

BETTER *By The* BUNDLE

by DICK BUCCI

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INNOVATIVE VENDORS OFFER TIGHTLY FOCUSED SOLUTION BUNDLES TO TARGET SPECIFIC CONTACT CENTER PAIN POINTS.

by Dick Bucci, Pelorus Associates



HAVE YOU NOTICED THAT IT'S GETTING HARDER TO BUY JUST ONE OF ANYTHING? Need to make a flight reservation? Go to any travel site and you may conclude that it's now illegal to book a flight without reserving a hotel room and rental car at the same time. Need new cable service? Expect to be confronted with countless permutations and combinations of TV channels, Internet access, telephone service, home security and heaven knows what else—maybe a cloud-based food processor. The bundling phenomenon now extends to virtually all major product and service categories. That includes both consumer and commercial markets. You can find package deals for healthcare, financial services, insurance and software. Product bundles range from McDonald's Value Meals to IBM's package that takes care of the entire IT operations for global corporations.

In marketing, bundling is simply offering several products or services as one combined product, either as new product altogether or two or more separate products sold at a special price. It makes the most sense when the products are highly related and there are distinct buyer benefits from purchasing the combo rather than the individual components. Typical advantages include convenience, lower price, easier to use or assemble, and greater functionality.

The concept is not new. The McDonald's Happy Meal was rolled out in 1977. It proved to be a huge success with children by including a small toy with standard burger and fries, all contained in a cute container that looked somewhat like a circus tent. On the commercial front, Microsoft's Office For Windows (Office 1.0) debuted in November 1990 with a combination of Word 1.1, Excel 2.0 and PowerPoint 2.0.

BUNDLING AND THE CONTACT CENTER

In the contact center world, the first major foray into product bundling was the launch

of Verint's Impact 360 in 2005. The suite had all of the basic components of the complete workforce optimization (WFO) suite: compliance recording, quality management, speech analytics, e-learning and coaching, workforce management, performance management and voice of the customer surveys. Others were quick to copy and, by 2014, three-quarters of interaction recording vendors offered a bundled suite of three or more applications.

VENDORS THAT GET IT

The WFO model is now 10 years old. While it is by no means ancient history, WFO is certainly on the downward slope of its lifecycle. The original concept was technology and vendor-driven. Now that virtually every vendor that has the resources has already adopted the model, WFO no longer presents a significant competitive differentiator. The appeal of an integrated multi-application solution from a single vendor is giving way to smaller, more tightly focused solution bundles that are designed to address specific pain points and opportunities encountered by the contact center. Following are some examples:

Aspect Software. Aspect offers nine bundles. There are three categories: the Workforce Management Family, the Recording/Quality Management Family and the Full Workforce Optimization Family. Each of the three categories consist of three levels of functionality: basic, advanced and enterprise. Aspect configured these bundles to address different types of customer needs and existing environments. For example, the Workforce Management Family is addressed to existing customers that have productivity challenges and legacy quality management recording products that are difficult to replace. The Quality Management Family is directed to existing customers that cannot or do not wish to replace their workforce management system. The Workforce Optimization bundles are targeted to large contact centers with complex infrastructures.

VPI (Voice Print International). When Pelorus started researching the infrastructure market in 2002, contact centers had to build a QM solution from a selection of items in various categories. First it was the recorder, then QM software system for selecting and retrieving calls, then deciding if you needed screen

2014 BUNDLING STRATEGY BY VENDOR

VENDOR	POINT	SUITE	VENDOR	POINT	SUITE
ASC TECHNOLOGIES			MAGNETIC NORTH		
ASPECT			NICE		
CALABRIO			NOBLE SYSTEMS		
CXM RECORD			ONVISOURCE		
dvsANALYTICS			RED BOX		
ENGHOUSE			TANTACOMM		
ENVISION			TELSTRAT		
HIGHERGROUND			VERINT		
HP AUTONOMY			VPI		
INCONTACT			ZOOM		

SOURCE: 2015 WORLD CONTACT CENTER INTERACTION RECORDING SYSTEMS MARKET, PELORUS ASSOCIATES

recording as well as voice recording, and then deciding on a scorecard system and reporting package. VPI, a mid- to enterprise-size solution provider based in sunny Camarillo, Calif., has created the VPI QUALITY PRO bundle that has it all. They even bundled in real-time performance management and automated coaching tools to empower agents and supervisors to identify and issues and opportunities earlier, and better self-manage performance.

Verint Systems. As a pioneer in workforce optimization, Verint offers its software as standalone solutions or in bundles designed for different market segments and budget levels. The company has made significant acquisitions which strengthened its capabilities in customer engagement optimization. One result is Verint Engagement Analytics. This is a robust analytics platform for capturing, analyzing and correlating customer interactions, behaviors and journeys across all channels. When combined with Verint Workforce Optimization and Verint Engagement Management solutions (through its KANA acquisition), Verint Engagement Analytics delivers insights that empower businesses to engage more effectively with us customers and employees.

WHERE TO NEXT?

Some things just naturally go together. Think salt and pepper, peanut butter and jelly, baseball and beer, and voice of the customer and speech analytics. Yes, that last one is correct. Voice of the customer and speech analytics complement each other in such a way that

THE APPEAL OF AN INTEGRATED MULTI-APPLICATION SOLUTION FROM A SINGLE VENDOR IS GIVING WAY TO SMALLER, MORE TIGHTLY FOCUSED SOLUTION BUNDLES.

lacking either significantly diminishes the value of the other. Would it not make sense for some smart vendor to combine the two into a packaged offer (at a great price) and maybe include some analytics software to help users better understand their customers? This could be called the "Business Intelligence Package."

Another focus could be on security and compliance. Those are both big issues for contact centers today. The bundle might include real-time speech analytics to monitor the accuracy of disclosure statements, PCI compliance, and perhaps voice authentication. This could be the "Security Package."

With all the applications available today and open standards to ease connectivity, the biggest constraint to preparing popular solution bundles is creativity. ☺



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