration associated with holding and having to call again later. Aspect's solution is unique because it is integrated with Aspect's workforce management software, which allows businesses to adjust staff schedules dynamically.

Cox Communications handles more than 40 million incoming customer contacts a year, a challenge when trying to optimise staffing schedules to handle all contact requests during certain peak periods of the day.

"Aspect continues to provide us with the leading innovations in contact centre capabilities that benefit our business and our customer experience. We're rolling this new functionality out to four of our centres," said Joel McGinley, Cox's director of customer service technology. "Aspect Enterprise Contact Server and Scheduled Callback help us ensure that we always have the correct number and type of staff scheduled, so service is not compromised. The ability to integrate callback requests with workforce scheduling is extremely valuable. We're all faced with tight budgets and high demands, and no business wants customer service to suffer because of that. Aspect offers a solution for a very common business dilemma." High call abandonment rates during the day can be very costly. Customers choosing to abandon and call back later means that a business pays for those customers to contact it twice or more as they re-dial a toll-free number. Customers or prospects contacting a competitor may mean that they are lost for life; even customers who opt to remain in queue may feel they are not getting the customer service levels they expect, making them vulnerable to competitors. Scheduled Callback addresses these challenges and provides flexible options for customers to feel comfortable with scheduling a callback time that suits their personal needs.

Designed to leverage Aspect's solution suite, Scheduled Callback is most effective when accurate staff schedules and forecasts are managed with Aspect eWorkforce Management software. Aspect's workforce management solution analyses scheduled callback data along with other call volume, call type, staff preference, staff skill and other service data to create reliable staffing schedules, so contact centres are never over or understaffed for handling outbound and inbound communications.

"Saddletree Research views the availability of Scheduled Callback as a highly desirable upgrade to Aspect's installed base of eWorkforce Management users and an attractive incentive to install Enterprise Contact Server to those customers who have not already done so," said Paul Stockford, president and chief analyst at Saddletree Research. "As the holder of the majority of sites in the installed base of workforce management sites, Aspect has a strong incentive to continue to provide innovations such as Scheduled Callback in order to retain its number one position."

Aspect's Scheduled Callback offers customer callers various callback times based on business rules involving estimated wait time, staff schedules and service level parameters. For eligible customers in the queue, Scheduled Callback automatically calculates the best options from staff schedules and contact centre objectives. The caller can choose from available callback times in the near term or select a preferred period for which the system will pinpoint a suitable time. Callbacks can also be initiated from a Web page. Contact centres can lower costs significantly through fewer abandoned calls, reduced toll charges, smoother staffing and higher customer satisfaction overall. Customers enjoy the convenience and reduced frustration of not having to wait on hold for a representative. In today's competitive market, contact centres are looking for every way to strengthen customer relationships that reduces churn and increases customer loyalty.

"Scheduled Callback is another significant differentiator in the marketplace," said Gary Barnett, Aspect's chief technology officer. "Aspect's solution easily integrates with existing environments. Every contact centre will want it. As an early user, Cox Communications has already seen significant benefits, and its feedback has been invaluable in ensuring that this offering meets the rigorous demands of large enterprises with huge customer bases."

Scheduled Callback is in limited customer release and will be available as an application for Aspect Enterprise Contact Server v6.0, generally available in the second quarter of 2003.

About Aspect Communications

Aspect Communications Corporation is the leading provider of business communications solutions that help companies improve customer satisfaction, reduce operating costs, gather market intelligence and increase revenue. Aspect is a trusted mission-critical partner with more than two-thirds of the Fortune 50, daily managing more than 3 million customer sales and service professionals worldwide. Aspect is the only company that provides the mission-critical software platform, development environment and applications that seamlessly integrate voice-over-IP, traditional telephony, e-mail, voicemail, Web, fax and wireless business communications, while guaranteeing investment protection in a company's front-office, back-office, Internet

and telephony infrastructures. Aspect's leadership in business communications solutions is based on more than 17 years of experience and more than 8,000 implementations deployed worldwide. The company is headquartered in San Jose, Calif., with offices around the world and an extensive global network of systems integrators, independent software vendors and distribution partners. For more information, call (877) 621-3692.

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